

# Re-Intermediation, Audience Development and the Discourse of the European Film Public: Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinema

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## *Abstract*

This article considers two recent attempts at developing networked film cultures in online exhibition spaces. Focusing on two video-on-demand platforms, Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinema, the article examines how VOD is being positioned and utilized as a tool to develop film-literate audiences while also serving the interests of the film industry by promoting and exposing films to different geographic markets. While Festival Scope originated as a platform for industry insiders to view and gather information about films, Curzon Home Cinema has emerged in the last five years as a leader in day-and-date online releases of art films for audiences in the UK and Ireland. The emergence and growth of both platforms is examined with special attention to the rhetoric of on-demand spectatorship as a special event. In both cases, the platforms' presentation of films on-demand, concurrent with their theatrical (Curzon) or festival (Festival Scope) screenings, is offered to audiences as a privileged moment of participation in film culture. The article then argues that these platforms should be understood in close relation to the prevalent discourses of European film policy, funding and industrial support. Both Festival Scope and Curzon are funded in part by Creative Europe's Media programme. The article situates the growth of these on-demand platforms in relation to Creative Europe's competing cultural and economic discourses of public access and competitiveness. An analysis of Creative Europe's funding schemes reveals how VOD figures into the goals of European cultural and economic integration. The re-intermediation of film culture that is fostered by VOD platforms such as Festival Scope and Curzon is considered with regards to how it aligns with Creative Europe's cultural and economic objectives and its emphasis on digitalization and transnationalism.

Video-on-demand has become an inescapable element of screen culture in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As on-demand television and film offerings further converge with ubiquitous internet connectivity, mobile platforms and connected viewing practices, questions surrounding the materiality of media and the qualities of mediation remain crucial to a critical understanding of emergent forms and sites of media power. Thus far, much of the critical attention to on-

demand film culture has been directed at what Cunningham and Silver refer to as the 'King Kongs' of the industry, the subscription video on-demand (SVOD) and download-to-rent or electronic sell-through (EST) services launched by internet giants including Google, Amazon, Apple and Netflix.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the global success of Netflix and Amazon as streaming services and original content producers has encouraged analytical models that position VOD in a televisual framework. Notwithstanding the explosion of serial television content in the on-demand environment and the consolidation of the streaming industry by Amazon, Netflix and Google, considerably little has been written about the mediation of film culture as it moves online. In considering the digital mediation of art-house cinema, this article seeks to redirect the analysis of 'digital disruption', towards film exhibition once again.<sup>2</sup>

Focusing on two video-on-demand platforms, Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinema, both funded in part by Creative Europe's Media programme, this paper considers how VOD is positioned and utilized as a tool to develop film-literate audiences, while also serving the interests of the film industry by promoting and exposing films to different geographic markets. While Festival Scope originated as a platform for industry insiders to view and gather information about films, Curzon Home Cinema has emerged in the last five years as a leader in day-and-date online releases of art films for audiences in the UK and Ireland. The emergence and growth of both platforms will be examined with special attention to the rhetoric of curation and on-demand spectatorship as a special event. In both cases, the platforms' presentation of films on-demand, concurrent with their theatrical (Curzon) or festival (Festival Scope) screenings, is positioned as a privileged moment of participation in film culture. In conclusion, this article will examine Creative Europe's attempts to address, and thereby articulate, a European public audience through its support of digital distribution platforms.

### *Film Culture Moves Online: Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinema*

Festival Scope launched in 2010 as an intermediary portal for film professionals engaged in buying, selling, programming and reviewing films. As its name suggests, the business platform was designed to complement the international festival circuit which has developed in recent years into a quasi-market and limited distribution system for non-Hollywood films. Since 2015, Festival Scope operates two parallel platforms. Its original business-to-business platform, exclusive to members of the film industry, has been rebranded as Festival Scope Pro, while its new publicly accessible site operates under the Festival Scope banner. In their

<sup>1</sup> Stuart Cunningham and Jon Silver, *Screen Distribution and the New King Kongs of the Online World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> *Digital Disruption: Cinema Moves On-line*, ed. by Dina Iordanova and Stuart Cunningham (St. Andrews: St. Andrews Film Studies, 2012).

