

# Polish Screenwriters Guild/Polish Filmmakers Association

## Activity Report 2013

The current number of members of the Polish Screenwriters Guild is 90 out of the membership of the Polish Filmmakers Association which is over 1700 including directors, cinematographers and other film professionals. (Being a part of the Association and not a separate legal entity, the Guild technically is not a trade union but professional association.)

In 2013 The Guild conducted a number of activities to the benefit of its members within Polish film industry, supporting screenwriters vis a vis both the national authorities which regulate the film market therefore creating the legal framework for writers' work and the producers as their direct employers. While Polish law (both authors law and cinema law) form the basic system which grants and protects both moral and material rights of screenwriters, there is still a number of unresolved questions, on which the Guild is working together with our parent organization – Polish Filmmakers Association and related organizations like ZAPA – the collective management organization devoted to the audiovisual field. Other area of the Guilds activity is that of international dimension – we work to increase the presence of Polish writers among international community, to compare and harmonize legal regulations with these of the countries of UE and to work with our foreign colleagues to the benefit of screenwriters of Europe and the world. Some of this activities are listed below.

In April 2013 under the patronage of the Polish Screenwriters Guild Poland hosted the international script development program Sources 2 session. Two lectures by members of our Guild were presented: Joanna Kos-Krauze with Krzysztof Krauze gave a lecture about development of their last film and Agnieszka Holland presented her lecture 'Sources of inspiration'. The aim of the event, among others, was to provide an opportunity for our members, especially the younger ones, to work on their projects with internationally renowned professionals and tutors. This is example of our program of professional education aimed to enhance skills of Polish writers and their ability to work in international environment. Another was the visit of renowned script consultant Franz Rodenkirchen during this year,s Gdynia Film Festival of Polish Films (later in the year). Our guest gave a four day workshop for a group of filmmakers (writers as well as producers and directors) and a heavily attended public lecture.

In May 2013 the Guild underwent some internal changes: president of the Board Joanna Kos-Krauze resigned from her post still remaining the member of the board. Maciej Karpinski was elected as the new President of the Guild. Under a new leadership the Board meetings became more frequent and are covering broader spectrum of issues.

In October 2013 took an active part in the consultations conducted by Polish Film Institute (the public body funding and generally overseeing the film industry in Poland in practically every aspect) regarding changes in the Institute's system of evaluation of projects applying for funding, for both the production and project development. Particularly the latter is of the vital interest of screenwriters so the Guild came forward with a number of detailed proposals of reforms. Some of them were accepted and included in the Institute's regulations for 2014. The Guild also proposed some of its members of screenwriters as the candidates to lead the evaluation committees (especially the ones dealing with the funding of the very writing process – grants for individual writers and project development – which are also covered by the public support by the Institute).

The representative of the Guild took part in the series of workshops organized by FSE in Brussels devoted to collective bargaining (April-June-November 2013) raising our attention to the problems not yet fully resolved by the Polish legislation and every-day practice, especially in relations with producers, often leading to abuse and malpractice in respect to writers' contracts. As the result, the Polish Screenwriters Guild secured the legal assistance started its own research of the most common occurrences of such practices with the goal of preparation of the internal professional "code" acceptable for both writers and producers which would eventually become a tool in the project evaluation process at the Polish Film Institute.

As the part of this project the Polish Screenwriters Guild launched an inquiry among its members about the most common issues and problematic clauses of a contract for writers while dealing with producers or broadcasters. The aim of this inquiry is to help prepare the recommendations for the Institute and also for Polish Chamber of Audiovisual Producers to create the adequate rules of conduct and respect them when a contract with a screenwriter is negotiated and signed.

In October 2014 Poland will host the III World Screenwriters Conference. This is a privilege but also a very serious and challenging task. Polish Screenwriters Guild is working hard on the preparation of this important international event in terms of budget and the organization as well as development of the agenda of the Conference.

*Warsaw. November 2013*