



How to Set Up a Screening Venue

2024

ARE DOCUMENTARIES DOCUMENTING?

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Document vs. To Document

"The verb 'to document' refers to the act of recording, describing, or capturing information, events, processes, or details in a systematic and organized manner. Documentation can take various forms, such as written text, photographs, audio recordings, or videos, and serves the purpose of preserving information for reference, communication, analysis, or legal purposes. Documenting involves creating a record that can be used to convey, explain, or provide evidence of something. It is commonly employed in various fields, including business, research, education, and technical documentation." (ChatGPT 3.5, 7 Jan 2024)

For the introduction to this chapter, I asked AI for a dictionary definition of the verb 'to document.' Although the noun and verb are clearly related, do they actually mean the same thing? The longer I've been working in the field of audiovisual media, the more I feel that the word in question and its connotations bound us in an endless cycle. Are documentaries indeed "evidence" or "records"?

Some documentary films at the very beginnings of cinematography captured a brief moment in time; nowadays, we would call these "newsreels". In 1922, the film *Nanook of the North* by the pioneer of the documentary genre, Robert Flaherty, received a similar label. Flaherty not only

presented us with several scenes from the life of Eskimos beyond the Arctic Circle but also gave the film a coherent narrative structure and insight into the life of an Inuit family. However, the audiences eventually learned that Flaherty had selected only the members of the tribe who most closely corresponded to the established stereotypes and that he had changed some of their names to make them easier to remember by the Western audiences. Despite the fact that *Nanook* is not a faithful “record” or “evidence”, we continue to call it a “documentary.”

Defining a Documentary

So, what would be a proper definition of a “documentary”? Is it a film giving evidence of real events? In such a case, *Titanic* (1997) would classify as well, and yet we don’t include it. Or is it a film telling a story of real people? However, *The Crown* (2016–2023) does that as well.

“*The creative treatment of actuality*”—that’s how Scottish director John Grierson defined documentaries. This is likely the closest approximation of what we imagine under a “documentary”. Usually, we are aware that we’re watching real events and stories of real people—however, it’s through the lens of the given filmmaker and with the actors’ knowledge that they are being filmed.

In his legendary book, *Introduction to Documentary*, Bill Nichols expands and supplements the most general definitions of a documentary into a thesis, that “documentary films speak about actual situations or events and honor known facts; they do not introduce new, unverifiable ones. They speak directly about the historical world rather than the allegorical world.” He argues that “documentaries are about real people who do not play or perform roles.” Nichols further adds that “documentary tells a story that is a plausible representation of what happened rather than an imaginative interpretation of what might have happened.”

To Experience Someone Else’s Life Through Their Eyes

Then why do we make and watch documentaries? Why are you reading this right now? Why are there projects and initiatives like KineDok? Most likely because documentaries give us something that we may already be more familiar with from fiction films—they transport us to a different world and give us a glimpse of another’s life—they offer us a trip to another reality, often uncomfortable and complex without simple or clearly defined answers. We dive into a stranger’s life, knowing that there are short moments of fiction, selected points of view, specific camera framing, stylized editing, or post-production alterations of sound. However, we also watch such narratives with the strong belief that the documentary represents the slice of the selected reality in its rawest form with the least amount of such interventions possible.

Each documentary gives us a unique opportunity to perceive the world through the eyes of the authors, crew members, and artists who bring their unique style, personality, interests, and even social circumstances and political opinions to the silver or TV screen.

FILM SELECTION

<https://kinedok.net/selection/film-catalogue>

A collective affair

I always start my lesson on film production by stating that “*film is a collective work*.” We all know how numerous crews of some films can be and how many people are involved in seemingly small and simple projects. However, the community aspect is integral to the film even after its completion—in distribution. Every public screening can also be described as a collective affair—a place for shared contemplation, reflection, inspiration, and, above all, discussion. Whether you meet in a cinema, café, gallery, or even on a boat, the time before, during, and after the screening gives us a unique opportunity to share with others.

Shared Experience

KineDok could be considered a social network of sorts—it connects the filmmakers with those for whom their work is created, namely the viewers and fans of documentaries. While online you’d need to post comments or heart emojis, KineDok breaks down this barrier of anonymity and creates an opportunity for a live, open discussion incited by documentaries. The following pages aim to introduce KineDok as a platform for a shared experience in more detail. Our colleagues will guide you through community issues, technical aspects, program selection, working with the audience, and dealing with political and ethical topics that documentaries

inherently open up. Then, it will be only up to you whether you decide to become one of the *influencers* on this unique platform.

Influencers, watching and sharing

If we stick to the social network metaphor, KineDok is an open venue for new influencers—active individuals who seek stimulating discussions to get new opinions and perspectives on the world. And what better means of achieving that than by experiencing someone else's life through the said person's eyes? KineDok screenings have already taken place in a variety of venues—on the aforementioned boat, in senior centers, or even in prisons, to give a few examples. The audience was not that concerned about the venue. According to the organizers, the point was to meet and share the experience with others. However, the screenings have also found their audience in more familiar locations, such as cafés, galleries, or libraries. The annual selection of films provides the viewers with a much sought-after alternative to the often stereotypical program of regular cinemas. The experience of the venue managers—the “influencers” of KineDok, shows that people seek an alternative to mindless and needlessly aggressive online debates and wish to engage in a meaningful and open dialogue.

You're not alone

As a producer, my door is open to anyone who believes themselves a creator—regardless of whether they have higher education in the field or whether they have extensive, or little to no experience. What's important to me is the topic they want to open and discuss. KineDok follows the same principles. It doesn't matter if you are a high school student or a member of a senior club—the important thing is that you want to tell stories and grow and develop your skills.

Whether your goal is to spark a debate, attract new audiences to documentary screenings, engage in meaningful conversations, or “just watch good films,” you can become a member of this platform. You won't be alone—the creators, guests, or moderators will often join the screenings. You'll also have this comprehensive guide to KineDok at your disposal. We likely won't be able to show you the full scope, which cannot be passed on in any other way than by experiencing it yourself. It's the same thing with documentaries.

Real world

To conclude this musing, I turned to AI once again and asked: If you had to replace the term documentary film with something more appropriate, what would it be?

The answer was:

If I had to replace the term “documentary film” with a more appropriate term that preserves the essence of the genre, I would choose the term “real film” or “real world film.”

I’m glad that KineDok can bring *real films* to the *real world*.

And I’ll be overjoyed if, after reading this, you’ll decide to join as well.

JOIN US

<https://kinedok.net/join-us>

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PHOTOS:

GLISNÍKOVÁ Lenka; PISKAČOVÁ Radka a Barbora TRNKOVÁ

I Miss You, Marius (film still)

BUILDING BLOCKS OF YOUR COMMUNITY

AUTHOR: Veronika Hanáková, Film Curator (Kampus Hybernská, Czechia)



- > Introduction
- > Beginning: Analyze
- > Second Stage: Research
- > Third Stage: Plan
- > Don't panic and ask for help

Building Blocks of Your Community

When you organize a cultural event with a documentary film screening, you do it for people to see and enjoy it and to incite a discussion. You want an audience to take the documentary film and share it, discuss it, and even question it. Only in this way do the films manage to connect not only different topics and phenomena but also people from different backgrounds. Being part of the KineDok network means creating and reinforcing a community of people who enjoy documentary films because these films reflect their own lives, broaden their knowledge about the world, initiate discussions about complex issues, and create space to share, connect, and laugh together. In this chapter, we will focus on the community-building aspect of screening films because a community does not arise spontaneously but needs to be built up gradually. Let's get started.

“Documentary films have the strongest impact; they can change your vision and even attitude about different topics.”

Ana

**ART HOUSE GORI
(GEORGIA)**

<https://www.instagram.com/arthousegori/>

Beginning: Analyze

VENUE

PURPOSE

AUDIENCE

MOTIVATION

Analyze

Position of Your Venue: Among the KineDok community, a venue can have one of these three positions:

- 1) brand new cultural spot, i.e. without a connected community,
- 2) established venue that still needs a community interested in documentary films,
- 3) established venue with a history of screening fiction films and an established community.

Whether you are starting from scratch, or are an experienced film-screening venue, the following steps will inspire you to address your new community, or reinforce the existing one.

Content and Purpose: What is the purpose of your events? What do you want to achieve through documentary film screenings? These questions help you understand why you are part of KineDok and what you want to accomplish for your venue, location, and community. Select documentaries that bring something different, new, and entertaining to your venue.

Audience: Always think about the audience for whom the screenings are intended. Do you screen films because you want to empower your community? Do you want to educate or entertain them? Or do you want to create a program for overlooked audience groups (seniors, families with children, etc.)? Initially, it is advisable to identify one primary target group for your screenings, the accompanying program, and the promotion. It is better to start slowly. Don't bite off more than you can chew!

The First Step: The first screenings can be stressful; there will be some uncertainty about how many people will appear. Even if a relatively small number of people show up, don't panic! It's not about the numbers! At this moment, organizing cultural events is about creating a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere. Be welcoming, be kind, and be talkative. Audience numbers will gradually increase. But it will depend on whether that is your purpose and if you can attract the audience with your program (not only the film but also accompanying events, discussion, guests, etc.). The composition and volume of your audience are entirely up to you (and the possibilities of the venue).

“It was one of our first screenings with KineDok, and only five people came. But, after the screening, we had an hour-long discussion, which was really memorable.”

Natali

**CUBE IN CONTEXT
(GEORGIA)**

<https://www.instagram.com/cubeincontext/>

Motivation: What do you want to get out of it as an organizer? Building a community can be a tedious process; be aware of your motivations and goals. Your goals might be to be active in the local community, to support the local cultural scene, or to build a new cultural center. The possibilities are endless.

“The members of the community know each other, say hello while they meet out in town or go together to other events.”

GALATI (ROMANIA)

<https://kinedok.net/ro/venue/muzeul-de-arta-vizuala-galati>

Second Stage: Research

IDENTIFY YOUR COMMUNITY

Research

Understand Local Audiences: Finding a community audience for your documentary film screenings may be challenging. Sometimes, a community forms naturally after the first screening. Other times, only few people show up for the screening—the original target audience for your cultural events needs to be reconsidered as it might be clashing with an already existing local offer of cultural events. It's good to remember that your venue is not the only cultural or community player in town. Be sure to do your research on what other organizations offer cultural programs (you can specifically focus on film screenings), which communities they target, and with what content. This step might help you understand the local cultural scene and discover what cultural activities are missing and what communities are being forgotten. Also, think about whether and how a regular screening of documentary films can fill this gap.

