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18 February 2016

Mikhail Gorbachev sends message to participants of Cinema for Peace Gala Berlin 2016

The Cinema for Peace Gala Berlin 2016, which took place on 15 February 2016 in the German capital, gathered 1,000 filmmakers, activists and artists from around the world to put the spotlight on films addressing human suffering and injustice around the world.

This year's gala focused on the current situation of refugees and on migration and presented a special award section to films that address refugees, their lives and fates, called the "Cinema for Peace Refugees Award", the first one of its kind of any film festival or similar event in the world.

Mikhail Gorbachev, as patron of the gala, sent this message from Moscow: "More than 25 years ago, calling for reunification of their country, Germans took to the streets and chanted: We are one nation. We are one nation. Today, I would suggest a new slogan, which I believe is of vital importance: We are one humankind. We are one planet. We must live in peace. And this goal, too, can be achieved."

His last visit to Berlin, by invitation of the Cinema for Peace Foundation, took place during the 25th anniversary of the fall of the wall in November 2014.

For more information about the event and the Cinema for Peace Foundation's activities see:

Press Release

"It Always Seems Impossible Until it's Done": Cinema for Peace Gala 2016 Puts the World's Spotlight on Refugees. Academy Award Winner Charlize Theron presented Nelson Mandela Award / Jury-President Ai Weiwei with stunning life jacket installation at gala venue / Patron Mikhail Gorbachev sends message from Moscow / Film awards in five categories / 1000 guests attended gala at Konzerthaus Berlin.

Berlin, February 15th 2016.

The Cinema for Peace Gala Berlin 2016, which took place in the heart of the German capital tonight, gathered 1,000 filmmakers, activists and artists from around the world to put the spotlight on films addressing human suffering and injustice around the world. "It always seems impossible until it's done", said Charlize Theron, Academy Award winner and honorary gala guest, quoting Nelson Mandela, at the opening of the award ceremony. "It is a very powerful quote, but most importantly, it's time for us to act on it. Let's make the impossible, possible, because we can."

This year's gala focused on the current situation of refugees and on migration and presented a special award section to films that address refugees, their lives and fates, called the "Cinema for Peace Refugees Award", the first one of its kind of any film festival or similar event in the world. The Chinese artist **Ai Weiwei** served as the Honorary President of this year's gala jury: He is strongly involved into bringing public attention to the refugee situation by being present on the Greek Island Lesbos these days. In the last couple of days, he had created a fascinating installation with life vests and a rescue boat from the Greek island of Lesbos at the Konzerthaus, which was widely discussed among the 1,000 VIP guests from Germany and abroad.

The former President of the Soviet Union and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate **Mikhail Gorbachev was the patron of the gala. For the event, he sent this message from Moscow: "More than 25 years ago, calling for reunification of their country, Germans took to the streets and chanted: We are one nation. We are one nation. Today, I would suggest a new slogan, which I believe is of vital importance: We are one humankind. We are one planet. We must live in peace. And this goal, too, can be achieved." His last visit to Berlin, by invitation of the Cinema for Peace Foundation, took place during the 25th anniversary of the fall of the wall in November 2014.**

The winners in the six award categories are:

Nelson Mandela Award for the Most Valuable Movie of the Year: "Beasts of No Nation", presented to Producers Tony Tagoe and Daniel Damah from Ghana and the former child soldier Emmanuel Jal Ehem.

The International Green Film Award: "Racing Extinction", presented to Producer Fisher Stevens

Special Peace Award: „Der Staat gegen Fritz Bauer“, presented to Burghart Klaußner

Cinema for Peace Refugees Film Award: "A Syrian Love Story", presented to Director Sean McAllister (+ protagonists Raghda and Amer)

Cinema for Peace Award for Justice: "Watchers in the Sky" presented to Producer Kery Dwyer



The End of the Cold War and the World Today. International conference.

Gorbachev in the news media

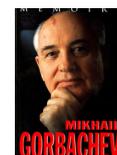
Recent articles in the Russian media about Mikhail Gorbachev and Perestroika

Georgie Anne Geyer. Gorbachev Demands Real Democratic Reform in Russia

Yahoo News, 15.04.2013

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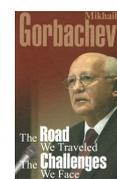
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Raisa Gorbachev. I hope. Reminiscences and Reflections



Mikhail Gorbachev. The Road We Traveled. The Challenges We Face

Cinema for Peace Award for Justice: *Watchers in the Sky*, presented to producer Kerry Hopper
Cinema for Peace Award for the Most Valuable Documentary of the Year: "Cartelland", presented to David Romero and Domingo Bartolo - Cheran Indians who started the freedom fight of the indigenous people in "Cartelland".
 The Cinema for Peace jury unites 130 members of the film industry, e.g. international award winners, festival directors, journalists as well as members of the Golden Globes and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Oscars). The "**Nelson Mandela Award for the most valuable movie of the year**" was presented by Academy Award Winner Charlize Theron and Kweku Mandela.

Other laudators included the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, as well as Shirin Ebadi, a former judge and human rights activist from Iran will also join the event. Ebadi has been the first female Muslim Nobel Peace Prize Laureate when receiving this prize in 2003. Other prominent guests were, for example actress Nastassja Kinski and the Russian activist and music group Pussy Riot.

