

MEDIA SALLES' NEW PRESIDENCY Interview with Domenico Dinoia

For some months now, Domenico Dinoia has been the new President of MEDIA Salles. He was elected head of the Association by the Executive Committee, which was renewed during the MEDIA Salles' General Meeting in Cannes last May. President of Fice, the Italian Federation of art-house cinemas and, as such, a member of the President's Committee of Anec, Dinoia is well acquainted with the situation of exhibition and is a convinced supporter of the importance for this sector of the European dimension, "the only one in which important decisions can be taken". The outgoing President, Jens Rykaer from Denmark, who will now be working alongside him, together with Spain's Primitivo Rodriguez Gordillo, as Vice-President, declares his satisfaction that "MEDIA Salles, which has been, and continues to be, validly supported by the Italian Government, has returned to the most logical situation - that of an Italian presidency". Dinoia assured him, together with all those present, that "our work will continue in the same direction as it did under my predecessor". This work and the more delicate issues facing European cinema exhibition, published together with our best wishes for the success of his work as President of the Executive Committee which will accompany him in this new phase of MEDIA Salles' existence.

Mr President, what do you consider to be the most delicate issues facing the European cinema market at present?

Firstly there is the question of the circulation of European films in the territory of the EU: on the one hand, we are again ready to offer quality films, since we have a series of young and talented European directors. The increase in the consumption of domestic products by European audiences is another positive sign. Yet these positive aspects are unfortunately countered by the low circulation of non-domestic European films in EU countries.

What steps are necessary as an incentive?

To allow European films to be seen more in Europe, well distributed economic supports are necessary. To prevent European films from remaining on the sidelines in Europe's cinemas, they must become a constant presence there. In other words, we cannot count on the sporadic successes of films such as *Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain* or *Good Bye, Lenin!*. But to ensure that this presence is not intermittent, economic incentives must be equally invested in the different phases of the film's lifecycle, including the exhibition phase. Exhibition is, in fact, the crucial link in the chain. For good films to appear on the market, it is not sufficient to have the funds to produce them. An adequate number of copies must subse-

quently be distributed, backed by efficient advertising promotion, and they must find the right context for presentation to the public. Here, one highly important aspect is the diversification of exhibition.

In other words different cinemas, according to the type of film?

In a way, yes. The different types of cinemas do in fact correspond to different concepts of the cinema-going experience. If megaplexes and multiplexes find favour with young audiences and families, partly because of their location alongside other entertainment and service facilities, single-screen cinemas and small complexes remain favourites with adult audiences, more interested in seeing the film than "going to the cinema". This is a clear demonstration that all these structures must be able to co-exist, without the new destroying the old.

So there are many challenges facing the exhibition sector. What is the role of MEDIA Salles in helping exhibitors to meet them?

The role of MEDIA Salles is to provide useful tools that are always updated to meet the demands of exhibitors. These include special promotional work which, thanks to well-established initiatives such as *Focus on Europe* and *Focus on Europe - Kidflix Special*, promote new European films at a European level and encourage debate amongst exhibitors. This is accompanied by training courses, research, innovative and important studies - regarding, for example, the opportunities and doubts opened up by new technologies - information services, such as the Newsletter "European Cinema Journal" and our website, which is about to be re-designed, in order to guarantee increasing space for information and to provide exhibitors with useful material on several important issues, from theatre marketing to cinema-going in the various European countries. Various tools, therefore, through which we shall continue our commitment to European cine-



From left: Elisabetta Brunella, Secretary General of MEDIA Salles, Peter Aalbak Jensen, Managing Director of Zentropa Entertainments (DK), awarded by MEDIA Salles as "European Producer of the Year", with his daughter and Domenico Dinoia, President of MEDIA Salles, in Amsterdam, during the *Focus on Europe* event at CEI 2004.

Photo by Sigurd Moe Helland.

ma and to serving Europe's theatres. All this in the spirit of the MEDIA Programme, within which MEDIA Salles has now been operating for thirteen years.