There Is Not Only One Community: Trying to get documentary films out to the broadest possible audience is the primary goal of many KineDok venues, but getting there takes a lot of work. There is not just one community. On the contrary, many viewers come from different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds, are of different ages, have varying interests in specific topics, and come up with uniquely different questions. Ask yourself: How can I ensure that the

cultural program offered in my venue engages different audiences and thus attracts diverse communities?

Research: 1) do some basic research on the cultural activities offered for different groups, what is available to them and why, 2) study the KineDok catalog, look for reviews and audience reactions, and analyze what they liked, didn't like, and why.

Ask: 1) consult your local KineDok coordinator for options and advice, 2) connect to other KineDok locations, 3) ask your local community (schools, clubs, senior residences, etc.) in what issues they are interested, 4) online.

Participate: 1) in local festivals and meetings, 2) club meetings, 3) cultural, sports, folklore, neighbourhood events.

Whether you focus on one community, create a program for multiple communities, or try to make a curated selection “for all,” these communities may have different requirements and expectations that you should keep in mind.

Identify Your Community: There are many communities in every town or village. It is very challenging to create a screening program and a follow-up debate or workshop to fit the needs of everyone. So feel free to focus on just a few. This focus will not only help with the selection of films and the accompanying program but also simplify the promotion of the event. It is a good idea to start slowly, focusing on a particular group of viewers (maybe your regular audience or the most neglected in your town/village) and gradually adding other groups. For example, if you screen every two weeks, one screening might be for families, and the second for people interested in social issues. This regularity will make it possible to create a cultural program for specific communities that will know when a film screening will occur. Over time, you can add on more film screenings, modify your target audience, or try to connect communities.

“Our target audience is anyone with an interest in documentaries. We strive to curate a diverse program engaging all age groups.”

Ana

**SHPEENADOX LABIN
(CROATIA)**

<https://www.facebook.com/shpeenadox>

Third Stage: Plan

BE PREPARED

PLAN

COMMUNICATE

Plan

Accessibility: The primary step is to know your venue. Identify the potential and challenges of your venue (e.g., many stairs without an elevator, small toilets, accessibility/non-accessibility by public transport, walkability to and from your venue, or a playground nearby). To target specific communities, you must think about their needs well in advance. Once people arrive, you want them to feel welcome and not like an unexpected visitor. Respecting diversity is an active approach rather than silent observation.

“Respecting diversities among the audience is also desirable.”

NIKICA, ŠIBENIK (CROATIA)

The following table offers possible questions to ask if you want to reach a given group and find out whether the venue has the capacity to welcome such a group without any problems.

OPEN THE TABLE

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vRFuG8O-QB2xa4_EcB4cbEXtXh44XvV7As7RVKUyfeBuFxeedU5pgIxINbgse62YpeCzlQk0TsTNZ2f/pub?gid=0&single=true&output=pdf

Possible Scenarios for Different Groups:

“We screen outdoors and target parents with smaller kids who cannot stay home alone. So we provide the kids with a parallel program inside—they are creating something there, we provide them with food, and there is a responsible adult with them. Our new target group is older people; they will join us this Christmas for workshops. And I wish we also had a younger audience, like teenagers, but they prefer going to a different venue that is more for them.”

IVANA, CENTRUM VOLNÉHO ČASU HRUBÍNKA (TŘEBÍČ, CZ)

“We always try to have something for children, both serious and not-so-serious films, to meet the taste of a broader audience. We organize filmmaking workshops for children, and we then screen it before the official program. So, we combine a younger audience with their parents. Since the screenings are free, random tourists can walk in and sit and watch for 10–15 minutes and then move on. The atmosphere is very relaxed.”

Ana

**SHPEENADOX LABIN
(CROATIA)**

<https://www.facebook.com/shpeenadox>

Be Prepared, Plan, and Communicate: Organizing a film screening is a time-consuming job. It is essential to have a program schedule and the technical facilities in place and to make sure the film and accompanying program are ready.

“Before the screening, we watch each film and prepare the whole event; we have our groups and chats where we share ideas.”

ANA, ART HOUSE GORI (GEORGIA)

Don't panic and ask for help

However, if something goes wrong or you get negative feedback, don't panic; try to solve the problem immediately and communicate it to the audience. Working with the feedback from the audience and guests regularly can improve your program and your impact. Feel free to ask for help in the community; you can even involve them in selecting films, preparing accompanying programs, etc.

JOIN US

<https://kinedok.net/join-us>

PHOTOS:

GLISNÍKOVÁ, Lenka; JASNÝ, Michal; MRÁČEK, Adam; PATYCKI, Michał and Ivana TVRDÁ
Archive of our screening venues (Prádelna, Rabenštejnská 2020)

ON DIVERSITY OF VENUES

AUTHORS: Szabolcs Szirony, Zsombor Szabolcs Pál



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- > Cultural Centers
- > Museums and Art Galleries
- > Organizations and NGOs
- > Cafés and Other Catering Facilities
- > Schools and Universities
- > Libraries
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- > Do-It-Yourself approach
- > Cosy Spaces

On Diversity of Venues

KineDok's diversity is reflected in the variety of its venues and locations. You can see KineDok documentary films in six countries, each with its own language and culture. Our venues can be found in eco-communities and industrial cities, in tourist destinations abandoned in the off-season and vibrant capitals, in small depopulated villages with older residents and in university towns. There are no wrong locations. The screen can be set up on a garden fence or in a hall of a modern art museum, in a high school or retirement home, and even in a music festival.

"I never recommend my film club to anyone, as I do my screenings in prison."

ZSOLT, DUNAÚJVÁROS, HUNGARY

There are different reasons and motivations why people start screening documentary films for the general public. Some organizers focus on popularizing cinematic culture and approach documentary works from their visual artistic value. Others organize documentary film screenings and accompanying events because they want to highlight issues exposed in the films and primarily focus on the content and emotions that documentary films create. Very often, they see documentary films as a starting point for a discussion.

Importance of Being an Organizer

The success of a venue very often depends on the personal qualities and organizational skills of its organizer(s). They ensure that regular screenings run smoothly, communicate with the audience, guests and filmmakers, and curate memorable accompanying events. These organizers (or venue managers, as we call them at KineDok) are passionate individuals who strive to benefit the common good and make a positive impact on their communities. They share a mission of creating community experiences and building community bonds. They do not settle for ready-made mainstream experiences: they have a DIY attitude and a personal touch, so every KineDok venue is different.

“Our biggest motivation is that we live in Orlová; honestly, we partly curate the program for ourselves. We want to enjoy life in our town and we attend our events. I really feel that over the years our communication with the town has become much better; we are taken seriously as an important venue in our town. Sometimes town representatives write nice comments about our events, how interesting they are. That’s great feedback. I believe that there’s still room for improvement. Of course, it’s a structural challenge, so it will take time. It is a really nice place to live, and one day, it will be even better. The change is already underway.”

Blanka

**FUTRA (ORLOVÁ,
CZECHIA)**

<https://www.futra.cz/>

They make their guests feel welcome and respected and create a safe space for diverse opinions to be expressed. They select movies based on their own motivation and interest, as well as the expectations and needs of their audiences, and they design each event with care and attention. KineDok screening venues differ significantly in their target audiences, local possibilities, and approach to the use of documentary films. However, they all share one common aspect: an individual or a team that organizes the screenings.

Anyone can start to screen documentary films. Here is a variety of the most typical venues that screen KineDok films:

Community centers are an ideal complement to documentary film clubs. As gathering spaces continue to sprout in various neighborhoods, they aim to bridge the modern-day gap left by the decline of traditional communal activities. Many of these centers exude the refreshing spirit of the DIY attitude, boasting enthusiastic and seasoned staff who cater to diverse age groups within the community. These centers foster genuine personal connections with the locals and offer a wide array of activities. Trust is the cornerstone of their events.

“In our town, organizers are seeking different and new venues similar to ours. Our Prádelna venue can accommodate up to 100 people. Our advantage is that apart from being a cultural center, we are also a community center for people from our town. So we built a community space for locals.”

MARTIN, PRÁDELNA (CZECHIA)

“Hrubínka Cultural and Sports Center is located in the middle of a housing complex, a green oasis amidst blocks of flats. It consists of an office and a big garden where we organize lots of activities for kids. Throughout the year, we hold events, workshops, summer camps, and holiday-themed functions. We want to create a vibrant environment. There is a retirement home nearby, so we try to create activities which the older citizens could join or just have a coffee, and it works very well. They like visiting our space. And I would like to motivate all these people to come and watch the documentary films we screen.”

Ivana

**CULTURAL CENTER
HRUBÍNKA (CZECHIA)**

<http://www.rdmkv.cz>

Cultural centers are well-organized institutions that have considerable experience in hosting various cultural events. They boast a solid and diverse audience base spanning all age groups. However, their busy schedules and efficient organizational backgrounds can sometimes work against them. The personal touch, which is paramount for film clubs, may take a backseat in these centers. Viewers often perceive their events as akin to those held in cinemas and theaters: they attend the screening and leave right after. On the upside, cultural centers benefit from their solid infrastructure, allowing them to provide a cinema-like experience.

“We want to enrich the cultural life in Opava. We have a cinema with 55 seats, and we screen all films there. KUPE is a culture & art space with an art gallery, a cinema, and a café. Our program also includes a variety of music events, concerts, stand-ups, etc. All this is happening in a space, which used to be a water tower with three floors now repurposed into this cultural space, which has been in operation for six years.”

Terezie

KUPE (CZECHIA)

<https://www.kupecko.cz>

Museums and art galleries serve not only as aesthetic institutions but also as social and educational hubs, with their collections accessible to the public. Screening movies in these “cultural sanctuaries” provides a remarkable opportunity for them to forge connections with diverse and local communities. The shared experience of a documentary screening holds special significance for a substantial number of art gallery visitors. These social gatherings subtly shift the prevailing perception from the traditional notions of ownership and curatorial authority to opening a dialogue among participants. The artistic approach of visual art professionals who present these films offers a unique perspective on the genre of documentaries.

“We are an institution accustomed to events of all kinds, so anything related to visual arts is part of our target. What the documentary medium brings to the table is the opportunity for discussions and the sense of a KineDok community formed over time. Its members know each other and hang around after the movie (don’t leave right after like at other events). The members of the community recognize each other, say hello when they meet in the street or go together to other events.”

Simona

**MUZEUL DE ARTA
VIZUALA GALATI
(ROMANIA)**

<https://kinedok.net/ro/venue/muzeul-de-arta-vizuala-galati>

Organizations and NGOs often require mainstream cultural or artistic elements to raise awareness within the broader society or strengthen engagement with their supporters, thereby inspiring their members. Certain films from the annual KineDok catalog can address this need. Consequently, some NGOs regularly host screenings, while others select a single film relevant to their work which they screen during social events they organize. These organizations span various domains, including environmental advocacy, women’s right movements, LGBTQ+ organizations, and social work in diverse fields.

