



RomArchive Selection Weekend - Report

On the weekend of 7th-10th April, the RomArchive - Roma Film Archive - Workshop & Film Festival took place in Budapest, Hungary. The event was organized in the frame of a long-term project called the [RomArchive – Digital Archive of the Roma](#), which aims to become an internationally accessible virtual discursive space that makes the cultural heritage and history of the Roma visible and responds to recurring stereotypes by a counter-history told by the Roma themselves.

The first part of the event was a Selection Workshop organized by the Film Section of RomArchive. The workshop participants consisted of a team of Romani filmmakers and independent experts coming from Czech Republic, Croatia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain and the UK. Romani filmmakers from UK and Bulgaria joined the discussion via skype.

The team of Romani filmmakers and independent experts were involved in the film selection process in the frame of a workshop led by Katalin Bársony – filmmaker, and curator of the Film Section–, Eszter Lázár – art historian–, and Marion Kurucz – French-Hungarian TV/film producer– with the support of Ramona Cara, an expert on Romani culture from Romania.

During the workshop, the team reviewed and discussed the shortlisted films – the result of an expanded research of one year– about Roma from Europe, Canada, and the USA. The selection process and procedure consisted of a well-structured questionnaire based on selection criteria set up by the curator and the experts of the Film Section.

The main outcome of the workshop is the feedback of the Romani professional on 64 films – the genres of the films ranged from short films to feature-length films, and from documentaries to experimental films and animations. The Romani professional from different countries and backgrounds rated and commented on the films that represent the major portrayals of the Roma culture and history. The thought-provoking conversations were an important contribution to the content and creation of the Film Section.

Parallel, as on the 8th of April it was the International Romani Day, the Romani filmmakers and experts participated to the traditional casting flowers at the Danube “Let the spirit of International Romani Day Unite us”, and to the public event COMPACT-Roma Film Night where the documentary film Taikon was screened. The screening was followed by a roundtable discussion with the participation of Romani experts, who not only presented their experience as filmmakers and professionals but also as members of the Romani minority, who work on a daily basis for the empowerment of young Romani people in their close environments. Pablo Vega, a Romani filmmaker from Spain; Catalin Cazacu, Romani director and photographer from Romania; Artur Conka, Romani photographer and filmmaker from the UK; and Vera Lackova, a Romani filmmaker from the Czech Republic took part in the moderated discussion. The event attracted an audience of approximately 85 people, many of whom were Romani professionals, activists, and university students.

The program of the weekend ended with the recording of video interviews during which the Romani experts shared their experiences as filmmakers, and non-Romani experts talked about their opinion on the Selection Weekend and the potentials of the RomArchive. The recorded material will be published on the public surfaces of the project. The videos will not only introduce some of the experts behind the construction of the RomArchive, but will also further enrich the content of RomArchive.

[Let the spirit of International Roma Day unite us!](#)

The International Romani Day symbolizes the unity of the approximately 12 million Romani people who are scattered around the globe. Rmedia Foundation together with CEU Roma Access Programs, European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), Phiren Amenca, UCCU Roma Informal Education Foundation and a large group of Roma activists, Roma students, alumni and pro-Roma organizations gathered and walked from the Bem Cinema to the Danube, to cast flowers into the Danube, which has been a tradition since the first World Roma Congress was held in Orpington near London. The celebration of International Romani Day continued with a speech delivered by Ágnes Daróczi, Roma intellectual, and activist, and with COMPACT – Roma Film Night.

[COMPACT – Roma Film Night](#)

The documentary Taikon – the Untold Story of a Roma Freedom Fighter paints a dramatic and vivid portrait of one of the most important advocators of human rights in the 20th century Europe setting against the backdrop of the developing Swedish welfare state. The film which focuses on the group left behind of the society, the Roma minority was screened for the first time in Hungary.



RomArchive is funded by the
German Federal Cultural Foundation