THE FUTURE OF CINEMA-GOING Interview with John Fithian - First part -

John Fithian is President of Nato (national Association of theatre owners), the US exhibitors' Association representing over 26,000 screens, with headquarters in Washington D.C. and members throughout the world in more than 40 countries. Last April Fithian was a speaker at the MEDIA Salles' course "DigiTraining Plus: New Technologies for European Cinemas" and gave an interesting overview of the expectations and concerns of exhibitors with regard to digital cinema. We asked him to provide our readers with an outline of possible scenarios for the international cinema market.

Mr Fithian, how do you see the present situation of cinema-going at an international level?

Cinema-going around the world is at a very strong point right now for several reasons. First, in the last few years cinema owners have developed a new infrastructure of theatres in many locations that offer comforts like multiplexes with multiple screens, stadium seating so patrons get better views of the screen, new

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MEDIA Salles' new Executive Committee

The members of the new MEDIA Salles' Executive Committee, under Dinoia's presidency, are, besides the Vice-Presidents Jens Rykaer and Primitivo Rodriguez Gordillo, Mike Vickers (Of the British exhibitors' Association), who was confirmed Treasurer, Pierre Todeschini from France, President of Cicae (the European Federation of art-house cinemas), Mette Schramm, President of the Danish exhibitors' Association and Walter Vacchino, President of Anec (the Italian exhibitors' Association).

Two Work Groups were also set up by MEDIA Salles: Joachim Ph. Wolff, outgoing Vice-President, was appointed co-ordinator of the existing Group, which is responsible for statistics and, in particular, for producing the "European Cinema Yearbook"; Laura Fumagalli, Marketing Director of the Arcadia cinema in Melzo (Italy), was appointed co-ordinator of the second Group, devoted to new digital technologies. Our heartfelt thanks go to Jens Rykaer, for everything he wished and was able to do in these three years of presidency and for his trust in the European dimension of cinema exhibition.

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sound systems and other amenities we are finding the patrons worldwide love to do. Theatre complexes are rather helping with theatre attendance. At the same time the mix of movies that are both produced in Hollywood and produced domestically in various countries has been relatively strong and that had helped to drive movie-going. I think the main weak point of the cinema industry in general and also the biggest threat to the cinema industry is the issue of movie piracy.

What are the real dangers of piracy and how, in your opinion, can they be dealt with?

Today criminals are able to steal movies very early in the movie release process. They steal movies by recording them off movie screens in the United States, they take them from studios, post-production houses. Once these have acquired the movies, they then rapidly produce them in DVD form and circulate them for downloading on the Internet. Cinema owners cannot compete with free pirated material or cheap pirated material that comes out before they even get the movie in their cinema.

What measures can be adopted to face this problem?

The fight against piracy must include both the supply and the demand for the pirated material. On the supply side, cinema owners around the world are working to improve their local laws to impose severe penalties on pirates that steal movies.

At the same time, the industry must tackle demand for pirated movies by teaching our patrons, particularly our younger patrons, that the purchase or downloading of pirated movies is a crime and that it will hurt their ability to get good movies in the future.

What is the role of new technology on the present market?

I believe that digital cinema will both improve movie-going and also permit cinema owners to offer additional types of entertainment to their patrons. The new technologies have improved tremendously in the last few years and we're within a few years of a large-scale roll out of digital cinema. I believe that the technology is there, the technical standards are being developed and the business models are coming together.

Does this regard most countries or is it still an option reserved to just few of them?

I believe the digital cinema revolution will help every territory around the world. There are different implementation plans in different countries. In some locations the local government is getting involved in helping cinema owners with the costs - that's the case in China, the case in the United Kingdom. In other territories the government won't be involved, and studios and cinema owners will work together to develop these as models, with the aim of implementing digital cinema.

Do you think that with digital screening cinemas will modify their offer?