Cafés and other catering facilities often carve out time or space during their bustling hours to accommodate community screenings. This endeavor imbues these establishments with a sense of cultural and social engagement, elevating their reputation. However, film clubs operating within such venues face unique challenges. They must navigate the often-noisy ambiance (including those pesky whistle sounds from café machines), divided audience attention, and the transient presence of bar patrons. To mitigate these hurdles, venue managers wisely opt for audience-friendly film titles that are concise and impactful.

“It means a lot to the venue, because we didn’t have film screenings in the pub’s gallery before. And for us, it is a pleasure to be able to bring documentaries into such a space. We want to bring a bit of cinematic seriousness to the pub atmosphere. This way, in addition to drinking beer, you can also have a focused conversation about movies.”

Boglárka

**TELEP, BUDAPEST
(HUNGARY)**

<https://kinedok.net/hu/venue/telep>

Schools and universities can utilize documentary screenings to enhance the learning experience in a convenient and practical manner. These screenings can take place either within the classroom or in an adjacent community area. The audience primarily consists of students. Furthermore, it is common in such venues to restrict access to outsiders, preserving the magic within the silent walls of the alma mater. Unfortunately, this often results in a simple reality: if the screening event is not mandatory, it becomes a source of joy only for a few enthusiastic students and teachers, as they lack reinforcement from the broader universe.

Libraries are well-organized community spaces with a skilled workforce, accessible technical facilities provided by the maintaining municipality, and far-reaching marketing platforms (both online and offline). Regular visitors, who seek knowledge and art, frequent these spaces. Therefore, it is evident that libraries should be utilized for cultural events such as film screenings. One of the unique challenges faced by libraries is the size of film subtitles, particularly because their average audience tends to be older. However, libraries also serve as excellent venues for connecting movies with an older audience, who deeply appreciates such cultural offerings.

“We always try to see if there is any relevance between the topic and any local issue in our city. If there is, we try to highlight the local issue and involve those affected thereby or with an insight thereof. If possible, we like to invite filmmakers to help us work with the film experience. The topic can even define the chosen venue to add to the atmosphere of the film.”

Levente

KINODOMINO (HUNGARY)

<https://www.facebook.com/documentaryscreenings/>

Mobile venues are institutions where organizers regularly select different spots within a certain area for screenings which align with the film's topic. This approach allows them to continuously engage with new potential audiences and curate unique events in collaboration with the facilities at each chosen spot. Typically, they rely on robust social media platforms to effectively communicate their impromptu arrangements to their dedicated viewers.

“We always pick new and less familiar locations which could provide a new experience. Although we like the fountain, a place where it all started, we are open to new locations that could make us more available to the audience.”

ANA, SHPEENADOX LABIN (CROATIA)

“When I moved to this small village from the capital, I missed the good movie events that I used to attend. Since no one else organized something like that here, I decided to start my own cinema.”

Dóra

BAKONYBÉL (HUNGARY)

<https://kinedok.net/hu/venue/kinedok-bakonybel-kozossegi-mozi>

Do-It-Yourself approach is when venue managers do not wait for ready-made things; they create them. KineDok enables them to choose freely from an ever-expanding catalog and run their community cinema in their own autonomous way, adapting it to the varying local possibilities and demands. The DIY attitude is positive; when faced with a problem, it instinctively explores possibilities to find a solution. If someone possesses strong organizational skills, and they aspire to share cultural and artistic experiences, build a community, cultivate a reflective and open-minded audience, or just create a cinema through documentary screenings, they should seek out the aforementioned venues in their neighborhood.

By identifying a place that aligns with their vision, they can organize screenings for a group with whom they feel most comfortable engaging. Furthermore, they should reach out to those cozy spaces, knocking on their doors with enthusiasm and a personal conviction that what they are doing is valuable. Such dedication will undoubtedly lead to a successful endeavor.

“I moved to Brasov seven years ago. Back then nobody was doing documentary screenings, and I felt it was needed. I wrote to all my friends in the field to give me their films to screen; I did it for my own passion, but I saw people stayed for discussions and they were interested in those topics, so I understood they wanted more information from around the world and I continued.”

Laura, Braşov, Romania

PHOTOS:

Archive of our screening venue (Café Rouge)

NAVIGATING TECHNICAL HURDLES

AUTHOR: Mariam Jachvadze, Production Manager (Chai Khana Media, Georgia)



› **Revival of Cinema : Case-study on Georgia**

› **14 Must-Answer Questions for Flawless Film Screening**

› **New Life for Bolnisi Movie Theater**

› **Community of Cinema Enthusiasts in Gori**

› **Screenings in the Highlands of Racha**

› **Preparations for Screenings in Tetrtskaro**

Revival of Cinema

With online VOD platforms and home cinema systems now so readily available, creating something the audience can't experience at home is more important than ever. Cinema enthusiasts are often advised to go a step further and craft an event that the audience won't easily forget. However, the reality might be totally different for a country like Georgia, which lacks standard independent cinemas but has many old cultural centers in villages and towns that used to serve as cinemas in the Soviet past. The young Georgian enthusiasts who aim to bring new life and concepts to the former Soviet cultural institutions in their hometowns face numerous technical challenges along their journey.

There are young cinema enthusiasts in the regions of Georgia who are trying to revive abandoned buildings, organize film screenings and believe in the magic of cinema. However, this ambitious goal has its obstacles. It seems to be an ongoing struggle and lots of hard work. While in more developed countries, organizers can take for granted the availability of fully-equipped cinemas and community spaces that have their own basic technical facilities (a projector, a sound system and a projection screen) and skilled technicians, in Georgia, there are places where heating, electricity and Internet are still not the norm. In the following chapter, we will describe several cases from Georgia demonstrating how challenging it is to set up technical equipment for community screenings in different locations. But first, let's answer the following questions together.

MAGIC OF CINEMA

14 Technical Questions

To show the film to its best advantage, quality projection and sound equipment are a must, but they're not everything. It turns out some other rather unusual issues need to be addressed before the screenings. Let's see:

1. Do you have the basic technical equipment available, i.e. a projector, a sound system and a projection screen?
2. Can the venue be darkened sufficiently?

3. Is the screen high enough to be seen clearly from all seats?
4. Is the sound system equipment suitable for outdoor spaces?
5. If you are screening outdoors, have you checked the weather and secured the screen? It should not be windy or raining.
6. Is the seating comfortable even for seniors? In addition to pouffes and cushions, it is better to have chairs available.
7. Can you run through the screening in advance?
8. Do the speakers and the projector sync with a specific laptop?
9. Do you have enough plugs/cables?
10. If you are using a wall instead of a projection screen, check it thoroughly. Is it damaged? Are there any stains?
11. Have you downloaded the film file on your laptop?
12. Have you checked the sound?
13. Have you seen the film in advance and considered the context of your region and community?
14. Who from your team is responsible for the technical side of the screening? And is this person there for the whole screening?

This list could serve as a helpful guide that has the potential to make a significant difference.

New Life for Bolnisi Movie Theater

There are a few small cities in Georgia where film screenings have gradually become a part of everyday life, at least for the younger generation. Bolnisi, located in the central part of the Kvemo Kartli region in southeastern Georgia, was one of the first cities where the locals began to advocate for a cinema and successfully persuaded the city hall to renovate the old movie theater. It still has a long way to go, but a team of three young cinema enthusiasts has been screening films in this old building since 2020. They invite Georgian filmmakers to their city,

watch movies together, and organize Q&A sessions after the screenings. However, they find it hard to recall a day when the screening went smoothly without any technical hiccups.

“The first step was to bring power to the building. Initially, we thought the low volume was due to our poor-quality audio system. But the truth is that since it is a big hall with a high ceiling, it presents a challenge to acoustics, so the sound does not travel properly. The sound system must be adjusted for the hall and cinema screening. As for the projector, it is better to always put it in one place, so you don’t have to adjust the zoom and focus every time. We bought an iron structure for the screen and made it from a material used for advertising banners. It does not transmit light; the background is black, so the rays of the projector do not pass through. We have quite a big screen. We started stretching from the corners so that it would stretch properly without leaving any lines.”

Vano, Bolnisi (Georgia)

"Hang a dark curtain on the door. The distance between the door and the curtain would prevent light from entering the dark hall when people leave or enter during the screening."

Lazare

BOLNISI (GEORGIA)

<https://epfound.ge/en/resources/stories/singleview/1610-restoring-bolnisis-movie-theatre>

Community of Cinema Enthusiasts in Gori

The Art House, established by members of the Gori Photographers Club, stands as another vibrant and creative space in eastern Georgia. They organize film screenings to prompt the audience to contemplate ongoing issues through documentary films. Nevertheless, building a community of cinema enthusiasts comes with its share of technical challenges. The large round hall designed as an exhibition space proved acoustically challenging during film screenings due to sound distortion and echoes. However, the team found a solution by covering the floors with carpets and filling the empty walls. The sound quality has significantly improved.

“Experience means a lot, especially when you are poorly equipped. I remember a problem with an AUX cable once, hindering the transfer of sound from the laptop to the speaker. We had to replace it. Since then, we have kept a big box stocked with various types of cables at the venue. The connectors between the speaker and the laptop from which the movie is played are crucial. Sometimes the devices do not sync with a specific laptop, so testing beforehand is essential.”

Ana

**ART HOUSE, GORI
(GEORGIA)**

<https://www.instagram.com/arthousegori/>

Screenings in the Highlands of Racha

Experience holds significant value for Eter Arsanidze, who lives in Racha, a highland area in western Georgia. She is a young activist who has established a community organization in Racha. Eter has brought together young people from different villages, procured a projector, screen and up to 15 chairs, and travels from one village to another, bringing cinema to the locals. Given the absence of high-quality projection, sound equipment, and space flexibility, each screening comes with technical challenges.

Due to their limited experience organizing film screenings, Eter and her fellows realized a bit late that they should have darkened the room beforehand. She recalls a day when they were set to screen a documentary film by Salome Jashi, who, recognizing the problem, brought darkblack curtains to cover all the windows and prevent light from coming in.

“The speaker we purchased works well indoors, but its power is insufficient for open spaces. During a cartoon screening for children, the sound was so poor that the kids could hardly hear anything. As a result, they gathered as close as possible to the screen, practically sitting on the stage.”

Eter

RACHA (GEORGIA)

Preparations for Screenings in Tetrtskaro

Lighting is one of the major challenges many screening venues face. Pati Shavadze, who works for the Youth Centre in Tetrtskaro (a town in southern Georgia), recalls they have never held a single screening during the daytime, always waiting until dark. In addition, the stability of the Internet sometimes seriously hampers the screenings.

