

Circom Report

CIRCUM Regional Newsmothly•CR is the European Association of 380 Public Regional TV Stations in 38 countries• May 2003/No 43

As the CR annual conference unfolds on May 21

Record attendance expected for Grado

A record attendance is expected for the CIRCUM Regional annual conference to be held in Grado, Italy, May 21-25, at the invitation of RAI, hosted by CR Vice President Pier Luigi Malesani.

The CR Executive Committee holds a meeting at the Palazzo dei Congressi in Grado, on Wednesday, May 21, at 9 am in the framework of the conference. At 2.30 pm a meeting of the CR European Board members will take place in the same spot.



Maria Nemcic elected EBU Television Committee President

Maria Nemcic, Circom Regional Secretary General was elected by the members of EBU to the post of the EBU Television Committee President last month, during the regular annual TV assembly that took place in Amsterdam.

Trieste training fully booked

This years training workshop for young journalists, to be held in Grado prior to the annual conference, is full. Once again, there were more applicants than places. Circom Regional intended to restrict the number of places to 24 people, but such was the demand, that careful budget planning allowed an extra three delegates.

27 people from 13 countries representing 23 regional stations will be benefiting from the training which is sponsored by Circom Regional and the Council of Europe Human Rights Media Division.

The generosity of Circom member stations has meant that the training team will be joined by 13 leading professionals who have been released from their normal duties. These trainers and technicians, who will deliver the workshop for Circom Regional are from France 3, ARD Berlin, Hesisscher Rundfunk Frankfurt, HRT Zagreb, the Thomson Foundation, BBC Wales and Nelson-media.

The workshop will run for 10 days prior to the annual conference and will then continue with a specially organised two-day workshop on video journalism, with journalists being introduced to the operation of DV cameras and editing equipment. (More on page 2)

TVP3 Katowice wins the Grand Prix for "Dobrek Dance" doc

Program quality rising at Prix Circom Regional 2003

The judges of the awards for the best European regional programmes (Prix Circom Regional 2003, Sinaia - Romania, April 10-12, 2003) were surprised by the improving quality of regional programming, especially documentaries, at a time of economic difficulty for many broadcasters. Bobrek Dance from TVP3 Katowice won the Grand Prix Documentary for an alert but often poignant view of life in a small and depressed Polish town. Facts Weekly from TVP3 Wroclaw won the Grand Prix News for a fresh way of doing a weekly review, involving viewers in trying to remember the main stories of the week. The top awards – for news and documentary – both went to TVP3 Polish stations, who were singled out by judges for their creativity and journalistic strength. "The fast development of programmes in Poland has been wonderful to enjoy over the past few years," said awards chairman David Lowen, Director General of EuroNews. "Poland has always had a flourishing film industry and this is now clearly translating to television. The Polish programmes across all regions were contenders for prizes."

Bobrek Dance from TVP3 Katowice won the Grand Prix Documentary for an alert but often poignant view of life in a small and depressed Polish town. Facts Weekly from TVP3 Wroclaw won the Grand Prix News for a fresh way of doing a weekly review, involving viewers in trying to remember the main stories of the week.

The other winners were - People for Sale from BBC 1 Northern Ireland won the Prix Current Affairs, Euro 3 from France 3 Nord-Pas de Calais-Picardie won the Prix Cross-Border, Death at Deepcut from BBC Scotland won the Special Prix and POLDER MASH from Omroep Flevoland, Netherlands won the Most original Prix.

Special commendations by categories were – News (Teleskop, TVP3 Poznan, Poland; Look East, BBC East, UK), Documentary (Amanda, the prince charming and the baby, France 3 Bourgogne, The Queen is coming, TV2 Ost,

Denmark -also commended Sentenced for life, France 3 Corse), Current affairs (Inside out, BBC South; The night the fish come; TVR 2, Romania), Cross-border (Hang gliders from Bosnia, HRT Zagreb - Croatia, The unseen side of Aphrodite, ERT3 Thessaloniki, Greece), Special (German and Poles 3; ORB Germany; The Queen is coming, TV2 Ost, Denmark) Most

original (Close up West) Street level, BBC 2 West; A guard, RTV Montenegro).

The sponsors of the awards were European Parliament (Current Affairs category), Committee of the Regions (Cross-Border category); France 3 (Prix Spécial de France 3category) and TVP, Poland (Most Originalcategory).

