

Building connections between art and peace

The role of art in war and peace has been the focus of an exhibition installed at the Villa Plantamour, the HD Centre's headquarters, in October 2012. The HD Centre is fortunate to be able to use the Villa Plantamour in Geneva as its headquarters. This beautiful building on the bank of Lac Léman is loaned to the organisation by the City of Geneva to support the HD Centre's work as an independent mediation organisation. The Villa is an architectural artwork in its own right, and, since October 2012, its walls have been enhanced by the hanging of artworks by international artists whose work considers how art can support peace. It is the result of a new collaboration between the HD Centre and an independent Swiss foundation called artasfoundation for peace which was established in Zürich 2011 to explore the relationship between art, conflict mediation and peacebuilding.

The exhibition is focused on a suite of three rooms facing the lake which provide a unique environment for hosting delicate discussions between those in conflict. The rooms are also made available at no cost to other humanitarian organisations working in a similar field. As a result, the walls bear witness to many vital discussions which aim to contribute to the resolution of global conflict and the reduction of human suffering around the world. By hanging thought-provoking artworks on its walls, the HD Centre hopes that those working and meeting in the building as well as those visiting the Villa will become more aware of the connections between art and peace, and of the work of international artists in this area.

The "Art and Peace" collaboration was formally launched in October 2012 with a reception at the Villa Plantamour and the HD Centre was honoured by the presence of two of the three artists. Sixty guests came to celebrate this new collaboration, including representatives from the local and international communities in Geneva as well as the Permanent Missions based in the city. They were welcomed to the event by the HD Centre's Executive Director, Dr David Harland, as well as Ms Danielle Nanchen and Ms Dagmar



'Art and Peace' exhibition at the HD Centre's headquarters, Geneva, Oct. 2012.

Reichert from the Executive Board of the artasfoundation. The exhibition's Curator, Catherine David, subsequently introduced the guests to the artists and their work. The eclectic nature of the initial "Art and Peace" exhibition reflects the international way in which the HD Centre works and features artworks by Mr Ayaz Jokhio from Pakistan, Ms Beatrice Minda from Germany and Ms Hajra Waheed from Canada.



The 'Art and Peace' exhibition also reflects the HD Centre's interest in fostering peacemaking in all its forms.

The "Art and Peace" exhibition not only reflects the interest of the artasfoundation organisation in exploring the links between art and conflict mediation, it also reflects the HD Centre's interest in supporting the peacebuilding community, maintaining good relationships with the local and international community in Geneva, and fostering peacemaking in all its forms. Following this first exhibition both organisations plan to continue the collaboration with further exhibitions in the future.

The HD Centre is honoured to be part of this initiative and would like to thank the artasfoundation for its trust and support in this endeavour. For more information on the artasfoundation, please visit the organisation's website:

<http://www.artasfoundation.ch/>