

Film News

FROM LATVIA



TOP EVENTS

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Top Events 2007/2008

Front Cover *Defenders of Riga*

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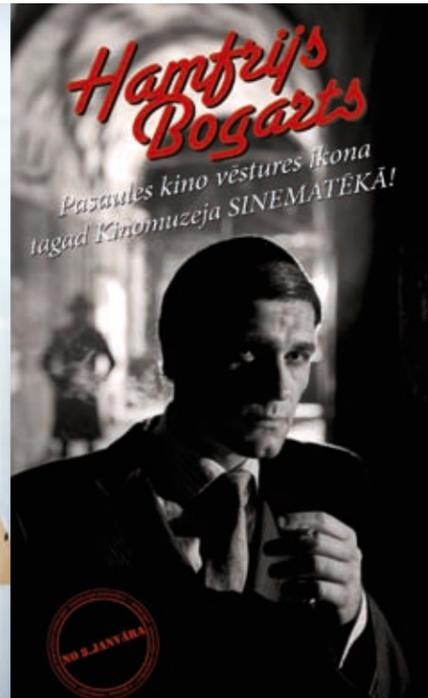
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Top Events 2008

January

Cinematheque at the Riga Film Museum – advertised on Riga streets by large-format posters with actors from the New Riga Theatre, well known in Europe, posing in the roles of film icons Marilyn Monroe, Humphrey Bogart and James Dean. Cinematheque began in the previous year with over-capacity lectures on Louise Brooks and the film *Pandora's Box*, Rita Hayworth and the film *Gilda*, as well as lectures on French film gems, starting with the silent film classic serial *Fantomas*.



February

The *Berlinale* will take place from February 7 – 17, and Latvia will be well represented not only by the number of film delegates which increases with every year, but also with Ēvalds Lācis' animation short *Jaunā suga* (*The New Species*) in the *Generation Kplus* competition, and *Teat Beat of Sex* from Signe Baumann (produced in the USA and Italy) in the *Berlinale Shorts* competition, and with other films in the *Berlinale* market screenings.

March

The results of the competition for State funding will be announced. In 2008 there will be revolutionary changes in the Latvian film industry – **financing for film production has been increased by 120%**, by one million lats.



Top Events 2008

April

The premiere of *The Deconstruction of an Artist* from director Pēteris Krilovs and producer Uldis Cekulis. This film, among huge competition, was recognized as the second best project at the Cannes documentary film market MIPDOC *Co-production Challenge* presentation in the spring of 2007.



May

The premiere of a new feature film by director Ināra Kolmane, whose recent documentary *My Husband Andrei Sakharov* has already garnered international recognition. Her first full-length feature *Mona* was made together with Icelandic film master Fridrik Thor Fridriksson, and is a mystically erotic story about passion in a small town. With this the **first wave of 2008 premieres end**, to be continued in the early fall. The number of premieres for the year for State supported films includes 4 features, 4 shorts, 20 documentaries and 12 animation films. New films include two film student graduation projects.



June

The Riga Film Museum will host an exhibition dedicated to the legendary film personality – director and revolutionary Sergei Eisenstein, who would have celebrated his 110th birthday in 2008. His film *Battleship Potemkin* (*Bronenosets Potjomkin*, 1925) is often recognized as the best in film history, but many do not know that the great director was born in the Latvian capital Riga, and that this city has inspired him creatively.



July

Graduation of the first class from the Master's programme at the Baltic Film and Media school, founded in Tallinn, Estonia in 2006. Four directors, two cinematographers, two producers, one screenwriter and one editor will be returning to Latvia with their Master's degrees. The BFM is led by director Boris Frumin, Associate Professor at the New York University: Tisch School of the Arts.

August

The *International Film Forum Arsenals*, which takes place every two years in September, will once again be heralded by the traditional breakfast. The forum is famous for spectacles that occur from the beginning to the end of the festival, and long after. In 2008 *Arsenals* will celebrate its 22 year anniversary, and as per tradition the main prize will again be determined by a mystical ceremony.



September

Interest in documentary film in Riga is once again activated by the **Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries**, gathering professionals from the Baltic, Scandinavian and Eastern European countries. Project presentations, discussions with potential co-production partners and distributors are enhanced by a topical film programme which attracts great public interest.