For me the biggest transition in the history of the worldwide cinema is the transition from traditional film technologies to new digital technologies. The new technologies will ensure that the quality of movies is consistent around the world with every show, whereas film technologies can degrade or deteriorate over time. They allow cinema owners to offer new types of entertainment, sporting events, music concerts, educational programs so that the worldwide cinema will become a destination point for many different types of entertainment.

(To be continued in our Newsletter no. 1/2005).

"WHICH MARKET FOR EUROPEAN FILMS?" A MEDIA Salles' analysis

"Which market for European films?": MEDIA Salles tried to answer this question with a research study describing in details their distribution in Europe, providing for a quantitative analysis of the phenomena determining the historical difficulty of domestic films in crossing the threshold of their country of origin.

This analysis, presented at an international level at the Cannes Film Festival and, for Italian operators, at the "Giornate Professionali" in Genoa (Italy), was elaborated on the basis of MEDIA Salles' data on European films and was edited by Paola Bensi, lecturer in Marketing at the Catholic University of Cremona (Italy), whom we asked to present the main results.

Although the results of the research are rather complex and difficult to classify, some main trends do emerge:

The considerable variation in admissions for European films, recorded on average over the past seven years, which proves to be clearly higher than the variation for US films, and **the low correlation between the trend in admissions for European films and that for overall admissions** on all the Western European markets on which the average admissions for European films are highest.

The high concentration of ticket sales for European films on a handful of titles.

In 2002, in fact, total admissions in 31 countries were concentrated on 8 European films, of which only three (*Astérix et Obélix: Mission Cléopâtre*, *Die Another Day* and *About a Boy*) obtained more than 10 million spectators throughout Europe and were widely distributed (on average 23 markets were covered); the other five (*Gosford Park*, *8 Femmes*, *Hable con Ella*, *Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain* and *Resident Evil*) sold between 5 and 10 million tickets in Europe, with a distribution that was the same as that of the top three titles.

The widely varying extents to which domestic films manage to draw audiences abroad. The European films most widely distributed in Europe are UK productions. The top ten most widely viewed domestic films on the UK market in 2002 drew 60% of their total admissions outside their country of origin. British films are gaining growing market shares especially in Western Europe, for example in France (with 59.1% of overall admissions for European films), Spain (54.2%) and the Netherlands (53.9%). The impact of French films is still strong, and they were most viewed in Luxembourg in 2002 (with 58.6% of overall admissions for European films), Italy (48.7%), the UK and Ireland (38.7%), Finland (36.1%) and Denmark (22.5%).

German films come in third place, in terms of ticket sales, in France, Spain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Latvia, although with a percentage of admissions that is often far lower than that of French and British films. Over the past few years, the distribution of Spanish films has increased, with significantly higher percentages in 2002: 24.2% in France, 21.0% in the United Kingdom together with Ireland.

The time lag of the release dates on the different European markets. This hinders communication and international pro-

motion and represents a danger because of the low number of admissions that leading domestic films obtain on the home market in the year following their release, with the exception of Spanish and French films only.

Co-productions play an essential role, especially outside their country of origin.

Indeed, amongst the European films with the highest admissions in Europe in 2002, the top eight were co-productions. In some cases these co-productions accounted for over half their admissions in the partner countries: for example, *Astérix et Obélix: Mission Cléopâtre* (F, D co-production) sold 71.3% of all its tickets in France and in Germany, *About a Boy* (UK, USA, F, D) 58.3% in the United Kingdom, Germany and France, *Gosford Park* (UK, USA, D, I) 57.8% in the United Kingdom, Italy and Germany.

In addition, admissions in Europe for US-European co-productions, especially those with the United Kingdom and Germany, are on the increase: in fact, whilst in 2000 only *O Brother, Where Art Thou* (USA, F, UK), with 4 million admissions, was classified amongst the 50 films most widely seen in Europe, in 2001 two co-productions came into this classification: *Lara Croft, Tomb Raider* (USA, UK, JP, D) and *Traffic* (USA, D), totalling 24.8 million tickets; in 2002 five films were classified, for a total of 35.8 million admissions.