For the first time, the gala was followed by a ball. A band of Syrian refugees was playing, following an initiative by Jan Josef Liefers, and being supported by last year's laudator Katja Riemann. In 2013, Liefers had travelled to Aleppo in Syria with Cinema for Peace, delivering milk powder and promoting the idea of a no-fly-zone and asking to stop bombing civilians.

This award was particularly important to Germans: In the context of Pegida, NSU and the irritating reaction to the Hitler actor from the film "Er ist wieder da" ("He is back"), when by-passers on the Kurfürstendamm greeted him friendly, Cinema for Peace wants to make a strong statement against the silent acceptance of Neo-Nazis which partly is the result of a polarizing discussion about refugees and unsolved integration issues. "We have foreseen this development for more than two years" Cinema for Peace Founder Jaka

Bizilj explains. „We have staged many screenings about Syria across Germany, we have visited war areas in Syria, tried to wake up politicians and the people in order to finish this war. Nobody has acted. Or to say in the words of Ai Weiwei: If you don't do anything, everything will get worse. We have to act now and have to finish wars."

The Cinema for Peace Award for Justice was handed over by **Fatou Bensouda** and **Shirin Ebadi** but also human rights experts and lawyers such as Manfred Nowak (former UN ambassador being responsible for "torture"), Dr. Wolfgang Kaleck (Founder of the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights) and Fred Abrahams (E-Team/Human Rights Watch).

Cinema for Peace Berlin 2016 was presented by **Fabrica de Cine** and supported by **Henry Lambertz GmbH & Co. KG, Point Rouge** and **DJE Kapital AG**. Fabrica de Cine is a partner of Cinema for Peace Berlin and Los Angeles. The company aims at presenting the social responsibility of the cinema by financing films on humanitarian and social topics such as Martin Scorsese's, „Silence" but also the new Tom Tykwer film „A Hologram for the King" with Tom Hanks.

Other Cinema for Peace partners are **Ejido Verde** and **Cotton made in Africa**. Supporting companies are also **Fleurop, Selters** and **Fiji Water Company LLC**, the **Südliche Weinstraße e.V.**, the **Premium Corps AG, Hruby Werbetechnik GmbH, Expofair GmbH, TRUST Promotion GmbH, Amano Hotel, Regent, Cine Impuls**.

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Mikhail Gorbachev's message to participants of Cinema for Peace Gala Berlin 2016

Dear friends,

I am very glad to greet all of you, both the organizers and the participants of today's event in Berlin. You have gathered to support the initiative that Cinema for Peace took in creating the Berlin Wall Museum. It is, indeed, an excellent initiative, to remind people and to tell them about the historic events that ultimately led to the end of the Cold War. I highly appreciate and support this initiative and I am grateful to all those who are implementing it.

The wall not only divided Germans; it was a symbol of the division of Europe. We put an end to this division by common efforts of our nations and the leaders of both East and West, and by the efforts of citizens, the multitudes of people who stated their will to live together in a united Europe. This was decisive.

The process of ending the Cold War was not easy. It came after several decades of mistrust and of continued arms race, with nuclear-armed missiles deployed on both sides, which could within minutes destroy the fruits of human civilization in our European continent and on the whole planet. It seemed that this deadly train could not be stopped. But we succeeded, we did it. And I want to pay tribute to all those who contributed to this historic achievement.

Today, Europe and the world are going through difficult times. This is something I want to emphasize. Political leaders are lagging behind the rapid pace of change in our global world. Once again, new walls are emerging, visible and invisible, that divide people. Every day seems to bring alarming news. I see with great concern how international media engage in propaganda wars.

If we ask people today whether the world is moving in the right direction, I think that most of them would say no. And if you ask my opinion, I agree with them.

But we must not despair. That would be a great mistake. All of us, including artists, film-makers, intellectuals and ordinary citizens can do something to make the world safer and better, to prevent another division of Europe.

Our global world is facing so many common problems – fighting terrorism, climate change, the challenge of poverty, inequality. None of those problems can be solved by military means or if nations remain divided and act alone. We can only do it together. We can only do it through cooperation on the basis of common interests.

Let us do all we can to prevent the building of new walls that divide cities and nations, that keep apart families, that cut through

Let us do all we can to prevent the building of new walls and armed states and nations, that keep apart families, that cut through peoples' hearts and minds. The experience we gained during the years of perestroika and new thinking, when we moved toward ending the cold war, should help us in achieving this goal.

I want to tell you that I am convinced that our two nations, Germans and Russians, which did so much to abolish the Cold War, must now make a decisive contribution to overcoming of the current very alarming situation. Let us demand that our political leaders act now and take concrete steps to save our continent and our planet.

More than 25 years ago, calling for reunification of their country, Germans took to the streets and chanted: We are one nation. We are one nation. Today, I would suggest a new slogan, which I believe is of vital importance: We are one humankind. We are one planet. We must live in peace.

And this goal, too, can be achieved.

I wish all of you, who participate in this event tonight, to have a good evening and a good discussion of the vital issues of our time. I am quite confident that, working together, we will resume moving along the path that brought us to the end of the Cold War. We must firmly commit ourselves to this path. This must be our common choice.

I thank you all.

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