Up to six community organizations created the network **KSELI**, which unites young cinema enthusiasts to exchange experiences and support each other in enhancing access to culture in the regions of Georgia.

EXCHANGE KNOW-HOW

SUPPORT EACH OTHER

“We never trust the Internet. We always download the film file in advance, preferably a day before the screening. Sometimes, the download can take too long, up to 3–4 hours. It’s also crucial to check whether the download has been successful. There was a case where we thought we had downloaded the file, but it jammed at the last minute. So, it is definitely worth checking beforehand. I would also advise you not to rely on an external hard drive; always download the file onto the laptop or computer.”

Pati

**YOUTH CENTRE,
TETRITSKARO
(GEORGIA)**

<https://www.facebook.com/tycgeorgia/>

PHOTOS:

ADAMIA, Levan; ARSANIDZE, Eter; CHKHARTISHVILI, Nat ali; KOŘÍNKOVÁ, Eva; PHALAVANDISHVILI, Lasha and Tato TSIKARIDZE

HOW TO PICK THE RIGHT FILMS

AUTHOR: Andreea Bratosin, One World Romania Association (Romania)



- > Selecting a catalogue
- > Quality and Subject Matter
- > Type of Venue
- > Target Audience
- > Personal Taste
- > Timing
- > Local Cultural Events
- > Major Socio-Political Issues
- > Summary

Selecting a catalogue

Each season, KineDok creates a catalogue of films curated by members of the organization team from the respective partner countries. Each country's representatives propose the top two contemporary documentaries produced or co-produced in their homeland. The main criteria of the film selection include cinematic quality, diversity of topics and socio-political involvement. So, annually, you can choose from 12–16 documentary films. The film catalogue is then discussed and promoted with each venue manager to curate a specific program for their venue. The people or organizations screening KineDok films may vary; they can be cultural associations, public institutions, civic groups or individuals from all walks of life. Their selection of films always goes hand in hand with the ethical or cultural values and the identity of the screening venue. Any film selected from the KineDok collection can draw parallels to your local culture. There are several criteria you should take into account when selecting documentary films you want to screen.

Quality and Subject Matter

KineDok catalogue contains documentaries of artistic quality that cover a wide range of social and political issues, e.g. justice, freedom of speech, health & mental health, migration, institutional corruption, ageing and senior citizens in society, abuse and family trauma, collective trauma, minorities, inequality of opportunities, environment & climate change and many more.

“We decide on the films with the help of the KineDok coordinator. Currently, we are screening more Georgian films due to the political situation in the country. Generally, we choose cinematic films interesting to art professionals, photographers, etc. We usually know the available slots for film screenings a few months beforehand and decide a week before which specific film we will screen.”

Natalie

**CUBE IN CONTEXT,
GEORGIA**

<https://www.instagram.com/cubeincontext/>

Type of Venue

Screenings have to be adapted to the type of location (indoor, outdoor) and the atmosphere the organizers wish to create. For example, mainstream, audience-friendly films are more suitable for outdoor screenings, bars, and pubs, while artistic films for cinephiles are better suited for museums, libraries or art galleries. Ultimately it is up to you what to screen and for what kind of audience.

„We aim to screen all the catalogue items during the season. We try to screen as many films as possible outdoors while the weather is good and to use community spaces only during the cold autumn, and winter months. This significantly influences the planning of screenings, as lighter films are timed for outdoor screenings and heavier films for indoor screenings in winter.”

ZSUZSI, AKE-DEBRECEN (HUNGARY)

Target Audience

It is crucial to identify the potential audience for a specific subject represented in the film and invite them to the screening. For example, you can invite members of senior clubs and NGOs that work with older people to a film dealing with the role of senior citizens in society. Different organizers have different objectives; some want to build a loyal and reliable documentary film community, while others, who already have such a crowd or community-specific screenings, wish to focus on discussions about presented topics that relate to the lives of the community.

“Usually, we set the screenings around four weeks apart. We realized that when we try to make the screenings more frequent, it doesn’t work, mainly because our team members are unavailable so often. Sometimes, it depends on the space. Once we had access to a space for two days, so we organized two events on these two consecutive days while making sure they didn’t overlap with others. They matched in theme, so it worked perfectly. During the week, we hold the film screenings at 7 PM for indoor events, which works OK in Arad. People don’t stay that late in town. They watch the movie, join the discussion and are home at 10 PM. In summer, depending on the hour it gets dark, we show the movies outdoors, and people also stay out longer.”

Ioana

**CITIZENIT ASSOCIATION
(ROMANIA)**

<https://www.citizenit.ro>

Personal Taste

As a cultural event organizer, you must build your own curatorial vision. At the same time, you need to remember that you are screening films for an audience, not for yourself. There should be a balance between your personal taste and a clear sense of what your audience would watch.

BUILD YOUR OWN CURATORIAL VISION

“There is a creative process in choosing the films, even if it might not seem so. I check the list of films from the KineDok catalogue and think: first, which topics work best for my town; second, which films are a good fit with other events/festivals; third, which of the films follow up on the current world or local events; and fourth, which movie speaks to a specific audience we want to engage. And then, I consider my personal preferences and film reviews (I do serious research in that area). Now, I plan the program only 2–3 weeks ahead of time, but I would like to plan more in advance and have a sort of KineDok series, like a mini festival or film club. I know that the selection still is quite subjective, but I do my best.”

Simion

**PALATUL CULTURII
(ROMANIA)**

<http://www.palatulculturibistrita.ro>

Timing

Certain documentaries/topics can draw more attention if screened in a particular season. Think about which films can be associated with a summer or winter atmosphere. For example, films about travelling, sports, and family relationships have more of a summer vibe.

VIBE OF THE FILMS

Local Cultural Events

Consider important cultural events in your area that you can associate the screening with (e.g., film or music festivals, local spring/summer festivities, Open/White Night of Galleries, Museums or Libraries, Town days, etc.). An accompanying event could enhance the impact of the screening and increase the turnout.

“Usually, I check the calendar to see if there is any special date coming up or something interesting happening that could fit with any of the KineDok films. Then, I also approach potential guests for the after-screening discussions. For example, I write on FB that I am looking for such and such experts, and sometimes people send me tips, or I approach people with a lot of connections. Of course, it has to be quite low-cost because we don’t have a budget for some high-profile celebrities.”

Blanka, FUTRA(Czechia)

Major Socio-Political Issues

Try cooperating with local organizations that focus on critical issues in your country, e.g., an LGBTQ+ film would attract more attention when screened during Pride Week or another event that focuses on the queer community; a film about the Roma community can be screened on the International Roma Day, etc. Remember that some issues can be seen as politically sensitive in some countries, so be ready for backlash or heated discussions with your audience.

Summary

Each season, Kinedok creates a catalogue of 12–16 films from which the local partners can choose to screen in their venue. The selection of films always goes hand in hand with the cultural values and the identity of the screening venue. There are several criteria you should take into account when selecting documentary films you want to screen:

- **Quality and subject of the film:** KineDok catalogue contains artistic quality documentaries that cover a wide range of social and political issues.
- **Type of venue:** Screenings have to be adapted to different types of locations (indoor, outdoor) and the atmosphere that the location and the organizers can create.
- **Target audience:** It is important to identify the potential audience for a specific subject represented in the film and invite them to the screening.
- **Personal taste:** There should be a balance between your personal taste and a clear sense of what your audience will be watching.

- **Right time (season, holidays):** There are certain documentaries or topics that can be more successful if they are screened in a particular season.
- **Regular or ad hoc local cultural events:** Take into consideration important local cultural events that you can associate the screening with.
- **Major social-political issues:** It is also possible to cooperate with local organizations that focus on major social-political issues in your country.

As a cultural event organizer, you must build your own curatorial vision. At the same time, you need to remember that you are screening films for an audience, not for yourself. There should be a balance between your personal taste and a clear sense of what your audience would watch.

PHOTOS:

Film stills (Apparatgeist; White on White)

Archive of our screening venues (Muzeul Amintirilor din Comunism Art Burg; Muzeul Cineastului Amator; Muzeul Literaturii Romane; Rezidenta Scena 9 – Bucharest Romania)

CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUDIENCE

AUTHOR: Mária Hejtmánková, PR and Cultural Manager (Slovakia)



- › It all comes down to communication
- › Budget
- › Direct Marketing
- › Timing: How Often to Address Your Audience?
- › Who is Your Audience?
- › Explore New Narratives and Fresh Topics
- › Social Networks
- › Visual Identity

It all comes down to communication

Once you decide to screen films from KineDok's selection, your venue becomes a distinctive community space, bringing your audience the finest from Central and Eastern Europe documentary film production. You are offering more than movies; you deliver experiences! Even with all of this on your side, you might still find yourself unable to attract viewers. It all comes down to communication. It plays a pivotal role in our daily lives, serving as a means for connection and information exchange. Establishing effective communication with your audience, supported by well-tailored marketing and PR efforts, is crucial to drawing in viewers.

Budget

The PR budget is frequently underestimated, particularly by cultural and non-profit spaces prioritizing financial investment in their programs but overlooking the need for effective communication with the public. When formulating the budget, it's crucial to establish specific allocations for both PR and marketing. Adequate communication is essential for every cultural

event in the program and for promoting each screened film. Before finalizing the budget, consider how you intend to reach your audience. Define your audience, determine how best to reach it and assign funding for such purpose. Be realistic and think it through. What is the effect of program posters alone? What is the impact of movie posters? How many are truly necessary, and where is the best place to display them?

What is the reach of paid advertising on social networks? Is it well-tuned? Do you avoid paid advertising? Consider not doing so if a broader reach is desired for individual posts and your social media page. Go the extra mile and try creating videos, reels, stories, etc. Who is in charge of your PR? When it comes to PR, the role of a PR manager is often undervalued. This position is either combined with other responsibilities or receives low remuneration, requiring the individual to work on additional projects. Ideally, one person employed full-time should communicate with the media, create content for social networks or a website, and focus on other activities related to enhancing the program's visibility.

Direct Marketing

Maintaining constant communication with your audience is beneficial, even outside social networks. A simple and budget-friendly communication method is direct email or newsletters. But remember, sometimes, less is more. Define both the content and frequency of your email communications to avoid being perceived as bothersome and ensure the content remains concise and interesting.

Direct marketing can be a potent tool in identifying the target audience and devising effective communication strategies. It also provides a cost-effective alternative to conventional advertising methods. If you lack a mailing list to reach your viewers, consider asking them if they would like to receive information about your program when they enter the screening room.