The judges were Mojca Recek (STV Maribor, Slovenia), Dippy Chaudhary (BBC London, UK), Vanda Condurache (TVR Iasi, Romania), Jean-Marie Belin (France3, France), Ove Mulvad (TV2/Fyn, Denmark), Raymond Maxwell (Committee of the Regions); Istvan Hegedus (MTV Budapest, Hungary), Daniel Parmentier (RTBF Charleroi, Belgium), Martine Kruidier (Omroep Flevoland, Netherlands), Christian Baudissin (BRF Munich, Germany), Euro Metelli (RAI Trieste, Italy), Dimitar Bogdanov (BNT Sofia, Bulgaria), Nikos Vezirgiannis (ERT3 Thessaloniki, Greece), Brynjulf Handgaard (NRK Oslo, Norway) and Phil Davies (Thomson Foundation, Wales).

The judging took place in Sinaia, Romania from April 10-12 and was hosted by TVR, Romania. The awards will be presented at the CIRCUM Regional Annual Conference at Grado, Italy, on 21 May 2003.

27 delegates for the training course in Grado

“Twenty seven delegates have been selected for the training in Grado” writes Karol Kioma “This year we have received more applications than we have the budget for, so unfortunately some of you will be disappointed. However, we hope that we will be running a similar workshop next year in Wroclaw, Poland when I hope you will apply again stating that you were not selected for the Grado course. I would like to thank you all for applying and regret that we cannot accept everybody. The decisions have been very difficult. The criteria for selecting delegates was based upon countries first and stations second, i.e. we must first accept a member from each of the countries that applied, and then select delegates from different stations where possible. If any of the selected delegates are not able to attend the training please let me know as soon as possible. We will be able to fill your place if you cannot attend. Please note the decision is final and those not lucky enough to be accepted will be placed on the reserve list”

Albania

Eno Popi TVAlbania
Kleart Duraj TV Albania
Menanda Zaimi TV Albania

Bulgaria

Dimitar Bogdanov BNT Bulgaria

Croatia

Martina Kiseljak HRT Karlovac
Klara Dujmovic HRT Pula
Masenka Vukadinovic HRT Rijeka
Franka Jovic HRT Split

Czech Republic

Jiri Loucka CTV Ostrava

Germany

Diana Loebel Hessischer Rundfunk
Frankfurt

Greece

Vassilis Katsaras ERT3
Thessaloniki

Hungary

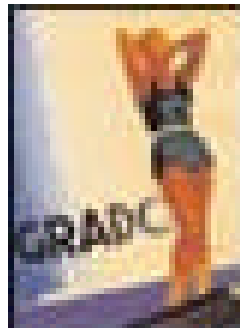
Emese Gal MTV Budapest
Andras Tengeltits MTV Sopron

Norway

Tina Sletbak NRK Oslo

Poland

Agata Dzikowska-Sworowska TVP
Wroclaw



Beata Skowronska TVP Bialystok
Ewelina Tomasik TVP Katowice
Karolina Raszeja TVP Bydgoszcz

Romania

Diana Neda TVR Timisoara
Paulina Urucu TVR Craiova
Gabriela Gugeanu TVR Iasi

Serbia and Montenegro

Nik Kaljaj RTV Crne Gore

Slovakia

Zuzana Kostelinikova STV Kosice
Tatiana Balazova STV Banska Bystrica

Slovenija

Petra Bauman RTVSlovenija Maribor
Tatjana Kren RTV Slovenija, Maribor
Mirjana Loverice RTV Slovenija,
Lendava

CNN defends silence on Iraq atrocities

A top CNN executive kept quiet about some atrocities in Iraq not because the network wanted to protect access but because it was worried about putting lives in danger, CNN said on Monday. Eason Jordan, CNN's chief news executive, revealed the incidents in a piece in The New York Times on Friday headlined "The News We Kept to Ourselves." He said that in the mid-1990s, an Iraqi cameraman working for CNN was tortured because the government believed Jordan worked for the CIA. Reporting the story "would almost certainly have gotten him killed and put his family and co-workers at grave risk," Mr Jordan wrote. CNN also learned from Kurds that a planned attack on network employees by Saddam Hussein's forces in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq was thwarted a few months ago, he said. Mr Jordan was subsequently criticised by at least two columnists for soft-peddalling news on Iraq to maintain CNN's access to the country by its reporters. Franklin Foer, an associate editor of New Republic magazine, wrote in The Wall Street Journal on Monday that he was suspicious of Mr Jordan's "outbreak of honesty." But Mr Foer wrote the he didn't see it as honesty.