The countries that invested most in US co-productions were Germany and the United Kingdom, which obtained a good deal of success with audiences in 2002, in particular with the films *Red Dragon* (USA, D, UK), *40 Days and 40 Nights* (USA, UK, F, CA) and *The Bourne Identity* (USA, D, CZ).

Paola Bensi
Lecturer in Marketing at the
Catholic University of Cremona (Italy)

FOCUS ON EUROPE AT CEI 2004

MEDIA Salles marked its presence at **Cinema Expo International 2004 in Amsterdam** with a seminar devoted to the opening of cinemas in new markets, the presentation of a selection of European films and of the "European Producer of the Year" award.

MEDIA Salles' **Focus on Europe**, held from 21 to 24 June, had an intense schedule.

The award was presented to **Peter Aalbæk Jensen** of **Zentropa Entertainments**, the production studios he founded together with the director Lars Von Trier and that in little under a decade has realized some of the most important films of European cinema. Very much appreciated was the film **Don't Move**, presented thanks to the collaboration of "The Hollywood Reporter" and European Film Promotion. The movie, directed by Sergio Castellitto and that was a big box-office hit in Italy, has got distribution in countries such as France, Switzerland, Singapore and Australia. Also screened were trailers of the films *The Alzheimer Case*, *El Cid: La Leyenda* and *Head On*.

On the occasion of the seminar, MEDIA Salles distributed a special publication, entirely devoted to the cinema market of the countries that adhered to the European Union from 1 May, already available on the website, under the section "Focus on Europe".

Here it is also possible to consult the press releases regarding the entire event.

FREQUENCY ON THE INCREASE

The law on the cinema of 16 July 1987 in Poland established the bases for activities connected with the production and distribution of films, cinema exhibition and the spread of film culture. Recently members of Parliament have been working on the new law for the sector.

Despite the lack of new laws, Poland has managed to achieve true pluralism with public and private bodies engaged both in the distribution and in the production of films. Private companies are, in fact, those that constitute the strength of the Polish distribution market.

One of the characteristics of this market, from the changes of 1989, is the tendency for the major Hollywood studios always to have their representative companies in Poland: these are independent and do not operate as branches of American companies in the strict sense, nor as divisions of distributing companies. They have always a contract signed for a certain number of years with exclusively distribution rights in the territory of Poland. These independent companies also have different names from those of the organisations previously mentioned (for instance: Cinepix – 20th Century Fox, Forum Films – Buena Vista), but of course there are also branches like Warner Bros Poland.

At present many distribution companies operate on the market, some of which acquire a licence of their own, independently of the Hollywood studios. Amongst the so-called independent distribution companies the most important are Gutek Film, SPI International Polska, Monolith Films, Vision and Kino Świat International.

Since the cinema market has stabilised, the distribution companies have started to participate in the production of Polish films, at the same time reserving exclusive distribution rights for the films they co-finance. Most of the investments are made in popular cinema, whilst art-house films are financed by the “independent distributors”.

It is already the rule that releases of foreign films in Poland come immediately after their worldwide première. In the Nineties an average of 150-160 new films reached our screens every year. With the appearance of multiplexes, the number of releases has increased, reaching 195-205 films a year. Over recent years, programming has consisted of approximately 70% of American titles, 15% of European films and a remaining 10-15% of Polish films.

1999 was a special year for Polish cinema, since domestic films attracted the attention of around 15 million spectators, representing about 55% of the total 27.5 million admissions.

The frequency of cinema-going in Polish cinemas is on the increase. At the beginning of the Nineties the “video boom” emptied cinemas: in 1992, for example, there were about 13 million spectators. But in the second half of the Nineties a new, positive trend began: already in 1995 over 22 million tickets were sold, reaching over 27 million in 1999.

