artasfoundation Newsletter 1/2018



drawing by Elene Chantladze

While writing our first newsletter of the year, we are keeping a constant eye on the news from Armenia. We hope that the civic movement there, that is dedicated to bringing more transparency and democracy to Armenia, will succeed in peacefully transforming their country. Following on from our preparations of last year, we will be starting two new projects in Armenia this coming August. But we already active this spring and further down you can read about our international choir project and an exchange project with art education students from Switzerland and the Southern Caucasus.

This time, our newsletter contains four invitations: to three events in the upcoming days in Basel, Holm/Hamburg and Zurich and – for those of you who want to engage more profoundly with art and peacebuilding – an invitation to join our further education programme.

We look forward to hopefully seeing you at one of these occasions!

Your artasfoundation team Božena Čivić Olivia Jaques Fenja Läser Maja Leo Dagmar Reichert

PS: as of January 2018 Marcel Bleuler ceased to be a permanent staff member at *artasfoundation*, but luckily, he will continue to work with us as an affiliated colleague for the CAS Arts and International Cooperation and for the residency project off/line in Zemo Nikozi, Georgia.

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// CAS: Applications are immediately possible! – The second Certificate of Advanced Studies Course "Arts and International Cooperation - Collaborating in Fragile Contexts and Processes of Peacebuilding".

// Art Matters! – Training of teachers for art education: exchange Switzerland-South Caucasus.

// Art in international peace processes – a public talk hosted by Kunsthof Holm.

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// THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US

// "International Choir" with Franziska Welti and Jean-Daniel Girod in Abchasien*



International Choir Workshop, Photo: Christoph Läser

From 25.3. – 1.4. 2018 the "International Choir" project took place in different villages and cities throughout Abkhazia*. The choir workshops were conducted by the Swiss musicians Franziska Welti and Jean-Daniel Girod and concluded in two public concerts in Gudauta and Sokhum/i. Young singers with diverse backgrounds from various places in Abkhazia*, speaking several different languages, came together and worked on a repertoire of international folk songs. The experience of collectively learning new songs in foreign languages helped to create bonds and to overcome prejudices between young people of diverse, sometimes marginalized, communities. Due to current events, the local project coordinators in Abkhazia* decided to refrain from publicly staging specific regional folk songs from the different regions in Abkhazia* and to focus on singing international songs. The young people who participated, visibly enjoyed themselves and seemed to communicate easily through the act of collectively making music, regardless of given differences in mother tongues or backgrounds.

Project manager artasfoundation: Fenja Läser

// Art Connection, Chambarak, Armenia



Chambarak in Armenia 2017, Photo: Olivia Jaques

Next August, 24 art students from Yerevan and Zurich, together with Franziska Koch, Olivia Jaques, Shoghakat Mlke-Galstyan and Dagmar Reichert, will travel to Chambarak, a place in Armenia's border region to Azerbaijan. Due to the unresolved conflict between the two states, life is stagnating in the 5800-inhabitant community, whose townscape is characterized by the exodus of male workers and the remaining elderly, women and children. During our stay, the artists will work together in small, mixed groups and learn about the place, its inhabitants and their history (s). They will be supported by local young people, whose art school will be transformed into a temporary base station for the project. The students will stay with twelve local host families and through this get a direct insight into everyday life. We hope for lively mutual exchanges.

// CAS, Arts and International Cooperation



Photo: Tobias Eisenring

The Certificate of Advanced Studies Course (CAS) "Arts and International Cooperation -Collaborating in Fragile Contexts and Processes of Peacebuilding", a joint project of artasfoundation with the Zurich University of the Arts, will take place between January 2019 and January 2020 for the second time.

The course is intended for artists and cultural workers, organizers and those from internationally active organizations and humanitarian work, who (want to) work in fragile contexts or conflict regions. In four modules, experts from the field of peacebuilding, art and development cooperation will share their knowledge. A joint study trip (Lebanon or South Caucasus) with a visit to sample projects forms the core of the course. The aim is to work together within a group of participants from different cultural areas on exploring the question of how contemporary artistic work can contribute to social transformation, empowerment and peacebuilding. The language of instruction will be English. Applications are possible from now on until October 31, 2019. www.zhdk.ch/cas-arts-and-international-cooperation

// Art Matters! Training of teachers for art education: exchange Switzerland-South Caucasus



Photo: Dagmar Reichert

In March, artasfoundation, supported by the Mercator Foundation Switzerland, launched a major new project: an exchange between art education students from Switzerland and the South Caucasus.

