CINEMA D'EUROPA
MEDIA SALLES

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MEDIA

European Cinema JOURNAL MEDIA SALLES

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THE FIRST TRAINING COURSE FOR EXHIBITORS TOOK PLACE IN DENMARK

From 5 to 9 June, the first training course for European film exhibitors within the framework of the MEDIA Plus Programme was held at the European Film College of Ebeltoft, a charming little town on the Danish coast. The course was a MEDIA Salles initiative in collaboration with Danske Biografer and the College itself. The course was attended by professionals from 12 different European countries, with 6 speakers also coming from different parts of Europe.

The course director, the Danish producer Mads Egmont Christensen, opened proceedings with a talk on vertical integration in the cinema industry.

Amongst the lecturers was Julian Stanford, head of UIP's sales operations in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, who examined the theme of marketing in the area of film distribution, whilst Michael Berg, of the UIP's Danish office, completed the picture by looking at local distribution.

The themes most closely linked to theatre management were introduced in the sessions by Marc Tjissens of Kinepolis, who – starting from experience gained by the Belgian group – analysed the opportunities and risks presented by digital projection, and by Meinolf Thies of CinemaxX, who presented the strategic choices of a group operating on a highly competitive market. Introducing the module on getting to know audiences, Emanuele de Plano of Ticketing Systems and Strategy Business Developer, spoke of procedures for the management of information deriving from audience reaction. Speaking of tools for analysing audience expectations and styles of cinema-going, Ole E. Andersen's talk combined a thorough knowledge of the cinema market with expertise in the field of advertising.

The intense programme of the training course kept participants, speakers and organisers busy almost uninterruptedly between the lessons and the group work, in which exhibitors were able to discuss the practical applications of what they had been told and also take advantage of advice from the experts.

The method chosen for these study sessions was that of the "case study", to be solved together and presented at a plenary session at the end of the course.

A characteristic of the days at Ebeltoft was also – and above all – the time that the European exhibitors themselves spent together, both during the sessions and in convivial situations and intervals, when they exchanged ideas and together tackled problems relating to their own work, thus forming a sort of community of cinema exhibition on a European basis. These exchanges also occurred thanks to the "round tables", at which the participants – grouped according to geographical affinity – were asked to give a short summary of the present state of cinema exhibition in their respective countries, adding information on their own personal experience, and of the promotional initiatives now going on or being arranged for the future.

In an exhibitors' course, the films themselves could not fail to be present: two long evenings of this northern summer were partly dedicated to films being released in European countries, which were screened in the Big Bear, the College's film theatre.

FOCUS ON EUROPE
AT CINEMA EXPO INTERNATIONAL

Amsterdam, 24-27 June 2002
SHOOTING FOR GOAL! WITH EUROPEAN MOVIES

24 June at 10.30 am
2001 ADMISSIONS WERE UP.
Was it due to European films!?
The Annual Cinema Expo Seminar from MEDIA Salles.
A panorama on cinema-going in Europe in 2001.

26 June at 10.00 am, RAI Auditorium
Bend it like Beckham
by Gurinder Chadha.
Big screen presentation of the hit movie from the UK plus trailers featuring other must see European films.
A co-production of MEDIA Salles and The Hollywood Reporter, with the participation of European Film Promotion.

26 June at 2.00 pm, RAI, room H
Seminar on cinema statistics
organised by the Foundation for Research and Statistics of NFC, with the participation of MEDIA Salles – by invitation –.

MEDIA Salles at the Trade Fair:
Stand 119 - 120
"European Cinema Yearbook" 2001 edition
together with the "European Cinema Journal" n. 2/02
and documentation on recent European productions available, thanks to cooperation with national agencies for the worldwide promotion of domestic movies.

THE VOICE OF PARTICIPANTS

In these interviews, course participants share with us their thoughts and opinions.

Sylvianne Smith and Paul Homer are two young film exhibitors based in the UK. Sylvianne manages a 2-screen independent cinema in Southampton called Harbour Lights Picture House counting a total of 469 seats. It is part of an independent chain called City Screen Ltd and is one of 13 sites around the UK. Southampton has a population of around 220,000 and this includes a student population of around 31,000. Paul runs the Metro Cinema, in the West End of London. The cinema is independently owned by The Other Cinema Company.