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partnership with over 60 film festivals from around the world, Festival Scope Pro functions as both a selective archive of festival films and a media player for the one-time viewing of films by industry professionals. The design of the platform presents itself to the industry professional primarily through its use of a database structure for searching and displaying information sorted by festival, film title, sales agency and director. In addition, the 'pro' site includes a curated section for browsing selected films under the 'Expand' heading.

In comparison with its industry-oriented sibling, the recently launched public platform hails a consumer-cinephile audience. With a far more simplistic visual design, the layout of the publicly accessible Festival Scope is also more closely structured around the partnering festivals from which its films are curated. Films are navigable either by festival or by a list of all films sortable by alphabetical order, country of origin, year or release, genre, subtitles and runtime. Another option, 'Collections', expands lists of films associated with year-round labs and contests such as the Torino Film Lab and Nespresso Talents. Limited free 'tickets' are available to online audiences for short periods of time, adapting the timeframe of a film festival.

Curzon Home Cinema, a division of the vertically-integrated Curzon label of exhibition and distribution, launched in 2010. Since then it has made its name on its unique day-and-date model of VOD and theatrical release, marketing itself as the 'latest independent box office, in your home, at the touch of a button'.<sup>3</sup> With an emphasis on European cinema, Curzon's library consists of several hundred award-winning and genre films from around the world. Curzon Home Cinema is available to registered subscribers in the UK and Ireland. Each film costs viewers between £2 and £10.

### *Curation and Symbolic Value*

Despite their distinct target audiences, Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinema share in their attempts to re-intermediate cinematic experience through their online platforms. Curation, rather than content aggregation, is key to both ventures in their efforts to cultivate and address cinephile audiences and define the experiential parameters of film-going in a VOD platform. The re-intermediation of curatorial expertise in the on-demand media environment challenges the dominant view of streaming culture as an extension of the multichannel television universe. Rather such curatorial interventions exemplify the remediation and expansion of traditional film culture's investment in a system of cultural value based on the expertise of the critic. In Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinema, curation operates as an appeal to film connoisseurship, albeit within the structures of participatory, digital culture. According to MJ

<sup>3</sup> *Discover Curzon Home Cinema*, online video recording, <<http://faq.curzonhomecinema.com/howitworks>> [accessed 1 August 2017].

Robinson, the distinction between aggregation and curation can be defined as follows:

Aggregation is automated, it collects data based on metadata such as keywords not sentiment or content comprehension and it is unable to evaluate context and quality. Curation relies upon expertise and connoisseurship — an understanding of the criteria by which a collection is being assembled — because ultimately the role of the curator is to impart value through contextualization.<sup>4</sup>

Through its reliance on expertise and connoisseurship, curation strategically delivers value, or cultural capital, to audiences.<sup>5</sup> Conversely, the cultural capital that is offered by Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinemas to their audiences is determined by the degree of connoisseurship that frames the programming on each platform.

The primary curatorial strategy used by Festival Scope is the film festival. Programming a selection of independent films from its source of primarily European partner film festivals, Festival Scope positions itself as an authority on the international festival circuit from Locarno to Rotterdam.<sup>6</sup> As a curator of previously curated festival films, Festival Scope imports the cultural distinction attached to festival screenings to its virtual screening room. Adopting the language of discovery and the metaphor of cinema as a form of travel and mobility across borders, Festival Scope rhetorically addresses its spectators as cosmopolitan cinephiles and participants in its cross-border curatorial project. The website concludes its stated mission under the 'What is Festival Scope?' banner at the bottom of its front page with the sub-heading 'Paths of Glory': 'Festival Scope is the new platform for film lovers who want to tour the world with us in search of the best films at the best film festivals.'<sup>7</sup> Festival Scope spectators are thus addressed in much the same way as festival audiences, as discerning and worldly cinemagoers.

Festivals, it has been argued, construct and maintain an 'alternate system of film distribution' that lies outside of Hollywood's global reach.<sup>8</sup> Whether it constitutes a system of distribution or not, one of the effects of the festival circuit's synergy with independent cinema has been its gatekeeping function, whereby festival films gain cultural capital due to their exclusive availability and their inclusion within a larger programme in addition to their potentially

<sup>4</sup> MJ Robinson, *Television on Demand: Curatorial Culture and the Transformation of TV* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital' in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. by John G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1986), pp. 241–58.

<sup>6</sup> At the time of writing, [festivalscope.com](http://festivalscope.com) lists 17 partner film festivals on its public platform.