In the first six months of 2004 18.8 million spectators visited the cinemas and amongst the five films that drew over one million spectators there is also a Polish romantic comedy, *Never Again!* by Ryszard Zatorski, which sold 1.6 million tickets.

The result is truly encouraging, especially when compared to that of the first half of 2003, in which 12.3 million tickets were sold. Nevertheless, despite the growth in the cinema market, audiences in art-house cinemas are not increasing and remain 80 to 130 thousand spectators. *Lost in Translation* by Sophia Coppola, awarded with an Oscar for the script, was an exception, drawing 270 thousand spectators in six months.

For the spread of art-house films, a decisive role is played by festivals whose objective is to make this kind of cinema better known.

Amongst the most im-

portant are the Warsaw International Film Festival and the Forum of European Cinema, which are part of the distribution strategy adopted by Gutek Film and SPI International Poland.

In Poland around 850 screens are in operation in just over 600 cinemas, with differing standards, of which 22 complexes have at least 8 screens. The first Polish multiplex opened in Poznań in 1998. In 2000, out of a slightly lower total of screens, there were only eleven multiplexes, which gives an idea of the entity of investments in the creation of complexes in the most important towns. It is the larger structures, offering many new releases that do not reach provincial cinemas until later, that draw around two thirds of audiences.

Poland supports all mutual work on behalf of EU countries directed at improving the system for distributing European films. Sixteen cinemas are part of the Europa Cinemas network but for most Polish exhibitors it is impossible to achieve the requisites for admission to this network at present. This is why, in 2004, we started working on a network of cinemas (Sieć Kin Studyjnych) along the same lines of Western Europe’s art-house theatres.

As well as European films – which also include Polish films – of high artistic value, space will be made for films that are part of the heritage of worldwide cinema, with particular attention to activities of an educational nature.

Jacek Fuksiewicz
Director of Film and
Audiovisual Media Department
of the Polish Ministry of Culture

Great domestic hits in Poland

Film title	Director	Year of release	Admissions (million)
<i>With Fire and Sword</i>	Jerzy Hoffman	1999	7.2
<i>Pan Tadeusz: The last Foray in Lithuania</i>	Andrzej Wajda	1999	5.5
<i>Quo Vadis?</i>	Jerzy Kawalerowicz	2001	4.3
<i>In Desert and Wilderness</i>	Gavin Hood	2001	2.2
<i>The Spring to Come</i>	Filip Bajon	2001	1.7
<i>Never Again!</i>	Ryszard Zatorski	2004	1.6

NEWS FROM MEDIA SALLES

IN BUDAPEST THE NEW COURSE FOR EXHIBITORS

On 22 September the new edition of the traditional MEDIA Salles’ course on theatre marketing and management, entitled “European Cinema Exhibition: A New Approach”, will begin: for 5 days around forty exhibitors and professional players of all Europe, from France to Finland and from Greece to the UK, will take part in lectures and visits to local cinemas.

The main theme of the course is the cinema market’s prospects in the new balance determined by the presence of multiplexes: what are the future developments, what are the main winning marketing strategies, what is the space devoted to European films in multi-screens and in other types of cinema.

Amongst the speakers, Roman Gutek, who will illustrate the strategy of Gutek Film, of which he’s President, in Warsaw: through his

rich experience, from theatre management up to festival organisation and to the distribution of important titles – such as the Venice Golden Lion *The Return*, a Russian film by Andrej Zvyagintsev – Gutek will explain the distribution and exhibition of art-house films in Poland.

The topics also include an overview of digital cinema, focusing on audiovisual piracy on one hand and on the presentation of concrete experiences on the other. A significant place for debates on this theme will be MOM Park, a multiplex with a theatre equipped for digital screenings. Among the visits to cinemas, there are also the Lurdy Ház multiplex and two art-house theatres, the Művész Cinema – with a programming devoted to young audiences – and the Uránia National Cinema Palace.