The current situation of British cinema exhibition is quite strong. According to Paul Homer: in Britain there is a wide variety of exhibitors, which keeps all the competitors alert, although most exhibitors seem to be interested in the same product, and even 'arthouses' will play reasonably straight films. Very few seem prepared to take the risks needed to push cinema culture forward.

Paul knows the topic very well as the cinema he manages is an "arthouse", where a wide range of cultural films, European, world cinema, documentaries, cutting edge and *avant garde* films are shown and the atmosphere is cinephilic and contemporary but without pretensions.

How do you promote your cinema, Sylvianne? We have many initiatives in place at Harbour Lights, which include cheaper tickets for students, a specific day for OAPs called Silver Screen, in which they get a ticket for £ 3.00 plus a free cup of tea/coffee and a biscuit. We have a free e-mailing list, which is currently at 5,500 e-mailing addresses plus a membership scheme currently at 2,600 members. We also run film courses in conjunction with the local University. We have a film quiz night every other Tuesday with normally around 10 teams of 4. Regular late night screenings with special coffee/bar promotions.

Paul, what kind of impact do you think digital cinema will have on the exhibition sector in Britain, above all on the kind of cinema you run? Digital cinema will undoubtedly have a huge impact on exhibition over the next few years. There is definitely an issue about who will pay for this equipment. Interestingly, it could fuel a revolution in the structure of the film industry overall. Distributors are increasingly becoming marketing agencies first and foremost – I think digital cinema will speed up this process. Exhibitors may deal directly with producers for titles, and unless organisations play politics all cinemas should be able to play any film they wish. This should hopefully lead to an increase

(continues on page 2)

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THE EUROPEAN CINEMA MARKET, NATION BY NATION, NOW AVAILABLE ON CD ROM

The full version of the "European Cinema Yearbook" will be out over the next few days: added to the comparative tables there are now national profiles, with an analytical description of each individual country, necessary for drawing the most precise picture possible of its national cinema market. The analyses regard 18 countries in Western Europe and 14 in Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean Rim, including in the indicators the top ten domestic films, the top ten European films and the ten clear leaders in terms of admissions, as well as a breakdown of cinemas by number of screens, figures on monthly admissions and the concentration of distribution and exhibition.
This year's edition offers an important new feature: it is published on CD Rom. Experimented successfully for the publication of the comparative tables, the digital version makes consultation of the Yearbook easier and gives greater opportunities for carrying out cross analyses, using the data contained in it. The Yearbook on CD Rom is the result of collaboration between MEDIA Salles and ANEC on initiatives for professional operators in the cinema world. In fact it is at the "Giornate Professionali del Cinema" (Professional Days) – the most important meeting for exhibition and distribution in Italy, which counts ANEC amongst its organisers and which will take place this year from 27 to 30 November in Sorrento – that MEDIA Salles will be presenting the new edition of the 2002 "European Cinema Yearbook".

of choice for the customer, and maybe even push them to take more risks in their choice of viewing.
Let's now talk about the course... in one sentence, Sylvianne…
The course was hugely rewarding, extremely informative and highly enjoyable.
And what about you Paul?
I learnt a lot from the other exhibitors present as well as the lecturers. It was well organised and full of people with passion and knowledge of the industry.
What was the 'best offer' of the course?
Sylvianne takes up the question: interacting with other countries on initiatives that were in place in their particular cinemas around Europe. The guest speakers were some of the best in their fields, and so I felt very honoured to be able to listen to their views on particular parts of the industry, very informative. A very well organised course with friendly staff and… fantastic food!
Paul, in general terms, do you think such training initiatives are useful for European exhibitors?
These training initiatives are undoubtedly useful for European exhibitors – they allow a flow of information and ideas. It gives an opportunity to take the long view of the industry, which is essential for future planning.

Anna Pekala is the manager and art director of Gutek Film, a company that owns an art house with 2 screens.
Pawel Wachnik is general manager of operations for the Polish territory for Ster Century Cinemas SP. Z.O.O., which has 45 screens in Poland. Both are based in Warsaw.