Iraq war boosts website hits

The American news sites CNN.com and Google News experienced the biggest monthly audience increases among UK surfers in March as Britons turned to the internet to find different perspectives on the war in Iraq.

Figures released today by market researchers Nielsen/NetRatings show that the news sector as a whole saw a 25 per cent jump in audience during March, with audiences peaking at 1.3m on March 20, the day war was declared. CNN.com saw the highest increase in unique audience with a rise of 96 per cent on the previous month, while the search engine Google's recently launched news service saw a 79 per cent increase in unique audience in the same period. Among British sites, the Timesonline.co.uk and the Telegraph.co.uk saw the biggest increases with audience rises of 44 per cent and 49 per cent respectively. However, the BBC's news site remains the most popular news website in the country by a considerable margin, and guardian.co.uk retains its position as the most popular newspaper website and second only to the BBC overall.

Americans turn to BBC for war news

TV ratings for BBC News in the US have rocketed since the outbreak of the Iraq war, even as mainstream American network bulletins have lost viewers. Audience figures for BBC World News bulletins on US public service channel PBS increased by 28 per cent in the three weeks after the start of the conflict. Two of the main US networks lost viewers on their flagship nightly news broadcasts, with CBS down 15 per cent and ABC down nearly six per cent. Jonathan Howlett, the director of airtime sales at BBC World, claimed more viewers were tuning in to the network for its "balanced and impartial" reporting. The US' three main 24-hour news networks, Fox News, CNN and MSNBC, all recorded huge audience increases after the war began in late March. In the first few days of the conflict Fox News' audience was up by 379 per cent compared with the same week in 2002, while CNN enjoyed a 393 per cent ratings boost and MSNBC rose 651 per cent. Many US viewers said they had switched to the BBC because of the apparent pro-American bias of some local networks.

PBS stations broadcasting BBC World News bulletins reach more than 80 per cent of US homes. The service is also carried by the cable network BBC America. The BBC said it had seen similar increases in viewing figures elsewhere in the world, including Australia, India and South Africa.

BR Munich Copro office passes duties to CR General Secretariat

After seven years of effective collaboration BR Munich will no longer be responsible for the CIRCUM Regional program window on Europe by Satellite and as CR Copro office.

Starting June 1 the duties of the Munich office will pass to the General Secretariat in Munich.

Valerie Joyeux, who has worked very hard at the Copro office all these years, describes her feelings with a fax: "I thank you for your support, your cooperation...It was a very good team work that has enabled us to send each week your best regional programs to Brussels".

The 28th Golden Chest Festival in Plovdiv, October 19-27

a new category involves students

The Bulgarian National Television is organizing the 28th Golden Chest International TV Festival in the city of Plovdiv, Oct. 19-27.

The Organizing Committee of the festival invites all interested organizations to participate in the competition program in the following three categories:

- * Category one: TV Films and Series for Adults
- * Category two: TV Films and Series for Children and Adolescents
- * Category Three: TV Documentaries

"True to our traditions to keep our Festival renewing and enriched with innovations, this year there will be a new category added to the competition program – Category Four "First Steps" – feature films, documentaries and animation produced by students. It will be open only for television and Film Schools from all



over the world" writes Kiril Gotsev, Director General of Bulgarian National Television and Chairman of the Golden Chest Organizing Committee.

Besides the competition program the festival organizes out-of-competition screenings, presentations of other festivals and forums, press-conferences, meetings with Bulgarian film authors and producers and numerous cultural events.

Television and radio call for proposals

The European Commission is launching a call for proposals with the aim of raising awareness about the European Union and its policies. The scope for public and private broadcasters and programme makers is wide and consideration will be given to proposals relating to enlargement, the future of Europe and to European issues that are directly relevant to the daily lives and concerns of citizens.

They are looking for dynamic programmes that will stimulate the interest of the general public. The programmes could be short, long, one-off, a series, documentary, infotainment, edutainment, a game-show, a magazine programme, fact or fiction, passive or interactive.

