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EKRAN - Call for Applications

WHAT IS “EKARAN”?

The European training project EKARAN is a collaborative project between the Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing, FOCAL, the Norwegian Film Development, the Danish Film Institute, the Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen, the Internationale FilmSchule Köln and the International Film School Wales.

EKARAN (the Polish word for “screen”) is an international training program focusing on the creative pre-production process based on shooting practice. It aims at advancing the participants’ scripts and producing two scenes presenting the tone, casting and visual strategies of the project. This includes:

- Treatment or script development (group (treatments) and individual work (scripts or treatments))
- Preparation for shooting (casting, storyboard, individual consultancy with tutors)
- Shooting (tutors’ directing consultancy available)
- Editing (tutors’ editing consultancy available)
- Evaluation of the produced scenes.

As the creative pre-production process is based on teamwork, EKARAN includes each of the key creative roles in its training curriculum. Every participating project is therefore represented by a team consisting of a director (or writer/director), a writer (or co-writer), a producer and, optionally, a director of photography.

In order to ensure the best possible market opportunities, EKARAN will favour applicants with independent film projects with a strong personal vision.

The ‘Godfathers’

To bring the experience of the older generation of filmmakers to the participants, Andrzej Wajda, as the main ‘Godfather’ himself, is inviting two more ‘Godfathers’ of EKARAN to act as Masters of visual grammar, and to interact creatively with the teams. These Godfathers will be Volker Schloendorff from Germany and Alexander Sokurov from Russia.

The team of tutors involves experienced film professionals from all over Europe including: Wojciech Marczewski, Agnieszka Holland, Krzysztof Zanussi, Edward Zebrowski (Poland); Lone Scherfig, Thomas Vinterberg, Per Fly, Morgens Rukov (Denmark); Ildiko Enyedi (Hungary); Udayan Prasad, Nigel Orrillard, Marilyn Milgrom (England), Antoine Jaccoud (Switzerland).

WHO ORGANISES EKTRAN?

The Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing (Warsaw, Poland)

Supported with the honorary patronage of the European Film Academy, the School started its activity in November 2001. The School founders are Andrzej Wajda, Wojciech Marczewski and The Warsaw Film Studio. The School is the only training center for film professionals in Poland, and runs fiction and documentary courses based on project development on a Master Class level.

FOCAL (Lausanne, Switzerland)

This Foundation for professional training in cinema and audiovisual media promotes the development of creative, technical and entrepreneurial skills among professionals in the areas of film, audiovisual arts and new media.

The Norwegian Film Development (Oslo, Norway)

This organisation addresses filmmakers involved in the creative process, primarily writers and directors. Accordingly, the development of scripts and film projects in all genres and durations is the major task and challenge of the institution in the years to come.

The Danish Film Institute (Denmark, Copenhagen)

New Danish Screen is a development and production scheme for fiction film. It is initiated by the Ministry of Culture and is jointly operated by the Danish Film Institute, the Danish Broadcasting Corporation and TV2/Denmark. New Danish Screen exists to extend the present success of Danish Film by maintaining and developing emerging talent, thereby providing the film industry with new ideas and change.

The Nordrhein Westfalen Film Stiftung (Germany, Düsseldorf)

Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen supports writers, producers, directors, distributors and cinema owners, high-budget and low-budget productions as well as outstanding international films for television. In order to react in a flexible way to the needs of filmmakers and producers, the Filmstiftung NRW supports almost all the phases of a film production: screenplay, project development, production and post-production, and even the distribution and sales of the final product. After the foundation of the ifs international film school cologne gmbh, it has also been contributing to the qualification of the next generation, while the Film Commission provides advice on the selection of shooting location. In addition, it helps producers to establish contacts with service providers in Nordrhein Westphalia.

ifs internationale filmschule köln

ifs internationale filmschule köln has come within a few years to be one of the leading study and advanced training institutions in the area of film and television in North Rhine-Westphalia. The ifs' Film Studies Program follows an innovative concept offering the first Bachelor of Arts Degree in the fields of screenwriting, directing, and creative producing in Germany. Ten further education programs prepare young professionals in the film and TV industry for continuously increasing demands, in national as well as international contexts. Lecturers, students, and co-operation partners also come from European countries and from the USA.

The International Film School Wales

The International Film School Wales is the main provider of film education in Wales. The School, founded in 1966 by documentary film-maker John Grierson, is a lead partner in the Skillset Approved Screen Academy for Wales and is funded and supported by the British Film Council with the intention of transforming vocational training provision for the film industry in the UK.

WHO CAN APPLY?

EKRAN is based on teamwork and involves professionals from several fields. The primary target group consists of European directors or writer/directors who have realised their first feature or several shorts. Writer/directors will participate with their own script, whereas directors will participate with a script they are developing with their co-writer. In order to be accepted by EKRAN, the directors or writer/directors must be part of a team consisting of:

- the writer or co-writer of the script
- the producer committed to the project
- the director of photography they intend to work with (optional)

These members of the pre-production team form the secondary target group of the programme. Each professional group will be given specific guidance by experts with professional experience in each of the participants' production roles throughout the programme.

HOW DO I APPLY?

The application must contain:

- 1) CVs of all team members (4 copies, plus an electronic version on CD)
- 2) a 25 page (maximum) feature film Treatment (4 copies, with electronic version on CD) – (if the script exists it should be translated into English and available for individual consultancy since first session)

3) a letter of commitment from the producer or the Producer's production company as well as a producer's statement outlining their intended strategy for the development of the project (4 copies)

4) an entry form signed by all the members of the team (4 copies)

5) a sample of the director's work (1 copy)

6) a filmography and samples of the cameraman's work (1 copy)

The application deadline is 15th November 2006.