How do you approach your audience?
People in Poland are very snobbish, sophisticated you know, but at the same time there is not much money around – *Anna says* – and therefore the only way seems to give them interesting venues but at a very cheap price. As for my cinema, an art house, I have to be very careful and choose extremely high quality films, ranging from good European productions to Asian ones. Hardly ever do we screen movies from the US.
As for Pawel, the approach is very different: our cinemas are multiplexes, showing blockbusters and people just pop in and choose the film they like the most. Of course our cinemas provide lots of comforts and facilities, which are added values to attract people.
What kind of film education is currently offered in Poland?
Well, the Polish film industry is still cottage-based and only promotes a few courses but in terms of real film schools... There is only one in our country, unfortunately. *Anna adds*: from time to time our cinema co-operates with Warsaw University, but that involves more film promotion rather than film education: it aims at attracting students to the cinema.
What is your personal experience of this course?
It is absolutely fantastic to have the opportunity to meet people, here, from different European countries doing your job – *is the enthusiastic reaction from both the interviewees* – it really gives you the possibility to share similar experiences, to build new strategies together, to foster ideas, to cope with the same difficulties.
We deeply appreciated all the lessons, presentations, screenings and work-groups in teams. As for these, perhaps, it would have been better if we had faced real situations and worked out real promotion strategies to be implemented in our cinemas for the next season. Last but not least… the European Film College cooks are excellent!

WESTERN EUROPE: THE ADVANCE OF THE MULTIPLEX

In Western Europe the number of screens situated in multiplexes is growing relentlessly, rising from the 4,924 recorded by MEDIA Salles on 31 October 1999, to the 7,133 recorded on the same date in 2001, with a 45% increase in just two years.
Complexes with 8 to 10 screens, accounting for 51% of the total number of screens in multiplexes, continue to weigh most heavily, followed by cinemas with 11 to 14 screens (34%). Although at present screens in complexes with 15 or more screens only account for 15% of the total number housed in multiplexes, there does seem to be a dominant trend towards the development of these large-scale structures: over the past three years the largest growth rates are to be found in the number of screens situated in cinemas with 13 auditoriums, which have increased by 83%, and in those with over 15 screens, which have seen a 69% increase. The largest percentage of screens in multiplexes is to be found in Great Britain (with 25% of the total for Europe), followed by Spain (20%), France (19%) and Germany (16%). In fact, the development of multiplex centres is fairly different on the five leading European markets:
• in Great Britain the percentage of screens situated in multiplexes, which today account for 54% of all the country's screens, has grown steadily over time, with year-by-year increases, some of which were considerable, especially in 1997 (+ 43% compared to the previous year) and in 1998 (+ 30%). This growth affected all the different types of multiplexes in more or less the same way, so that the total number of screens in these sites on 31 October 2001 consisted of 44% in cinemas with 8 to 10 screens, 42% in cinemas with 11 to 14

Table 1 – Breakdown by number of screens, in the different types of multiplexes in Western Europe on 31 October 2001

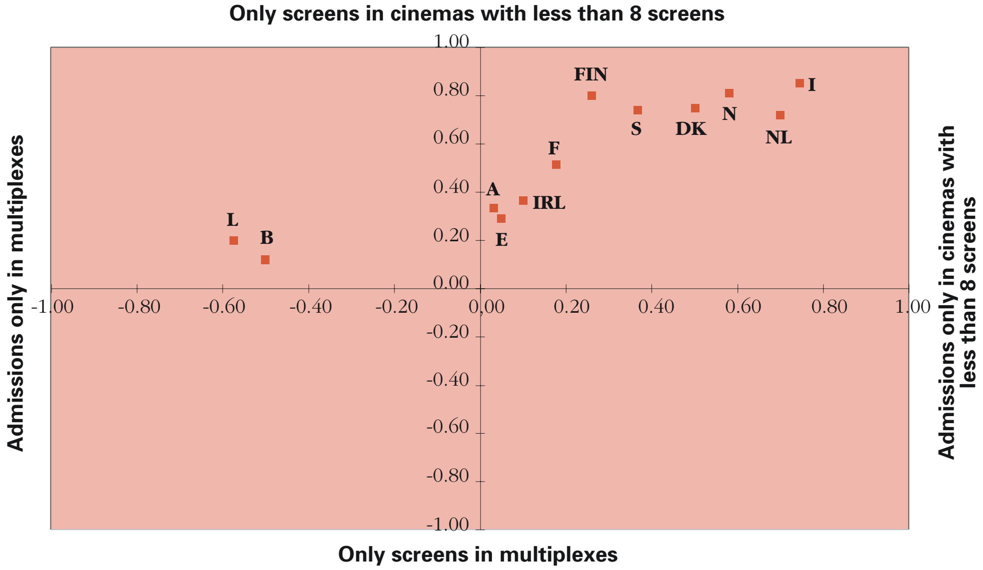
Country	8 - 10 screens	11 - 14 screens	≥ 15 screens
A	57.8%	32.9%	9.3%
B	18.3%	47.5%	34.2%
CH	72.3%	27.7%	-
D	72.7%	19.8%	7.5%
DK	50.0%	19.6%	30.4%
E	58.9%	24.1%	17.0%
F	33.2%	43.4%	23.4%
FIN	67.4%	32.6%	-
GR	46.6%	19.0%	34.5%
I	57.2%	36.8%	5.9%
IRL	38.4%	61.6%	-
N	64.9%	35.1%	-
NL	61.4%	38.6%	-
P	64.4%	12.6%	23.0%
S	63.2%	16.0%	20.9%
UK	43.9%	42.4%	13.7%
Western Europe total	50.8%	33.7%	15.5%

