

SENDER (TURKISH SCREENWRITERS ASSOCIATION) 2010 REPORT

The SENDER has currently 250 members who are all professional writers on television and cinema. The 4th General Congress of the SENDER took place in May 2010. The former board, which has executed the administration with great responsibility during the previous years, did not stand for the elections this time, contributing the democracy within the guild. The new board consist of five members and one full time office staff.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF 2010: CAMPAIGN AGAINST 90 MINUTES OF TV SERIALS

Current situation: The TV serials in Turkey are notorious for their duration of 90 to 120 minutes. On the last couple of years the condition has gotten worse; the shooting crew of one TV serial works over 18 hours a day while writing one episode, certainly goes beyond what the screenwriter have energy for and can effort. This lowers not just the quality of what is written, but also the performance of the actors and leads to unsecured & illegal working conditions.

1. The SENDER staged a demonstration against 90 minutes in Istanbul in November. 150 members of the guild called upon that the legal duration of the TV series should be 48 minutes the most with 12 minutes of commercial breaks in total. The Sender has also sent several letters to the government, related ministries and TV channels asking for attention and legal regulations.
2. The second protest, one of the biggest of all times, took place in December. The SENDER united 1500 screenwriters, actors, cinema professionals, producers and employees to protest against the working conditions and the trend of ever-increasing episode run times. The sector stopped the activity and gathered to support the demonstration and requested the international standards.
3. The SENDER's campaign has been a great figure in the Turkish media. The Prime Minister of Turkey and the Ministry of Labor has responded to the SENDER's call and given urgent attention. The inspectors have been sent to sets which exceed the legal working hours. State bodies such as Turkey's Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTUK) and a commission of Ministry of Labor started to work on the issue. RTUK established an international research on runtimes worldwide and stated that the issue should be regulated. The Ministry of Labor asked for the help of SENDER and there have been several meetings with them. The campaign still goes on.
4. The campaign also helped us on developing our relations with the European colleagues. We have started a research on the European regulation of runtimes & advertisement breaks and asked European guilds and FSE for sending support letters to the Turkish government and all major TV channels.

OUR MAIN GOALS & PROBLEMS

1. Execution of the works on total harmonization within the framework of comments over EU progress report, of the laws those regulate and protect the trade of all cultural products.

2. Forming minimum standards for scriptwriters in cinema, helping them in getting percentage of the box office and that their secondary payment rights will take place in the contracts.
3. Regulation of television industry and the problematic areas for screenwriters by all means. Campaigning for the legal sanctions in the presence of government against TV channels, deforcing our rights deserved from the repetitions of the screening.
4. Assuring the collection and distribution of the copy right levies, accrued and outstanding in Ministry of Finance.
5. Contributing the relations between sectoral bodies such as the Turkish Cinema Council and other professional unions to work properly and effectively.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Our web site

We are in the progress of renewing our corporate identity. A team of designers have been invited to design the official web site of the SENDER which we hope will become an important reference in screenwriting industry and this will result in an increase in visits. The new look and the content will be accessible at the end of this month.

Seminars & Workshops

We continue to deliver workhops to the ones who would like to learn the craft of screenwriting and be able to work as professional screenwriters. A seminar was established where the significant screenwriters of Turkey met with their audience. By those seminars and workshops which are going on at the moment, we aim to improve quality of screenplays in the sector.

Syd Field Books

Two of Syd Field's books "Screenplay" and "Screenwriter's Problem Solver" was translated into Turkish with the advent of SENDER last year. They will be available in bookstores as of March. The SENDER made another attempt on Syd Field's other books ("Four Screenplays" and "Screenwriter's Workbook") to be published in Turkish. They are going to be ready for print at the end of this year.