



Press release

Berlin, October 6th 2017

The first Roma film festival AKE DIKHEA? will take place in Berlin from October 19th to 22nd under the patronage of Dr. Klaus Lederer. The films in the festival focus on the life of Roma in Europe – and surprisingly, have a lot to say about European society as a whole.

The name says it all: the festival asks the question "Ake dikhea?", which translates to "So, can you see?". It picks up the fight against the blindness for the diverse and complex reality of Roma and Sinti, which does not correspond to the widespread stereotypical ideas about Roma and Sinti. The patron of the first edition is Dr. Klaus Lederer, Senator for Europe and Culture of the State of Berlin.

"It highlights films that critically reflect and consciously deconstruct antiziganistic clichés. That speak about humans first and foremost, and about Roma secondarily. Thereby, AKE DIKHEA? sets standards."

Dr. Klaus Lederer

The AKE DIKHEA? film festival, which takes place on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the inauguration of the memorial to the Sinti and Roma murdered during the Nazi era, evaluates the films by three criteria: **authenticity, individuality** and **social relevance**. As the artistic director of the Hamze Bytyci Festival emphasises, a new, authentic imagery must finally assert itself in the film landscape. That's why Roma from all over Europe have submitted their films to the festival, and also why the festival jury is mainly composed of Roma filmmakers.

The international jury placed particular emphasis on the individuality of the film protagonists and their stories. For example, the opening film **DJANGO**, which will be shown in cooperation with the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin and the Landesrat der Roma und Sinti, RomnoKher Berlin-Brandenburg on Thursday, October 19th, is not about "Roma music" in general, but about the personal story of jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt, who despite being a prominent figure did not escape the Nazi persecution. The film **GYPSY SPIRIT** also portrays not only the search of a Sinto musician for the Indian roots of his music - but also a genuine Viennese in a foreign, exotic country.





Django



Gypsy Spirit

Above all, however, films were selected for being highly topical and relevant to today's society. For instance, Eszter Hajdú, Hungarian film director and member of the jury, appreciates in the film **CZECHS AGAINST CZECHS**, that it pursues the fundamental questions of our time and addresses problems such as right-wing extremism, neonationalism and structural racism - which, at the latest with the entry of AfD into the Bundestag in Germany, have become explosive topics again.



Czechs against Czechs

The festival also contributes to other current debates. **MEN WITH BALLS** shows the bizarre and peculiar logic of the EU bureaucracy: the mayor of a small Hungarian village in which the majority of the inhabitants are unemployed built a brand new tennis court, simply because there was a subsidy for it. Nobody seems to care that the community actually needs entirely different things. The film **BURIED LETTERS** deals with the forced assimilation of Roma children in post-war Czechoslovakia - and raises ethical and moral questions, which should also be interesting for today's integration policy.



Men with Balls



Buried Letters

In addition to important films, the festival programme includes a **panel discussion** and a **workshop on the representation of Roma in film**, **screenings for schools** and a **film workshop for young people about film as a means of self-empowerment**. Discussions with the filmmakers, who will be present at

most of the screenings, will of course not be missing. One possibility to meet the festival guests is the final gala night, at which the jury and audience awards will be presented:

Galaabend AKE DIKHEA?

October 22nd , 6.30 pm

Movimiento Lounge,

Kottbusser Damm 22

10967 Berlin

The festival is organized by the Berlin-based Roma self-organization [RomaTrial](#) and in cooperation with the oldest cinema in Germany, [Movimiento](#), the agency [Journey 2 Creation](#), the self-organized film school [filmArche](#), the [Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe](#), the [Evangelical Academy of Berlin](#) and Landesrat der Roma und Sinti, RomnoKher Berlin-Brandenburg. [ROMADAY](#), the broad social alliance for solidarity with the Sinti and Roma in Europe, [RomnoKher](#) Berlin-Brandenburg, offers friendly support. The project is supported by [International Visegrad Fund](#), which organizes school performances within the framework of the programme Living Democracy! of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Media partner is [taz. die tageszeitung](#).

Further information can be found on the official website at <http://roma-filmfestival.com/>

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