

# INFO FIPA 6

News from the 20<sup>th</sup> International Festival of Audiovisual Programs in Biarritz January 23 to 28, 2007

## THAT'S A WRAP!

# Back to the fiction

**Jean-Michel Ausseil, managing director of Fipa, gives us his impressions of Fipa 2007 and outlines plans for next year's festival.**

**Info Fipa: What kind of final statement can you make about Fipa 2007?**

**Jean-Michel Ausseil:** Many more industry professionals were present at this year's festival; we were able to count between 2,300 and 2,400 accreditations, which makes for an increase of about 200 people. Particularly noteworthy was the heightened presence of the media and a much stronger collaboration with Radio France and Télérama.

**What about the public?**

**J-M. A.:** It took a while for people to realize that this festival wasn't strictly reserved for professionals, but today we welcome an audience that is much more committed and curious about Fipa.

**Are there any trends that emerged this year?**

**J-M. A.:** Dramas are back. On the other hand, creative documentary submissions have become less and less frequent. Several Egyptian films have been entered in the competition this year.

**What's the recipe for success at Fipa?**

**J-M. A.:** It's not the whole picture that has to be perfect, it's the detail. In my opinion, this approach has led to success at the festival.

**What's next for you?**

**J-M. A.:** Sunday and Monday, we'll wrap up. After that, we'll make an

assessment with our regional partners. Next week, it's back to Paris to go over the accounts and prepare grant applications. Fipa is a year of full-time work. Ideas are already materializing for 2008; we'll see an emphasis placed on imagery and religion.

Translated by Kitt Squire

Jean-Michel Ausseil, managing director of Fipa.



## WORD ON THE STREET



Whether regulars or newcomers, film buffs or experienced organizers, they share their impressions of the festival as the 20th Fipa draws to a close.

Opinions are mixed. For some discriminating viewers, Caroline Huppert's "ideal television" is present. They were especially impressed by the dramas and their firm basis in the social realities of the world. For the documentary section, reactions were just shy of unanimous. Some reproached the increasing tendency to imitate television's standards. "One can't help but notice the subject matter taking precedence over the creative process," admitted a festival attendee. She regretted not being able to discuss with the directors. More debates open to the public would have been appreciated.

The new professionals do not sense a divide. They leave the festival with promising contacts. One Fipatel employee noticed an unfortunate tendency for buyers to focus too much on films that are already financed and distributed by dominating channels. Overall these rare reservations don't dim the attendees' enthusiasm. All those interviewed are looking forward to returning next year.

Translated by Joanna Freudenheim

## LAST UP

# Bloody Sunday: in search of the truth

**Margo Harkin's documentary *Bloody Sunday — A Derry Diary* shows the people behind the tragedy "that has haunted their lives for 30 years."**



Through the tears, the struggles, the antidepressants, Harkin shows the people behind the news footage.

January 31, 1972: a peaceful civil rights march in Derry, Northern Ireland, turns to a bloodbath. 35 years later, in Ireland and around the world, this day remains a tragedy. *Bloody Sunday—A Derry Diary* opens with photographs of the wedding of Banty Nash, a man from

Derry. Banty and his bride are glowing, but their smiles become heart-breaking as director Harkin's voice reveals the sad truth that will define the rest of Banty's life: he has barely celebrated his wedding when his 19-year-old brother is killed on Bloody Sunday.

This opening sets the stage for the film's approach, focusing on individuals and the impact of Bloody Sunday on their lives. The families' story, Harkin says, "has been covered before, but I took it particularly from that point of view." Harkin herself experienced the event first-hand; the film documents her interviews with friends and neighbors, and her preparations to testify, in an attempt to give her own truth and the truth of those around her, to end up "making a film about the truth."

Watching this documentary sheds light on the hidden side of Bloody Sunday. People like Banty and his sisters have lived with the tragedy of

their brother's premature death, deprived even of official recognition that he was killed unjustly.

"While the political repercussions have been well documented, few knew of the catastrophic effect it wrecked on the families of those killed or wounded," states the film website.

This unpretentious film is, for Harkin, an attempt to give a voice to those who have none. Like many other films screened during this week's festival—including *In the Name of the Victims* and *Paper Cannot Wrap Up Embers*—the importance of perspective seems more essential than ever in challenging the media and government reports that are all too often taken for granted. Harkin urges viewers to accept and even dig for the truth, no matter how painful or complicated it may be.

Sarah Lynch, an Irish film student present at the screening, felt that the

film "hit home". While she is not from Northern Ireland, Lynch commented that the voices she heard during the footage from *Bloody Sunday* "could have been my brother's," and was struck by how emotional she became while watching the film.

Perhaps, in showing her *Diary* at international festivals such as Fipa, Harkin is lightening the burden of *Bloody Sunday* from her own shoulders, from Banty's, and from all of Derry's.

By Anna Cumbie

Genna Patterson and Sarah Lynch contributed to this article.

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