Top Events 2008

October

Active film production season in Latvia ends. In the summer of 2008, almost ten features and shorts will be shot simultaneously, including the family film *Mazie laupītāji* – about a small brother and sister who successfully rob a bank, and the historical film *Rūdolfa mantojums (Rudolf's Gold)*, directed by Latvian film master Jānis Streičs, and produced by Andrejs Ēkis who released the 2007 hit *Defenders of Riga*.

November

Latvia celebrates the 90th anniversary of its first independence, and the culmination event of a film programme dedicated to the celebrations takes place in the film theatre *Rīga* – an outstanding architectural monument that opened on December 30, 1923, was the first reinforced concrete structure in the Latvian capital, and was built especially for screening films. The then-called *Splendid Palace* was the first film theatre in the Baltics to show films with sound. The film theatre *Rīga* is now a part of the *Europa Cinemas* association and will devote a large part of their repertoire to national films.



December

It is once again time to head to where the **Baltic Films** sphere of activity takes place and to see **new films from the whole Baltic region**, – the *Baltic Event* film project market and the *Black Nights Film Festival*. The *Baltic Films* work year, which also includes the Berlin, Cannes and Karlovy Vary festivals, the *Sunny Side of the Doc* in La Rochelle and the *Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries* in Riga, ends with this feature film project gathering.



January 22

First premiere of the year – director **Juris Poškus'** feature *Monotony* filmed in a non-traditional way, soon began to garner awards on the festival circuit. The highest honour to date was in June, when *Monotony* won the Perspectives competition at the Moscow International Film Festival receiving a St. George statuette and a certificate for 10 000 metres of KODAK film. At the National film festival *Lielais Kristaps*, the film received awards for best director and best actress.



April 14-15

At the European Documentary Network film market *MIPDOC* at Cannes, **Latvian producer Uldis Cekulis** is named one of eight best documentary film producers. He presents the film he produced and shot at a special screening – director Laila Pakalniņa's *Teodors*, which was included in the 2006 IDFA competition programme, and received the Special Jury Prize at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in July 2007.



May 4

On the day of the declaration of independence, a **Latvian national day of celebration** – the now **traditional Latvian film parade** took place over 12 hours at the film theatre *Rīga*, with, for the first time, an open-air screening in the courtyard, from dusk until midnight. The programme included a special retrospective showing in honour of documentary cinematographer and director **Andris Slapiņš** who died at the barricades in 1991, and 21 short films in five screenings including four premieres.

February 9

The *Generation* competition, celebrating its 30th anniversary, was introduced at the *Berlinale* festival, and the children's *Generation Kplus* section also included a Latvian and Estonian co-production, the feature-length animation film *Lotte from Gadgetville*.



February 16

MEDIA Desk Latvia organizes a **seminar on documentary film scriptwriting** with **Tue Steen Müller** – the documentary film guru from Denmark.

April 25

An **exhibition honouring Latvia's oldest working director Rolands Kalniņš'** 85th birthday opened at the **Rīga Film Museum** (his latest feature, *Bitter Wine*, had its premiere two weeks later). The fate of his earlier films is a harsh illustration of the terrible attitude during Soviet times towards talented artists, but the exhibition also reveals that in the 1960s, Rolands Kalniņš was able to capture the mood of the French and Czech *Nouvelle Vague* movement in his films, though the Iron Curtain prevented commensurate comparison.



May 19

The film programme of the *Francijas pavasaris (Un Printemps français)* festival ended with a large-scale night event – *Nouvelle Vague. Reloaded* at the **Rīga Film Museum**, part of the international Museum Night event in Latvia. The two month long film programme screened the French masters' classics collection and a Francois Truffaut retrospective, as well as feature-length animation films made together with Latvian film studios – *Kirikou et La Sorciere*, *Kirikou et les bêtes sauvages* and *Les Triplettes de Belleville*. The French animation director **Michel Ocelot** presented master classes in 3D animation and appliqué techniques.