<sup>7</sup> Festival Scope, <[www.festivalscope.com](http://www.festivalscope.com)> [accessed 1 August 2017].

<sup>8</sup> Dina Iordanova, 'The Film Festival Circuit', in *Film Festival Yearbook 1: The Festival Circuit*, ed. by Dina Iordanova and Ragan Rhyne (St. Andrews: St. Andrews Film Studies, 2009), pp. 23–39.

challenging or unconventional aesthetic forms.<sup>9</sup> Festival Scope's direction to 'watch hidden gems that you can't find in theatres near you!' is therefore an assurance of exclusivity and an assertion of connoisseurship and the added-value of curation.<sup>10</sup>

Where Festival Scope is engaged with discovery of non-mainstream and non-critically acclaimed films in its cultivation of a cinephile audience, Curzon Home Cinema curates its on-demand programming to include many of the key award-winners and critically-successful films from larger festivals such as Cannes, TIFF and Sundance, especially those that had wider releases in English-speaking markets. As mentioned above, a key feature of Curzon's programming is its release of films on-demand simultaneous to their theatrical release, a window-collapsing model in which films are release on VOD at the same time as in theatres. However, curation for Curzon Home Cinema consists of more than creating a new exhibition channel for films that are widely available on several VOD platforms if not in brick and mortar theatres. Rather, Curzon addresses its audience as a cinema-literate community rhetorically through its programming categories and by engaging its audiences through regular newsletters highlighting added content and new collections. Where Festival Scope's films acquire value by virtue of their attachment to the international festival circuit and their relative exclusivity to the circuit, Curzon relies more directly on its programming categories in order to rhetorically demarcate its expertise as a content provider and its audience's expertise as cinema spectator. Sorted under its 'Collections' label, the site lists a number of thematic programs for viewers to browse, including (at the time of writing) such categories as 'A Life on Film', '2017: The Best so Far', 'Resisting Oppression', 'The Andrei Tarkovsky Collection' and 'Road Movies'.<sup>11</sup> As part of its Curzon Curates program, an additional curated collection is added every second week.<sup>12</sup> With its emphasis on thematic classification and 'best-of' lists, Curzon curates based on ideas of critical judgement rather than aggregation. Moreover, it is the intended audience which is also rhetorically addressed as possessing discerning cultural and aesthetic judgment. Curation thus grants Curzon, and film culture, a level of symbolic capital and cultural prestige that often eludes online video and streaming services.

<sup>9</sup> On the gatekeeping function of film festivals see: Liz Czach, 'Film Festivals, Programming, and the Building of a National Cinema', *The Moving Image*, 4.1 (Spring 2004), 76–88; Marijke de Valck, 'Fostering Art, Adding Value, Cultivating Taste: Film Festivals as Sites of Cultural Legimitation', in *Film Festivals: History, Theory, Method, Practice*, ed. by Marijke de Valck, Brendan Kredell and Skadi Loist (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 100–16; Thomas Elsaesser, 'Film Festival Networks: The New Topographies of Cinema in Europe' in *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood*, ed. by Thomas Elsaesser (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), pp. 82–107.

<sup>10</sup> Festival Scope, <[www.festivalsscope.com](http://www.festivalsscope.com)> [accessed 1 August 2017].

<sup>11</sup> Curzon Home Cinema, <<https://www.curzonhomecinema.com/collections>> [accessed 1 August 2017]. At the time of writing there are 22 such collections. Films are also searchable by genre, actor, director, and country.

<sup>12</sup> Curzon Curates, <<http://curates.curzonhomecinema.com/>> [accessed 1 August 2017].