Background: From May 2004 the European Union will have up to 25 Member States. This enlargement is a unique achievement healing divisions that follow centuries of conflict. An enlarged Europe will bring increased stability, solidarity and prosperity and it will provide opportunities for countries and for citizens but it will also require changes in the structure of the European Union.

In order to meet the needs of 25 Member States and 470 million citizens, and to take account of the European Union's past achievements and new internal and external challenges, European leaders have begun the process of preparing a constitutional treaty. The aim is to bring more democracy, simplicity, legitimacy and efficiency to the workings of the EU. This debate on the future of Europe is currently taken place in the "Convention on the future of Europe". The outcome of the debate will provide the basis of the new constitutional Treaty and will in turn have an impact on the lives of citizens throughout the Union. It is, therefore, extremely important that the general public is aware of the discussions that are taking place and that they should be able engage in a dialogue about the future of Europe, that is, their future. Of course, in order to participate in such a dialogue it should be ensured that citizens have information about the European Union in general as well as about the discussions on the future of Europe, the changes that might be made and the consequences of those changes. In view of the fact that television and radio are most people's

preferred means of gaining information about the European Union, and the fact that there is still a huge information gap, this call for proposals is an opportunity to stimulate interest in and nurture understanding of the issues that make a link between the lives of citizens and the European Union and its policies, from enlargement to employment, from the debate about the future of Europe to food safety.

Launching of the Call

The call for proposals is designed to encourage public and private broadcasters to submit proposals for television and radio projects that will attract a financial contribution from the European Commission. The call has three wide themes:

Enlargement

The future of Europe

General information about the European Union

One of the main objectives of this call is to raise awareness and nurture understanding especially in respect of those people who have little or no knowledge of the European Union or the impact that it has on their daily lives. We are looking for proposals that will make the EU and its policies relevant to people so that they come to know of its useful and beneficial role. Particular priority will be given to broadcasts in prime time reaching the largest audience possible. Grant applications must be presented on a standard form, accompanied by the documents needed to assess the quality of the project and to evaluate the technical and financial capacity of the applicant.

Parliament approves TV bill with strings

The lower house of Italy's Parliament has passed a fiercely contested bill that opposition critics say is intended to expand the business interests of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. The opposition did manage to stun the political establishment by winning enough votes to amend the bill to limit its scope, despite the Prime Minister's party saying, the legislation is necessary to modernise television here and create more choice on the Italian airwaves. Mr Berlusconi owns the country's largest private television network and indirectly controls Italy's public broadcasting channels. The bill, as drawn up by Mr Berlusconi's communications minister, would have quickened the country's path to digital television, overturned a law ready to go into effect at the end of the year banning ownership of more than two non-cable television channels and eased restrictions on media acquisitions.

The owners of television networks could have bought newspapers and increased advertising rates. But in a secret vote last Wednesday, the opposition and 17 defectors from the governing party passed an amendment weakening the bill. It would impose a limit of two on the number of channels any company may own and would block the other changes. Mr Berlusconi may be forced to get rid of one of his three private channels. He and his supporters seem confident that the bill will be readjusted in May by the Senate, where the government coalition has a solid majority. But the opposition contends that it has struck a blow against what it perceives to be Mr Berlusconi's glaring conflict-of-interest problem. (See Media News April 03, 2003)

BBC Worldwide to webcast to US market

RealNetworks is to take the BBC to the US market over the internet after a carriage deal was reported to be signed between the two companies. Multimedia programming is expected to be based on the BBC's international service, BBC Worldwide, although RealNetworks has said that content will be specifically commissioned for the desktop environment, along with other digital platforms. The deal means that content will not simply be repurposed but that BBC Worldwide will create exclusive web-based programming for the Real service. RealNetworks already carries multimedia content from news networks such as CNN and ABC News under its subscriber scheme, RealOne SuperPass. It is not clear whether the new BBC web channel will be bundled in with the scheme.

