

CROSSING EUROPE AGAIN WITH AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF VISITORS

Media information for the final press conference at the OK Media Deck on 26 April 2009, 12.00

On the last day of CROSSING EUROPE Film Festival Linz 2009, festival director Christine Dollhofer was again able to **announce a success**: Since the opening of the sixth festival edition on Monday, 20 April by Provincial Governor Josef Pühringer and Vice-Mayor of Linz Erich Watzl, nearly **18,000 festival guests, film and music fans (2008: 16,000)** have attended the film screenings, discussions & presentations and the Festival Nightline despite the fine weather during the whole festival week. With more than 570 accredited international and national festival guests CROSSING EUROPE received unprecedented interest on the part of the film industry and the media. Another positive aspect was the increase in the number of festival venues – e.g. the Chamber of Labour of Upper Austria, the Ann and Pat youth centre, the new Ars Electronica Center as well as the Lentos Art Museum.

CROSSING EUROPE, which lasted a day longer in this year of exceptional cultural activity, presented a **total number of 177 films from 33 countries which were shown in 180 programmes**. About **130 directors and film guests** attended the Q&A sessions. The festival audience especially appreciated the relaxed atmosphere in the area around the OK Offenes Kulturhaus Oberösterreich festival centre.

The cooperation with Linz 2009 European Capital of Culture, which took place for the third and last time this year and considerably contributed to the success of the past festival week, has been extremely pleasant. In 2010, Linz09 will not be one of the main partners any more, thus Christine Dollhofer is concerned about the future of CROSSING EUROPE. Basically, support in terms of cultural policy has been promised, which gives rise to hope that alternative financial means will be procured to replace the funding provided by Linz09 so far. All politicians present at the opening night again emphasised their intention to support the festival in 2010 and beyond.

At the **award ceremony** on Saturday 25 April, prizes with a total value of 21,000 euro were awarded.

The **CROSSING EUROPE Award European Competition** powered by Linz 2009 European Capital of Culture, endowed with 10,000 euro, was awarded to the Turkish director Mahmut Fazil Coskun for **UZAK IHTIMAL/WRONG ROSARY** (TR, 2009).

A **Special Mention** went to the Swedish director Ruben Östlund for **DE OFRIVILLIGA/INVOLUNTARY** (SE, 2008). Alexis Dos Santos received the **ray Audience Award** with a total value of 5,000 euro for **UNMADE BEDS** (GB, 2008).

The **CROSSING EUROPE Award Local Artist** (6,000 euro) funded by the Federal Province of Upper Austria (4,000 euro) and Synchro Film- und Videobearbeitung (2,000 euro) was split this year. **Martin Music** received the cash prize (4,000 euro) for **DRAUF**. The non-cash prize (2,000 euro) went to the film **DROPPING FURNITURE** by **Harald Hund** and **Paul Horn**. Furthermore, the jury – Barbara Musil (A), Edith Stauber (A) and Hermann Greuel (NO) – has awarded a Special Mention to the animation film **ROMEO UND JULIA (Franz und Rosi)** by the **Steinerkirchen secondary modern school**.