An alternative method of direct personal communication could involve WhatsApp or Signal groups, allowing you to share information about upcoming discussions and screenings. A powerful marketing tool, likely familiar to you, is the influence of positive references, commonly recognized as word of mouth (WOM).

How can you optimize this? Reflect on occasions when you recommend a restaurant, hotel, or a particular venue to your friends. What added value do you provide in those instances, and when and where does WOM typically begin? Following each discussion or screening, encourage your audience to explore other films featured in your curated program, just like they do at places like the Georgian **ART HOUSE GORI** or the Hungarian **TELEP**.

Introduce them to the film's central theme and the guests invited to the discussion. Much like Alternatív Közösségek Egyesülete, always display a poster of the next film to be screened. If

your space and technical capabilities allow, take inspiration from **DOKUKINO**, which promotes its program through original videos. You can subsequently share the discussions held during the screenings on your website or social media channels or highlight specific captivating moments from these debates.

Timing

Timing is of the essence. Is it sufficient to post on social networks a day before the screening? Is it enough to rely solely on posters displaying your monthly program scattered around the city? Cultural venues offer a diverse range of programs, akin to a box of chocolates, each with its unique flavor. Therefore, providing comprehensive information about the film program well in advance and distributing movie posters systematically is advisable.

When is the ideal moment to start advertising a particular screening, and how should you go about it? Place the film poster in locations frequented by potential viewers at least two weeks before the screening, prominently displaying the date and time.

Additionally, start promoting the screening early through social networks, local media, direct email, and other channels. Remember to mention what makes a film screening at your venue special.

Connect with media representatives

For instance, the film might not be available through regular cinema distribution or on TV, or your event may include a discussion or other program featuring exciting guests. Recognizing these unique aspects is essential. Notable cultural centers, such as **STANICA ŽILINA-ZÁRIEČIE** in Slovakia and the Romanian **MA HUB**, attract the highest number of spectators, particularly during their summer outdoor screenings. What's your experience? Establish a connection with media representatives, regularly update them about your program and invite them to take part in the screenings. In this context, once again, less is more.

To ensure your messages resonate with media representatives, communicate them clearly, concisely, and in moderation. Express gratitude for any mention of your program. Create a marketing calendar using Sheets on Google Drive or a digital dashboard, where you mark the days of communication and the corresponding formats. Effective marketing relies on clear planning. Last but not least, you also need to consider the timing of the actual film screening. Pick the optimal day and time based on your local circumstances, e.g. assess other city events featuring similar films or major events that might lead to lower attendance.

Who is Your Audience?

It might be detrimental to operate under the belief that a film you are about to screen suits everyone. You should narrow it down and identify your target audience. Who genuinely wants to see it? Who should see it? Despite attending your events, visitors likely have different interests and perspectives than you do. Where do they spend time when they are not visiting your venue? What are their interests? Are they employed, currently studying, or in retirement? What communication channels do they prefer—Facebook, Instagram, direct email, posters, radio, podcasts, or other? If you find yourself unable to address these inquiries, consider conducting a survey using a questionnaire. You can share it as a sponsored post on social networks or hand it out directly to attendees of your events. And once again, we come back to the golden rule that less is more. The questionnaire should be short, with clear and concise questions. Don't forget to ask whether the respondents are interested in receiving your newsletter.

How to maintain your community?

If you are located in a city with secondary schools or universities, consider establishing partnerships with them. Reach out to educators, particularly those teaching a subject related to the film, engage with students, and work towards cultivating and sustaining a community. If the prospect of young individuals eventually moving away for job opportunities, further education, or starting families concerns you, remember that they have shared a significant part of their lives with you and are likely to continue sharing their feelings and experiences.

To maintain the community, adapt your program and communication methods to cater to the evolving demographics of existing visitors while also welcoming new audiences. Consider organizing screenings for parents with children, a practice similar to what carries out. While adults enjoy a movie outside, there is a specially curated program for children indoors featuring creative activities. They are also offered snacks they can take home if there are any leftovers. This approach creates a charming atmosphere.

The **FUTRA** Club extended invitations for the film beyond regular viewers, including representatives of the local social services authorities. Is there a significant number of seniors in your city? Be sure to consider them while curating your program. For instance, consider connecting with organizations that bring them together. These places are often frequented by active seniors who enjoy participating in new activities, particularly those related to the arts.

Do you collaborate with the city or district? Have you established relationships with the owners of nearby shops, cafés, ice cream parlors, etc.? You can showcase movie posters in these locations and interact with your audience. Establishing connections between communities is of utmost importance.

A model example of this approach is a cinema in the small Slovak town of Stupava. You can find film posters all over the town, in various locations, such as shops, art schools, ice cream parlors, or restaurants. These posters serve as the fundamental means of communication with the audience, fostering a sense of ownership among the townspeople, who perceive it as “their cinema.” The venue is housed in the Cultural Centre. Tickets are conveniently available at the cinema café, offering beverages, popcorn and even books with artistic merit suitable for adults and children. Engaging with your audience goes beyond conveying information; it involves providing added value to enrich their overall experience.

STUPAVA (SLOVAKIA)

Explore New Narratives and Fresh Topics

What is the subject of the film scheduled for screening at your venue? What issues does it address? Before initiating communication about the movie, address these questions. Tell the film’s story, emphasize its central theme and reach the audience on a personal level.

Take the film *Holy Dilemma*, for example. Have you ever wondered what being a Roman Catholic priest is like? What are the implications of celibacy? Is it necessary? Do you know a priest who didn’t observe celibacy? How did people treat him? Approach these questions with sensitivity. In both your communication and film-related discussions, you can explore relevant issues, whether they are of global significance or specific to your local area.

By exploring the film's themes, you can shed light on current social events. For instance, consider this post about screening the documentary ***SIEBEN WINTER IN TEHRAN***: "Today is World Day Against the Death Penalty. The documentary *Seven Winters in Tehran* by Steffi Niederzoll is currently playing in the cinema. It tells the life story of Reyhaneh Jabbari, an Iranian student who killed her rapist and faced **EXECUTION AS A CONSEQUENCE**."

The Hungarian **KINODOMINO** has designed plane tickets as invitations for a virtual journey to Mexico, promoting ***HECHO EN MEXICO***. The authentic visuals drew attention to the documentary, which retells the history of Mexican culture through music. The event immersed the audience in Mexican ambiance, featuring cuisine, music, and decorations. They created an experience beyond a simple screening—an event you'd want to relive.

Another significant added value of KineDok screenings lies in the discussions. Drawing from past experiences, you know that people enjoy attending events featuring well-known figures in your town. Invite them as guests to the post-screening discussion. Each KineDok documentary brings up topics that need to be discussed. Each has won an award and has been screened at major festivals.

This kind of information resonates with audiences. An enticing feature could be a film curator presenting content in an appealing manner. For example, when guests from other NGOs are invited to attend an event at the Budapest pub **GÓLYA**, they actively promote the event on their respective social media platforms. The greater your connections with other organizations and communities, the broader your potential audience becomes.

Social Networks

People don't like them, yet they spend so much time on them. Which social network does your audience prefer? What is the best time to post an invitation? In his book, Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman outlines two systems that govern our thinking. The first is fast, intuitive, and emotional, while the second is slower, more goal-oriented, and logical. Leveraging both systems in our social media communications is crucial.

The overwhelming amount of information coming at us from every direction is diluting people's attention spans, especially on social media. To capture attention, consider sharing visually appealing content (photos, videos) that stands out as viewers swiftly scroll through each post. At the same time, users seek valuable and concise content that attracts and motivates them to click on a link for more information and ultimately attend the film screening. Last-minute invitations without added value are unlikely to attract viewers. Use simple, understandable

language, and avoid writing entire synopses in your posts. As an example, consider the **POST** for Nisha Pahuja's ***TO KILL A TIGER***.

Visual Identity

KineDok is a brand known for delivering impactful documentaries. By incorporating photos and promotional materials featuring the KineDok logo, individuals captivated by previously curated events will naturally engage. The visual identity catches the eye at first glance. It is linked to the logo but also to the values we embody.

When implemented correctly and consistently, films from the KineDok collection become instantly recognizable. This cultivates lasting recall of the KineDok brand among the audience. Consistent communication of this identity is key. Don't forget to use #kinedok on social media to connect all KineDok unique spaces. In addition to basic information on each film, KineDok provides you with: posters, synopsis, photos with KineDok logo, trailer and press kit.

These resources are designed to assist you in effectively communicating your program and delivering exceptional experiences to a broad audience. Every member of your organization actively contributes to the creative process of developing communication tools at various stages.

Remember, more heads are better than one!

JOIN US

<https://kinedok.net/join-us>

Daniel Kahneman: **THINKING, FAST AND SLOW**

Clarke L. Caywood: Public Relations

KineDok survey ☺

<https://www.facebook.com/zuendfunk>

<https://www.instagram.com/sakhinyc/>

<https://www.facebook.com/documentaryscreenings>

PHOTOS:

GLISNÍKOVÁ, Lenka; MRÁČEK, Adam and Radka PISKAČOVÁ

Archive of our screening venues (Kinodomino, Futra)

Film still (Holy Dilemma)

Instagram (@sakhinyc)

DEAR AUDIENCE, WHO ARE YOU?

AUTHOR: Dina Pokrajac, Dokukino KIC Manager (Restart, Croatia)



- › Dear Audience, Who Are You?
- › The Curator's Choice
- › Cinema as a Living Room
- › Don't Just Screen Films, Provide an Experience
- › Find Your Allies
- › 7 Practical Tips to Help You Tend to Your Audience

“Your target audience is everyone, and the sooner you realize this, the sooner you’ll become successful.”

Nikica

**KINOKLUB ŠIBENIK
(CROATIA)**

<http://kinomreza.hr/kinoklub-sibenik/>

Dear Audience, Who Are You?

The following chapter will summarize the experience with community screenings for various audiences at **DOKUKINO** in Croatia. Our program is primarily defined by current societal events. It consists of films that address socially and politically relevant themes (e.g., gentrification, degrowth, ecology, migration, colonial legacy, the defense of the commons, sex and gender equality, social change, questions of democratization and participation, the media and public sphere, and alternative economic models) in an artistically accomplished and innovative way. We embrace controversial and delicate topics and encourage dialogue through documentary film screenings followed by moderated discussions—different opinions are welcomed, and we stimulate open critical thinking.

Art is Always Political

We extensively cooperate with civil society organizations and experts from various fields, including political science, sociology, philosophy, ecology, anthropology, history, and economy. In this way, we want to contextualize themes that certain documentaries cover in a broader interdisciplinary way. We often receive backlash on social media from members of the opposite political spectrum for certain films we screen, especially the ones dealing with Yugoslavia and the former socialist regime or disputed historical events. These are still painful subjects in our society, and unfortunately, collective memory is constantly being erased and rewritten. However, for us, art is always political, and it is our duty to initiate debates about controversial topics. Documentaries help people open their minds and develop empathy and understanding.

