

PRESS RELEASE

November 3, 2008

Films and debates on the European Union and Migration: Freedom of Movement

On Monday 17, Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19 November, Maastricht will host a unique festival with film, discussions, keynote speeches, and music on migration issues within and into the European Union. This event is organised by Maastricht Debates in cooperation with Lumière Cinema, Studium Generale and the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance.

The overarching question behind the festival is how to accommodate freedom of movement inside the European Union on the one hand, whilst ensuring security and safety of its citizens, on the other. This complex issue is captured in four themes, each introduced by experts. The audience is invited to give their views and to raise questions. The themes are 'European migration policy', 'Human trafficking', 'Migration from Eastern Europe' and 'Cultural identity'. For more information, see www.maastrichtdebates.net.

Practicalities

Monday 17, Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19 November, 7.30 p.m.
Lumière Cinema, Bogaardenstraat 40B
Admission: € 5,- (including 1 drink)
Reservations: www.lumiere.nl, (043) 321 40 80

EU Migration Policy

The EU has an ambitious aim: creating an area of freedom, security and justice. The abolishment of internal frontiers as a result of the intergovernmental negotiated Schengen agreement brought in its wake the necessity to strengthen the external frontiers of the envisaged common area and the harmonization of asylum and immigration policies. The EU has been heavily criticized for these policies as they lead to the creation of a "Fortress Europe", with an external shield and an internal trace of "illegal" immigrants. In which direction will the EU move? Adapt to existing realities or continue its enclosure? The experts are Sergio Carrera, Head of Section & Research Fellow, Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels and Melissa Siegel, Research Fellow, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance. The documentary is titled 'Dijarama' – welcome – by Gus Barrera (2007).

Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking can be considered a new version of slavery. Human Trafficking lacks any moral concern and deprives the victims of their freedom and identity. Taking their passports away, the intermediaries have complete power over the fate of their victims. This immense power has led to the formation of a criminal network taking advantage of the despair among the people being smuggled. According to US State Department data, an estimated 600,000 to 820,000 men, women, and children are trafficked across international borders each year, approximately 70 percent of them being women and girls and up to 50 percent are minors. The experts are Hildegard Schneider, Faculty of Law, and Maarten Vink, Department of Political Science, both Maastricht University. The movie is titled 'True North' by Steven Hudson (2006).



Migration from Eastern Europe in an enlarged European Union

In 2004 and 2007, respectively 10 and 2 states from Eastern and Central Europe joined the European Union. The new European citizens were meanwhile entitled to have freedom of movement, a core principle of the European Union. Yet concerns were raised among the former Members regarding the poorer economic level of the new entrants which resulted in quotas restricting the number of workers coming from the new Member States. The EU faces therefore a very paradoxical internal situation between principles and realities. Legality of movements does not forcibly find an echo on the national labor markets. Illustrations speak of themselves, the most culturally and politically striking being the complex situation of the Roma and Sinti populations in several Member States. It attests the dualism existing between European inclusion and national exclusions. The expert is Morag Goodwin, Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology and Society, Tilburg University. The feature movie is the classic 'Time of the Gypsies' by Emir Kusturica (1989).

Cultural Identity

The formation of cultural identities is a never ending process of identifying and attaching oneself to a particular set of ideas leaving room for change and adaptation. Thus when, in the case of immigration, different cultural identities clash, immigrants are faced with a completely new set of ideas. As a consequence they have to find a way to redefine their cultural identity trying to compromise the old as well as the new set of ideas. Nevertheless, oftentimes, the different sets of ideas are too conflicting and lead to identity crises. The experts are Ulrike Müller, Assistant Professor, University College Maastricht and Veronica Davidov, Department of Political Science, University of Maastricht. The documentary is titled 'All white in Barking' by Marc Isaacs (2007).

Note for the editor:

For more information, see www.maastrichtdebates.net or contact Huub Mudde, Coordinator Maastricht Debates at info@maastrichtdebates.net or T. +31-(0)62 1275064.

Other upcoming events

On December 9, Maastricht Debates will organize a debate with European Parliamentarians in the light of the upcoming elections, June 2009. What are their views vis-à-vis the role of the EU as a global player?

On January 26, Bert Koenders, Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation will come to Maastricht to discuss with senior officials of the World Bank and the audience on sustainable economic development globally.

Detailed programme

Monday, 17 November

7.30 PM

Opening of the festival by Han Aarts, Maastricht Debates & Director, Mundo
Introduction of the evening and movie by Metka Hercog and Cheng Boon Ong, Research Fellows,
the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

7.50 PM – 9.30 PM

Movie: It's a Free World (Ken Loach, 2007)

Tuesday, 18 November

Theme 1: European migration policy

7.30 PM

Discussion with Sergio Carrera, Head of Section & Research Fellow, Centre for European Policy
Studies, Brussels and Melissa Siegel, Research Fellow, Maastricht Graduate School of
Governance

8.45 PM – 10.00 PM

Documentary: Dijarama (Gus Barrera, 2007)

Theme 2: Human trafficking

7.30 PM

Introduction by Maarten Vink, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of
Maastricht

