ECFA's General Assembly 2007 in Berlin:

**Tonje Hardersen is the new President of ECFA**

Like her predecessor Mia Lindrup also ECFA’s new President Tonje Hardersen comes from Oslo/ Norway. In total four new board members were elected. Besides Hardersen, who is the children’s film adviser of „Film & Kino“ (the main organisation for the cinema and video industries in Norway) the following people were elected to the board: Emmanuelle Chevalier (Les Films du Préau, Paris/ France), Charlotte Giese (Danish Film Institute, Copenhagen) and Dimitris Spyrou (Neaniko Plano, Athens & Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People, Pyrgos/ Greece). ECFA-Journal will introduce the new board members during the next issues throughout this year.

Together with Debbie Maturi (Leeds/ Great Britain), Jerzy Moszkowicz (Poznan/ Poland), Eva Schwarzwald (Milano/ 

**“We Shall Overcome“**: Interview with Director Niels Arden Oplev and Main Actor Janus Dissing Rathke

**“An Adult Mistreating Children Should Not Expect Mercy“**

„We Shall Overcome“ was the most successful European film for young audience in 2006. After the Berlin Kinderfilmfest in February 2006 it was shown at almost every film festival for young people all around the world and won almost all prizes that were there to win. The film is partly based on Niels Arden Oplev’s memories. Talking about this film therefore also means: talking about his life.

Niels Arden Oplev: With 407.000 tickets, We Shall Overcome got the best result of all films released in Danish theatres in 2006. The catchline „A film for all ages“ sounds a bit mellow but certainly suitable: this is a film parents go to see with their young teenagers. For me that is the perfect audience. Amongst the 14 internationawards the film won so far, there were 3 in ‘adult’ film festivals (Gothenburg, Reykjavik and Hamptons/ USA).’

The original Danish title ‘Drammen’ (Dreams) sounds awful, doesn’t it? Arden Oplev: The title We Shall Overcome wasn’t suitable for the Danish market. For our 2nd choice - I Had a Dream - rights had to be claimed with the Martin Luther King Foundation. They asked a reasonable fee (3.500 $), but the words couldn't be commercialised - a campaign based on that title was over the limit. So we chose We Shall Overcome.

You were 8 years old in 1969.

Arden Oplev: This film is the dramatization of something which happened actually in 1974. Corporal punishment was abolished since 1967, but in countryside schools teachers had problems outgrowing their bad habits. Secondary school catapulted me straight into dark medieval ages, due to a headmaster against whom nobody dared to resist. It’s hard to explain to a

Dear Readers of ECFA-Journal, ...

ECFA is a European organisation for children’s film culture. Therefore many of you may be convinced that ECFA is well supported by the European Union. Indeed it is not! For many years ECFA’s board members have checked the EU-programmes for Media and other related support schemes, but except with some small projects an organisation like ours obviously does not fit into these programmes. Of course we could adjust our activities to these support schemes, start a project and maybe get some grant. But these projects for example usually have to be limited to six months. Only a few organisations succeeded in getting a support for a longer period, but we know some examples how they were dropped down again after two or three years. despite the fact that they did excellent work. Is this what we want to achieve with ECFA? We want a sustainable network for the production, distribution, exhibition and reception of high quality films for children and young people. So at the moment ECFA prefers to stay a small, independent and – hopefully – effective organisation – with nothing but the support of its members.

ECFA-Journal 1/2007
An Adult Mistreating Children Should Not Expect Mercy

Continuing from page 1

young actor what it felt like: being scared every day when going to school.

You had your personal Eddie Svale (the supportive teacher)?

Arden Oplev: Ole Lund Kirkegaard. Later he became a famous author for children (cf. Rubber Tarzan) but in our countryside school he opened the eyes of many of us youngsters.

Even when being a positive character, still he betrays his ideals. Why?