How Google views news

Google has come under fire again from online journalists for watering down the definition of 'news'. In UK web magazine The Register, Andrew Orłowski shows that the search engine is republishing press releases in the same category as real news. "You may not think of Coca Cola or the Microsoft Corporation as legitimate news organisations," he said. "But Google News thinks so. It's redefined the term "news" so that press releases from corporate sites or lobby groups are acceptable content for the "automated" news harvester. We found a Monsanto Company press release. Plus one from Exxon-Mobil Corporation. He added: "Incredibly, a search for "cluster bombs" on Google News yielded five stories, and four of them were press releases. Only one was a "news story". Transparency in the instruments we use is vital, to ensure the integrity of the system. So we need to know how these editorial decisions are made." Google has already come in for criticism from the online community for launching a news service that does not use real journalists to produce its content.

From June 1-7

“Golden Albena” Int’l TV Festival for Entertainment Programs in Bulgaria

The Golden Albena International Television Festival for Entertainment Programmes is held once again in the beautiful Black Sea resort of Albena, as part of the International Media Events 2003 organized by Television World Foundation. The Festival, hosted by the Black Sea resort of Albena, will take place June 1-7 2003.

CATEGORIES

Any television organization, television company or independent producer can enter programmes in the following categories: 1) Concerts 2) Comedies 3) Talk shows 4) Variety and cabaret 5) Fashion design and Art programmes 6) TV games 7) Classical music (operas and concerts) 8) Programmes for children not older than 10 years 9) Teenager programmes

The programmes should not be longer than 60 minutes. All entries must have been produced or broadcast for the first time after 1 January 2003
Working language: English.

SELECTIVE COMMITTEE

The entries will be reviewed by a 3-member selective committee, formed by professionals in the entertainment and musical genres, including the director of the festival. The selective committee assigns the entries to the categories defined in the regulations and prepares the competition programme.

The Committee or an accredited technical coordinator will notify all entrants of its decision, which will be final.

JURY: The selected programmes will be judged by a 5-member international jury, composed of TV professionals. In its work the jury will be guided by and observe the procedure rules adopted at a preliminary constituent meeting of its members held prior to the opening of the Festival.

AWARDS

The international jury will grant the following three awards: Golden Albena Grand Prix, a First Award to the best programme in each category and the Albena Resort Award

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Application forms will be accepted not later than 10 May accompanied by:

? a synopsis of up to 5 lines in English;

? advertising materials – photos, posters, etc,

? An obligatory requirement to the programmes with text is that they have subtitles or voiceover in English. Programmes in an original language without subtitles or voiceover will not be accepted.

PARTICIPATION TERMS

Every entrant pays a 150 EURO fee for admission to the selection. The sums should be transferred by 10 May.

10 May is also the deadline for the receipt of the applications and videotapes (BETACAM SP PAL or DVC PRO and one VHS tape for the selection) with the competition programmes of the participants. The parcel labels should explicitly state that the contents cost less than 50 USD.

The delivery of the programmes to the address of Television World Foundation in Sofia and back to the participant is at the expense of the sender, the television organization or the independent producer. The Festival organizer insures the programmes from the moment of their delivery

by the dispatcher till their return within 45 days of the closing of the Festival. The insurance does not cover the damages caused by the normal use of the submitted tapes during the Festival.

By filling in the application form for participation the producer of the TV programme agrees that a 2-minute excerpt of the submitted programme may be broadcast for information and advertising purposes.

ACCREDITATIONS

Every TV organization or independent producer can send representatives to the Media Events at their expense.

1. The registration fee entitles the accredited person to a case of information and catalogues, an access to the respective event and all the other festivals, markets, seminars and cocktails.
2. The accredited person can attend the opening and closing ceremonies of the Events.
3. The accredited person gets a 20 % discount at the partner restaurants of the International Media Events 2003 in Albena.

Accreditation fee:

► For 7 days - 150 EURO per person when the fee is paid by 20 May 2003; After that the fee is 200 EURO per person for an unlimited duration.

► For 3 days - 100 EURO – access to all the events within these three days

► For 1 day - 30 EURO – no entry in the catalogue.

HOTEL RESERVATION

The Festival organizers can book hotel rooms for the guests at preferential prices and a preliminary request filed not later than 20 May 2003. While the number of hotels in Albena is considerable those by the beach and the Events are few. The reservations that have been paid first will be treated with priority.

The deadline for the hotel reservation requests at preferential prices is 20 May.

BANK INFORMATION

- The payment may be done by a credit card or by a bank transfer.

- All bank transfers will be done on the account of Television World Foundation.

