

Festival Production Management Training

Module III | Istanbul, Turkey | 7 - 9 November 2016

Speech by

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Opening of the Festival Production Management Training, Module III

07 November 2016, Istanbul, Turkey

Dear Participants,
Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to Istanbul, we are so happy to see you all in our city.

Istanbul is one of the most exciting cities of the world with its very rich cultural heritage from Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans, having been the capital city of both Eastern Roman Empire and Ottoman Empire. The city is very strategically placed between the two continents and it is the only city with the sea passing through it. With its population of 15 million inhabitants, Istanbul is the most crowded city of Turkey and of Europe as well.

The history of Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts goes back to almost 45 years ago. It is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation founded in 1973 by seventeen businessmen and art enthusiasts who gathered under the leadership of Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı, with the aim of organising an international arts festival in Istanbul. The Foundation's initial goal was to offer the finest examples of art from around the world, while at the same time promoting the national, cultural and artistic assets of Turkey, by using arts to create an international platform of communication.

Besides organizing festivals, İKSV has been committed to bringing together different cultures and contributing to the creation of a platform for multicultural dialogue. In this respect, İKSV organised a series of international festivals and exhibitions in major European cities such as Berlin, Stuttgart, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Vienna and Russia. The "Cultural Season of Turkey in France" activities were also organised by İKSV. Since 2007, the Foundation has been organising the Turkish Pavillion at the International Art Exhibition, la Biennale di Venezia.

We know you all have questions regarding the political situation in Turkey. We are currently living in unusual conditions. But as citizens of a country that always has a dynamic political climate, we have been able to invent methods for adapting to changing situations.

It is vital that organizations working for the advancement of arts and culture in Turkey continue their work as before.

Cultural institutions should be the advocates of freedom of speech and provide creative actors and participants from different opinions to reach the public. We believe that what we do become more crucial during these turbulent times. Culture and the arts have the power to transform societies and show simultaneous universes to people. During traumatic times we need this strength more than ever.

The history of IKSİ goes back to almost 45 years since 1973, a timeline throughout which Turkey unfortunately witnessed different kinds of disasters. Nevertheless, we never ceased our efforts to present the people of Istanbul with the outstanding examples of cultural and artistic production from around the world. We believe it is our duty to realise our events in all circumstances, to underline the power of the arts in reaching peace, both domestically and internationally.

Therefore we believe in the importance of continuing, even expanding, international collaboration in culture and the arts in the period ahead. Creative expression is one of the most powerful tools for fostering a culture of peace and dialogue between manifold visions of our world, our history and our future, and in trying times like today, we need its unifying, healing power as ever before. It is culture and the arts that bind us with the global community and provide hope for the future.

We believe the participants of our activities feel the same way and believe in the importance of the work that we are doing together.

So, we will continue, in the best way that we can, doing what we do - supporting and celebrating creative production and promoting culture and the arts, under all circumstances.



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Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union