

Report from Norway to the General Assembly of the FSE 2010

Writers' Guild of Norway was founded in 1938, and is an independent writers' organization whose purpose is to protect the artistic and financial interests of writers for film, television, radio and theatre. Out frame agreements with the producers are to be found also in English versions on our web site www.dramatiker.no. These are similar to the other Nordic countries, and more can be read at our common web-site www.nordicwritersguild.com

To be eligible for membership, an author must have written and had staged a public performance of at least one full-length or several shorter original works of drama for the theatre, film, television or radio. To qualify for membership, the performance must be professional and the work must be of professional quality. The applicant must have written the work in the Norwegian or Sami language him- or herself.

For the time being, the Guild currently organizes 288 writers, and 30 candidate members, who is anyone who has completed publicly approved higher education as a playwright or screenwriter. There is a steady rise in the number of members.

The organization is funded as a part of the collective remuneration writers receive from public libraries. (In this respect, we are in fact a collecting society.)

Membership fee is around € 100.

Some important issues:

All new fiction films and TV-series in the public libraries

There is a political will to include fiction films and TV-series in the same system as with books and music to the public libraries. There are, however, not any sufficient system for clearing the rights for this publication, since there are more right holders than in literature and music, and this will demand an administrative solution that is not established today.

Clearing the archives of the public broadcaster NRK

There is a political demand from their owner, the Ministry of Culture to the NRK to clear their archives of own productions earlier than 1 January 1997. The publication of this material will mainly be on the Internet. We are participating in the negotiations for the compensation for clearing the rights, and there is a goal to reach a solution like the Danish.

Digital script directory

We are working to establish a digital script directory, including scripts for theater, film, radio and television. In this, the writers themselves publish what they want to be included. The directory is supposed to be available though subscription of registered and (low-)



paying users, especially different producers and education institutions in all levels. The launch is planned in 2010.

Gender

There has been a general lack of balance of gender in film productions in Norway. This has resulted in a demand for a more equal distribution of funding. We have, together with the other professions in the film industry produced a report to the Minister of Culture on how to reach this goal. Regardless the report, we have already started our own mentorship program, including 11 young female writers.

“Dramatikkens hus”

From 1 January 2010, a new center, called “Dramatikkens hus” is established for script development for theatres, based on the same principles as for script development for feature films. In these arrangements, a writer might be supported both financially and professionally in the script development with and without a producer.

Digital committee

The guild has newly established a so-called digital committee, to follow the public debate and the technical development on the digital area, including the up-coming revision of the Norwegian copyright law. The committee’s mandate is to guide and advise the board on technical, juridical and political issues in this area and to secure the writers’ rights and income in digital distribution of their works.