The Curator's Choice

"I'm not going to say it's easy because it's not. It requires a lot of effort, and it only takes one film (which you thought would be interesting) to lose your audience forever. I think one needs to maintain a good program, constantly bring in new things and try one's best. The most rewarding experiences are when, after seeing the film, people come, still under the impression, to say thank you. That is when we see a purpose and a meaning in everything we do."

Ana

**SHPEENADOX - LABIN
(CROATIA)**

<https://www.facebook.com/shpeenadox>

The first thing a film curator needs to do is to define the audience they are addressing. Sometimes, when we want to reach out to everybody, we become painfully aware we are reaching out to nobody. You will never be able to please everyone, and it is OK that the first viewer you aim to please is yourself. The curator deals with two conflicting approaches. On the one hand, we want to cultivate a broad and diverse audience. On the other hand, certain films and topics will address particular audiences and niche tastes.

Film curators will be respected by cinephiles for their film knowledge and exquisite taste, but at the same time, they must remain accessible to a less sophisticated audience with a sporadic interest in documentary films. The latter come to the screening only because they are interested in a specific topic or because your successful PR campaign spurred their curiosity.

Your goal is to make the screening a gratifying experience so they return to your venue or events. Of course, biographical and musical documentaries are always very popular. Viewers of documentary films are still predominantly thematically oriented, and they don't necessarily perceive a documentary as a legitimate art form—it is our task to change their minds.

And now, identify important and urgent topics (often omitted by other cultural events) in your community and try to find documentaries that address them in a relevant and artistically stimulating way. You can think of a topic yourself, brainstorm it with your team, ask people around, or follow current events in the media and on social media.

The KineDok **CATALOGUE** is a good start. For instance, ***TAMING THE GARDEN*** is one of my personal favorites of 2021 and an example of combining all three audiences with a challenging film. This visually stunning cinematic poem appeals to cinephiles but also attracts a broader thematically oriented audience because of its edifying tale about the resilience of nature and the insatiability of human greed (in recent years, our viewers have been particularly interested in ecological topics, especially the younger ones).

Don't underestimate your audience or pamper their every whim, but don't be a pretentious snob, either. Recognize when to play it safe and schedule a feelgood film, a festival darling, or a film made by a popular local travel blogger. Still, your program must have a recognizable signature, so don't hesitate to make bold and daring creative decisions in your film selection. However, you should also strive to be inclusive and open to suggestions from the community (our viewers reach us through emails, social media comments or answers to occasional questionnaires we give out after screenings).

Cinema as a Living Room

Always keep in mind that coming to watch documentaries is a social event. At Dokukino, our main aspiration is to screen current documentaries in a cozy and intimate atmosphere and turn our cinema into a living room—with comfortable chairs and direct contact with the filmmakers and the creative team behind the project. We communicate with our visitors on a regular basis and readily respond to all their comments and suggestions.

We often receive messages from audience members saying, "You should screen this" or "That was a fantastic evening". It sounds like a cliché, but people can tell when you love what you do, and if you don't like the place where you work, everyone else will feel it, and no one will come. It is important for us that people enjoy coming to our cinema, asking our team questions, and taking part in events.

Sometimes, small gestures make them feel welcomed and at ease; for instance, we encourage our viewers to bring drinks from the bar or their own snacks to the screening room. As we are a dog-friendly cinema, we always have some dog bowls filled with water and goodies lying around so their pets can enjoy the trip to the cinema as well. Also, make sure your staff talk to the viewers and engage them in comprehensive and substantiated conversations on all film-related topics. And don't become self-defensive when confronted with criticism—even the Karens of this world have something worthwhile to share.

DOKUKINO (CROATIA)

Don't Just Screen Films, Provide an Experience

HOW TO SPARK THE PUBLIC'S CURIOSITY?

“Successful promotion is any promotion that doesn’t strike the target audience as being addressed by a corporation.”

Nikica

**KINOKLUB ŠIBENIK
(CROATIA)**

<http://kinomreza.hr/kinoklub-sibenik/>

How to spark the public’s curiosity remains the greatest challenge. Let’s face it: a film of superb quality and timeliness often isn’t enough to capture its attention. We cannot just screen films; we need to provide an experience. Film premieres at Dokukino are almost exclusively accompanied by talks with the film crew, panel discussions related to the film’s topic, or other special events.

For each new film, we specifically target our audience; apart from regular advertising and promotion, each month, we organize specific promotional campaigns in which we use communication channels and promotional tools appealing to the particular audience in question. We target cinephiles, but also, for each film, we build an outreach network and contact NGOs, associations, brands, and media that are specifically related to the theme the chosen documentary film explores.

For example, for the film **KING SKATE**, we reached out to skaters and the punk scene (we contacted local skating clubs and alternative clubs like **MOCHVARA**; we even found out that there is a **VLADIMIR SKATE FILM FESTIVAL** organized in Istria every year). On the other hand, for **PALACE FOR THE PEOPLE**, we contacted local architects, urban anthropologists, urban planners, and students of design and architecture. We built a whole program around it called **ARCHITECTURE AND MEMORY** with a panel discussion involving experts and other film titles.

When we screened ***SOLO***, we organized a conversation with piano teacher and child prodigy Virna Kljaković and psychiatrist Hrvoje Handl, who shared their experiences with us, providing added value to our audience. We also reached out to music schools and the University Psychiatric Hospital Vrapče, which organizes a film-discursive program called ***FILM AND PSYCHIATRY*** for their students and interns in cooperation with the Croatian Film Critics Society.

We strive to celebrate film culture but also promote a cinema-going culture. To achieve this goal, we organize a varied events program but also try to maximize the spaces and create additional rooms to the cinema hall—a café to host post-screening discussions, workshops, and talks, a bookstore to buy film magazines and publications, an exhibition space for video-installations, film posters and photographs, open mic sessions to review films or discuss new releases, and many more.

**DOKUKINO, ZAGREB
(CROATIA)**

<https://dokukino.net>

Find Your Allies

The audience attendance usually starts dropping in June—this is why, from the beginning of July until the second half of September, we organize open-air screenings at **ART PARK ZAGREB**, a green oasis in Zagreb's city center and a perfect place to chill during the hot summer months. In 2023, we did ***DOKSI UKLETI***, a series of very successful screenings at Klet, a revitalized space occupied by emerging local artists and cultural professionals. We find our allies to get the audience's attention for creative documentaries and topics we want to address in local artists, activists, artisans and grassroots initiatives, while the film screenings become part of a wider range of events (concerts, workshops, street art, flea markets). For instance, *Plastic Free July* is a great initiative which helps us screen environmental documentaries in collaboration with local NGO **ZELENA AKCIJA**.

7 Practical Tips to Help You Tend to Your Audience

1. Follow current events, identify socially and politically relevant topics and encourage debate.

2. Make bold and creative programming decisions, and never underestimate your audience.
3. Involve the community and be open to their suggestions—diversify your program and encourage them to participate.
4. Do small gestures to make your audience feel comfortable so they return to your venue or screenings.
5. Don't just screen films; provide your audience with a memorable and enjoyable experience.
6. Build an extensive outreach network and target your audience specifically for each new film with personalized and original digital marketing.
7. Provide your audience with additional activities (workshops, performances, exhibitions, concerts, etc).

PHOTOS:

BISTRČIĆ, Sanja; ŠARLIJA, Zoe; MAGZAN, Ant o; PLANINC, Borut, BERDAIS, Klara and Leonardo
KLANCIR

Archive of our screening venue (Dokukino)

FILM SCREENINGS UNDER PRESSURE

AUTHOR: Mariam Jachvadze, Production Manager (Chai Khana Media, Georgia)



- > Struggle for democracy
- > Sensitive Content in Small Towns
- > Collaboration with Civic Society
- > Unpredictable Outcomes in Discussions
- > Defying Potential Barriers
- > Memory As a Trigger for Conflict
- > Films Under Political Pressure
- > 7 Tips on Providing Safe Space

Struggle for democracy

In a time when the struggle for democracy is approaching a turning point, freedom of expression and free speech come under pressure. Furthermore, amid greater invasions of privacy, intimidation and incentives to self-censor both online and offline, freedom of self-expression has also declined over the years, according to the **2023 FREEDOM IN THE WORLD REPORT**.

Eastern Europe has been no exception. War between Azerbaijan and Armenia, full-scale war in Ukraine, and protests in Georgia made living in the region unstable and insecure. In a fragile democracy, people who create art face challenges on different scales. Political pressure is not the only issue because ultra-nationalist movements and ultra-conservative groups also have a direct influence on some cultural events and the film distribution process.

These groups become stronger when human rights, especially the rights of minorities, are insufficiently protected. In addition, in more traditional societies, the audience tends to be sensitive towards queer topics or gay love. Therefore, films that depict these relationships are not widely welcomed and appreciated. Filmmakers and screening organizers, including the

venue managers, must consider all possible complications in countries like Georgia, Azerbaijan, Hungary, or Romania.

In the following chapter, we will give a few examples of how filmmakers and film event organizers deal with the political and social pressure they encounter. Hopefully, it will give you hope that it is possible to screen films even in a challenging context.

Sensitive Content in Small Towns

Careful selection of films for screening is not a unique experience to Georgia but it extends to other countries, such as Romania, where each film selected for screening is treated with caution. This process becomes more challenging in smaller cities and towns where the audience is limited. Cultural center representatives in these areas invest significant effort to expand the audience and initiate discussions on topics relevant to their society. Their goal is to engage and connect with the audience.

Simion Pop, currently working for the Bistrita Palace of Culture in Romania, acknowledges the existence of sensitive topics and the uncertainty surrounding their potential impact on the audience. In smaller towns, one must strike a delicate balance between attracting more viewers and avoiding alienation.

“There are sensitive topics, and we don’t know how to include them and whether it expands or reduces our audience – it’s a small town, and we don’t want to alienate our audience. We are not New York, where you need not care that much about what you show since there will always be a niche audience. I need to pay attention to people’s sensitive triggers even if they do not coincide with mine.”

Simion

**BISTRITA PALACE OF
CULTURE (ROMANIA)**

<http://www.palatulculturibistrita.ro>

Collaboration with Civic Society

In Croatia, addressing the current social and political issues through documentaries is a very important mission. Local representatives of KineDok actively strive to embrace diverse opinions and encourage critical thinking. Their approach to film screenings involves extensive collaboration with various civic society organizations and experts from different fields, including political science, sociology, philosophy, ecology, anthropology, history, and economy. By doing so, they aim to contextualize the themes covered in certain documentaries in a broader, interdisciplinary manner.