UNION BANK,

1606 Sofia, “Damian Gruev” Str. 10-12, BG

Bank code: 19591957

? 1900488707

All bank fees are at the expense of the sender.

The filled in and signed applications for participation shall be regarded as acceptance of the terms stipulated by the present regulations.

The filling-in of the forms for participation maybe done directly in the web site of INTERNATIONAL MEDIA EVENTS twworld.bg or by printing, filling and sending the forms through fax + 359 920 94 57, or mail to the foundation.

BBC's Newsnight to enter streaming trial

BBC News Interactive, the 24-hour online and interactive television news service from the BBC, and Envivio, a provider of MPEG-4 broadcast and streaming solutions, has announced a plan to trial interactive MPEG-4 technology. BBC News Interactive have developed a model which, were it deployed, would stream interactive MPEG-4 content to customers who would then be able to view the streams using Windows Media, RealNetworks or QuickTime players. The trial service will consist of special edition interactive content created by the editors of the BBC's Newsnight programme. The MPEG-4 content has been authored by developers at the BBC in London using the Envivio Broadcast Studio, a professional authoring and compositing tool for interactive content. The content will be streamed using the Envivio Streaming Server, a MPEG-4 server built to stream live and stored interactive content. "We understand the power of the MPEG-4 standard and its ability to create highly interactive content that is based on a single non-proprietary format," said Russell Merryman, Interactive Television Development Manager at BBC News. "The principle of authoring once and publishing everywhere is becoming a vital part of our production systems for TV, radio and online content", Mr Merryman said.

BBC begins fight for new charter

The BBC has begun a three-year battle to secure its future and retain the around 3.6 bn euros licence fee by appointing a team of 50 to work on a new royal charter. The director general, Greg Dyke, has engaged outside consultants to help convince the public and the government of the corporation's efficiency and effectiveness. The government will conduct a comprehensive review of the BBC's remit in the run-up to renewing its charter, which lays down the principles that govern the organisation, in 2006. Commercial rivals complain that under Mr Dyke's leadership the corporation is encroaching on their territory.

Charles Constable, head of commercial affairs at the BBC, and Roly Keating, controller of the digital channel BBC4, were seconded to the renewal project for six months, and since the beginning of the year they have been joined by about 50 BBC employees. Mr Dyke has also revived one of the most hated tactics of his predecessor John Birt by hiring two consultancy firms, Oliver & Ohlbaum and Spectrum Strategy, to help draft the BBC's case. In an attempt to control the debate about the future of the BBC the team is expected to publish a charter renewal manifesto later this year, when the government will also set out the terms of the review.

Difficult start for BBC3 News

BBC3 suffered the embarrassment of seeing its news bulletin register zero viewers at the height of the war in Iraq. As the popularity of news channels and terrestrial bulletins rocketed, the audience for The News Show sunk so low that the Barb ratings system registered it as a zero.

In the first few days after BBC3 launched on February 10, The News Show attracted audiences as high as 91,000 viewers. The poor ratings performance of The News Show during the second Gulf war will be a blow to BBC3 controller Stuart Murphy, who promised it would bring a new approach to TV news to make it appeal to the 16-34 audience. Mr Murphy was forced to introduce more news, current affairs and factual programming after the British culture secretary Tessa Jowell threw out the initial proposal because it did not have a strong enough public service remit.

Newsroom Management Seminar in Maastricht

Newsroom Management Seminar organised by the European Journalism Centre, Maastricht, will be held in May 13-15. This seminar offers the opportunity to brush up on management techniques, test them in discussions and role play and find out how other managers deal with the challenge of motivating staff and running an efficient newsroom.

The course, run by Per Andersson, former editor of the Swedish Channel 1 news programme and a trainer in newsroom management since 1995, has been so successful that it is now a regular feature in the EJC's seminar programme.

The course trains managers in leadership techniques, coaching staff, organising a creative working environment that works efficiently and dealing with conflicts in the newsroom. For more information about this seminar: <http://www.ejc.nl/cp/courses.asp?recordID=483>

The role of the media and conflict reporting

“Conflict Reporting: the role of the media” is a workshop organised by the European Journalism Centre, Maastricht and AMSU to be held in Maastricht, June 30 – July 2

While reporting conflicts, should journalists objectively report the facts and never intervene? Should they report in such a way as to promote peace rather than exacerbate tensions and violence? The main idea behind this workshop is that journalists are not supposed to take sides in conflicts, other than the side of peace. The seminar will concentrate on the ways in which the media act as a forum of communication between conflicting parties, and on case studies in which journalists inform the public about negotiation processes or monitor peace agreements in such a way as to affect people's sense of ethnic and national identity.