EUREKA SCREENINGS 2002

Audiovisual Eureka's main aim is to promote co-operation between the European Union and the countries of Eastern and Central Europe in the audiovisual sector. And it is thanks to this that a number of cinema professionals from outside the MEDIA Programme were able to take part in the course for exhibitors that took place in Denmark at the beginning of June. One of Eureka's initiatives is Eureka Screenings, the travelling European film market that focuses especially on young producers and directors.

Do you want to sell your films on the European audiovisual markets?
Send your love films to Audiovisual Eureka in VHS-format and take part in the 2002 Eureka Screenings on the first travelling market of European films.
Do you want to find financing for your film project?
Learn the art of pitching before pitching in front of decision-makers such as European buyers and producers.
Do you want to meet representatives of European support programmes and funds?
Find more information on our site.
Regulations and application forms on http://www.aveureka.org/en/0.htm
Deadline for receiving VHS tapes and projects: June 2002.

Graph 1 – Index of screen concentration and admissions in multiplexes in 2000



It can be seen from the graph that Italy, for example, has a far lower concentration of screens in multiplexes compared to the total (0.85 and thus very close to 1, which represents the hypothetical total of screens not housed in multiplexes) and the lowest concentration of admissions in multiplexes (0.74) amongst the countries examined. Finland, on the contrary, with figures for screens in multiplexes similar to Italy's (0.80), is distinguished by a far higher concentration of tickets sold in multiplexes (0.26 and thus quite close to zero, which represents the point of perfect balance between admissions in multiplexes and those in all other types of cinema).

screens and 14% in those with at least 15 screens. Alongside the development of larger-scale complexes, there have been fluctuations in the number of screens housed in single-screen cinemas, which have been oscillating at around 300 over the past few years;

• in Spain – the market with the largest concentration of screens in multiplexes (35%) after Great Britain – screens in sites with at least 8 theatres, which were still almost inexistent in 1992, grew to 1,259 in 2000, thanks to huge increases, year by year. Not until the last year did this growth slow down, nevertheless recording a notable 18% rise compared to the previous year. Development of this type of cinemas also regarded medium-and large-scale structures: 59% of all screens in multiplexes are situated in cinemas with 8 to 10 screens, 24% in those with 11 to 14 screens and 17% in cinemas with 15 or more screens. Parallel to the increase in multiplexes, a constant drop has been recorded in the number of screens housed in single-screen cinemas, which decreased by 6% in 2000;

• in France the number of screens in multiplexes – a total of 1,243 – came to represent 24% of the total number in the country in 2000. Compared to the other leading markets, the increase in multiplexes seems to have detracted less from multi-screen and, in particular, single-screen cinemas, which have only decreased slightly over the years. As regards the breakdown of screens in multiplexes, out of the leading five countries, France is the one with the lowest percentage of auditoriums in 8- to 10-screen complexes (33%) and the highest percentage in 11- to 14-screen sites (about 44%) and in cinemas with at least 15 screens (as much as 23%);

• in Germany 23% of all screens in the country are situated in multiplexes. Compared to other countries, the increase in multiplexes and in multi-screen cinemas in general seems to have been more markedly to the detriment of single-screen theatres, which have decreased in numbers over the years, losing about 30% of screens over a ten-year period. Multiplexes prove to be small- or medium-scale: 73% of screens are to be found in cinemas with 8 to 10 screens, 20% in those with 11 to 14 screens and 7% in centres with at least 15 screens;

• in Italy multiplexes started to develop later (from 1997 onwards), growing to account for 7.4% of total screen numbers in 2000.

