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COALITION CURRENTS: NEWSLETTER # 8

This is the 8th UKCCD's bi-monthly newsletter to members. Please send us information or links with specific relevance to Convention/Coalition objectives & agendas which you wish to share. Please mark "newsletter" in subject box and send to ukccd1@gmail.com

NB!

Next MEMBER'S MEETING to be held on Thursday 23 July from 4:30 -6:00 pm at the Quebec Government Office in London 59 Pall Mall SW1Y 5JH. Please RSVP to ukccd1@gmail.com. New members are always welcome, so we encourage you to invite interested parties. Kerry Michael from Theatre Royal Stratford East to speak on theatre industry in the UK (TBC).

Also visit our new website www.ukccd.org

1. Government Report: Digital Britain

On Tuesday 16 June Lord Carter the Minister for Communications, Technology and Broadcasting published the Digital Britain report on behalf of the DCMS. The report

presents Government recommendations in support of the creative industries and outlines a three-year national action plan for extending digital participation. The Digital Britain report is central to the Government's Building Britain's Future plan and draft legislative programme. Measures outlined in the report include controversial proposals for managing the costs associated with digital convergence and Public Service Broadcasting.

Further Information and a Pdf of the Digital Britain report are available at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/broadcasting/5631.aspx

2. UKCCD response to the Digital Britain report

In a letter addressed to the Editor of the Guardian, Holly Aylett and Carole Tongue of the UKCCD have spelt out their objections to Lord Carter's report. Taxpayers funding the development of the digital network in the name of digital democracy are effectively funding the future business interests of British Telecom. Stephen Carter has failed to consider an alternative funding model in which a levy imposed upon the commercial players within the lucrative digital market could be used to support local

content and creative programming. This would be a fairer way to involve all commercial audio visual players in protecting the diversity of cultural expression to which the UK is committed as signatories of UNESCO's Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expression. Please find letter attached.

3. Not in Our Name: *FREE* screening @ the Whitechapel Gallery, 30/7, 7pm

Another FREE screening of the film 'Not in Our Name' (6 years in the making) at the Whitechapel Gallery in the space where Goshka Macuga's Bloomberg Commission is located. After the screening, there will be a round table discussion with the film's directors and contributing artists on the dynamics of art, film and protest. Featuring veteran anti war campaigner Tony Benn and peace campaigners from around the world, the film opens up a rich visual landscape to explore the folly of war.

Check out www.philmaxwell.co.uk for detail and watch the trailer.

4. National Campaign for the Arts: Future Britain – Arts leading the way

On Monday 15 June the NCA presented a conference at TATE Britain on the development of the arts sector over the coming years and its role in shaping Britain's future. Future Britain also launched the NCA's latest Arts Manifesto, which has been created as a lobbying and advocacy tool in the run up to the next General Election. The day centred around three panel debates which dealt with different aspects of the arts today, from the importance of meaningful dialogue with politicians, opinion formers and the public to building a stronger, more resilient arts sector. Speakers included Dame Joan Bakewell, Tim Joss, and Lord Melvyn Bragg.

Further information and a Pdf of the Arts Manifesto are available at:
<http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/news/artsmanifesto.html>

5. The French "HADOPI" Law on Internet Piracy

Tuesday 10 June

The recently adopted French "HADOPI" law provided for a new administrative authority with the right to send two warning letters to those internet subscribers found to be illegally downloading film and further provided the authority to cut the off the offenders subscription if transgressions continued after the warnings.

The French Constitutional court has just given judgement on this law has said that only a judge can decree cutting someone's internet connection in recognition of the article guaranteeing the right of communication in Human Rights Law.

The Court agrees with the establishment of an administrative high authority charged with the power of warning against "pirates" but says that such an authority cannot

enjoy the power of sanction to cut an internet connection.

The French government has taken note of the judgement and is planning to put this "graduated response" law on the statute books as soon as possible.

Creators' organisations in France are welcoming the law and judgement as it still provides a clear framework of law and they believe that the High Authority's action through "warning letters" will help to reduce piracy.

Furthermore this could now facilitate the adoption of the Telecoms Package which had hitherto been held up due to disagreement between Council and the European Parliament.

Article on French *HADOPI* law by Liza Porteus Viana for Intellectual Property Watch to be found at:

<http://www.ip-watch.org/weblog/2009/06/10/french-minister-says-hadopi-law-a-21st-century-reality/>

6. The Second Ordinary Session of the Conference of Parties 15 – 17 June

The Second Ordinary Session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions took place at UNESCO Headquarters from 15 to 16 June 2009.

This meeting had special significance because it launched the operational phase in the life of the Convention and its International Fund for Cultural Diversity. It is the moment to put into practice the underlying principles set out in article 1.

Quote:

to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions; to create the conditions for cultures to flourish and to freely interact in a mutually beneficial manner; [and] to encourage dialogue among cultures with a view to ensuring wider and balanced cultural exchanges in the world in favour of intercultural respect and a culture of peace.

