

Tamara Tatishvili:
**Promoting pan-European identity through
cinema**



European cultural identity, diverse and multi-angled just like Europe's ethnic composition, is one distinguishing feature of Europe. Its uniqueness can hardly be questioned even by the most radical Eurosceptics. It is rooted in the long history of Europe, preserving an almost uncut tradition of literature, theater, cinema and other forms of arts.

Culture can serve as an efficient tool of communication. It should not be underestimated as means of fostering cooperation, enhancing shared feeling of a common past and destiny, and achieving better understanding of what Europe really is about.

Where politicians or lobbies often fail to find common ground, art as a means of expressing universal human values often succeeds. In the 21st century, cinema has probably become the most prominent form of art, creating a lasting effect through its audio-visual tools. European cinema is globally recognized as a distinct "trade mark". The unique power of European cinema lies in its ability to connect with diverse, multilayered audiences while offering content that educates us about the specific issues of particular states and social or ethnic group. 4 MONTHS, 3 WEEKS and 2 DAYS by Christian Mungiu, THE KID WITH A BIKE by Jean Pierre and Luc Dardenne, PROPHET by Jacques Audiard, AMOUR by Michele Haneke, GOMORRAH by Matteo Garrone, ARTIST by Michel Hazanavicius, MELANCHOLIA by Lars von Trier to name a few, all serve as examples of thematically different, visually exceptional and very relevant examples of Europe's cinema output today.

European cinema can also serve as a good example of a value that Europeans fought for together. A common European policy framework safeguards cinema as an art form that offers creative and socially charged content.

Cinema can be a motivator to enhance European identity. There are numerous examples of how old, new and even aspiring member states connect to each other in a form of European coproduction. Sometimes cinema can even bring together parts of Europe that otherwise are moving apart. One of the main competition films of Cannes Film Festival 2015 is a good example - *THE LOBSTER* by Yorgos Lanthimos (Greek Director) – a coproduction of Ireland, UK, Greece, France and the Netherlands.

The above is meant to be a brief reminder of creative force that exists *only in Europe*. It is not yet fully explored in an effective branding of Europe – place of continuous creative harvest...