As opposed to the pattern of events on the other leading markets, the growth of multiplexes has been accompanied by an increase in multi-screen cinemas, too. The latter saw a yearly increase in screen numbers of 53% in 1998, of 20% in 1999 and of 13% in 2000. The number of screens situated in single-screen cinemas has, instead, remained fairly stable over time: although there have been some losses from year to year (- 1.3% in 1996, - 3.9% in 1998 and - 4.1% during the last year), in 2000 there were 1,896 of them – a return to almost the same figures as were recorded for 1993. As regards the breakdown of screens in multiplexes, Italy is the one leading market distinguished by having the lowest percentage of sites with at least 15 screens. In fact the latter house only 6% of the total number of auditoriums in multiplexes. Lastly, the latest data from MEDIA Salles seems to confirm the frequently-noted ability of the multiplexes to react better than other centres of cinema exhibition to fluctuations in demand and to harvest a considerable share of annual ticket sales. Most notably, in Western Europe – apart from Great Britain – there are generally fewer screens in multiplexes than in the other centres of cinema exhibition as a whole, even though in some countries, such as Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain, they are starting to account for close to 50% of all screens on the national territories (graph 1). It is interesting to note that, as screen density in the multiplexes increases, admissions to these cinemas rise more than proportionally, so that in the countries with the highest density, such as Belgium and Luxembourg, the multiplexes account for respectively 75% and 79% of total admissions. In other countries, such as Austria, Spain and Ireland, admissions to multiplexes are now almost equal to those in other exhibition centres as a whole.

Paola Bensi

TRAINING FOR EXHIBITORS:
DOUBLE THE OPPORTUNITIES

Marketing techniques and in-house promotional initiatives, analysis of audience expectations and styles of cinema-going, the opportunities and risks of digital projection. These will be some of the main themes covered in the next exhibitors' training courses, which will be twice as numerous in 2003. Next year there will be two opportunities for training offered to those who manage the final phase of the encounter between film and audience: the often neglected, yet decisive phase of screening in the cinema.
A course will again be held at the European Film College in Ebeltoft, Denmark, to consolidate a tradition that is still young but has started out on the right foot. The other will take place in Italy and will be organised in collaboration with the ANEC. The dates of the courses will be made known during the second half of 2002. In the meantime the following contact is available for those interested:

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EASIER AND QUICKER INFORMATION WITH THE ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter "European Cinema Journal" is now sent by e-mail to all those who have given us their address, in order to allow for quicker delivery and consultation. Anyone who wishes to inform us of a change of address or to subscribe to our Newsletter is kindly requested to send a message to infocinema@mediasalles.it. Those who usually receive our communications by fax are especially requested to let us have their e-mail address, if they possess one.

MEDIA SALLES AT THE 2002 CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Faithful to tradition, in 2002 MEDIA Salles once again chose the Cannes Festival for the publication of data regarding cinema-going over the previous year. Whilst presenting the latest edition of the Newsletter "European Cinema Journal", Jens Rykaer, President of MEDIA Salles, emphasised the fact that 2001 had been an exceptional year. The MEDIA Salles Newsletter published an interview with Lawrence Safir, a Director of AFMA and President of its European section – which gives ample space to the development of digital cinema – thereby contributing to the debate on the prospects and problematic sides of digital projection, a debate which attracted the attention of the exhibitors present in Cannes this year.

FOCUS ON EUROPE AT "CASTELLINARIA" 2002: the international meeting of exhibitors committed to programming for younger audiences

