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PRIX EUROPA 2009

European media industry in a state of flux – creative programme ideas for the future

Festival preview

PRIX EUROPA, 17-24 October 2009 in Berlin

Europe Selects its Best Productions: Television – Radio – Emerging Media

"Seen from the perspective of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it seems we were correctly reading the signs of the times in 1987 with our founding idea for **PRIX EUROPA**, and the festival helped pave the way for the European broadcasting landscape to grow ever closer together," says **Festival Director Susanne Hoffmann**. This time around, we hope that Europe's biggest media competition for quality productions will again give the industry some important boosts. "In times of crisis, programme makers have to close ranks even more to find new ways of realising their creative visions. We in Berlin want to provide the necessary platform for this and encourage discussions on topical issues and trends in an increasingly global media world."

In addition to being a competition in eight categories, **PRIX EUROPA 2009** is also an international **media meeting** with numerous discussion sessions, panels and lectures in which industry experts from 35 countries can exchange ideas with like-minded people. The spectrum covers everything that makes up the modern multimedia world: television, radio, print and online media. The wide range of topics extends from workshops on stylistically influential radio thrillers from Norway, to the first online videos by up-and-coming European filmmakers, and to a lecture by **bestselling author Richard David Precht** under the auspices of the "**Berlin Summit**" **culture radio conference**.

One of the most important rounds of discussion will consider the **quality of media content on the Internet** and invite top experts from the various digital genres onto the stage. There, **Jörn Kabisch**, deputy editor-in-chief of the weekly magazine *Der Freitag* will interview (among others) **Danny Schechter**, pugnacious TV producer, blogger and media critic from the USA, **Silvia Costeloe** of BBC News, and **Leo Busch**, presenter of *busch@n-tv.de*, one of the first interactive talk shows on German TV. The fact that **media makers from China** will be presenting a cross-section of their radio-documentary productions at **PRIX EUROPA** for the first time is an indication of the attraction that the festival exerts even beyond Europe.

20 years after the collapse of the Iron Curtain it is clear that the festival has become a key forum for dialogue among media professionals in east and west. In a special **PRIX EUROPA** edition of the rbb radio programme "**Forum – The Debate on Inforadio**", rbb cultural journalist Harald Asel will ask such prominent personalities as **publisher Lojze Wieser** from Austria and **Pulitzer Prize winner György Baló** from Hungary to give their very personal take on events since 89 – and to look at Europe then and now.

The heart of **PRIX EUROPA** remains the competition, of course. The **231 nominated productions** in eight different categories will provide material and focal topics for an intensive festival week and give

a unique insight into European lifestyles. Historical subjects are becoming increasingly popular, with many films set against the **background of contemporary events**. Examples include the ARD's production on the Mogadishu aircraft hijacking, or the Spanish documentary series **23F** (The King, Hardest Day) about the attempted military coup in 1981 – the biggest television success of the summer with over 6 million viewers. In times of declining programme budgets, such major films can often only be financed with the help of partners, and there is a clear trend towards **European co-productions** among this year's competition nominations. One of the pioneers of this development is the **successful** German **producer** and multiple **PRIX EUROPA** winner **Nico Hofmann**:

"Cross-border and cross-cultural cooperation by film makers from all over Europe offers an opportunity to realize large-scale productions with even higher quality and greater diversity in future. **PRIX EUROPA** is the ideal platform for entering into a dialogue with potential co-producers and creative partners. In such a context, the *Made in Europe* concept does not remain just a vision, but can become the trademark of a new form of European film that sets completely new standards."

In this spirit, the **Radio Day of European Cultures** is also being staged for the fourth time in cooperation with the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and under the patronage of **Leonard Orban, EU Commissioner** for Multilingualism. The Radio Day will be seeking to bridge all language barriers under the motto "**Languages through Microphones**" and is for the first time supporting committed radio professionals by offering its own production grants for multilingual programmes.

Language diversity is also the topic of "**Languages through Lenses**", the Festival's new category featuring short videos from Europe's film academies; it is sponsored by the European Commission. The winner will be determined publicly by online voting on the **PRIX EUROPA** website.

The opening concert to launch **PRIX EUROPA 2009** on 17 October in rbb's Concert Hall will feature the French band **Babylon Circus**. This event will be broadcast worldwide. The festival will be offering a special treat after the Prize-Giving Ceremony: the general public will be given an opportunity to see several of the 2009 festival's award-winning films on the big screen at the **PRIX EUROPA cinema matinee** on 1 November.

Over a thousand media professionals from every corner of Europe are again expected to attend **PRIX EUROPA 2009**. The festival week is characterized by a uniquely transparent adjudication system, which encourages direct exchanges and discussions between international journalists, media makers and managers. Interested festival participants can also attend the open adjudication groups as observers.

The 25 partners of the **PRIX EUROPA Alliance** are the supporting institutions behind the festival. These are broadcasting organisations from western and eastern Europe, European institutions and, of course, the states of Berlin and Brandenburg.

You can find the **complete festival programme** at: www.prix-europa.de

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