The full programme can be consulted in the “Training” section of the MEDIA Salles’ website (www.mediasalles.it).

MEDIA SALLES’ COMING EVENTS

61st VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 6 September 2004

Presentation of the Newsletter “European Cinema Journal” no. 4/2004.

EUROPEAN CINEMA EXHIBITION: A NEW APPROACH Budapest, 22–26 September 2004

New edition of the traditional exhibitors’ course.

Amongst the main topics: promotion and marketing, analysis of film genres for different audience sectors, theatre management, digital cinema.

EUROPEAN FILM AWARDS Barcelona, 10 December 2004

Presentation of the “European Cinema Yearbook – 2004 advance edition”.

CINEMA MARKETING: AN INTERESTING NOVELTY

Modernizing theatres and the occurrence of new ways of consuming films different from preceding ones, but also an increasing competition and a greater complexity of consumers' behavior: over the last few years the cinema exhibition sector has gone through deep changes. Hence, the need of exhibitors to run their theatres

Training and digital screening: news from MEDIA Salles

A new section of MEDIA Salles' website has recently been opened, providing on-line the **exhibitors' training course Reports**: a collection of the speeches on the various themes faced in the courses, from marketing to programming, from theatre promotion to digital technology.

Next to the Report of "European Cinema Exhibition: A New Approach", the course held in Rome in 2003, there will also be, within the end of the year, that of "**Digi-Training Plus: New Technologies for European Cinemas**". Promoted by MEDIA Salles and carried out from 31 March to 4 April at the Barco headquarters in Kuurne, Belgium, it was the first course entirely devoted to digital technology and saw about forty participants, both professionals and speakers, from 14 European countries. Conducted by experts in the various fields of the sector, the speeches varied from technological aspects to business models, to the opportunities represented by alternative contents. This is a confirmation of MEDIA Salles' commitment to stand by exhibitors to facilitate the comprehension of the unknown factors and benefits of the new technologies in the screening field.

The commitment is again renewed with the **new edition of the course, scheduled in 2005** (and regarding which some initial information is available on the website, in the "Training" section). Moreover, a new **column** will also be devoted to digital screening, starting from the next issue of this Newsletter. These are all contributions that we feel are important in order to provide greater information in a field that is in continuous development.

FOCUS ON EUROPE – KIDFLIX SPECIAL

After the Castellinaria (Switzerland) and the Giffoni (Italy) Festivals, it was the 44th International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Zlín, Czech Republic, that boasts one of the longest traditions in Europe, that from 3 to 6 June hosted the 2004 edition of **Focus on Europe – Kidflix Special**, the event that MEDIA Salles devotes every year to European exhibitors involved in promoting European cinema in kids and school programming.

"This 44th edition is the fullest in content in the history of the Zlín Film Festival, probably the largest in the world for quantity of films for kids and teens, for the variety of countries represented and for the number of kids and youth participating", affirmed the President of the Festival, Vítězslav Jandák,

with a managerial approach that reflects, in particular, both a marketing and a communication perspective as a bridge between the theatre and market. The new column by Rossella Gambetti – a Ph.D. candidate in "Marketing and Communication" working at the Catholic University in Milan (Italy) – that will appear in these pages from the next issue and on our website, is conceived as a support to the working out of the main cinema theatre managerial is-

in his welcome speech to the 40 exhibitors coming from a good 13 European countries, from Ireland to the Slovak Republic, from Portugal to Norway.

He pronounced himself happy with MEDIA Salles' collaboration, "that brought together exhibitors from all over Europe, making us feel even more deeply a part of a European Union that is becoming ever larger". Seminars, debates and screenings of a selection of European films proposed at the Zlín Film Festival were among the activities proposed to the Focus' participants. Among the films were also *Cheese and Jam*, a 2003 Slovenian film set in Sarajevo, the birthplace of the director Branko Djuric and the Swedish film *Jinak* (2003) by Christina Olofson.