Arden Oplev: Because he's a grown up. Kids see justice and injustice: black and white. Grown ups maintain a grey zone. For many young people in the sixties, the revolution was only 'today's fashion': they just moved with the tide. A revolution counts only little revolutionaries as it requires real sacrifices. That's why Frits is the true revolutionary.

Is the influence of Martin Luther King based on your childhood memory too?

Arden Oplev: In our family, John F. Kennedy, Gandhi and Martin Luther King were true heroes. I was 7 when King was shot; a man paying for justice with his life made a huge impression on me.

For Frits, victory is far from complete. Lindum Svendsen doesn't get fired… he dies. For Frits, victory is far from complete. Lindum Svendsen doesn't get fired… he dies.

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Looking for the future of children's film culture: The Time After „Terkel“

The Swedish Film Institute invited to a two-day seminar of thought provoking lectures and discussions about the future of Nordic children's films. Some headlining questions were: Have the Nordic children's films lost their good reputation as innovative quality films that are respected and admired internationally? Have they lost their national audience? Is the definition „children's films“ too narrow and a problem in itself? Would it be better to remove the definition once and for all and rather talk about films about kids or childhood or with kid actors?

The seminar started with a lecture from Professor Lasse Dencik, who emphasized that we live in an event driven world, with children who are both more flexible and demanding than before, due to more unstable family structures. They have a strong sense of self-reliance and a vast selection of cultural offers - such as TV-channels, computer games etc. So how do we launch the Nordic children's films as events, and make them known in a highly competitive media world? Not surprisingly no clear solution was reached during the seminar.

And how does the future of the Nordic children's films look? Not so great according to the different film consultants from the film institutes and film funds in Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. They all agreed that there is a lack of good and exciting scripts. There is too much emphasis on a film’s learning potential. We often find a sickly combination of political correctness and cynical commercialism. There is a lack of good stories and goal driven characters. Director Jesper W. Nielsen also stated that censorship is a huge problem. There is a discrepancy between what the censors and filmmakers think of as a children's film. If a director has made a bold and fresh children’s film and then gets a censorship certificate stating 11 years, the film’s market potential will be ruined. And this is something Mr. Nielsen has a personal experience of, being the director of The Last Viking and Little Big Sister (Forbudt for barn).

So what should script writers do? They should present dilemmas - not solve them! They should look at children’s films as films, making real films. They should explore the secret and sometimes unpleasant sides of childhood. There is a longing for the great cinematic experience, the long journey and the great story. Scriptwriter Per Nielsen suggested that it is a good idea to look at a film’s play potential, if the kids won’t play it - don’t make it.

Many speakers suggested that we should stop talking about children's films altogether. There is too much talk about children and no mentioning of films! Perhaps we could lure film makers into making great children's films if they think they are making ordinary films and are not restricted by a narrow frame. Personally I think we must recognise children's films as a unique genre, which has to be taken seriously and taught properly in film schools and taken seriously by the press. Directing a children's film should not be seen as one step closer to directing a „proper“ film, meaning a film for adults. A really good film must not be dismissed as „a film not just for children“. To define children’s films as a genre means that it can (like any other genre) be challenged, developed and broadened. The different short films and film clips that were presented at this seminar proved that a film for children can be many, many different things. Nielsen closed his presentation with a beautiful sentence: „Children's films are too important to be just for children!“

Tonje Hardersen, Children's film adviser, FILM&KINO, Norway, and – since February this year President of ECFA
**Films on the Horizon**

New European films for children which are ready to be discovered for your programmes. More information and more films can be found at www.ecfaweb.org. Of course we can never guarantee that we cover all important new films. Producers, distributors and sales agents are kindly invited to inform us of their new releases.