Top Events 2007

May 21

National Film Centre Director Ilze Gailite Holmberg was the representative for international-level official activities at Cannes – she discussed issues of film piracy on the internet, film digitalization and support for film competitiveness in Europe at the European Film Agency Directors association, and participated in the *European Film Promotion* platform meeting. In turn, the Minister of Culture of Latvia, Helēna Demakova, participated in the meeting of Culture and Audiovisual Ministers of the European Union at the invitation of Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Information Society and Media, and Gilles Jacob, President of the Festival.

ESTONIA · LATVIA · LITHUANIA



Top Events 2007

June 7

The premiere of an unusual project in Latvian and world film history – the feature film *Vogelfrei*, where four directors jointly created a unified life story for the main hero. The film had its world premiere at the Pusan festival in Korea in October, its European premiere at the Torino International Festival of Young Cinema in November, and received the most nominations and won for best film at the National film festival in Latvia.



June 11-16

Latvian animation films, after a ten-year pause, once again participated in the Annecy International Animated Film Festival in France. The Latvian/Estonian co-produced feature-length animation *Lotte from Gadgetville* was screened in the feature films out of competition section, Jurgis Krāsons made his directorial debut with the short *Melnā kaste (Black Box)* in the *Annecy Plus* section – it was also later selected by a festival in Brazil, and the popular-in-Europe Latvian band *Brainstorm* had their video-clip *Lonely Feeling* as one of six animation clips in competition for *Music Video*.



June 19

The premiere of Latvian animator and US Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences member Signe Baumann's latest produced-in-Latvia animation film *Veterinārārsts (The Veterinarian)*. The location chosen for the premiere is very thematic – the Museum of the History of Medicine. In this film Signe continues with the medicine theme she started in *Zobārsts (The Dentist, 2005)*, which is quite different from the sexier films she makes in New York and is showing in this year's *Berlinale Shorts* competition.



June 26-29

Three Latvian film producers – Uldis Cekulis, Guntis Trekteris and Roberts Vinovskis took their projects to the documentary film market *Sunny Side of the Doc* in the French city of La Rochelle.

June 26

MEDIA Desk supports a master class held in Riga by American and British actress and Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences member Lisa Eichhorn, who studied at Oxford University and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, debuted in film together with Richard Gere, later played roles in the films of Anthony Minghella and Steven Soderbergh, and currently teaches her master classes according to the Lee Strasberg method. Lisa Eichhorn had proven her worth with her work on the national hit *Rīgas sargi (Defenders of Rīga)*, and she is now training the family for the new children's film *Mazie laupītāji*, which will have its premiere in 2009.



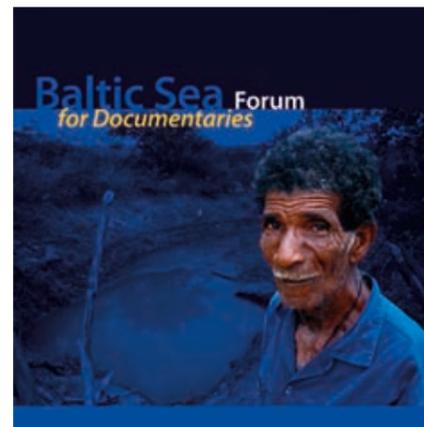
July 30-August 5

The MEDIA supported international documentary filmmakers training programme ESoDoc 2007 session takes place in Latvia. ESoDoc presenter Chris Wherry gives a lecture on sound design, and Lars Barthel on cinematography. On August 2, a MEDIA Desk Latvia reception and documentary film night with Latvian film professionals, ESoDoc Latvia participants and a wide audience is held at the industrial architectural monument the *Sarkanie spīķeri* warehouses.



September 5-9

The Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries takes place in Riga. Film professionals from the Baltics, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine and Georgia present their upcoming projects and the documentary film programme *Films That Shook the World* screens films for the public.



September 8-12

Documentary film week ends with the European Documentary Film Symposium, celebrating 30 years since theoretical ideas in documentary filmmaking began developing intensively in the former USSR territory and later in Eastern Europe.



Top Events 2007

August 14

The premiere of director Una Celma's latest film *Nerunā par to (Don't Talk About It)*, oriented towards a female audience. The script's author is well-known writer and relationship columnist Dace Rukšāne, whose favourite topic is the soul searching of thirty-something females. Director Una Celma has explored female themes in her documentary films *1960. gada meitenes (The Girls of 1960, 1995)* and the festival hit *Egg Lady (2000)*, and does so this time as well – to great acclaim.



