

SHORT FILM FESTIVAL IN DRAMA

*** Collaboration between the Short Film Festival in Drama and the Hellenic Open University - Establishment of a Film Studies program in Drama**

*** Renovation of the Tobacco House**

*** Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Digital Policy**

PRESS RELEASE

The Short Film Festival in Drama is delighted to announce its collaboration with the Hellenic Open University, which, by taking advantage of the Festival dynamics, establishes a Film Studies Program in the city of Drama.

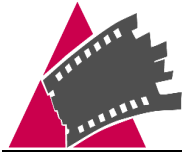
A prerequisite for the program to work is the existence of appropriate premises - a long-lasting request of the Festival itself, which last year celebrated four decades of life.

This will be accomplished with the launch of the Project for the reconstruction of the building in the big Tobacco House, which was purchased in 2000 by the Municipality of Drama in order to be given over to the Festival. The project was funded by the entrepreneur Mr. Costas Apostolidis-Founder and Chairman of the Board of Raycap Company.

This cooperation was announced by the President of the Hellenic Open University Mr. Vasilis Kardasis, the Mayor of Drama Mr. Christodoulos Mamsakos, and the Artistic Director of the Short Film Festival in Drama Mr. Antonis Papadopoulos on Monday, June 4. The Minister of Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Media Mr. Nikos Pappas, who was also there, signed a Partnership Agreement with the Municipality and the Hellenic Open University and pledged to practically support the implementation of the project.

New facilities such as cinema theaters for the activities of the Festival, lecture rooms, sound-, editing-, animation- and filming studios for the needs of the University, a Cinema Research Center, a Digital Museum, a Library, a Film Archive as well as recreation areas will function in the new premises all year round. An open air cinema will be set up in the Atrium. It should be noted that the curriculum of the Hellenic Open University will be completed with a period of practice within the new premises.

In the description of the Film Studies Program, the President of the Hellenic Open University Mr. Vasilis Kardasis referred to undergraduate and postgraduate courses in



the Greek and English Language. Mr. Kardasis pointed out that Drama has a strong brand name due to the Short Film Festival.

Mr. Nikos Pappas pointed out that Drama has an advantage because of the Short Film Festival, "upon which we are building the further development of the city with the establishment of both the School of Cinema and Audiovisual Media and the pioneering Digital Center".

"Drama is now a reference point for film studies internationally," the Mayor of Drama Christodoulos Mamsakos added, "and it is becoming a pole of attraction for the world of artistic creation and the arts in Greece, Europe and globally".

After the warm welcome of the Deputy Governor of Drama, Mr. Argyris Patakakis, the General Director of the Hellenic Cinema Center, Mr. Vasilis Kosmopoulos, expressed his continued and unreserved support of the Center and the Ministry of Culture for the Short Film Festival and the new ambitious project. The MP for Drama, Mr. Christos Karagiannidis played an important role in the promotion of the project from its beginning.

Mr. Antonis Papadopoulos, the Artistic Director of the Short Film Festival and film director, said: *"We are happy and honored because a 25-year-old personal vision is becoming a reality. This moment is of crucial importance not only for the Short Film Festival in Drama but also for the entire Greek Cinema. For the first time in Europe, the cinematographic and academic community has reached such wonderful results. A festival gives birth to a university faculty ... "*