The 11th Archipelago Int'l Festival of Short Films and New Images

The 11th edition of Archipelago, an Int'l Festival of Short Films and New Images, will be held in Rome, May 30 – June 4.

Created by 3E-medi@, Archipelago is the most popular Italian event dedicated to new formats and new trends of independent cinema.

The following are the competitive sections of the 2003 edition:

- Short Waves, international competition for short films. Running time must not exceed 30 minutes. All genres are eligible (fiction, documentary, animation and experimental), either on film or video
- eMovie / Digital stories, international competition dedicated to new images. Italian and foreign short films up to 30 minutes are eligible, and must be made on computer and / or digitally shot.
- Corto. Web 4.0, international on-line competition. For short films exclusively

conceived for diffusion on the Internet or however compatible with a Web distribution. The competition will be held exclusively on-line (www.conrtoweb.tv) and it's reserved to works of all genres, up to 15 minutes long ('Desktop' category) or 3 minutes long ('Wireless' category)

- Videorome, sixth competition for videomakers from Rome – 3 minutes on video, on the theme “All the Colors of Green” – organized in collaboration with Mediateca Roma and the Environment Department of the city of Rome.

As in past editions, the Itineraries section will present the best of the “short” Italian production screened at last year's festivals.

French media groups propose global TV news channel

French media companies have submitted bids for the creation of an international television news channel in response to President Jacques Chirac's call for a French-flavoured alternative to CNN, BBC World or al-Jazeera. Chirac floated the idea during his election campaign a year ago, and experts say he needs it more than ever to sell France's point of view on the world stage since his stand against the war in Iraq and subsequent rift with leaders in Washington and London. The main French state-owned TV and radio groups made a joint offer, saying their existing networks abroad would allow them to target 36 million homes in the Middle East, Africa and Europe, using English and Arabic as well as French at an early stage.

Two offers came from big private sector companies, one from the LCI news, current affairs channel owned by TF1, and the other from rival Canal Plus, owner of news channel iTELE. The deadline for offers was last Tuesday and the government has said it will consult Chirac in the coming weeks with the intention to get the channel up and running next year.

Media looks for British Pathe archive

Daily Mail and General Trust PLC said it has signed a deal with Independent Television News Ltd where ITN will take over the management and marketing of British Pathe's film archive business. The deal will create the world's biggest commercial source of news and history footage, containing half a million hours of historical material dating back to 1896, Daily Mail said in a statement. Under the exclusive five-year deal, ITN will operate and represent British Pathe's film archive business, selling its content globally through ITN Archive's network of international offices.

Brussels to probe German public broadcasters

European regulators are to investigate Germany's public broadcasters after their private-sector rivals accused them of illegally using state money to fund commercial activities. VPRT, Germany's federation of private-sector broadcasters and telecommunications companies, on Thursday said it had filed a complaint to the European Commission accusing ARD and ZDF, the state-owned television groups, of breaching competition law.

The Commission's decision on the German case could have an impact in other countries, such as Italy and the UK, where public broadcasters are involved in commercial activities. The complaint alleges that ARD and ZDF have been benefiting from hidden state aid and have breached competition regulations by financing online ventures with revenue from the licence fee.

According to VPRT, the broadcasters have failed to distinguish between commercial and non-commercial activities in their reporting, allowing them to conceal the extent to which they engaged in cross-subsidies. The practice had been helped by Germany's failure to incorporate into national law an EU directive requiring companies to keep separate accounts for commercial and non-commercial operations.