Kidz in da Hood

**Feature Film, Sweden 2006**
Director: Ilva Gustavsson & Catti Edfeldt
Production: Gilda Film
Festival: Berlin Generation
World Sales:Trust Film Sales
Upplandsvägen 35
SE-113 28 Stockholm
phone: ++46 833 55 76
fax: ++46 830 99 34
E-Mail: annakarin@trust-film.dk
Internet: www.trust-film.dk

Onni von Sopanen

**Feature Film, Finland 2006**
Director: Johanna Vuoksenmäki
Production: Merkelfilm
Festival: Oulu 2006
World Sales:Production House
Höylämäntie 18 A
SF-00380 Helsinki
phone: ++358 9 229 3260
fax: ++358 9 229 32 665
E-Mail: info@nonvonsopanen.fi
Internet: www.nonvonsopanen.fi

Silly’s Sweet Summer

**Feature Film, Germany 2006**
Director: Johannes Schmid
Production: Kinderfilm GmbH, Schlicht
Festival: Berlin Generation
World Sales:Telegpool
Sonnenstr. 21
D-80331 München
phone: ++49-89-558760
fax: ++49-89-55876188
E-Mail: telepool@telepool.de
Internet: www.telepool.de

**The Emperor’s Secret**

**Feature Film, Finland 2007**
Director: Riina Hyytiä
Production: Filmkameratene
World Sales:Svensk Filmindustri AB
Råsundavägen 150
SE-16986 Stockholm
phone: ++46 8 680 35 00
fax: ++46 8 680 37 83
E-Mail: international@sf.se
Internet: www.sfinternational.se

**Iska’s Journey**

**Feature Film, Hungary 2007**
Director: Csaba Bollók
Production: Merkelfilm
Festival: Berlin Generation
World Sales:Merkelfilm
Németvölgyi út 19
H-1026 Budapest
phone: ++36-1-214 43 21
fax: ++36-1-214 43 21
E-Mail: merkelfilm@t-online.hu

**The Ghost in the Swamp**

**Feature Film, Croatia 2006**
Director: Branko Istvancic
Production: InteFilm, HRT
World Sales:InterFilm d. o. o.
Nova Ves 45/2
CRO-1000 Zagreb
phone: ++385-1-4667290
fax: ++385-1-4667022
E-Mail: interfilm@interfilm.hr
Internet: www.interfilm.hr
www.duhumovari.com

**Elias and the Royal Yacht**

Call Me Elisabeth
**Feature Film, France 2005**
Director: Jean-Pierre Améris
Production: Pyramide Productions
Festival: Berlin Generation
World Sales:Pyramide International
5 Rue du Chevalier de Saint-George
F-75008 Paris
phone: ++33-1-42960220
fax: ++33-1-40200551
E-Mail: pricher@pyramidefilms.com
Internet: www.pyramidefilms.com

Desmond and the Swamp Barbarian Trap
**Animation Film, Sweden 2006**
Director: Magnus Carlsson
Production: The Jolly Patron AB
World Sales:NonStop Sales AB
Döbelnsgatan 24
SE-11352 Stockholm
phone: ++46-8-6739999
fax: ++46-8-6739888
E-Mail: info@nonstopsales.net
Internet: www.nonstopsales.net

Elias and the Royal Yacht
**Animation Film, Norway 2007**
Director: Espen Fykse, Lise Osvoll
Production: Filmkameratene
World Sales:Svensk Filmindustri AB
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phone: ++385-1-4667290
fax: ++385-1-4667022
E-Mail: interfilm@interfilm.hr
Internet: www.interfilm.hr
www.duhumovari.com

**Trigger**

**Feature Film, Norway 2006**
Director: Gunnar Vikene
Production: Cinenord, Miso Film
Festival: Berlin Generation
World Sales:Svensk Filmindustri
(address see above)
**Films on the Horizon**

**U**

Animation Film, France 2006
Director: G. Solotareff & S. Elissalde
Production: Prima Linea, Gebeka, France 3
Festival: Berlin Generation
World Sales: Celluloid Dreams
2. rue Turgot, F-75009 Paris
phone: +33-1-49700370
fax: +33-1-49700371
E-Mail: info@celluloid-dreams.com
Internet: www.celluloid-dreams.com