September 11

The Riga Film Museum receives official accreditation from the Latvian Museum Council, develops a work strategy for 2007 – 2011 and begins the modernization of the museum's facilities, creating suitable museum-standard storage conditions.



September 28

The National film festival *Lielais Kristaps* begins its 30th anniversary celebrations, screening 100 films produced during the last two years in three theatres over the course of a week. At the same time voting takes place on Latvian Television for the all-time best films of the last 30 years. The festival also includes the premieres of Lithuanian and Estonian feature films, an alternative night screening for youth and films shown in non-traditional locations – the Riga Zoo, the War Museum and others. Legendary actress Vija Artmane receives a lifetime achievement award and a retrospective of her films is shown in the Riga Film Museum. Her portrait, taken in 1956 by Latvian documentary film master Herz Frank, appears on city streets in large format posters.

28. septembris – 7. oktobris



Top Events 2007

September 29

The premiere of *Čīza acīm (Little Bird's Diary)*, a film made in a very unusual and innovative way – as a documentary animation bringing to life some 80 years of drawings from the diaries of Irina Piļķe. At the National film festival *Čīza acīm* receives the award for best short animation film and the FIPRESCI Jury Award.



October 6

The National film festival ends with the awards ceremony, handing out awards in 8 categories and for the 16 best film professionals. The most awards are garnered by the films best known internationally as well – the features *Vogelfrei* and *Monotony* and short film *Fire*, documentary films *Theodore* and *My Husband Andrei Sakharov*, and the animation film *Lotte from Gadgetville*.



October 18

The annual Baltic Film Festival Berlin begins, and Latvian documentary film master Herz Frank is honoured with a wide retrospective in the film theatre *Babylon*. He isn't resting on his laurels though, as he is intensely at work on his new documentary film *Mūžīgais mēģinājums (Perpetual Rehearsal)*, filmed in Israel, Russia, the USA and Latvia, which will have its premiere at the beginning of 2008.



October 22-25

Latvia participates for the first time in the film market in Turkey – the 2nd Eurasia Film Market was held alongside the international *Golden Orange Film Festival* in Antalya. Representatives from *Baltic Films*, the organization that unites the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian film industries, were invited to come on a scouting trip.

October 27

MEDIA Desk Latvia organizes a seminar on European film distribution with producer David Collins of *Samsonfilms Ireland*, whose film *Once* has had great distribution success in the USA.



October 31- November 4

At the 49th Nordic Film Days in Lübeck, Germany, the now traditional *Baltic Films Prize* is presented – the conceptually-created glass and metal clock goes to Swedish director Ake Sandgren's feature *To Love Someone*.



November 7

The most paradoxical premiere of the year – the Latvian, Austrian and UK co-production film *Midsummer Madness* about events on the shortest night of the year, in June – the Austrian premiere was held on October 12, but Latvian audiences had a late fall screening. Though the trees outside were all leafless, the film's director was wearing a fake oak-leaf garland around his neck symbolic to the summer solstice.



November 11

The year's most grandiose premiere with the most far-reaching resonance – the President and ex-President arrived for the opening of Andrejs Ēķis' and Aigars Grauba's film *Defenders of Riga*, which goes on to become a national hit and smashes audience numbers records. The film surpasses the record for James Cameron's *Titanic* (1997), and with that *Defenders of Riga* becomes the most watched film in Latvia since the second independence.



Top Events 2007

December 2-6

Baltic, Scandinavian and Central European producers, distributors and festival representatives meet in the Estonian capital of Tallinn for the project market *Baltic Event* and the *Black Nights Film Festival*. Latvia is represented in the project market by the films *Vogelfrei* and *Monotony*, and the coming-soon projects *Amatieris (Amateur)* and *Medības (The Hunt)*.



December 12-15

At the global documentary film project *Why Democracy?* in Riga, the ten most socially and politically topical films from the world are screened, posing such paradoxical questions as – is the image of Che Guevara on a t-shirt enough for a revolution? Internationally renowned experts Anna Sharogradskaya from Russia, Hans Monath from the German newspaper *Tagesspiegel* and Flemming Rose, editor of the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, who started an international scandal by publishing caricatures of the prophet Muhammad, participate in discussions on the freedom of speech and democracy.



