

INITIATIVE FOR PROTECTION OF LUMBARDHI CINEMA

Initiative of 58 civil society organizations from all Kosova

27 October 2014, Prizren

PRESS RELEASE

Lumbardhi Cinema to be included in the Cultural Heritage List

Initiative for Protection of Lumbardhi Cinema handed in the request to Ministry of Culture to declare Cinema Lumbardhi in Prizren a protected cultural heritage property. In the official request signed by Eroll Bilibani (director of Dokufest) on behalf of 58 organizations of the Initiative, the arguments for designation of Lumbardhi Cinema were elaborated.

Law on Cultural Heritage and Regulation for declaring an object to be under legal protection foresees criteria (values) for including a property into the List of the Cultural Heritage: historic, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social, spiritual, technological and rarity. The cinema is one of the oldest public buildings that survived in Prizren (historic). It is proof of the film tradition of the city and it has had an impact in the creation of cultural and social identity of the community (social). The cinema brought advanced technology of projection of the time through a 35mm film tape into the big screen (technological). The style of the building (dimensions and having an open area alongside its closed one) represents a rare example both in Kosovo as well as in the region, not only at the time of its construction, but even today (rarity).

Part of Initiative's request is the legal basis, which currently provides protection for Lumbardhi Cinema. This legal basis derives from the Law on Cultural Heritage, Conservation and Development Plan for the Historic Zone of Prizren, Guiding Strategy for the Cultural Development of Prizren and Law on Historic Center of Prizren. Referring to the legal basis and values of Cinema Lumbardhi, the Initiative requested from Ministry of Culture and Kosova Council for Cultural heritage to assess the proposal for designation Cinema Lumbardhi as a protected cultural heritage property. Part of the official request is the additional documents in support of the arguments for designation.

Designation of Cinema Lumbardhi as a protected cultural heritage property would stop its further degradation and at the same time pave the way for its functioning as a multifunctional cultural space. Moreover, this will prevent the privatization of Cinema, a process initiated by the Kosova Privatization Agency. In response to this process, the Municipal Assembly of Prizren on 18 September 2014, brought a decision to declare Cinema Lumbardhi as a public interest area, aiming to prevent privatization and take measures for a proper functioning of the building as a cultural space.

In addition, the cultural community of Prizren and Kosova has expressed their willingness and readiness to become a part of the management process of Cinema Lumbardhi. Designation of Lumbardhi Cinema as a protected cultural heritage property and the eventual cessation of privatization process, would pave the way to transfer its ownership to municipality of Prizren. If the municipality is willing to revitalize the cinema and transfers its management to Culture Organizations Network in Prizren (RrOK

Prizrej), the network has prepared a concrete Plan for: Drafting and implementing of the Management Plan, and ensuring the financial sustainability of Cinema Lumbardhi.

Lumbardhi Cinema in Prizren is one of the most important evidences and values of cultural identity of the Kosovar society. Preserving this value is an obligation of the current generation of the society. This is the reason why we, civil society organizations from all around Kosovo have come together for the *Initiative for Protection of Lumbardhi Cinema*. Through this joint action we would like to clarify our determined stance as well as our readiness to use all possible democratic means to stand against the tearing down of the building or the change of the main business activity (function) of Lumbardhi Cinema. Based on our arguments, we request a cessation of the privatization process and, at the same time, express our disagreement against the attempts to tear down certain parts of Lumbardhi Cinema.

Thank you.

On behalf of 58 civil society organizations, part of the Initiative for Protection of Lumbardhi Cinema,

Eroll Bilibani, executive director
Dokufest

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Advocacy Training & Resource Center (ATRC), AKV Lidhja e Prizrenit, Alter Habitus, ALO, Anibar, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), Caritas Switzerland, Chopin Association Kosova, Dogru Yol TKSD, Dokufest, Durmish Asllano, EC Ma Ndryshe, ESTA Kosovë, Evolution Dance, Festivali DAM, Fondacioni ArsKosova, Fondacioni i Kosovës për Shoqëri të Hapur (KFOS), Fondacioni i Trashëgimisë Kulturore LEGATUM, Fondacioni Kosovar për Shoqëri Civile (KCSF), Fondacioni Together Kosova, Forumi për Iniciativë Qytetare (FIQ), Grupi për Studime Juridike dhe Politike (GLPS), Iniciativa Kosovare për Stabilitet (IKS), Iniciativa për Progres (INPO), Instituti Ballkanik i Politikave (IPOL), Instituti Demokraci për Zhvillim (D4D), Instituti Demokratik i Kosovës (KDI), Instituti GAP, Instituti i Prishtinës për Studime Politike (PIPS), Instituti për Politika Zhvillimore (INDEP), Keshilli Rinor Kosovë (KYC), Konsumatori, Kosovo 2.0, Kuarteti Pentagram, Leo's Art Org, Lëvizja FOL, N'GO, Nisma e të Rinjve për të Drejtat e Njeriut Kosovë (YIHR), Orin, ORION, Qendra ARTPOLIS, Qendra Multimedia Prishtinë, Riverside, Rrjeti i Grupeve të Grave të Kosovës (RrGGK), Stacion – Qendra për Art Bashkëkohor Prishtinë, Syri i Vizionit (SiV), Shoqata e Juristëve NORMA, Shoqata Numizmatike DEMASTION, Shoqata për Art FRYMA E RE, Shoqata për Teknologji të Informacionit dhe të Komunikimit të Kosovës (STIKK), Shtatë Arte (7 Arte), Teatar GetoGracanica, Teatri ODA, Trashëgimia Kulturore pa Kufij Prishtinë (CHwB), Varg e Vi, X40, Xhennet Comics, Youth Voice