Understanding young people's interest in films, discovering what they want and what they are curious about, encouraging them to appreciate the many, varied expressions of films from different countries and to watch films with a more critical eye: these are the objectives of "Castellinaria", the International Children's Film Festival, which will be held in Bellinzona from 16 to 23 November 2002. And, thanks to the collaboration with MEDIA Salles, "Castellinaria" also welcomes those who deal with young people and their tastes in the field of the cinema. During the fifteenth Festival the second Focus on Europe event will be held – in a special "children's cinema" version – organised by MEDIA Salles to promote European cinema and addressing exhibitors from all over Europe who offer specific programming for young people and schools.
The aims are to favour an exchange of experiences and reflections on the techniques for in-house promotional initiatives, to encourage discussion on the most effective forms of promotion for European children's films, to offer exhibitors an opportunity for getting to know their audiences better and thus to direct their choices towards the products that best answer the requirements of these budding audiences.
In particular, Focus on Europe will give exhibitors the chance to experience a selection of European films for young people or about their own world, which will be circulating internationally, and to share their opinions at meetings and debates.
In line with the MEDIA Salles tradition, the "Euro Kids" award will be presented during the event to a European children's film which combines success in its home country with a strong appeal abroad and the possibility of spreading its horizons to an even wider public. Last year the Spanish film *Manolito Gafotas*, by Miguel Albaladejo won this award. An award will also be presented to the cinema which organised the most significant initiatives for young audiences during 2001.
In this new Focus on Europe event at "Castellinaria", MEDIA Salles confirms its commitment to children's films, continuing along the same lines as the initiatives taken from 1996 to 2000 in the framework of Euro Kids Network and the research carried out on young audiences. From the most recent survey, "Little Viewers, Big Screens", regarding children aged 8 to 11, a new and certainly not secondary aspect of the relationship between children and the cinema emerged: 34% of European children perceive the films generally seen in cinemas as far removed from the real world whilst 14% consider them closer to adult life and not pertinent to their own. This is why initiatives aiming to support and promote the circulation of high-quality films suitable for young audiences are increasingly important. Focus on Europe at "Castellinaria" offers a meeting place for professionals who share this objective.

DENMARK – THE DOMESTIC FILMS AT THE BOX OFFICE

Over the last four or five years Denmark has experienced major growth and success within the domestic film industry.
Since 1998 Danish films have accounted for an average of 23% market share of the total box office at Danish cinemas and no less than 6 of these films have had more than 500,000 admissions. It is highly unlikely that there is just one reason for this; instead, it is probably due to a variety of factors.
One of the main preconditions for the success of Danish films at the box office is without doubt the changing attitude of audience to domestic films. In the 1980's and the early 1990's, local box office takings slowly declined and Danish films had an image of being very old-fashioned among cinemagoers.
This image may not have reflected the true nature of Danish films at the time, although most of the box office successes were either comedies or to a limited extent literary dramas. But since the mid-1990's a new generation of young filmmakers has emerged and changed the national film scene.
The Dogme concept in particular did a great deal to change in attitude. Even though not all the Dogme films were major box office hits, widespread international recognition of these films made the average cinemagoer aware of the "new wave" in Danish film-making and made seeing a new Danish film an acceptable experience. Danish films evolved from being something the audience would watch only if nothing else was playing to something hip and trendy.
Another obvious reason behind the success of Danish cinema is the increase in funding available for the film industry.
Since 1998, the Danish government has increased funding for The Danish Film Institute by 56 million Euro, making it possible for the industry to step up the number of films produced. From the 10 to 12 films in the mid-1990's, domestic film production reached an output of 20 to 24 in 1999 and the following years. Of course, not all films have been equally successful and Danish filmmakers still produce a wide selection of films of all genres and content. But once the general volume of films increased, the number of possible box office hits simply increased accordingly.
The increase in funding also made it possible for producers to market their film more efficiently. Funds are specifically allocated for marketing and distribution, allowing a higher number of prints to be released and boosting ad/pub budgets.
This allows domestic producers and distributors access to the funds they need to compete against the leading US films in the market. Finally, Danish films would have gone nowhere had the necessary talent not been available within the industry itself. Whether it be directors, writers, actors or producers, the essence of the success of Danish films is that the creative talent has become available to the industry and has been given the funds and the freedom to work.
As mentioned above, it is difficult to put the success of Danish films down to just one factor. A number of factors and reasons have interacted and the importance of each may vary from film to film. But what is essential is that we now have the best possible platform for the future.
Last year local market share broke through the 30% threshold and at the time of writing – June 2002 – we are now looking at a market share for domestic films of 22%, despite heavy competition this spring from *Harry Potter*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *Star Wars*.
And I have no doubt that this will continue as long as the industry continues to make a wide range of films catering for all audiences and producers continue to focus on the domestic market as the first, most important platform.

Jimmy Bredow

MEDIA SALLES COMING EVENTS

International Film Festival
Venice, 29 August - 8 September
MEDIA Salles is present at the MEDIA stand. Material available for visitors also includes the 3rd edition of the Newsletter "European Cinema Journal".

Focus on Europe at ShowEast 2002
Orlando, 9 - 12 October
By means of the 6th Focus on Europe at ShowEast event, MEDIA Salles promotes European cinema on the North-American market.