December 17

Latvia's most professional and internationally best-known documentary film studio – *Vides Film Studio* celebrates its ten year anniversary. Over the course of these years they have shot almost twenty short and feature-length documentaries, and in terms of both national and international awards, VFS is the absolute leader among Latvian film studios. VFS's internationally best-known films are *Roof on the Moonway* (2001), *Dreamland* (2004), *Sea of Attractions* (2005), *The Worm* (2005), and *Theodore* (2006), shortly to be joined by the coming-soon films *Stasys* (2008), *The Deconstruction of an Artist* (2008) and *Child of the Big Bird* (2008).



December 21

The exhibition *Kustības fenomens jeb Kā piedzima kino (The Phenomenon of Movement or How Film Was Born)* opens at the Riga Film Museum. It is a collection worthy of any respectable film museum – with a zoetrope, praxinoscope, mutoscope and other authentic 19th century optical toys full of the wonder of the birth of motion pictures.



Come

See New Horizons



FACTS & FIGURES

GENERAL DATA

Total population	2 270 700
Population of capital city Riga	722 485
Currency LVL (Lats)	1 EUR = 0,7028 LVL
Standard VAT rate	18%
VAT for cinema tickets	5%
Personal income tax 2007	25%
GDP 2006	16 028 308 190 EUR
GDP per capita 2006	7 004 EUR
Average monthly income 2006	544 EUR
Number of cinemas 2007	32
Number of screens 2007	46
Number of multiplex cinemas 2007	1
Average ticket price 2007	3,98 EUR
Gross Box Office 2007	8 856 995 EUR
Number of admissions 2007	2 225 322
Admissions per capita 2007	1
Market share of domestic films	7,4%
Annual state support for film industry 2008	6 134 112 EUR

12th Baltic Sea Forum

JOIN US AT

The pitching sessions of documentary film projects

BALTIC SEA DOCUMENTARY FORUM

Riga, Latvia, September 3-7, 2008

Application Deadline: Friday, June 6, 2008

Guidelines and Entry Form: balticforum@nfc.gov.lv
www.mediadesk.lv

Logos: ESTONIA - LATVIA - LITHUANIA Baltic Films, MEDIA, EDN, KOPRODUKCIJA

ANNUAL STATE SUPPORT FOR FILM INDUSTRY 2004-2008

	National Film Centre of Latvia		Culture Capital Foundation		Total	
	LVL	EUR	LVL	EUR	LVL	EUR
2004	761 943	1 104 284	776 340	1 125 150	1 538 283	2 229 434
2005	1 378 668	1 961 679	660 000	956 558	2 038 668	2 918 237
2006	1 468 596	2 089 636	750 000	1 067 160	2 218 596	3 156 796
2007	1 560 186	2 219 957	1 062 000	1 511 098	2 622 186	3 731 055
2008	3 243 054	4 614 476	1 068 000	1 519 636	4 311 054	6 134 112

LATVIAN FEATURE FILMS RELEASED 2005-2007 (incl. Betacam format)

Original Title	English Title	Director	Year of Release
Rīgas sargi	Defenders of Riga	Aigars Grauba	2007
Jāņu nakts	Midsummer Madness (AT/UK/LV)	Aleksandrs Hāns	2007
Par to nerunā	Don't Talk About It	Una Celma	2007
Rūgtais vins	Bitter Wine	Rolands Kalniņš	2007
Vogelfrei	Vogelfrei	Jānis Kalējs, Jānis Putniņš, Gatis Šmits, Anna Viduleja	2007
Monotonija	Monotony	Juris Poškus	2007
Tumšie brieži	The Dark Deer (LV/AT)	Viesturs Kairiņš	2006
Kilnieks	Hostage (LV/EE/SI)	Laila Pakalniņa	2006
Lote no Izgudrotāju ciema*	Lotte from Gadgetville* (EE/LV)	Heiki Ernits, Janno Pöldma	2006
Trīs musketieri*	The Three Musketeers* (LV/DK/UK)	Jānis Cimermanis	2006
Augstuma robeža	Maximum Headroom (LV/SE)	Una Celma	2005
Krišana	Fallen (LV/DE)	Fred Kelemen	2005

