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## Edward Bergers Keynote zur Verleihung des CineCoPro Awards

Mit einer wunderbaren Keynote stimmte der deutsche Filmemacher [Edward Berger](#) auf die Verleihung des ersten CineCoPro Awards im Rahmen des Filmfest München ein. Mit seiner freundlichen Erlaubnis dürfen wir wie sie im Wortlaut veröffentlichen (bitte haben Sie Verständnis, dass sie in englischer Sprache gehalten wurde) - ein allemal in jeder Hinsicht lesenswerter Text.

FILMFEST MÜNCHEN -- ON HUNGER

There is a rule of the 5P. I am not sure if you have heard of it, but it's something Adele's teacher has shared with her in singing class. The rule of the 5p means ?

Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance.

And since Adele is a pretty good singer and has obviously learned a thing or two from her coach I'm thinking it's perhaps advice one should try to adhere to...



Edward Berger erklärt, warum die Filmbranche von Adele lernen kann (Bild: Joachim Gern)

But I am also on holidays with my family at the moment. A couple of days ago we take a plane to Marseille. I rush out to the rental car office, it's 39 degrees Celsius, so it's bloody hot, but I stand in line, patiently awaiting my turn. After two hours we finally get the car, we drive up to this little house we are staying in, but on the way we decide to stop at a Supermarket. You know how it is -- you are on holidays and just want to fill up the fridge, so that you can splurge and don't have to worry about a good lunch for the next few days.

Anyway, we pay for this big cart full of groceries, load it into the boot of the car, take off, get to the house -- we are thrilled because it's beautiful -- unload the groceries from the back and I realise that one of my kids has put this huge bag of prawns -- 4 leaking pounds of prawns right on top of my jacket...

This jacket!

Now I'm on holidays, so I it's the only jacket I've got. There is this massive stain right here, and since it's prawns it is really smelly, too...

So you are trying to prepare yourself for this day, because I am not Olivia Coleman who wins an Oscar and is just so naturally funny that the whole world instantly falls in love with her. No, I'm trying to listen to Adele's singing coach, the rule of the 5P to prevent poor performance, but no preparation in this world keeps you safe from your kids putting smelly prawns on your jacket a day before you are supposed to fly off and give a speech in Munich.

Anyway, I just wanted to say in case it smells of fish in here, it is I...

But let's all please ignore it, so that I can get on with a keynote my friends Christoph Gröner and Bernhard Karl have asked me to give. And please, don't think that I am trying to sound incredibly pretentious, but they did ask me to give it in English so that we can share it with our international guests -- so English it is.

Why are we here today? Most of us have seen the films that are in competition for this wonderful award. We have seen nine films that make our heart skip, nine films that excite and elate us, because they are bold, they are different, and they are radical. Today we are here to applaud the nine directors who each have made a film with their own unique and very personal vision and have therefore secured a place for their work in today's cinematic landscape. And we are here to honour the nine producers or

producing teams who have decided to put their faith in the distinctive vision of their directors.

I'm a director, but this award is for you, the producer, so if you bear with me for a minute I would love to take this opportunity to tell you how much your faith and support means to us, the community of directors.

Allow me to digress for just a minute, but over the last few weeks I have had an argument with Christoph Gröner who has asked me to make this a personal speech and share my own personal experience with you. And I have resisted. I have resisted because I told him I hate when people make it all about themselves. We are all here to honour you, the producers, so why would anyone be interested in what I have to say? But perhaps this once, and only this once, I will indulge Christoph. And perhaps this once you will allow me to share with you how it is when you come from a place where you remember not always having had this faith and support, and how it feels when you finally get it.

My first film, a little over twenty years ago, was made for very little money, if I remember correctly perhaps 750 Thousand Deutschmarks, I wrote and directed, it traveled the festivals, was reasonably well received and successful enough to get me the financing for a second film with a much bigger budget, this time I think around 4 million. So it was a sizeable jump in terms of scope, and we all went about making it with enthusiasm and care.

But when the film was released it didn't perform. It just bombed. And I wish I could tell you it was the marketing. Or the hot weather. Or other people's fault, but I can't...

... because it was mine. There is a simple truth to why the film didn't work and it is that it just wasn't good.

I was confused, and it took me a couple of years to really understand what had happened until I finally came to terms with the fact that the reason for the film not being good was simply that I didn't have anything to say with it. There are prodigy directors who really know what they are doing from very early on, like Steven Soderbergh, Maren Ade, PT Anderson, James Gray, but I can

tell you, I wasn't one of them.

So I spent about ten years experimenting, writing, making movies for television, making mistakes and learning from them, trying to get my own films financed and failing -- basically searching for my own voice.

And you know what? I was beginning to feel that I wasn't living the life that I wanted. I saw all these wonderful films in the cinema, but I wasn't making them.

The great artist Louise Bourgeois said: "Tell your own story and you will be interesting."