An Italian Seminar by „Cinema senza barriere“ („Cinema Without Barriers“)

**„I Hear You with my Eyes, I Talk to You with my Hands“**

**A Journey In The Deaf’s World Between Poetry, Music and Artistic Expressions, Seminar in Milano/Italy on March 17th 2007**

Cinema Without Barriers is a programme of films conceived for physically challenged viewers, in particular the blind and the hard of hearing. This seminar will consider, in depth, a number of relevant fields: science; the Language of Signs; poetry; television; music for the deaf and hard of hearing; experimental approaches.

Signs are the language of the deaf and hard of hearing. Their cognitive structure was long held to be „different“. Therefore the deaf have often been educated differently, and regarded as being incapable of taking an interest or expressing creative faculties. As a result, social relations for the deaf have often been restricted to their own circle. Rarely are the deaf addressed by cultural schemes and projects, which tend to conceive music, theatre and dance as being naturally exclusive of those who cannot hear. However the deaf and hard of hearing are indeed active in all domains involving emotional and bodily feelings, even if these are thought by many to be the exclusive preserve of „normal“ people. Dirksen Bauman, professor of Deaf Studies and American Sign Language at Gallaudet University, will explore the similarities between signed language and film language. Both forms of expression function according to a visual logic that makes use of editing, motion and a variety of camera ‘shots’ - close up, medium and distant. He will demonstrate how sign language poets and filmmakers are beginning to forge new ground in the interplay between these two forms of language through a new genre of cine-poetics. Allan Johnston, producer of Something Special, a series of BBC which was made and designed specifically for children with learning difficulties, will present the „Deaf Children and Television Guide“ made in cooperation with the National Deaf Children’s society, a practical guide for producers to help them consider the needs of their deaf viewers in the 21st century.

„Cinema senza barriere“ is a project organized by ECFA’s board member Eva Schwarzwald and Romano Fattorossi for Aiace (Associazione Italiana Amici Cinema d’Essai) Milano on behalf of the Province of Milan, with the support of the Banca del Monte di Lombardia Foundation.

Information and reservations:
Aiace via Pioliti de’ Bianchi, 19
20129 Milano
phone +39 02 76115394
E-Mail: info@mostrainvideo.com
Internet: www.mostrainvideo.com

Professionals’ Meeting at the Malmö International Filmfestival for Children and Young People, Malmö/Sweden, March 16th and 17th:

BUFF Financing Forum 2007

BUFF Financing Forum will provide a unique opportunity for filmmakers to present and co-finance their latest projects.

The forum will attract the attention and the participation of financiers, producers, distributors, commissioning editors, funding bodies and directors from Northern Europe. The funding forum is exclusively aimed for the production of films for children and young people up to the age of 18. The forum focuses on full length films series aimed for cinema and/or television distribution. The accepted formats are narrative feature films or animation. The funding forum will be open for films produced in Northern Europe: Norway, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Poland, Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands and the Baltic nations. The BUFF Financing Forum will help spread awareness of regional productions and co-productions that are under development. The event will support the (co)-production of cinematography work, facilitating the financing prospective for children and youth films in the northern part of Europe.

Contact: BUFF - Int. Children and Young People’s Film Festival, Malmö/Sweden
phone: +46 733 612 619
E-Mail: annette.breijner@buff.se
Internet: www.financingforum.eu

The News Section:
Films, Festivals, Awards

Kristiansand International Children’s Film Festival, Kristiansand/Norway, April 24th to 26th 2007
Contact: Int. Children’s Film Festival Kristiansand Kino
P.O.Box 356
NO-4663 Kristiansand
Phone: ++47-38-10 42 05
E-Mail: d.krohn@lrskino.no
Internet: www.kicff.no