Of particular importance was the visit to the **Zlín production studios**, that was also a voyage through the history of animated film: founded in 1936 by Tomas Bata, with the aim of realizing advertising for his shoes, produced by his company located in Zlín, with time they were transformed, also thanks to great talents such as Hermína Trilová and Karel Zeman, into actual animated film production studios. **Workshops** were devoted to the illustration of initiatives for kids and teens and to the presentation of a rare series of pre-cinema equipment realized by the Italian Barz and Hippo, an organization that manages training activities for schools: the models were recreated starting from descriptions, drawings and photographs, with the aim of demonstrating to young people the processes starting from design up to cinema. And several young Festival spectators took part in the workshop, trying out the equipment.

With a formula already appreciated during other events, a day was dedicated to visiting different types of screens in the heart of Prague: from Lucerna Kino, a small cinema of vintage traditions in the centre of the Czech capital, to the Svetozor Kino, to the Slovanský Dům multiplex belonging to the Palace Cinemas chain, with the only digital screen in the Country. Here a workshop was held, devoted to the strategies of involving schools to bring youth closer to cinema, particularly to European films.

There were two different approaches: that of Palace Cinemas, illustrated by the Managing Director for the Czech Republic David Horáček, and that of the Irish Film Institute of Dublin, presented by Alicia McGivern, that, in regards to the event, affirmed: "It was really an interesting and involving experience. I greatly appreciated the possibility of also participating in the Festival, of visiting the theatres and of meeting exhibitors from all over Europe".

At the conclusion of the event, Elisabetta Brunella, Secretary General of MEDIA Salles, presented the first results of the **research**

issues, to which MEDIA Salles has always devoted great attention. Among the topics to be discussed, the determination of the theatre's *identity* and the definition of its *mission*, the identification of the offer's *attributes* based on the public's needs and expectations, the management of the *communication* process, the monitoring of *customer satisfaction* towards the offer, and the planning of *loyalty-driven initiatives* towards the theatre.

"**Internet and the cinema**", carried out by the Association with the involvement of various European cinemas, and launched a new phase of this study, that will also see the involvement of countries that have recently joined the European Union.

"EURO KIDS" 2004: THE AWARDS

During the grandiose closing ceremony of the Zlín Film Festival, broadcast live by the Czech television, the Vice-President of MEDIA Salles Jens Rykaer presented the "Euro Kids" 2004 awards.

In the "film" section, the award went to the German film *Die Blindgänger* by **Bernd Sahling**, for successfully conveying an aspect of European cinema culture, for its appeal to an international audience and for its portrayal of the day-to-day problems of adolescents.

The first prize for cinemas (1,000 euro) was awarded to the **Sala Don Bosco of Genoa (Italy)**, for the wide range of activities offered to children and for its attention to the cultural significance of the cinema.

The second prize (750 euro) went to the multi-screen cinema **Kristiansand Kino of Kristiansand (Norway)**, for the great care taken to involve young audiences, particularly through the organisation of a festival boasting one of the most significant traditions in Europe.

The **Cinema Paradiso of St. Pölten (Austria)**, winner of the third prize (500 euro), has distinguished itself in terms of its close attention to communication with young people and the variety of initiatives offered them, which have included the opportunity of using a film camera to make their own film: another way of attracting young audiences to the cinema.



From right: Jens Rykaer, Vice-President of MEDIA Salles, with the winners of the "Euro Kids 2004" awards presented to the cinemas, during the *Focus on Europe – Kidflix Special* event at the 44th Zlín Film Festival: Siri Sannætz of Cinema Kristiansand, Kristiansand – Norway (2nd prize), Giancarlo Giraud of Sala Don Bosco, Genoa – Italy (1st prize) and Gerald Knell of Cinema Paradiso, St. Pölten – Austria (3rd prize).