Unpredictable Outcomes in Discussions

Czechia provides another positive example of fostering the exchange of ideas and thoughts among a diverse audience through KineDok. The 2022 KineDok catalog included a film entitled ***COLORS OF TOBI*** (2021). The documentary features Eva and her family in a small village in Hungary. Eva’s 16-year-old child recently came out as transgender and now lives under the chosen name of Tobi. Described in the synopsis as an “*emotional tale of releasing and accepting*,”

the film resonates with Ivana from Hrubinka Cultural and Sport Center in Czechia. She notes that the audience's reaction to *Colors of Tobi* surprised her.

Georgia has also proved that if you select the screening space with the audience in mind and take the context of your country into consideration, the success of the event can be guaranteed. Even with the risks associated with screening LGBTQI films in Georgia, where active far-right groups pose a potential threat, KineDok Georgia successfully conducted two public screenings of *Colors of Tobi* without encountering disruptions.

“When we screened Colors of Tobi, I saw a couple of very macho guys in the audience, and I expected they would leave the screening but they stayed and were totally amazed at how Tobi is dealing with life and how a search for true identity looks like.”

Ivana

**CULTURAL CENTER
HRUBÍNKA (CZECHIA)**

<https://www.facebook.com/hrubinka>

Defying Potential Barriers

This accomplishment was particularly meaningful for Natali Chkhartishvili, a KineDok coordinator in Georgia. Showcasing the film to the public and defying potential barriers represented a significant achievement. The screenings managed to trigger discussions and foster empathy, highlighting the power of thoughtful selection of screening spaces in navigating sensitive topics within a particular cultural context.

“We had the opportunity to have one closed screening for the journalists from the South Caucasus, who were participating in a training session conducted by Chai Khana Media “How to report on queer topics?” and another screening at Untitled Gallery. This was our deliberate choice since this is a venue that frequently organizes events for and with the queer community. That’s why we were confident in expecting no issues and considering it a safe space for the discussion.”

Natali, Chai Khana Media (Georgia)

Memory As a Trigger for Conflict

Many factors can divide people. Memory, too, can serve as a trigger for conflict and resistance, particularly when organizing film screenings that feature historical events. However, it can also be a powerful tool for reflection and dialogue. In Croatia, films addressing Yugoslavia and the former socialist regime remain problematic and require a careful approach to avoid stirring controversy among the population. School students and teachers emerge as the best target audience for this type of documentary.

Dina Pokrajac, a KineDok representative from Zagreb, acknowledges the challenges associated with screening films related to disputed historical events. She notes: “Disputed historical events are still painful in our society, and unfortunately, collective memory is constantly being erased and rewritten. For certain films, we aimed to screen high school students and minors. We encountered challenges in obtaining permission from their parents and school principals, but we managed to convince them. We always strive to provide a broader perspective through well-moderated discussions and trusted experts.”

Films Under Political Pressure

Political pressure is much harder to tackle, especially when it involves an oligarch’s interests or the country’s most influential figures. Salomé Jashi’s latest feature film, ***TAMING THE GARDEN***, stands as one of Georgian cinema’s notable successes, winning prizes at international festivals and being nominated at Sundance. However, at home, it has become the country’s most controversial film due to its indirect reference to Bidzina Ivanishvili, the founder of the ruling Georgian Dream party.

In the summer of 2021, Jashi initiated negotiations with Cavea, the sole chain of movie theaters in Georgia, to screen the film for the local audience. After several months of talks, Jashi received an official refusal stating: “We don’t have a practice of releasing documentary films for rent.” This reply seemed unconvincing since Cavea usually takes fiction and documentary films from film productions, puts them on their platform (for subscribers only), and screens them in movie theaters. During the same year, numerous venue managers in various regions of Georgia, including Kvemo Kartli, Ozurgeti, and Batumi, refrained from screening the film to avoid potential conflicts with the local government.

This fear is not unfamiliar to Mindia Esadze, the former director of the Georgian Film Academy in Tbilisi, an independent, non-commercial legal entity aimed at developing and popularizing Georgian cinematography. *Taming the Garden* was initially approved for screening at the Cinema House seven times. However, the promise was not upheld, leading to the **ABRUPT CANCELLATION** of the film’s screenings at the Cinema House in Tbilisi. Jashi recalls the response from the director: “He [Mindia Esadze] told me he would not screen the film

that triggered different opinions and divided people on political grounds. Furthermore, he said he did not want to be a victim.”

This development sparked significant interest in society and prompted various organizations to step forward and screen the film. Among them were the Haraki Theatre, Goethe-Institut Georgia, Cafe Ezo, Cafe Mziuri, and others. All the screenings went well.

The documentary *Taming the Garden* continued its journey, gaining renewed significance amid ongoing cinematic protests linked to the reorganization of the Georgian National Film Center. In June 2023, Irakli Kobakhidze, the leader of the ruling party, publicly criticized director Salomé Jashi and her film, labeling it as “shameful” and “absurd.” He **CRITICIZED** the Georgian National Film Center for allowing such projects to proceed (e.g., to be funded by the National Film Center), stating, “A film with such shameful content should not be made, instead we should make films with the right content,” in remarks to journalists on June 19, 2023.

The very next day, KineDok Georgia demonstrated resilience and determination by promptly organizing two film screenings of *Taming the Garden*. Approximately 100 people gathered and actively participated in the discussion that followed the screening. Those unable to attend requested access to the film via a VOD platform.

“We received dozens of messages every day for the whole week. In such a volatile environment, providing VOD access becomes a viable solution to swiftly disseminate the film far and wide.”

Natali Chkhartishvili, KineDok coordinator, Georgia

Censorship and political pressure have spurred film industry professionals and cinema enthusiasts to initiate new movements. **GEORGIAN CINEMA IS UNDER THREAT** is a response to opaque decisions made by the Ministry of Culture of Georgia. As part of their protest movement, a new wave of film screenings has been launched under the name *Georgian Cinema for the Georgian Audience*. This initiative allows citizens to watch and appreciate modern Georgian films in their own backyards all over the country. At a time when municipal movie theaters are absent, films themselves are reaching out to embrace their audience.

7 Tips on Providing Safe Space

Drawing from these diverse experiences, emerging screening coordinators and venue managers can benefit significantly by taking the following into consideration:

- 1. Understand the unique political, cultural, and social context of your country and society.** Tailor your approach to align with the vulnerabilities and preferences of your audience.
- 2. Foster a friendly and safe atmosphere by inviting guests,** speakers, and experts for post-screening discussions. This can enhance the overall experience and provide additional insights for the audience.
- 3. Allow the audience to discuss and reflect on the topics presented in the films.**
- 4. Consider the language and overall promotion strategy,** especially for films that address sensitive topics.
- 5. Encourage open conversations that promote understanding** and bridge gaps, allowing for a more inclusive and enriching experience.
- 6. Consider alternative screening spaces** (or private/invitation-only screenings) **where safety is guaranteed.**
- 7. Explore creative ways of protest and supportive initiatives.**

You can read more:

<https://civil.ge/archives/491900>

<https://eurasianet.org/georgian-culture-vs-georgian-culture-minister>

<https://civil.ge/archives/556457>

<https://civil.ge/archives/548248>

PHOTOS:

CHKHARTISHVILI, Natali

Film stills (Taming the Garden, Colors of Tobi, Once Upon a Youth)

TOO COOL FOR SCHOOL: BUILDING YOUNG AUDIENCES

AUTHOR: Dina Pokrajac, Dokukino KIC Manager (Restart, Croatia)



- › Reaching Young Audiences
- › Democracy for Beginners -
Encourage Open Critical Reflection
- › Don't Patronize
- › The ABC of Film - Love of Cinema
Starts at the Earliest Age
- › Dokukino on the Air - Participation is
Crucial
- › 8 Things to Do to Engage Young
Audiences

“Our program is primarily focused on young audiences, especially students, who we try to encourage to develop open critical thinking and participate in interactive discussions; at the same time, we want to promote socially engaged and artistically accomplished documentaries. We strongly believe in the future of cinema and feel that nothing can match the magic of a film screening event, carefully selected film programs and the collective experience of watching and thinking about films.”

Dina

**DOKUKINO, ZAGREB
(CROATIA)**

<https://dokukino.net>

Reaching Young Audiences

In Croatia, as many as 40% of 16-29-year-olds do not regularly visit the cinema. It should also be emphasized how, according to the number of tickets sold, most young people who visit cinemas belong to those who follow American production consisting of Hollywood franchises and blockbusters. In contrast, independent European production lags significantly behind (the share of American films is 82% of the audience). Those who we call “digital natives” grew up with the Internet, and they mainly communicate through social networks and digital technology. The crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has further amplified the appetite of young generations for online content and increasingly individualized and alienated ways of watching movies via various digital screens. This data is alarming and underlines the uncertainty of the long-term survival of independent cinemas.

At **DOKUKINO** in Croatia, we run several programs for kids, teens and young adults that try to counter these negative tendencies by encouraging participation and democratizing the film selection, production, and distribution process. Even if you are not a cinema owner, this chapter could inspire you to work with young audiences who can turn into regular visitors as they age.

PROGRAM FOR TEENS

Democracy for Beginners - Encourage Open Critical Reflection

Demokracija za početnike (Democracy for Beginners) is a series of screenings of documentary films accompanied by interactive discussions to raise awareness among children of primary and secondary school age about the challenges of modern society, to define basic terms, and to encourage open critical reflection. The program is organized in cooperation with the **CROATIAN DEBATE SOCIETY**.

Through these special projects, we want to create a safe space for debate where high school students can approach serious and sensitive topics, learn how to express their attitudes towards and opinions about the film and its theme, and form clear argumentation. The films are selected according to topics that concern current challenges for young people, broader social issues in general, indications of rights and responsibilities, moral relationships, and actions towards peers, as well as responsibility towards oneself and the wider environment.

Some of the films we recently screened from the KineDok catalog were *Colors of Tobi*<https://kinedok.net/film/colors-of-tobi> (2021), which addresses transgender identity and the struggle for acceptance, and *Easy Lessons*<https://kinedok.net/film/easy-lessons> (2018), which sheds light on the migrant experience through the story of Kafia, who tries to adapt to a culture completely different than the one she was born into.

Both these films deal with their topics from teenagers' perspective, making them more relatable and approachable. We encourage the children to verbalize their dilemmas and disagreements, to ask questions, and to express their opinions. For certain films, we had problems with obtaining permission from their parents and teachers because of the topic sensitivity (for instance, transgender identity, teenage pregnancy, alcohol, and narcotic consumption).

