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GROUPEMENT DES ECOLES EUROPEENS DE CINEMA ET DE TELEVISION

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Report on the East West Conference on Production

The conference was held from June 10 - 13 in Prague, and to a large extent made possible by FAMU, and especially to the energy that Prof. Pecak and Mrs. Jana Abdalova put into it.

The program provided three main points:

- general information about tendencies and working methods in todays film production.

This subject was adressed in particular by Mr. Dan Allen, representative from Coopers & Lybrand, and by Mrs. Dr. Christina Kallas from Metropolis Film in Berlin, whereas the presentation of some case histories helped in explaining how general ideas were working out in practice. Independent producers Rob Buckler and Ene Vanaveski, both from the UK and Jan Suster from Tchechia provided these exemples.

- presentation of the ideas behind the curricula of various film-schools, more specificly those of VGIK - Moscow, Szinhas - Budapest, Dramatiska Institutet - Stockholm and HFF - Munich.

- discussion about the above themes with an outlook on possible developments in our schools in the future, with regards to the role the production department in general and the production students in particular should play.

The conference was attended by both professors and students of 13 schools, in total appr. 40 people.

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The conference was a result of a meeting of schools at the Munich CILECT conference in october 1992. Many East European schools firmly expressed their needs to get to know more about production in a market oriented society.

Six Eastern and seven Western schools were present. From both East and West smaller and larger (film-) countries were represented, roughly all schools that had asked for the conference in Munich.

It was felt in general that the conference served its purpose. To be more specific about the results:

- the various presentations gave a good idea about the specifics of filmproduction in the West, both of films with important budgets and smaller productions; also the possibilities and problems of coproducing were adressed;

- the presentations of both the actual situation of production and of how production is taught in East and West countries made very clear how wide the gap between the two actually is indeed;  
- the word 'production' can very easily be misunderstood; it is clear that in filmschools - especially in the earlier moments of a students presence at a school it becomes too soon 'organising' only, ranging from picking up actors early in the morning and cleaning up the set after midnight to proper production management;

- going beyond teaching the skills of production-management, and towards teaching the skills of how to become a producer, and what being a producer really means, is everywhere, also in the West, a subject that is being adressed only over the last couple of years. It will be necessary to find ways and means to include in our curricula those lessons that adress really the issue of what it takes to be a producer.

- many times the presentations and the discussions came back to filmproduction, leaving television a bit on the side, although Prof.Keil from HFF Munich pointed out very clear, that 74% of the people working in the audio-visual industry in Germany worked for television. It is probable, that in many of our schools this simple fact is too much overlooked, partly for historical reasons - many schools were founded in the days when there was hardly any television - and partly because of the fact that film is thought of as more important, a higher aim to reach out to.

- a very positive thing was the presence of both students and teachers. A realistic balance of what actually goes on in our various schools and what their problems are added much to the richness and value of our meeting.

- a conference is always too short, although absolutely useful and succesful within those limits. Again it became clear, that to bring knowledge from one place to another, a conference can only be an initial tool. As such it worked out well. But it will be of primary importance to see, that more in-depth meetings will have to be carried out. A presence of weeks if not months of someone with the know-how of teaching production will be needed in various schools that need this, to make real progress.

- it was therefore proposed, that Prof.Keil and your observer will try to set up a proposal to this end.

- as a footnote should be mentioned, that some connection with the CILECT project chair for production might be welcome if not necessary.

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# EAST - WEST PRODUCTION CONFERENCE

## JUNE 1993 PRAGUE

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GUEST SPEAKERS:

Dan ALLEN - Cooper and Lybrand  
Rob BUCKLER - Independent Producer U.K.  
Jan SUSTER - Independent Producer CZ  
Dr. Christina KALLAS - Metropolis  
Eve VANAVESKI U.K.  
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