*The Eventfulness of (Re)Intermediation*

Second to curation, Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinemas address their audiences as cinema-audiences through the rhetorical framing of their film programmes as special events. The qualities of the event, rather than the film catalogue, allow these platforms to address their spectators as participants rather than consumers. Francesco Casetti has advanced the notion of 'filmic experience' as defined by a situation that engages both sensory excess and reflexive recognition of one's own spectatorship.<sup>13</sup> According to Casetti, new media initiates a screen culture in which the spectator 'has ceased simply to consume a show and begins to intervene in the act of consumption.'<sup>14</sup> Drawing on Casetti's historical analysis, I argue that film culture is increasingly underpinned by the expectation and assumption that participation in it consists of a spatially and temporally expanded event. An 'event' connotes the qualities of contingency, singularity and unpredictability as well as, from a contradictory perspective, a designed and mediated structure. Festivals often embody the contradiction of designed experience, offering audiences singular and contingent experiences of communal film spectatorship within a highly regulated and planned environment.<sup>15</sup> As sense of eventfulness in the cinema depends in part on an atmosphere defined by liveness. For instance, in the alternative content industry, also known as 'event cinema', it is the spectator's sense of participation in a live event that drives the high ticket prices. Michael Gubbins argues in this regard that 'event cinema is predicated on the ability to create an illusion of authenticity — a belief that somehow the audience is sharing in at least some of the unique individual experience as those in the actual theatres and concert halls, where the live event is taking place'.<sup>16</sup> More broadly, the drive to 'eventize' film exhibition has been the purview of film marketing, which in the case of Hollywood is driven by 'twin goals' according to Tino Balio: 'to create a unique brand for a new release and to create a must-see attitude for the opening weekend'.<sup>17</sup> The need to offer an authentic and contingent experience in the context of VOD is central to the design and programming of Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinemas. It is possible that the imperative to eventize programming is even greater in a VOD environment than in a film festival due to the need to compensate for the lack of spatial and temporal contiguity of its audience. Whereas the live festival screening

<sup>13</sup> Francesco Casetti, 'Filmic Experience', *Screen*, 50.1 (Spring 2009), 56–66, (pp. 56–57).

<sup>14</sup> Casetti, p. 63.

<sup>15</sup> See for instance: Janet Harbord, 'Film Festivals-Time-Event', in *Film Festival Yearbook 1*, pp. 40–46.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Gubbins, SampoMedia, *Audience in the Mind* (Château-Renault: Cine-Regio, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> Tino Balio, *Hollywood in the New Millennium* (Basingstoke: BFI Palgrave, 2013), p. 69. For an example of the prevalent industry discourse surrounding film events, see Iain Blair, 'Indie Cinemas Face Challenging Future Together', *Variety*, 17 January 2017, <[variety.com/2017/film/spotlight/indie-cinemas-face-challenging-future-together-art-house-convergence-1201961826/](http://variety.com/2017/film/spotlight/indie-cinemas-face-challenging-future-together-art-house-convergence-1201961826/)> [accessed 1 August 2017].



derives some of its aura from its red-carpet star-sightings, gala programs and endless ticket queues, and the Hollywood blockbuster benefits from the buzz of its marketing machine, the online VOD film program must craft its own eventful strategies in order to establish its value as a gatekeeper of film culture.

One strategy utilized by Festival Scope has been the construction of a sense of liveness in their programming through the restriction of their films' availability over time. Again remediating the temporal model of the film festival rather than the 'always-on' dictum of the mainstream VOD platform, Festival Scope utilizes this temporal scarcity as a resource to frame their programming as a special event. Since Festival Scope draws its programming from the festival circuit, the temporal scarcity of its programming is paramount to its mission to expand the reach of independent cinema beyond the festival venues. Festival Scope's screenings of its festival films occur soon after the close of the festival. For instance the 2017 edition of the Thessaloniki Documentary Festival was held between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of March while Festival Scope made a selection of its films available between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of March on its VOD platform. In other cases, the delay between a film festival and Festival Scope premier is much shorter. During the 2017 Locarno Film Festival the films in 'Filmmakers of the Present' section, dedicated to first time filmmakers, are screened online via Festival Scope the day after their premiere. The 2017 selection includes films of seven new directors, each of which are also eligible for the Cinelab Award, voted on exclusively by Festival Scope viewers. The award is valued at €22,000 in the form of post-production services from Cinelab of Bucharest.<sup>18</sup> As is the case with most Festival Scope screenings, viewership is free but is limited to a relatively small number of screenings, in this case 400 'tickets'. The live event-like qualities of the VOD program are thus triply reinforced by the limited duration of the online festival, the exclusive opportunity to participate with limited availability of tickets, and the recognition of the Festival Scope audience as a community of cinephiles whose collective critical judgment determines an award of considerable monetary value.

