

Festival Internacional de Banda Desenhada Amadora
Stripgids Festival Turnhout
Erlangen International Comic Salon
Comicon – Salone Internazionale del Fumetto Napoli
International Festival of Comics and Games Łódź
BD-FIL- Festival international de bande dessinée Lausanne

Press Release

Eurocomics – European Comic Festivals Association ECFA Network of European comic-festivals founded Promotion of graphic literature in Europe

Erlangen, September 15, 2014

On September 13, 2014 an international network of European comic festivals was founded during the BD-FIL – Festival de bande dessinée de. Founding members are five major European comic festivals: The Festival Internacional de Banda Desenhada Amadora (Portugal), the Stripgids Festival Turnhout (Belgium), the Erlangen International Comic Salon (Germany), Comicon – Salone Internazionale del Fumetto Napoli (Italy) and the International Festival of Comics and Games Łódź (Poland). The association was named “Eurocomics” – European Comic Festivals Association (ECFA) and includes also BD-FIL (Switzerland) as co-founding member.

The five founding festivals, each representing one of the most important events for graphic literature in their respective country, have been working together intensively on different projects for several years. They were brought together by a high programmatic aspiration that expresses itself, among other projects, through prestigious exhibitions, but simultaneously being aware of the responsibility for their respective national markets for graphic literature. The statutorily-regulated goals of “Eurocomics” are, to promote the impact and reputation of graphic literature as a form of artistic representation, to highlight the significance of comic festivals, to encourage international cooperation in order to enable an exchange of information and experience between the festivals and their respective national markets for comics, to further communication between artists, publishers, audience and other institutions across borders, both linguistic and territorial, and to develop and implement specific shared projects such as exhibitions, competitions, etc. As a first joint project, each festival’s current award winners for “best album” will be presented in an exhibition during this year’s Festival Internacional de Banda Desenhada in Amadora from October 24 to November 11 2014. Afterwards the exhibition in progress will travel the members’ festivals.

The statutes of “Eurocomics” were signed by the respective directors of the founding festivals: Nelson Dona (Amadora), Koen Van Rompaey (Turnhout), Bodo Birk (Erlangen), Claudio Curcio (Naples) and Adam Radon (Łódź), as of now, other festivals can join the network. Prerequisites for a membership are as follows: the emphasis of the festival has to be on graphic literature, the festival must have taken place several times, it has to be of national relevance and of international orientation and it should offer a substantial artistic and cultural programme and simultaneously be of importance for its respective market for comics.

Further information: www.comic-salon.de

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Eurocomics – European Comic Festivals Association ECFA

Excerpts of the statutes

The association, a non-profit organization by fact, created for an unlimited period of time, bears the name “EUROCOMICS – European Comic Festivals Association”, abbreviated “ECFA”. For the purpose of communication the name of the Association will be “Eurocomics”.

Objectives

The Association pursues the following aims:

- to promote and support the relevancy and reputation of comics as art form and communication medium across the world;
- to promote the global significance and reputation of comics festivals across the world, and in particular those in Europe;
- to encourage international co-operation among comics festivals or other similar organizations;
- to represent the festivals in national and international organizations;
- to encourage and to be active in the exchange of knowledge, information and experience among the festivals;
- to develop a co-ordinated approach in relation to artists, publishers, audience and authorities;
- to directly organize any initiative (such as exhibitions, prizes, contests, etc.) able to help to accomplish the objectives of the Association;
- to take all initiatives which help making the purpose possible and support it;
- to enhance internationally the resilience of comics.

Members

The Association has an unlimited number of members, but counts five members at least. The Association's founders, with the status of *Founder Members* are:

- Stripgids – Turnhout (Belgium) represented by Koen Van Rompaey as general director of npo Strip Turnhout;
- Internationaler Comic-Salon Erlangen (Germany) represented by Bodo Birk as director;
- AmadoraBD Festival Internacional de Banda Desenhada – Amadora (Portugal) represented by Nelson Dona as director;
- International Festival of Comics and Games – Łódź (Poland) represented by Adam Radon as general director;
- Napoli COMICON Salone Internazionale del Fumetto – Napoli (Italy) represented by Claudio Curcio as general director.