All European applications (apart from Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, Norway and UK – which should be sent to the appropriate EKAN Partners' addresses) must be sent in 4 copies to:

**Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing
ul. Chelmska 21
00-724 Warsaw, POLAND**

HOW ARE PROJECTS SELECTED FOR EKTRAN?

On the basis of the submitted materials, a pre-selection will be made in each of the partner countries by professionals/tutors chosen by the partners. Wojciech Marczewski, the Mentor of the project, will interview the selected candidates at the beginning of January 2007. He will choose the final 12 participants' teams.

HOW IS EKTRAN TRAINING ORGANISED?

The EKTRAN training program is divided into three sessions of 11 days, 10 days and 10 days respectively. Each of the sessions includes the following basic modules, which can be supplemented by additional elements varying from session to session:

- Treatment or script development: group (treatment) and individual work (script or treatment)
- Preparation for shooting: casting, storyboarding, individual consultancy with tutors
- Shooting: tutors' directing consultancy available
- Editing: tutors' editing consultancy available
- Evaluation of the produced scenes

Between the sessions, the participants are expected to develop new and further drafts of their scripts or treatments and to write two full scenes to be shot at the second and third sessions.

English is the language used during all EKRAN activities.

Session 1: 1st March – 11th March 2007

Participants: directors and scriptwriters (12 teams, 24 persons).

Duration: 11 days

The session will begin with the presentation of the EKRAN program to the participants. The presentation will be followed by a treatments/scripts development module. In order to ensure a wide knowledge and appreciation of all participants' projects (so that everyone knows each others' work) each team will pitch its project in front of everyone else. The subsequent discussion of these projects will then enable the participants and tutors not only to get to know each others' point of view, but will also help to clarify EKRAN' s approach to film as art and business.

However, the crucial element of the session will be the production of 3-4 minute scenes with two actors (Polish actors speaking English). In order to establish and clarify working practices, and as a kind of warm-up, participants will not work on a scene from their own scripts or treatments but will be given the possibility to choose one of three different scenes from classics of the cinema selected by the tutors of EKRAN. Participants will be divided into three groups, each group having its own tutor. Tutors will consult and advise the participants during the whole session and supervise production of the scenes. Each group will also be assisted by its own production manager, responsible for organisational and technical issues.

While realising the scenes, special attention will be given to:

- working with actors and building characters
- visualisation: how to tell the story through images, how to build a composition within a frame, how to use light and rhythm efficiently etc. Directors and directors of photography, working with the teams, will be given additional advice from the expert tutor on that matter.

The session will end with an evaluation. All the scenes will be screened and discussed in the presence of all the participants, tutors and members of the production crews: directors of photography, sound engineers, editors and production managers.

Session 2: 12th April – 21st April 2007

Participants: directors, scriptwriters and producers (12 teams, 36 persons; producers stay about 5 days)

Duration: 10 days

The session will be devoted to the development of a further version of the script (or treatment) and to explore visualisation strategies in order to ensure a truly personal tone to the film to be made. The core of the session will be the production of scenes from the participants' projects with two or three actors. Having made decisions about casting and shooting at the first session, participants will now concentrate on visualisation and the refinement of the tone of their film, exploring appropriate and effective compositions and camera movements, so that the taste and personality of the director finds its expression on the screen.

In order to enable the future film to express the authentic power of the author's personality, the programme of the second session, in addition to the project-based individual and group coaching, will include:

- the seminar "Light in Film" run by director of photography Witold Stok
- the preparation of a storyboard for each scene (Mateusz Rakowicz)
- a seminar devoted to the analysis of the best scenes in world cinema (Wojciech Marczewski)
- a seminar devoted to the art of painting by Edward Hopper (Andrzej Wajda)
- a seminar devoted to the creative personality of an author (Alexander Sokurov)
- a seminar examining the relations between biography and fiction and ways to leave a director's fingerprints on the screen (Wojciech Marczewski)

The session will end with the evaluation of the produced scenes – just like session 1.

Session 3: 14th June – 23rd June 2007

Participants: directors, scriptwriters and producers (12 teams, 36 persons; producers stay about 5 days).

Duration: 11 days

Each team is able to invite a director of photography and two actors from their native countries (travel costs and accommodation will be covered by EKRAN) to produce a 3-4 minute scene from the script. This time scenes are shot in the mother tongue of each director and his/her actors, contrary to the previous sessions, where they had to be directed in English. However, each scene will be subtitled in English for evaluation purposes.

The pre-production of a scene includes, apart from discussions on directing strategies, the choice of the location, props and lights.

Once again, the main areas of interest are the dramaturgy of the scene and the development of characters and visualisation.

In his lecture, Volker Schloendorff will share his experience of transferring literature onto the screen by comparing literary language to film language.

The session will end with an evaluation, screening and discussion of the produced scenes.

WHAT DO I TAKE AWAY FROM EKTRAN?

As well as all the experience and knowledge gained, at the end of EKTRAN each team will have a well-developed treatment or new draft of a feature script and two scenes presenting the tone, casting and visual aspects of the project. The scenes, especially the second with selected actors, shooting locations, props and styles of photography, are to be used by the team's Producer as a test shoot and a visual example to accompany the script in the search for future film financing.

HOW MUCH DOES EKTRAN COST?

The directors and their teams will be granted full scholarships including participation fee, accommodation and journey (each team will be granted up to 1000 Euro reimbursement for travel expenses).

Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing the EKTRAN coordinator reserves the right to change the programme.