

Presentation 2012: Flemish Screenwriters Guild, Belgium



General info

The Flemish Screenwriters Guild (*'Vlaamse Scenaristengilde vzw'*) was founded in 2003, almost 10 years ago. At this moment we have 140 members (and one Honorary Member: Mr. Guillermo Arriaga), which covers about 90 % of all Flemish speaking professional fiction Screenwriters in Belgium.

Members with a track record in screenwriting pay 100 € / year but Junior members pay 50 € / year.

Our board of directors (13 persons) assembles once a month, and every individual member on the board has more or less his or her portfolio. The entire board consists of professional screenwriters with different backgrounds in film and/or t.v. and are all volunteers.

We have representatives to create and maintain a friendly dialogue in different organisations including 2 Collecting Societies (SABAM and DeAuteurs/SACD); the Flemish Film Fund, the coordinating Flemish Authors Society, our Belgian Film Festivals (Ghent, Brussels, Ostend and the Short Film Festival in Leuven) and of course the F.S.E.

We are very active in the field of author rights. It is in our own interest to keep a good relationship with all of the Collecting Societies. We do not only indicate the differences between them to our members and compare their rates, but also cooperate on legal topics (such as private copy, new media, pay-per-view,...).

We try to set up minimum rates and advise our members to take notice.

We arrange meetings with colleagues, and bring screenwriters together with producers and directors. We invite international guest speakers and organize Master Classes in cooperation with the Flemish Film Fund. Our Writers Guild also organize public interviews with screenwriters of new Flemish feature films or television series. We always podcast these interviews and put them on our website.

Every year we present a Best Flemish Screenplay Award, voted for by our members. This year we had a tie between Oscar nominee writer/director Michaël R. Roskam for his screenplay 'Bullhead' and writer Pierre De Clercq, for his screenplay of the international acclaimed feature 'Hasta la Vista!'

Our website www.scenaristengilde.be is kept up to date religiously and on regular basis we distribute a newsletter to our members and to an ever growing database of industry professionals.

Some highlights of 2011-2012

The Visser Neerlandia Award

On the initiative of the ANV (Dutch Language Union), for the first time the Flemish Writers Guild has collaborated with the Dutch Guild 'Netwerk Scenarioschrijvers' to set up a screenplay competition.

The purpose of this competition is to promote excellent but as of yet unproduced professional, scripts in the Dutch language.

From the participants we expected a complete screenplay of a feature film. 75 to 120 pages maximum, written in Dutch. The script has to be original (no adaptations or translations), and only projects which didn't get development or production funding from a film fund were allowed.

The competition received a total of 44 entries.

Anonymously selected by a jury of Dutch and Flemish professionals, this years winner, writer Marnie Blok, received a cheque of 10.000 Euro's for her screenplay 'Nadra'. The two runner-ups, 'Death and the Maiden' by Ruddy Morren and 'Fly to Fit' by Saskia Diesling and Eveline Verwoerd, received a cheque of 2.500 Euro's each.

Who wrote it?

After some incidents in the press, where screenplay writers didn't get the proper credit for their work, the Guild decided to put more pressure on Flanders Image (the promotion platform of the Flemish Film Fund who distributes most of the official press articles).

Meetings with Flanders Image not only lead to more awareness but also concrete promises on their behalf.

From now on Flanders Image puts the credit of the scriptwriter on their production file (online) and will adjust their archive.

Every press article distributed by them will acknowledge the scriptwriter of the film too.

This is a first step in the right direction and we hope other organisations (tv-networks, production companies, film festivals,...) will follow their example.

deAuteurs/ theAuthors

On September 7th 2011, deAuteurs was recognized by the Belgian Federal Government as an autonomous collecting society. It was founded when it became apparent that the Flemish, Dutch-speaking members of SACD/SCAM needed a more specific service in a rapidly changing Flemish culture and media landscape.

deAuteurs is an organisation by and for Authors. This means that all members become direct stock-owners of the society and that only authors can have a seat on the board of directors. The aim of the collecting society is to manage the rights of Flemish writers and directors of audiovisual works as well as literary works and performing arts in a correct and transparent way. In addition to this deAuteurs offers legal support, organizes lobby work on behalf of authors and informs its members on evolutions within the professional landscape. For her international operations, deAuteurs has the continued support of SACD/SCAM's knowhow and network.