Other than the *Founder Members* the Association consists of following categories of members:

- 1) European comics festivals whose activities fit the criteria of next articles and are accepted by the General Meeting, named *Associated Members*.
- 2) International cultural organizations as well as internationally known and renowned cultural institutions active in the field of comics or arts, named *Affiliated Members*.
- 3) Individuals who have been serving the development of the Association, named *Honorary Members*.

All membership applications are first presented to the Committee by at least one of the Founder or Associated Members. The Committee determines whether the application shall be submitted to the General Meeting. To be accepted by the Committee an applicant festival must fit at least 4 of 5 of these criteria:

- The festival focuses primarily on comics;
- The festival runs for at least 10 editions (non consecutive, non yearly);
- The festival is of national importance and has an international reach and orientation;
- The festival is not only a book fair, but has a substantial artistic program (exhibitions, panels, guests, workshops, etc.);
- The festivals program is not exclusively focused on artistic merits, innovations, etc. but shows a relation to the market and consciousness of the importance of economic viability and sustainability of publishing comics.

New members are admitted, on the Committee's proposal, by a decision passed at the General Meeting with a simple majority (50% + 1) of the scrutinized votes of the members present or represented, if the applicant festival does not fit one of the criteria, the majority must be qualified (75% + 1). The applicant's membership takes immediate effect from when the proposition has been passed.

No entry fee or annual subscription is due by the members of the Association, until it is changed by an amendment of this article.

Bodies of the Association

The Association's bodies with decision-making powers or executive functions are:

a) The General Meeting:

The General Meeting consists of all the Founder and Associated Members. Affiliated and Honorary Members may be admitted to the General Meeting without voting right.

The General Meeting is the governing body of the Association, according to the law and the present statutes. Belong especially to its power:

1. the amendment of the statutes;
2. the election and dismissal of
 - the President
 - the Vice-President
 - the members of the Committee;
3. the approval of the budgets and the accounts;
4. the admission of new members.

The General Meeting, named Annual Meeting, takes place once every calendar year within six months after the end of the Association's financial year.

An Extraordinary Meeting shall be called when one fifth of the members request so or when the Committee deems it necessary.

b) The Committee:

The Committee is composed of three members at least, to be elected by the General Meeting, with at least three founder members represented. The General Meeting can always bring an end to their mandate.

The General Meeting appoints the President and Vice-President.

The President is elected for a three-year term. The Vice-President and the further members are elected for a three-year term, with one third renewal every year. When his terms expire, a member of the Committee is re-eligible. After serving two terms, he must step down for a minimum of one year before being available for re-election, unless elected President or Vice-President, in which case his term is deemed to re-commence from that point.

Should the President be absent, he is replaced by the Vice-President.

The Committee is called by the President or three members of the Committee. It can only decide when a majority of the members is present or represented.

A Committee member unable to attend the meeting can be represented by another Committee member, by written proxy to be handed over before the opening of the meeting. Each member can only have one representation.

Decisions are taken by simple majority of votes. By tied votes, the President, or the person replacing him, has the casting vote.

The Committee runs the business of the Association. It can perform legal and other actions considered useful for the accomplishment of the purpose of the Association, except the actions reserved for the General Meeting or those contrary to the law.

c) The Presidency:

The Presidency consists of the President and the Vice-President. If the agenda requires so, the Presidency invites other participants to the meeting.

The Presidency deals with the routine business. It prepares the Committee meetings.

The President and, in case of his non-availability, the Vice-President, as well as the Secretary-General, represent the Association vis-à-vis third parties, the media and the public in general.

The Secretary-General is nominated by the Committee for a fixed term which can be renewed.

The Secretary-General is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Association. He leads the General Secretariat. He attends all meetings in a consultative capacity.

The complete statutes of Eurocomics were signed in Lausanne, September 13, 2014.