

Appendix E

Information on CIFEJ

What Is CIFEJ?

The International Centre of Films for Children and Young People is a 40-year-old international non-governmental organization (INGO) whose goal is to promote quality films, television programmes, and videos for children and young people around the world. With its General Secretariat in Montreal, CIFEJ is the only INGO with consultative status at both UNICEF and UNESCO to be headquartered in Canada.

Who Is CIFEJ?

Today, CIFEJ boasts 160 members in 54 countries, spanning all the continents of the world. The vast majority of members are institutions and organizations: broadcasters, film and television producers, children's festivals, media education groups, and specialized cultural groups which work directly with children and the media. They range from FR3 in France to street workers in Colombia, and from China's largest production studio to Sweden's smallest distributor. Canada has the largest number of members (15), provides the two-person staff, and is home to both the Secretary General and the Treasurer of the Board of Directors.

What Does CIFEJ Do?

To accomplish its goals, CIFEJ undertakes a variety of activities. A monthly newsletter links members and non-members to hard news about the milieu, and lists current prizes and publications dealing with production for children. A yearly compendium of such productions, published in French and English, fills over 200 pages with information on the professionals who work with the titles listed.

CIFEJ initiates specific projects to increase media literacy; the Teen Video Stories project allowed chil-

dren at risk in Poland, Peru, Mozambique, the Philippines, and Taloyoak, Canada, to create their own three-minute stories. The Latin American Tour brought feature films from Canada, Denmark, Germany, India, Iran, and Sweden to children in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The distribution of the CIFEJ Prize to exceptional productions cements relations with festivals around the world: in France, India, Slovak Republic, Finland, Germany, and Poland.

CIFEJ provokes international discussions on urgent questions; at the 1994 Bratislava seminar people from 31 countries talked about the future of production in eastern Europe. The CIFEJ staff undertakes research ("Quantifying Children's Production", Department of Communications, Canada, 1991) and acts as a lobby and spokesperson for children confronted by media.

Why Is CIFEJ Necessary?

CIFEJ is a network which draws on the varied strengths of its diverse members and puts them in the service of children. Because no single profession predominates, its focus on the needs of children remains sharp. That the international community needs the services and information which CIFEJ offers is reflected in the phenomenal growth of its membership. Over the past four years membership has grown by 755% and the number of countries represented by 294% (from 18 members in 18 countries in 1990).

CIFEJ offers the place where North and South meet, where every child carries the same weight, where financial preoccupations do not yet set the agenda. It is also a modern organization, restructured in 1990 to deal with current realities, be they economic, political, or ethical.