Well, I hadn't told my own story. So I wasn't interesting. I knew there was something I wanted to say, I was hungry for knowledge as well as achievement, hungry to finally let it all out... but I simply didn't know how. And with all that confusion inside of me I felt pretty lonely.

Until one day I met this young boy, not more than 10 or 11 years old, and suddenly I knew what I wanted to say. I knew the film that I wanted to make and I knew exactly how I wanted to make it. It was a film about the enviable power that is in children,

about their faith and confidence in life,

their belief that anything is possible...

and about how we as adults often lose that. How I had lost what I once was.

We made the film with a tiny crew for next to nothing, probably even less than my debut feature, but somehow I felt more free and liberated than during any other production before and ever since. And when the film was accepted into its first festival, a competition slot at Berlin, perhaps you can imagine how good that felt. After 10 or 12 years of searching, of not quite knowing how or why, after years of trying and not succeeding, I finally felt we had arrived somewhere. And believe me we screamed. It was a scream of relief. Of joy. Of pride. Yes, after all this work we were just proud and happy.

It was the moment that pretty much changed everything for me. It was the moment I realised that I wasn't alone. There were other filmmakers, other producers and financiers, who were interested in the films I wanted to make and were willing to support them.

But in my case where did this support come from? To be honest, it didn't necessarily come from Germany. In fact, the first calls I got expressing genuine interest were from Film 4 and BBC Films in the UK.

And by the way I am not the only one. The incredibly gifted Helene Hegemann made a film at age 15 called "Torpedo". She got quite a few calls from around the world, but none from her own country. Interestingly enough it was also a French-British producer who encouraged her to then not give up the rights to her novel, but rather helm it as her first feature herself. The wonderful Wolfgang Fischer reported how quickly the American industry responded after the premiere of his film STYX at Berlin a couple of years ago and commented on the positive boost that this enthusiasm gave him. Suddenly everything seemed possible.

In fact, on the German side the reaction to my movie I most clearly remember is the one I got from a producer I had previously worked with. When I sent him an invite and ticket for the film, premiere night at the Berlinale - and you know how hard those are to get - he wrote back:

Sorry, can't make it. I have a colonoscopy that day...

Complicated word, for those of you who need a translation, she had to go get a Darmspiegelung.

But let's disregard that perhaps this bit of information would be considered superfluous by some. For me it was also the moment I realised that the country we live in is a cinematic wasteland and her choice of word - colonoscopy - is symptomatic for our interest in the theatrical experience and culture.

Let's face it, world cinema has passed us by,

we may be good in building cars,

but when it comes to cinema,

filmmakers and producers in other parts of the world somehow seem to have a bigger urge to tell their story than we do here at home.

Dear nominated producers, I come here as a student, a fan of your work. I come here as a complete admirer. All of us who are making films know how incredibly hard it is to find the project that ignites our passion. There aren't many of them.

And if we aren't passionate, who will be?

But you, you nine producers, you have not settled for the status quo. In the need to satisfy your hunger, in your unwavering belief that your contribution can shape our future,

that cinema isn't dead,

that out there, there still are the aesthetic opportunities that excite our audiences as much as ourselves,

you have chosen to ignore nationality and borders. You have decided that you will work with the best talent only, no matter where they are from.

You have ventured into the unknown, driven from your home in search of what you were so craving:

a filmmaker with a vision,

a filmmaker with an urge to tell her story,

a filmmaker who has got something to say.

Dear producers, we know who you are. You are the ones that stay in the seat after the awards ceremony, rather watching the winner of the festival than go to the closing night party. You are the ones that walk up to directors and ask them what films you can help them make; and by doing that you give us writers and directors, in any part of the world, the courage to tell a story which has never been told before.

I now know what this encouragement means.

I now know what it feels like to be received with open arms, even if it is in a country that isn't your own.

It literally feels like an invisible but heavy, very heavy lid has been lifted from your skull that had previously inhibited you.

And it feels like you finally found what you were always missing:

Your voice.

Around you there are suddenly filmmakers, producers who help you hone what you want to say and how you want to go about saying it.

You see, dear nominated producers. This is what you do to us. There is a simple word for it: You give us faith. And for that I am eternally grateful. I thank you.

The world is getting smaller. As a reaction to globalisation nationalism has returned. Everywhere. When I walk the streets I notice hate creeping back into our language.

By producing the nine films nominated today you have opted for a dialogue with the world. You have refused to adhere to the concept of nationality and sent us a clear political signal.

Because of you I watch the films by directors from nine different parts of the globe. I lose myself in their worlds. And I learn from their shining example. Please continue to teach me.

Here's to you innovators and pathfinders!

May we all take more risks!

May we all come out of our hole!

And may we one day, all make more films as good as yours, and find what we are all craving, even here at home.

Wish us luck.

Quelle: [Blickpunkt:Film](#)