For Curzon, liveness is more immediately constructed in terms of the synchrony of the VOD and theatrical release for its premium programming. Although its day-and-date VOD and theatrical releases only represent a small fraction of its entire VOD catalogue, this fairly unique distribution model remains one of the platforms key selling points. Whereas Festival Scope's films are imbued with liveness by virtue of their temporal proximity to live festivals and the short durational availability of each film, Curzon Home Cinema's liveness is attached to the collapsed window of commercial film distribution and the sense of advanced access that comes with a Curzon membership. Moreover, in contributing to the eventfulness of its film program, each release is anticipated and marketed to

<sup>18</sup> Cineuropa, 'Cineuropa Partners up with Festival Scope to Present Films from the Locarno Film Festival', *Cineuropa*, 27 July 2017, <<http://cineuropa.org/nw.aspx?t=newsdetail&l=en&cid=332176>> [accessed 2 August 2017].

Curzon members through regular newsletters. Curzon fully embraces the logic and aura of the live event in its occasional streaming of one-off events. Since 2015, the broadcasting of live events has been part of Curzon's audience development plans, with a live stream of the red-carpet introduction of *Tale of Tales* (Matteo Garrone, 2016) in addition to a Q&A session with the filmmaker and talent in June 2016.<sup>19</sup> A subsequent event-based screening consisted of a live stream of the 2016 European Film Awards in December 2016. Such events, although limited thus far in number, represent attempts to utilize the VOD platform and as a site for more than simply film exhibition. Rather the on-demand environment is constructed as a site for the development of a film-going and film literate community.

The eventization of the VOD experience has been further pursued since 2015 by Festival Scope in its launch of the Scope50 and subsequently expanded Scope100 distribution project. In partnership with Gutek Film, the program seeks to empower local cinephile audiences to select a film for distribution in their given country. The third and latest edition of the project, in 2017, included the participation of nine distributors, each of which was responsible for selecting an audience of one hundred in their territory. A selection of seven films — European festival films without distribution deals — were then made available for the audience juries. The audiences of one hundred were then to select one of the seven films for local distribution. The latest 2017 edition saw Jan Matuszynski's *The Last Family* selected for distribution in four territories including France, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Austria.<sup>20</sup> Audience juries retain key roles in the creation of marketing and publicity for successful films, working as 'film ambassadors' to the local media and public audiences.<sup>21</sup> The Scope50 and Scope100 project represents a significant step for Festival Scope in its cultivation of local cinephile audiences. The eventfulness of the films' exclusive pre-distribution screenings for the selected audience jury in each participating country determines the symbolic capital of each film. It further establishes Festival Scope as a key gatekeeper of European film culture by virtue of its position as a new intermediary in the construction and regulation of the value chain of European cinema in bringing together sales agents, distributors, cinephile audience juries, and ultimately, wider distribution and exhibition for successful films.

<sup>19</sup> Tom Grater, 'Curzon Home Cinema to Trial Live Features', *Screen Daily*, 27 May 2016, <<http://www.screendaily.com/news/curzon-home-cinema-to-trial-live-features/5104401.article>> [accessed 3 August 2017].

<sup>20</sup> Cineuropa, 'The Last Family Comes Top among the Nine Scope100 Countries', *Cineuropa*, 12 January 2017, <<http://cineuropa.org/nw.aspx?t=newsdetail&l=en&did=321322>> [accessed 30 July 2017].

<sup>21</sup> Cineuropa, 'Scope100 Winners Picked by Audiences', *Cineuropa*, 03 February 2016, <<http://www.cineuropa.org/nw.aspx?t=newsdetail&l=en&did=304751>> [accessed 1 August 2017].



*European Citizenship and Cinema Audiences*

The re-intermediation of film culture that accompanies the projects of Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinemas is part of a wider attempt to articulate a space for film culture in a cultural field increasingly dominated by online distribution and exhibition. Another important point of consideration is how these projects address political questions surrounding film culture's move online, especially regarding online distribution's ambivalence for political borders and global audiences' expectations for borderless access to online content. The argument here is that both Festival Scope and Curzon participate in a project of pan-European cultural citizenship, albeit one whose fate is yet to be determined.