International Festival of Animation Films, Stuttgart/Germany, April 26th to May 1st 2007
Contact: International Festival of Animation Films Film- & Medienfestival GmbH Schloßstraße 84
D-70176 Stuttgart
Phone: ++49-711-92546100
E-Mail: trickfilm@festival-gmbh.de
Internet: www.itfs.de

„Goldener Spatz“ / „Golden Sparrow“, German Children’s Film & TV-Festival at Erfurt & Gera, Germany, May 8th to 16th 2007
Contact: Stiftung „Goldener Spatz“ Reichartstr. 8
D-99094 Erfurt
Phone: ++49-361-66 386 - 0
E-Mail: info@goldenerspatz.de
Internet: www.goldenerspatz.de

International Film Festival for Children and Youth Zlín/Czech Republic, May 27th to June and 2007
Contact: International Film Festival for Children and Youth Zlín Filmfest, s.r.o.
Filmová 174
CZ-76179 Zlín
Phone: ++420-57-7592217
E-Mail: festival@zlinfest.cz
Internet: www.zlinfest.cz

Kids Festival, Sarajevo/Bosnia-Herzegovina, June 8th to 14th 2007
Contact: Kids Festival, ViaKult Office
Hallibasica 52
71000 Sarajevo
Phone: ++387 33 232 644
E-Mail: office@viakult.org
Internet: www.kidsfest.ba

Plein la bobine - Sancy Film Festival for Young People, Massif du Sancy, La Bourboule & La Mont-Dore / France June 16th to 20th 2007
Contact: Plein la bobine - Sancy Film Festival for Young People c/o Hotel de Ville
Place de la Republique
F-63150 La Bourboule
Phone: ++ 33-473-655146
E-Mail: info@pleinlabobine.com
Internet: www.pleinlabobine.com
Tonje Hardersen is ECFA's New President

Florence Dupont, Mia Lindrup and Rose-Marie Strand, whose terms as board members completed after the maximum duration of six years, received a warm applause from all the members that were present at the GA. Another former board member, Pieter Boeckx from Antwerp/Belgium had already left the board previously, due to changing his job and therefore was no longer active in the field of film culture for children.

A discussion started when ECFA’s General Secretary Felix Vanginderhuysen and Mia Lindrup informed that CIFEJ had quit the co-operation with ECFA at the Kids for Kids Festival (KFKF). Upon request of Felix Vanginderhuysen CIFEJ’s Executive Director Jo-Anne Blouin explained some days before the GA via e-mail that „the board of directors of CIFEJ had decided not to renew the collaboration with ECFA on the KFKF project due to the damaging campaign undertaken by ECFA and ECFA board members against CIFEJ president.” All persons present at the GA agreed that there was neither a „campaign” nor any other intent to damage CIFEJ or CIFEJ’s president by ECFA. Nevertheless the new board members will make their attempt towards a positive solution for this problem, because they regard it as absolutely important for the two international children’s film organisations to have good relations and an effective co-operation with each other.

Felix Vanginderhuysen felt very sorry to add that there is another problem for this ambitious project KFKF: As he was informed the main sponsor decided not to renew the co-operation on this project for this year, therefore the organizers have to find new financial sources.

During the discussion on future projects for ECFA several members mentioned that the most important subject at the moment is the distribution of films for children in Europe and ideas on how to improve it. ECFA has already been working on it: A distribution conference took place at Cinekid Amsterdam in October 2006, another meeting of European children’s film distributors was scheduled during the Berlin International Film Festival 2007 and hosted by German ECFA-member Christian Meinke and his MFA+ Film Distribution (see photo below).

ECFA’s General Assembly 2007 was continued – as usual – with the party at Café am Neuen See together with 250 people from the children’s film scene in Europe.

ECFA’s New elected Board Members:

Emmanuelle Chevalier
Charlotte Giese
Tonje Hardersen
Dimitris Spyrou