7.35 PM – 9.15 PM

Movie: True North (Steven Hudson, 2006)

9.15 PM – 10.00 PM

Discussion with Hildegard Schneider, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Maastricht (tbc)

Wednesday, 19 November

Theme 3: Migration from Eastern Europe

7.30 PM

Keynote by Morag Goodwin, Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology and Society, Tilburg University

7.50 PM – 10.15 PM

Movie: Time of the Gypsies (Kusturica, 1989)

Theme 4: Cultural identity

7.30 PM

Introduction by Ulrike Müller, Assistant Professor, University College Maastricht

7.35 PM – 9.15 PM

Documentary: All white in Barking (Marc Isaacs, 2007)

9.15 PM – 10.00 PM

Discussion with Veronica Davidov, Department of Political Science, University of Maastricht

10.00 PM – onwards: Gipsy music by the Triska trio

The movies

It's a free world

By Ken Loach

2007

96 min.

The ironically titled movie, screened in competition at the Venice Film Festival, focuses on a spirited young English woman who becomes inured to the fate of immigrants while working for a big recruiting agency. Battered by her own work experience, she starts up a new agency, but the opportunity to make big money by exploiting the desperate and vulnerable leads to corruption and violence.

Dijarama

By Gus Barrera

2007

75 min.

In 2004, a Spanish team made a documentary in which economic refugees from West Africa reported on their life threatening journey to an illegal stay in Europe. Dijarama ('Welcome') is however about the viewing of this documentary in Guinea to warn people for eventual disappointments. A so-called anti-Europe campaign. The reactions by the people in Guinea differ. Sema, taxi driver, keeps dreaming about the 'El Dorado' of Europe, regardless the plea made by the tour guide to stay in his beautiful country. Dijarama is a colourful homage to the people and culture of Guinea in which at the same time common Africans are critical about the distribution of wealth and the failure of leadership in Africa and Europe.

True North

By Steven Hudson

2006

96 min.

The skipper of the Scottish trawler PD-100 has worked for more than thirty-two years to buy his fishing vessel but is bankrupt and near to lose his ship to the bank. While in the port of Ostend, Belgium, his first mate and son Sean accepts a lot of money to smuggle Chinese illegal immigrants to Scotland to keep the trawler with his father. The crewman Riley helps him in the scheme, and they hide the group in a store below the boatswain store. However, a Chinese teenager hides in the engine room, stealing food and leaving money in the galley. The cook, who is a little slow and has issues with sex, finds the stowaway and helps her. Sean decides to stay longer in the North Sea to get catch and avoid problems with customs, leaving the immigrants in the most subhuman conditions. When one of the Chinese dies, despair is triggered leading the crew to tragic actions.

Time of the Gypsies

By Emir Kusturica

1989

142 min.

Filmed in Sarajevo, this is a film everyone should see *twice*. The story centers around Perhan, a young Romany Gypsy who has inherited telekinetic powers. He lives with his grandmother, a gifted healer; his little sister, who is physically handicapped; and his uncle, a ne'er-do-well gambler, hopelessly in debt to the local thugs. They live together in a little house on the outskirts of Sarajevo, surrounded by the Gypsy community that is the focus of their lives.

Perhan is tricked into traveling to Italy with Ahmed, a local Gypsy lord. Ahmed traffics in everything from selling babies to pimping. Perhan is forced to lead the life of a petty criminal while, back in Sarajevo, his grandmother has promised to look after Azra, his fiancée. Ahmed promises that he's sending money back to Sarajevo each month, to be put towards the costs of the new home he is having built for Perhan and his fiancée. When Perhan returns home, he discovers that there is no house being built, that his fiancée is now pregnant with what may be his uncle's baby, and, most tragically, that his little sister, thought to be receiving medical treatment, has in fact been forced to

beg in the streets to survive. These revelations change Perhan's heart irrecoverably and he sets out on a mission to destroy Ahmed and find his sister.

The rare glimpse into the Romany Gypsy culture is enough to make this film interesting, but the story is so compelling, the cinematography so excellent and the characters so fascinating, that it takes on the proportions of a major work of film. Emir Kusturica won the award for Best Director from the Cannes Film Festival for *Time of the Gypsies* (1989).

All white in Barking

By Marc Isaacs

2007

73 min.

Filmmaker Marc Isaacs' funny and illuminating documentary gives a voice to people who feel that they are at the sharp end of multicultural Britain. Take a trip to the London borough of Barking and Dagenham, an area which has some of the highest levels of immigration in the country and where residents are struggling to come to terms with their new arrivals. There we meet life-long residents Susan and Jeff who are encouraged to put their assumptions aside to welcome their new Nigerian neighbours. There's also Dave whose anger at the influx of immigrants has led him to campaign for the far right British Nationalist Party - despite both his daughters having non-white boyfriends. Meanwhile, Holocaust survivor Monty and African Betty form a close friendship, despite disapproving stares. In this Storyville, Isaacs' gentle probing of these very different characters helps to paint a vivid picture of the attitudes and preconceptions at the heart of Modern Britain.
