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PRESS RELEASE

European Atelier for Young Festival Managers 2009 launched

Unique leadership programme of the European Festivals Association now open for expression of interest

From 26 April until 3 May 2009, the European Festivals Association (EFA) organises the second European Atelier for Young Festival Managers. The Atelier invites 45 emerging artistic directors from Europe, Asia, Africa, North /Central / South America and the Arabic world for a rigorous one-week training programme to Varna/Bulgaria. Bernard Faivre d'Arcier, Rose Fenton, Hugo De Greef, Nele Hertling and 15 other experienced festival pioneers will lead participants throughout the week in lectures, one-to-one talks, group discussions as well as intense workshops.

“The Atelier is about formulating experiences and handing them over to a next (new) generation of festival makers, focusing thematically on the very essence of arts festivals: ‘the art and the artist’.” as Hugo De Greef (moderator of the Atelier and former EFA Secretary General) explains the guiding theme of this **innovative training opportunity**.

The second **European Atelier for Young Festival Managers 2009** is hosted by the Varna Summer International Music Festival, the Varna Municipality and the Festival and Congress Centre Varna. As a city of festivals, of contrasts and transformation, situated in a region that will be in Europe’s political attention in the future, Varna invites participants to reflect also on festivals’ social, political and local/European significance.

Varna is the continuation of a first successful edition in Görlitz/Germany on the German/Polish border in 2006 witnessing the contribution of above mentioned festival pioneers joined by among the others **Gerard Mortier, Brian McMaster, Steve Austen and Tom Stromberg**. There is no doubt: the Atelier is a unique leadership programme and the only one featuring such a distinguished group of festival leaders and cultural experts.

EFA, the representative network of and for arts festivals in Europe, believes that cultural organisations need to embrace continuing professional development. “The very particular situation of EFA,” – according to Darko Brlek, EFA President – “gives us an essential role in the passing on of knowledge of the festival business: knowledge about the arts, artists and festival formulas.”

The Call for interest is open until 23 January. Selection will take place until mid-February 2009. Latest updates may be consulted on the EFA website at www.efa-aeef.eu .

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