In the first stage, 10 students from the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) traveled to Sukhum/i and talked with colleagues in Sukhum/i*, they prepared lessons together and taught together in four different schools in the region of Abkhazia*. In September, a two-week return visit of prospective art teachers from this region, which was separated from Georgia in a secessionist war, is planned. The exchange about different pedagogical traditions and jointly designed lessons shall take place in the cantonal school Bülach. The ZHdK together with the Department of Art Education is once again the partner organization for our projects.

Accommodation wanted for two weeks in Zurich

In order to accommodate young art educators from the South Caucasus, we are looking for hosts in Zurich who can accommodate one or two English-speaking students each. Period: 2nd- 16th of September 2018. Please send a short mail to Dagmar Reichert, if it would be possible for you to take in guests!

// Art in international peace processes - a public talk



Kunsthof Holm, Photo: Maja Leo

On May 8th 2018 "Kunsthof Holm" and artasfoundation invite to a public talk on the role of art in regions of conflict. Dr. Günther Baechler, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Southern Caucasus and Dagmar Reichert and Maja Leo of artasfoundation will discuss how artists and peacebuilders can collaborate in peace processes, and which roles the arts could play in processes of conflict transformation. The event is hosted by Maren Haartje, artasfoundation's long-time board member and the founder of "Kunsthof Holm". "Kunsthof Holm" is a newly established art space in Holm, Germany, and we are look forward to future joint activities.

May 8th 2018, 6.00 – 8.00 pm Kunsthof Holm, Hetlinger Strasse 19, DE-25488 Holm. If you would like to join us in Holm, please register at info@kunsthof-holm.de or maja.leo@artasfoundation.ch. www.kunsthof-holm.de

// Residencies in Lahore: Artist-exchange Switzerland – Pakistan



Photo: Dagmar Reichert

Pakistan's image in Switzerland is dominated by media reports about fundamentalism and violence. Not only does it leave out the values and efforts of the majority of people of this large country, it also misses the wealth of its cultures, its lively traditions in the fields of music and poetry, or the intriguing works within the contemporary visual arts in Pakistan. Together with the cultural centre HarSukh in Lahore, Dagmar Reichert and Andrea Saemann are currently setting up a program of three-month work-residencies for Swiss artists in Lahore. With Pro Helvetia, they are exploring possible institutional frameworks for the program, including plans for work-residencies of artists from Pakistan in Switzerland. On Wednesday the 9th of May 2018, an Info-Event will take place discussing background research for this residency program. It takes place at 7 pm in the Via Studio in Basel (Amerbachstrasse 55 A). You are cordially invited!

Jour Fixe: an invitation to the mounthly discussion event in Zurich



Jour Fixe, Photo: Olivia Jaques

A little bit too far for our friends from abroad, but maybe still of interest to you: Every month artasfoundation hosts a Jour Fixe, a public event where we present current projects, discuss open questions related to our work and exchange knowledge on relevant political developments. If you happen to be in Zurich from time to time or are simply interested in learning more about our Jour Fixes, you are welcome to subscribe to our mailing list here. The next Jour Fixe is coming up on May 16th, where we will discuss "Art Matters", an exchange project between art education students from Switzerland and Abkhazia*. Jour Fixe, 16.5.2018, 5.15 pm, Lindenbachstrasse 21, Zurich.

THANK YOU & PLEASE: SUPPORT THE WORK OF artasfoundation

The projects of artasfoundation can only be realized thanks to the great support of friends, donors and patrons of the foundation. Apart from the contributions of institutions and foundations, 60% of the budget comes from private donations. Thank you for your help and thank's to everybody who has supported us already in 2018. Any contribution is welcome, large and small donations are equally valued and helpful, no amount is too small.

- Bank details for individual donations: Artas Foundation, Raiffeisen Bank, 8001 Zurich, IBAN: CH56 8148 7000 0412 5940 4

- Information on the possibility to participate as a friend or donor of the foundation or to be a project sponsor, can be found on our Website or in person by Dagmar Reichert.

* artasfoundation would like to underline that its use of names and titles particularly with regard to the conflict regions should not be construed as implying any form of recognition or non-recognition by the foundation or as having any other political connotation whatsoever.

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