

### **Austrian Film Museum: Michael Loebenstein appointed as incoming director and successor of Alexander Horwath**

The Board of the Austrian Film Museum has appointed Michael Loebenstein, currently Chief Executive of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA), as the new director of the museum. This follows Alexander Horwath's retirement from the role of director, effective October 1, 2017 after 16 years of leadership at the museum.

The appointment was made following an extensive search, which commenced in June 2016 by an international recruitment panel.

Mr Loebenstein, born 1974 in Vienna, served as CEO of the NFSA since 2011. His time with the NFSA was marked by a significant reinvention of the NFSA into a more outwardly focussed, collaborative institution at the forefront of thinking about the challenges posed by cultural materials in the age of digitisation. In 2013, he was elected Secretary-General of *FIAF – International Federation of Film Archives*.

Since the 1990s, Michael Loebenstein had worked as a freelance journalist, curator, media producer and researcher. In 2004, he joined the team at the Austrian Film Museum to develop and lead the museum's research and education programs. He furthermore worked as a curator for special projects and contributed to a number of the Film Museum's publications. From 2009-2011 he was responsible for the collaborative research programs with the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for History and Society (Vienna), including projects on film and the city, amateur filmmaking, and 'ephemeral' films.

He will relocate to his native Vienna from Australia in early 2017 and commence work as the incoming director shortly thereafter.

Thomas Drozda, Federal Minister for Arts and Culture: *"Michael Loebenstein brings a remarkable amount of skills to the position: his professional qualifications, his abilities in the domain of administration and personnel management as well as his long standing experience within the fields of film archiving and film education work. In sum, the ideal prerequisites for the further development of one of Austria's most outstanding film institutions."*

Andreas Mailath-Pokorny, Councilor for Cultural Affairs, Science and Sports of the City of Vienna: *"The Austrian Film Museum could not have made a better choice. Michael Loebenstein has all the requirements that predestine him to be a wonderful director of the Film Museum. He is very well connected internationally, has garnered valuable experience in leading a sizeable film institution and is, last but not least, a renowned film expert. Furthermore, he will work across the arts and collaborate with many Viennese cultural institutions. As much as I appreciate the new appointment, I equally regret the parting of Alexander Horwath. Horwath was and is an outstanding museum director, an enthusiastic cinephile and film mentor as well as a passionate advocate for the cause of analogue film."*

Michael Loebenstein: *"It has been a privilege to serve as the CEO of the NFSA – and a fantastic process which I had not planned to conclude after five years. However, I just could not let the opportunity pass to head the Austrian Film Museum, one of the leading institutions in this field. I am honored by the trust expressed by the Film Museum board's nomination, and I'm very much looking forward to continue the work of Peter Kubelka, Peter Konlechner and Alexander Horwath for this great institution in my hometown"*.

#### **Contact:**

Press & Administration, Austrian Film Museum  
Alessandra Thiele, a.thiele@filmmuseum.at, T + 43 | 1 | 533 70 54 Ext 22