Snapshots from Prix Circom Jury meeting in Sinaia, Romania



Snapshots from Prix Circom Jury meeting in Sinaia, Romania



Festivals, Workshops and more around Europe and the world

- May 15: The European film day and media prize ceremony, Cannes
- May 15-16: Plenary session of the Convention, Brussels
- May 15: 50th birthday of EUROSTAT
- May 16: EU-ACP Council of Ministers
- May 16-17: Referendum on accession to the EU, Slovakia
- May 18: Elections in Belgium
- May 19: Competitiveness Council, Brussels
- May 19: Defence Council, Brussels
- May 19-20: General Affairs and External Relations Council, Brussels
- May 21: Commission meeting, Brussels
- May 21-23: Meeting of the Presidents of the Central European States, Salzburg
- May 22: ECB Governing Council
- May 25: Communal and regional elections, Spain
- May 26-27: Agriculture and Fisheries Council, Brussels
- May 26-27: Euromed mid-term ministerial conference, Kreta
- May 27: Commission meeting, Brussels
- May 28: EU-Canada Summit, Athens
- May 31: EU-Russia Summit, St. Petersburg
- May 31: President Prodi's official visit to Russia

June

- June 2-3: Health and Consumer Policy Council, Brussels
- June 2-3: Employment and Social Policy Council, Brussels
- June 2-4: NATO Ministerial meeting, Madrid
- June 2-5: European Parliament session, Strasbourg
- June 2-6: Green Week 2003
- June 3: Commission meeting, Strasbourg
- June 3-4: ECOFIN Council, Brussels
- June 4: Employment and Social Policy Council, Brussels
- June 4: Health and Consumer Affairs Council, Brussels
- June 5-6: Justice and Home Affairs Council, Brussels
- June 5-6: Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council, Brussels
- June 7-8: Referendum on accession to the EU, Poland
- June 11: Commission meeting, Brussels
- June 11-12: Agriculture and Fisheries Council, Brussels
- June 12: Plenary session of the Convention, Brussels
- June 13: Environment Council, Brussels
- June 15-16: Referendum on accession to the EU, Czech Republic
- June 17-18: General Affairs and External Relations Council, Brussels
- June 18: Commission meeting, Brussels
- June 18-19: Plenary session of the Economic and Social Committee, Brussels
- June 18-19: Plenary session of the European Parliament, Brussels
- June 20: European Council, Thessaloniki
- June 24: General Affairs and External Relations Council, Luxembourg (tbc)
- June 25: Commission meeting, Brussels
- June 25: EU-US Summit, Washington
- June 25: President Prodi's official visit to the United States
- June 30: European Parliament session, Strasbourg

July

- July 1: Italy takes over the EU Presidency
- July 1: Commission meeting, Strasbourg
- July 1-3: European Parliament session, Strasbourg
- July 4-5: Informal ministerial meeting on Transport and Infrastructure, Naples
- July 6: Informal ministerial meeting on Trade, Palermo
- July 9: Commission meeting, Brussels
- July 11: Informal Employment and Social Policy Council
- July 15: ECOFIN Council
- July 16: Commission meeting, Brussels

EU will finance Euronews this year

Euronews announced that it will become a public broadcaster following the departure of the English commercial channel ITN, which led Euronews since 1997. The new Euronews president Philippe Cayla said that the European Commission was willing to support the channel financially.

The European Parliament has in principle already agreed to support Euronews with three million Euro this year. In return Cayla announced that Euronews will open an office in Brussels and will increase its coverage of EU affairs. After the departure of ITN, Euronews will now be run by a consortium of European public service broadcasters.

New organization for journalists' safety

More than 100 media bodies have contributed to the establishment of a new organisation dedicated to journalists' safety. The International News Safety Institute will promote safety training and awareness and campaign for measures to increase protection for journalists working in the world's more dangerous places. The institute marked its launch in Brussels by calling for attacks on journalists during conflicts to be treated as war crimes. CNN's Chris Cramer, who is the institute's first honorary president, said: "After years of neglect in the face of increasing violence against media staff, we are putting security and safety on the top of the news agenda."

EU motives questioned by Danish Television

Danish public television is to broadcast a potentially controversial film of leaders behind the scenes at a key European summit. It was in December last year that negotiations were concluded with the EU candidates set to take part in the bloc's expansion in 2004. Christopher Gulbrandsen, who made the documentary 'Fogh Behind the Scenes,' was granted permission to follow the Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen for three months. The cooperative effort has raised criticism both in Denmark's media and in political circles. The film maker said he and fellow Danes couldn't care less about Brussels, that the EU's image was dull and dehumanised but that this work showed, with some surprises, the life running through it.

Circom Report

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