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Case Study

Sarajevo Film Festival



- Sarajevo Film Festival is the **premier and largest film festival** in the Balkans, and is one of the largest in Europe. It was founded in Sarajevo in 1995 during the siege of Sarajevo, and brings international and local celebrities to Sarajevo every year. It is held in August and showcases an extensive variety of feature and short films from around the world.

Over 12 days in 1995, 15,000 people showed up to watch 37 films from 15 countries. More an act of defiance than a proper festival, most of the films shown were video cassettes culled from personal collections.

- The **actors** behind strategy is the team with Mirsad Purivatra as executive director and the workers in cinematography from all over former Yugoslavia. In its beginning the main partnership with the festival had the Municipality of Sarajevo. Today, twelve years after the partners of this unique event are The Federal Ministry of Culture and Sport, Cinematography Foundation Sarajevo, The City of Sarajevo and the Ministry for Culture and Sport of Municipality of Sarajevo. The partnership was also made with Council of Europe and Swiss Agency for Cultural Development. Among others, there are many private companies which are sponsors of this festival.

- Sarajevo Film Festival is the international festival with a special **focus** on the region of the South-Eastern Europe.

Focus on the regional film through the Competition selections for feature, short, and documentary films, film industry segment (CineLink), an educational platform for young filmmakers (Sarajevo Talent Campus) and presence of the international film industry, film authors and media representatives alongside a paying audience of over 100,000, confirm SFF's status as the leading film festival in the region, recognised by both film professionals and the wider audiences.

In an emerging territory of more than 140 million inhabitants, the Sarajevo Film Festival serves as a common platform for film businesses from all over the region, setting the future standards in film festival organisation, film promotion and presentation of films in Southeast Europe. Furthermore, the Sarajevo Film Festival sets films, film talents, and future film projects from the South-Eastern Europe in the focus of international media attention.

- In memory of the life and work of this brilliant actress, it was founded the **Katrin Cartlidge Foundation**, whose primary goal is to encourage young artists on their creative paths. The task of the Foundation is to support the work of one selected artist by way of a one-year scholarship, thereby stimulating his or her independence, uniqueness and integrity of spirit, qualities that Katrin Cartlidge articulated so poignantly throughout her life.
- In cooperation with the Berlin International Film Festival and Berlinale Talent Campus, since 2007 we organize the **Sarajevo Talent Campus**. This exciting new educational and creative platform for up and coming young film professionals became the the most prestigious film training event in the region. Each year we receive more than two hundred applications, and only eighty most talented are privileged to attend a six-day training led by some of the most important film professionals.

For many years, the Sarajevo Film Festival has been developing programme platforms which aim towards providing support and promoting of the new young film scene in the region. It is in this framework that our recent project, Sarajevo City of Film, represents a natural upgrade and linkage between these two fields of activities – the education, i.e. training, and the film industry. Sarajevo City of Film fund has been launched in 2008, with the aim to encourage and motivate the young film directors from the region of South-Eastern Europe to realise joint projects/films, together with their colleagues, the screenwriters, producers, and actors (participants of Sarajevo Talent Campus).

- Also, The Sarajevo Film Festival hosted the **Human Rights Day** for the fourth year running. The Human Rights Day is organized with the support of the Swiss Embassy in BiH and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is held as part of the Competition Program–Documentary-Film.

This year's special edition of the Human Rights Day program, which was dedicated to commemorating the genocide in Srebrenica, committed 17 years ago. Using the film as a media, the Festival presented to the wider audience the important individual and collective stories stand testament to the situation in the field of human rights today. The program of the entire day was dedicated to human rights and was included other activities besides film – book presentations, panels and exhibitions.

- The seemingly unassuming **Children's Program** actually is one of the Sarajevo Film Festival's most spectacular features. The films, including *The Emperor's New Groove*, *102 Dalmatians* and *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, were donated and tickets were given free of charge to children two hours before the twice-daily showings.

Every day, 4500 children were transported from towns and villages throughout Bosnia by the European Commission and SFOR. Children from the Republika Srpska interacted with their counterparts from the Croat-Muslim Federation as they all enjoyed quite possibly the first big-screen film they had ever seen. All told, almost 35,000 Bosnian children were brought to the Festival in a remarkable, albeit unorthodox, gesture of humanitarianism.

- The groups and audiences to which SFF is targeted is all professionals in movie cinematography, but especially tourists visiting Bosnia in summer and of course young talented movie makers across South Eastern Europe.
- Sarajevo Film Festival has been recognized as a **development project**, not only for the city of Sarajevo, but also for the country. The team together with city officials tries to make the best in promoting the positive values that the City of Sarajevo and the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina has to offer. So, first of all SFF produces a different picture of BiH in the constellation of news coming out of our country. Also, the Sarajevo Film Festival has proved that he wants to and can be a strong factor in the development of BiH film industry, which has proved to be one of the best B & H products.

Thus, the event of any kind, which in Sarajevo gather more than 100,000 visitors, the hosts an impressive number of international media, employs large numbers of young people, causes full capacity of hotels, restaurants, tourist boards offer draws, is the best promoter of not only our city but also the whole state and promoter of

development of our country and in other areas. And that is its greatest strength and importance.