Both Curzon Home Cinema and Festival Scope are funded by the European Commission's Creative Europe programme, which since 2014 provides funding for the cultural and audiovisual sectors. Creative Europe's aims include such broad goals as helping the 'cultural and creative sectors seize the opportunities of the digital age and globalisation', 'enabling economic potential, contributing to sustainable growth, jobs, and social cohesion,' and giving 'Europe's culture and media sectors access to new international opportunities, markets, and audiences'.<sup>22</sup> However, the goals of European integration and citizenship are only thinly veiled, or co-opted, by these stated economic aims. Issues of representation, citizenship and circulation are important themes of a rationale for MEDIA 2007, one of Creative Europe predecessor programmes, in 2004:

Increased circulation of European audiovisual works has proved to be an important means of strengthening intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and knowledge among European cultures to form a basis of European citizenship. [...] Unless Europeans are able to watch fiction, drama, documentaries and other works that reflect the reality of their own lives and histories, and those of their neighbors, they will cease to recognize and understand them fully.<sup>23</sup>

Tied financially to the political-economic project of European integration, both Festival Scope and Curzon point to an emerging second order of re-intermediation, wherein the digital platforms of private ventures supply are mobilized to develop transnational markets and cultivate audiences as cultural public spheres. European audiovisual funding is caught between the two elusive demands of media literacy on the one hand, and market competitiveness on the other. Moreover, this is the contradiction that constitutes the discourse on the 'creative industries' which lends its name to the Creative Europe program. The

<sup>22</sup> Creative Europe, <[https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/about\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/about_en)> [accessed 2 August 2017].

<sup>23</sup> Explanatory Memorandum to the Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council concerning the implementation of a programme of support for the European visual sector (MEDIA 2007) (Brussels: European Commission, July 14, 2004), p. 2, cited in Luisa Rivi, *European Cinema after 1989: Cultural Identity and Transnational Production* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), p. 59.

'General Objectives' of Creative Europe as mandated by its founding legislation sum up the two goals as follows:

- (a) to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and to promote Europe's cultural heritage;
- (b) to strengthen the competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors, in particular of the audiovisual sector, with a view to promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.<sup>24</sup>

As relatively new intermediaries in the digital distribution industry, Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinemas are the product of a discourse on film which eschews either purely industrial or aesthetic terms. One outcome of this dual orientation has been a preference for projects which aim to develop transnational economic and cultural connections within and beyond Europe. In 2016, both Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinemas were awarded funding through the Online Distribution scheme of Creative Europe's Media subprogram, a funding program which emphasizes a notion of European content among its criteria for eligibility.<sup>25</sup> In the first stream titled 'Support to VOD Services', of which Curzon is a beneficiary, eligibility requires that no less than 60% of all content be of European origin. Festival Scope's eligibility under the third stream, 'Support to Innovative Multiplatform Releases', determines films to be European as defined by the origin of the producer and an adequate score of points for other talent.<sup>26</sup> In both cases, support for online distribution prioritizes 'transnational marketing, branding and distribution' and 'establishing systems of support for the distribution of non-national European films through theatrical distribution and on other platforms.'<sup>27</sup>

VOD platforms such as Festival Scope and Curzon Home Cinema fulfill the mandate of the European Union's transnational cultural and economic project in cultivating audiences for non-national European films. They reflect the fact that digitization, along with transnationalism, is central to the Creative Europe discourse. To the project of re-intermediating the festival, or the theatrical experience, the re-intermediation of European cultural citizenship could be further added as a goal of transnational digital film platforms. In its new intermediary role, the digital delivery of film culture provides a new space for the negotiation of European belonging and cultural value.

<sup>24</sup> European Parliament, 'Regulation (EU) no. 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 Establishing the Creative Europe Programme 2014 to 2020,' *Official Journal of the European Union*, 20 December 2013, Article 4, <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1408546810627&uri=CELEX:32013R1295>> [accessed 4 August 2017].

<sup>25</sup> 'Creative Europe Invests over €5 Million into Online Distribution Projects', *Creative Europe Desk UK*, 18 November 2016, <<http://www.creativeeuropeuk.eu/news/creative-europe-invests-over-%E2%82%AC5-million-online-distribution-projects>> [accessed 20 July 2017].

<sup>26</sup> European Commission, 'Creative Europe Media Sub-Programme Support for Online Distribution Guidelines', pp. 9–10, <[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/documents/guidelines-online-distribution\\_en.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/documents/guidelines-online-distribution_en.pdf)> [accessed 20 July 2017].

<sup>27</sup> European Commission, p. 3.