Still, we managed to convince them in the end by stressing that we would provide a balanced perspective through moderated discussions and expert introductions. In such situations, a written recommendation by a public body (in our case, the Croatian Audiovisual Center or the Ministry of Science and Education) can help substantiate that the film is suitable for viewing by minors (age ratings need to be visible).

To start with the screenings for schools, you need to create your own network of teachers, professors, and educators who are on friendly terms with you and ready to hear your film pitches. These can be your old teachers or people you know through your friends and colleagues. These educators are the ultimate gatekeepers—they are the ones you need to win over first to reach the children and teenagers. They are the ones who will have your back when struggling with overprotective and concerned parents or meddling principals. In Croatia, it depends on the school—sometimes, you need the school principal's or counselor's permission, but for the most part, the decision is up to the teachers. The parents' permission is usually not required, but when the topic is controversial and if they hear about it from their child later on, they can cause problems, so it's good to be prepared for the backlash or keep them informed upfront. Gaining the trust of the teachers is crucial, and it can only be achieved through personal contact. Reputation and trust take years to build, and all it takes is one harmful or inappropriate film to break this bond, so make sure that while selecting films for young audiences, you consult all relevant parties.

For instance, set up a teen advisory board to create a fun atmosphere or consult teachers and experts in media literacy to help plan and promote programs for young adults.

Creating additional educational materials to help the teachers and other collaborators navigate the children through the discussions is also highly recommended. You can approach professionals and make digital or printed brochures including the basic information regarding the film, explanations of key concepts, guidelines and potential questions for the discussion, suggestions for extra activities or a list of additional reading and viewing recommendations. You can also invite the filmmakers to make short introductory videos, which can be screened before the films, or invite guest lecturers to prepare informative PowerPoint presentations. It is useful to make your personal database, which will include the teachers' names and contacts and the subjects they teach—ours initially included only a few names, but now it is quite extensive. We communicate with them regularly and send them our catalog at the beginning of the school semester so they can plan their pupils' activities in time.

CREATE MATERIALS

Don't Patronize

While curating a program for young audiences, it is crucial to remember not to patronize them. There are certain values we want them to learn, as well as the artistic merit of certain films we

want to convey, but it is important to include them in the decision-making—ask for their feedback on what they are watching and implement it in your future selection. It is important to teach the children about the possibilities of the documentary genre. Many have only encountered true crime, wildlife or historical documentaries on television and online platforms, and they don't think about them as an art form. Invite filmmakers or film critics who can analyze the film's structure and elaborate how it approaches a certain theme or portrays its protagonists.

DOCUMENTARY AS AN ART FORM

Everything worthwhile takes effort, and by teaching the children how to approach complex content, you are helping shape their future taste—learning how to watch a film is the same as learning how to read; it is a skill we master through patience, dialogue, and exchange. Once, we screened a movie for high school students at Dokukino. Their teachers thought they would be bored because we selected ***HONEYLAND***—a very slow-paced, artistic film, but the children's response was very positive. It was great to see them recognize its artistic subtlety and comment on how they thought it was a fiction film, not a documentary. It also helped to rekindle the age-old debate around the relationship between documentary and reality and the ostensible objectivity of the camera. To bring the film's topic closer to the children, we also had a real beekeeper join us, teach them about honey-making, and present the art of beekeeping.

Love of Cinema Starts at the Earliest Age

It is also important to organize hands-on activities, such as workshops on making a film poster, a videogame, or a short documentary. Teach children how to use video production software and invite them to explore the cinematic themes via images and sound. For instance,

FILMSKA POČETNICA (THE ABC OF FILM) is an educational program we started with the intention of applying innovative and original approaches to film education from an early age.

The program allows preschool and elementary school children to get to know and master the fundamentals of film- and media-making through different thematic modules: photography, editing, scriptwriting and storytelling, music in film, sound and stereo imaging, 3D modelling, experimental filmmaking, interactive and stop animation, cyanotype, and other various techniques.

THE ABC OF FILM

<https://filmskapocetnica.restarted.hr/abc-of-film-2-2/>

Participation is Crucial

In 2023, we launched a new monthly film-discursive program, *Dokukino Eter (Dokukino on the Air)*. As part of the project, we help students independently choose films, moderate discussions with guests, and design and organize events. Through a series of meetings with film artists, we provide them with a unique insight into the creative process but also encourage them to express themselves creatively through the workshop and digital campaign *Gledaj svijet, mijenjaj svijet (Watch the World, Change the World)* for filming short thematic videos with their

smartphones, making Dokukino a space for creation and discovery of new talents. For projects like these, it is important to find the right partners to help us reach the targeted audience.

The project cooperates with the Student Club of the **FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE OF ZAGREB UNIVERSITY** and a popular local student-run radio station, **RADIO STUDENT**. Through this initiative, the students get to play an active and creative role in the curating process and organize one-off events—they learn to take care of all aspects of screening, from selecting the films to promoting them.

DOKUKINO ON THE AIR

<https://dokukino.net/film/dokukino-eter-govori-da-bih-te-video-uz-razgovor/>

8 Things to Do to Engage Young Audiences

1. **Incorporate discussions into your screenings:** encourage young audience to ask questions and express their opinions.
2. **Create your personal network of teachers,** professors, and educators.
3. **Set up a teen advisory board** to enhance your youth program and create a fun atmosphere, or consult the teachers and experts in media literacy regarding the film selection.
4. **Create additional educational materials** (printed or digital brochures, presentations, introductory videos).
5. **Don't avoid important topics and landmark films** just because they are difficult to process.
6. **Invite filmmakers,** film critics or other interesting guests to facilitate challenging content.
7. **Organize hands-on activities,** e.g., workshops on making a film poster, a videogame, or a short documentary.
8. **Participation is crucial:** Involve your young audience in all aspects of screening, from film selection to film promotion.

PHOTOS:

BISTRIČIĆ, Sanja; CERIĆ KOVAČEVIĆ, Samir; MAGZAN, Anto and Zoe ŠARLIJA
Archive of our screening venue (Dokukino)

HOW TO JOIN KINEDOK

AUTHOR: Szabolcs Szirony, Zsombor Szabolcs Pál



- > 1. Your motivation
- > 2. Study-time
- > 3. Preparations
- > 4. What to Expect from KineDok
- > 5. Welcome on Board

1. Your motivation

Take a moment to reflect on **your own passions and interests**. Ask yourself these three questions about your motivation, as it will be your trusty guide through this inspiring journey:

- Do I love documentaries?
- Do I care about the world around me?
- Do I find joy in building communities?

If you answered “yes” to at least two of these questions, you're the right person to join KineDok.

2. Study-time

Please spend some time reading all the chapters of the manual **How to Set Up a Screening Venue** (available on kinedok.net) we put together for potential KineDok organizers.

SEE THE MANUAL

<https://kinedok.net/chapters>

3. Preparations

Try to think about the **perfect venue** for screening documentaries. Look for a place in your neighborhood or town that shares your values and can provide a projector and a big screen. Once you find the perfect venue, it's time to create your schedule. The key here is to have regular screenings that your audience can look forward to. When planning your screenings, you'll also want to look around your neighborhood and consider local cultural events. Ideally, you should schedule your events when no other competing events are happening in the area.

If you're not the type to do it alone, try to **team up with some like-minded individuals** (friends, colleagues, neighbors). Nice to have a host who loves to chat with people, a tech whiz who can set up all the gadgets, a photographer who can capture stunning images for social media and a social media guru who is all about creating captivating content to communicate with your followers. Of course, it's great if you can do all of these things yourself, but working together is always easier and more fun, and most importantly, working in a team is more sustainable if you want to screen documentaries regularly. You have already made great progress. Now consider, **why** you want to screen documentary films and **who** your ideal audience should be. Once you figure that out, it's time to **contact the KineDok coordinator** in your country.

4. What to Expect from KineDok

Sign a contract

You need to sign a contract between you and KineDok. It is a simplified contract, where KineDok guarantees to secure the copyright licenses for screening movies while you undertake to handle our film copies/links with care. You can browse the contract [here](#).

CONTRACT

Select films

Now, dive into the KineDok Catalog and **pick out your favorite movies**. Be sure to choose films that you're passionate about, especially since you'll be facing the audience when the lights come back on at the end of the screening. By selecting movies you truly love, you'll be able to create an engaging and authentic experience.

Promote your event

After we sign the contract and you choose the films you would like to screen, we'll share a Google Drive folder with the film, subtitles and PR materials. The PR package may include tips on promoting the screening event and what to post on social media, stills from the film, video introductions from guests/filmmakers, logos, trailers, posters, additional texts, and distribution materials. You can use all of that to communicate with your audience and get them excited about your planned screening.

It's for free

Becoming a member of KineDok is completely free. In addition, we offer to help promote your event on our website and social media and often arrange guests for discussion after the

screening (covering their fee, accommodation, and travel). Moreover, we often make videos to promote specific venues for KineDok's purposes and also offer them for further use to you so that you can attract more audience. We also organize annual workshops and meetings for venue managers locally and internationally. Therefore, by joining our network, you'll establish connections with a community of venue managers and filmmakers involved in KineDok.

Additional must-dos

As a non-profit project, KineDok relies on support from public sources. Therefore, we need you to screen the sponsor reels and ensure their logos are prominently displayed at the event. All necessary details regarding this matter are explained in the "Important Info Before Screening" (you can also find it at the website under To download), which you will receive as part of the Google Drive folder containing the film and PR materials. Although most KineDok screenings are free, the decision to collect voluntary admission contributions is entirely up to you.

Report after the screening

After each of your screenings, we kindly ask you to send us a report from the screening. The report should include the number of visitors, any discussions held and with whom, details of accompanying events, if any, etc. We also ask you to send us a minimum of two photos from your event.

Remember

After each event, give yourself a pat on the back. Cinema is magic, and fostering a meaningful conversation about important topics is one of the most important community actions. We believe that every event presents an opportunity to make a difference. By cultivating a space for meaningful conversations and community engagement, you're helping to build a better world. Cinema holds the power to bring people together and inspire change, and you're doing an amazing job of harnessing that power. Year after year, dozens of our documentary filmmakers, hundreds of our venues, and tens of thousands of our viewers attest to this fact.

Never forget that Kinedok is always here for you. If you ever find yourself in a bind, remember that we've got your back. We believe that no problem is too big or too small. We're committed to helping you find the solutions you need.

WELCOME ON BOARD

<https://kinedok.net/join-us>

PHOTOS:

BENIDZE, Salome a Dániel ESZTER

How to Set up a Screening Venue

A manual issued by Institute of Documentary Film

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