* Feature-length animation

TOP 10 LATVIAN FILMS TRAVELING MOST AROUND THE WORLD 2007

Latvian Title	English Title	Genre	Direktor	Production Company
Zuduši sniegā	Lost in Snow	Animation	Vladimir Leschiov	Jet Media
Teat Beat of Sex	Teat Beat of Sex	Animation	Signe Baumanē	Signe Baumanē
Kilnieks	The Hostage	Feature	Laila Pakalniņa	Hargla Company
Medības	Hunting	Animation	Jānis Cimermanis	Animācijas Brigāde
Mans vīrs Andrejs Saharovs	My Husband Andrei Sakharov	Documentary	Ināra Kolmane	Film Studio Deviņi
Monotonija	Monotony	Feature	Juris Poškus	FA Filma
Teodors	Theodore	Documentary	Laila Pakalniņa	Vides Filmu Studija
Vogelfrei	Vogelfrei	Feature	Anna Viduleja, Gatis Šmits, Jānis Kalējs, Jānis Putniņš	Film Angels Studio
Vecāks par 10 minūtēm	Ten Minutes Older	Documentary	Herz Frank	Rīgas Kinostudija
Uguns	Fire	Short Feature	Laila Pakalniņa	Hargla Company

CONTACTS

Main Film Institutions

Ministry of Culture
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Riga Film Museum
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State Culture Capital Foundation
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Filmmakers Union of Latvia
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Latvia Film Producers Association
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eurimages@nfc.gov.lv

Latvia State Archive of Audiovisual Documents
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Fax + 371 6752 9954
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www.arhivi.lv

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forumcinemas@forumcinemas.lv
www.forumcinemas.lv

ACME Film
Kr.Valdemāra 33-8B
LV1011 Riga Latvia
Tel +371 6733 8027
Fax +371 6733 8028
oskars@acmefilm.lv
www.acmefilm.lv

International Film Festivals

Baltic Sea Forum for Documentaries
Peitavas 10/12
LV1050 Riga Latvia

Tel + 371 6735 8858
Fax + 371 6735 8877
balticforum@nfc.gov.lv
www.mediadesk.lv

International Documentary Film Symposium
Amatu 5
LV1941 Riga Latvia
Tel/Fax +371 6721 0022
pipars@mailbox.riga.lv
www.latfilma.lv/symposium

International Festival of Film Actors "Baltic Pearl"
Blaumana 26-18
LV1011 Riga Latvia
Tel/Fax +371 6728 9019
+371 6728 9040
info@balticpearl.lv
www.balticpearl.lv

International Film Forum "And The Word Became Film..."
M. Pils 6-4
LV1050 Riga Latvia
Tel + 371 6722 2061
ilze@stunda.lv
www.stunda.lv

Youth Film Festival "Happy 2 ANNAS"
Annas 2
LV1001 Riga Latvia
GSM +371 2976 5381

Fax + 371 6761 4789
viesturs@2annas.lv
www.2annas.lv

Nordic Film Days
Marštalū 14
LV1050 Riga Latvia
Tel +371 6721 0114
Fax +371 6728 0445
arsenals@arsenals.lv
www.arsenals.lv

Riga International Children Film Festival "Berimor's Cinema"
Mārštalū 14
LV1050 Riga Latvia
Tel +371 6722 1620
Fax +371 6782 0445
arsenals@arsenals.lv
www.arsenals.lv

Riga International Fantasy Film Festival
Mārštalū 14
LV1050 Riga Latvia
Tel +371 6722 1620
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www.arsenals.lv

Riga International Film Forum Arsenals
Marštalū 14
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www.arsenals.lv

The National Film Centre of Latvia is a state financed governmental organisation overseeing the film branch in Latvia, granting governmental financial support to Latvian films, preserving the national audio-visual heritage, promoting Latvian films abroad, co-operating with the rel-

evant international and national organisations and organising training for Latvian film professionals. We are members of the EURIMAGES Foundation as of 2001 and MEDIA Plus as of January, 2002. At major international events we work together with Estonians and Lithuanians

under the co-operation platform BALTIC FILMS. We are keen on attracting film, television, and video production to Latvia, stimulating inward investment, creating employment opportunities for creative staff, technicians and support service companies.

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