Full texts of the Resolutions and Working Documents can be found at:

http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=39139&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

7. Parliamentary Business: House of Lords

Two debates held on Thursday 4 June brought attention to the contribution of the creative industries to the United Kingdom economy and made a stand for public service broadcasting. Moved by Lord Bragg and Lord Fowler highlights from the debates are as follows.

- Creative Industries Debate: moved by Lord Bragg

- NESTA analysis suggests an average growth of the creative industries of 4% between 2009 and 2013, more than double the rest of the economy
- argues that the creative industries in the UK have outstripped and will continue to outstrip industry
- British theatre contributes £26 billion annually to the economy
- draws a parallel between the industrial revolution and the current/future creative cultural revolution
- argues for the continued support of art colleges, schools, and academies for film, theatre and music -- further stressing the need for structures such as ACE and agencies such as BBC, ITV, Sky Arts etc.
- mentions immigration controls and the detrimental effect that they have on artist from abroad coming to the UK, leading to loss of revenue and accessibility
- argues for a balance in cultivating creative industries
- mentions Dame Liz Forgan's announcement that £445 million will be invested in the arts to maintaining artistic excellence
- highlights youth music programmes and their importance

Public Service Broadcasting: moved by Lord Fowler

- Defines Public Service Broadcasting as (working definition): 'an approach that focuses on the provisions of core elements including national and regional news, current affairs programmes, the arts, children's programming, programmes dealing with religion and other beliefs and UK content'
- notes that the BBC is the pre-eminent provider
- agrees with Public Accounts Committee, which reported Thursday morning to have said that the BBC should give information about the salaries and fees that are paid to expensive presenters -- follows up by saying BBC should be recognised at the national asset that it is
- mentions the increase in citizen journalism and argues for the protection of professional journalist
- stresses that the BBC is not the only public service broadcaster -- ITV, Channel 4 and 5 make important contributions
- highlights the new provisions coming about as a result of the financial crisis -- need for protecting broadcast news or it will disappear
- rejects the argument that it should all be left to the free market because programmes would no longer be accessed free by the public but depends on subscription
- going the market way would end up a virtual BBC monopoly

Full *Hansard texts* are available on the UKCCD website: www.ukccd.org

8. European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity: Meeting, 5 May

Please find attached the minutes of the European coalitions' last meeting held in Paris on May 5th.

*NOTE: The next meeting will take place in Paris, on October 30th 2009 (10:00 to 16:30)

9. UKCCD Submission to Department for International Development (DFID)

May – The UKCCD drafted a response to DFID’s request for consultation on Eliminating World Poverty: Assuring our Common Future. Please find submission attached and in our website archives at: www.ukccd.org

10. UKCCD Submission to the House of Lords

April – Dr Carole Tongue and Holly Aylett drafted a submission to the House of Lords on Public Service Broadcasting. They make a case for society’s need for diversity/plurality of high quality drama/feature film/documentary film. Please find this submission attached and on our website archives at: www.ukccd.org

11. Stories Under Stress: The Challenge for Indigenous Television Drama In English-Language Broadcast Markets

Peter Grant writes a report on the challenges facing indigenous television drama. His report was published in December 2008. Please find it attached.

12. French National Centre of Cinema (CNC) debate: Cinema and Trade: inventory and advancement of international talk. SUMMARY

On 18 May representatives from the European audiovisual sector gathered in Cannes at the invitation of the CNC to hear four guest speakers discuss the status of the relationship between cinema and trade in international trade discussions. The need to define a global strategy for the European Union regarding implementation of the UNESCO Convention on cultural diversity was stressed. The principles of independent culture and cultural exchange and the exclusion of cultural and audio-visual services from all international trade negotiations were acknowledged as central to any future strategy.

Hélène Ruiz-Fabri spoke of the inevitable link between Cinema and trade. She emphasised that exclusion of the audio-visual sector from international trade talks was threatened by liberalisation within the WTO. She pointed out the difficulties inherent in protecting cultural diversity whilst promoting cultural exchange. *Ignasi Guardans Cambó* reiterated the need for the protection and promotion of cultural diversity and the role of the Lisbon Treaty in this process should it be enforced. He voiced his concerns about defining the scope of the audiovisual sector in the future. *Jim McKee* went on to express his frustration at the reintroduction of culture into trade agreements, citing the example of the future EU/Canada trade agreement that has a Cultural Cooperation Protocol annexed to the Free Trade Agreement. He warned that this could mark the return to a situation where culture is no more than a bargaining chip in trade talks, negotiated by experts in trade rather than culture. He urged the Coalitions to remain vigilant in upholding the objectives of the Convention and to make the development of guidelines for Article 21 a matter of priority. The meeting ended with *Pascal Rogard’s* comments on the need for a strategy to protect and promote cultural and audiovisual ser

vices in bilateral trade agreements, which he asserted should be based on principle adopted by the EU in multilateral trade agreements when these sectors are excluded from trade liberalisation.

Following discussions a number of operational guidelines were formulated. Cultural cooperation agreements should:

- Remain legally distinct from trade agreements and subject to a time table.
- Be negotiated by experts in cultural matters in consultation with cultural stakeholders.
- Have their own conflict resolution procedures.
- Include provision for automatic review and refinement.