



Dear friends of artasfoundation!

In our newsletters we report twice a year through words and pictures about our art projects in different regions. We actually never report about the preparation and follow-up work for these projects: the conception of the projects, their integration into political developments, the writing of funding applications, the exchange with artists and our regional partners or the creation of time and travel plans which make up a significant part of our work. Nothing that would make for particularly exciting photos or testimonials! Nevertheless, I would like to mention this „housework“: The book keeping in six currencies, address management, graphic design tasks, website maintenance, accounting, evaluation or reporting – all of this follows on from the actual projects. When we publish in our newsletter photos of joyful young participants in a choir project or the inspired encounters of future art teachers, this is due to the (office) „kitchen“, which works invisibly in the background.

Since establishing artasfoundation in 2011, we have not only carried out art projects in conflict regions, but have also gradually built up the accompanying processes and structures: as institutionalised as seemed necessary and with as little bureaucracy as possible.

This requires a good team! Unfortunately, in 2019 we have to say goodbye to two of its members: Silvia Flachsmann, who has supported us for seven years volunteering to put our accounting on a solid footing; and Fenja Läser, who, after working as a project manager, is now dedicating herself to completing her master’s degree. Many thanks to the two of you for your committed and reliable work!

And on the side of new members of our kitchen: Evan Ruetsch has just started working for us, and Anna Fatyanova and Sandra Frimmel will be joining us from summer onwards.

Our foundation board member Barbara Ellenberger’s role will also change and she will be supporting us in the office from autumn: If you take a closer look, you will soon be able to see the work of our new team members behind the photos!

Greetings & maybe see you soon at one of our monthly Jour Fixe events!

Dagmar Reichert and the artasfoundation team,
Božena Čivić
Olivia Jaques
Evan Ruetsch

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// THANK YOU FOR CONTINUING TO SUPPORT US!

// Further education course „Arts and International Cooperation“ – modules in Zurich and Beirut



CAS-Study-trip to the Lebanon

We have just returned from a study trip in Lebanon with the students of the CAS „Arts and International Cooperation“. The programme began in January and we now offer it for the second time. As a part of the continuing education programme of the Zurich University of the Arts, it involves 17 participants from seven different countries: a highly exciting and heterogeneous group of people with professional experience in the arts (theatre, dance, music, visual arts) or from organisations (UNHCR, Médecins sans Frontières, State Secretariat for Migration...) aged between 24 and 62.

During the program's study trip, there were several visits to organisations that maintain art projects in Lebanon, including one working in the Palestinian refugee camp of Shatila, one based in the poorer neighbourhoods of Tripoli, offering psychosocial support through art, or another project, that establishes music or film education for refugees from Syria in the Bekaa Valley. Due to the acute conflicts in the Arab world, Lebanon can be considered a laboratory for working with socially engaged art. The participants in our study trip were very impressed by the achievements that artistic work can accomplish in such a challenging context.

// Tskaltubo Art Festival – The seventh edition of the art festival in the Georgian spa resort



Meret Schlegel at the dance workshop Tskaltubo 2015, Photo: Maja Leo

This autumn once again there will be an art festival in the Georgian health resort of Tskaltubo: Already in its seventh edition! After previous workshops with young residents, the public performances are scheduled for the 4th and 5th of October.

Since we handed over the management of the festival to IDP Woman's Association of Tskaltubo in 2017, we will – once again – only accompany the festival: this time by inviting the musician George Kobulashvili and the dancers and choreographers Meret Schlegel and Manel Salas to Tskaltubo to perform in the festival. We have also invited for the first time the Swiss theatre director and theatre pedagogue Ron Rosenberg (Gorki Theater Berlin) to the festival. We will report back on their work in the autumn!

// Info-event of artasfoundation at the Literaturhaus in Zurich – „The South Caucasus in Literature and Art“



Photo: Evan Ruetsch

On the 29th of January, some of you accepted our invitation to the Literaturhaus Zurich to attend an event entitled „The South Caucasus in Literature and Art“. From our point of view, it was a successful evening in a full house.

The first part of the info-event was about the Azerbaijani writer Akram Aylisli: Thomas Sarbacher read from his book „Stone Dreams“, a novel in which the author contradicts the version of the conflict with Armenia in his country and tries to rebuild the bridges between the hostile nations. The book was banned in Azerbaijan and now at over seventy-year-old, the former celebrated writer is not allowed to leave the country. He was able to attend our event in the Literaturhaus for a few minutes via the Internet. Silvia Sasse, who moderated the event and introduced us to the political context, posed the questions. Akram Aylisli spoke, explained, and then left us with a void when he disappeared from the screen, returning into his distant captivity.

During the second half of the evening, we invited the visitors to different tables, where they could learn more about artasfoundation's current art projects through conversations with participating project managers and artists. We were very pleased with their lively interest!

// International Choir Armenia – Workshop and concert tour



International Choir, February 2019, Photo: Christoph Läser

‘We Are One’, is the name the 28 young singers gave their choir which will be doing a concert tour in July this year. This choir is special. Invited to our project, the young participants from several villages of the Armenian province of Tavush met for the first time. Their new friendships help to build bridges in a peripheral region near the border with Azerbaijan, where the mobility of the habitants is restricted and clashes regularly flare up between the neighbors in the north, impact on daily lives.

Exited and full of joy we’re looking forward to the concert tour taking the young participants to the various villages where they come from, Dilijan, Berd, Kohkb, Bagratashan, Ayroum - and finally also to the capital Yerevan. The singers will perform folk songs from different countries of the world taking the newly acquired techniques of body percussion to it’s pinnacle. Franziska Welti and Jean Daniel Girod coached the singers and brought out their exceptional talent in preparation for the concert during two workshops which took place in Oct. 18 and Feb. 19. They were accompanied by four teachers from music schools in Tavusch, who want to build on this new impulse in their lessons.

Olivia Jaques and Sandra Frimmel now take over the project management from Fenja Läser and are looking forward to the young chorister’s rehearsals, breaks , talks and concerts!

// Concert tour of the Armenian all-female band Tiezerk in Switzerland – an invitation



Tiezerk in Chambarak 2018, Photo: Olivia Jaques

Speaking of Armenia, Franziska Welti, music and friendships: Many thanks to Franziska Welti, who made it possible to invite Tiezerk to Switzerland. The young women's band from Armenia performs traditional Armenian music and also write music themselves. Eliza Baghdiyan, Asta Mamikonyan and Lusine Mlke-Galstyan are old friends of artasfoundation. We have taken them and their music to heart and recommend visiting the concerts in Basel, Winterthur, Zurich and St. Gallen. The Dates of the concerts can be found

// Jour Fixe – An invitation to the monthly discussion event in Zurich

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



Team photo February 2019, Photo: Evan Ruetsch

// THANK YOU FOR CONTINUING TO SUPPORT US!

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 hands. Thank you for your help and thanks to everybody who has supported us already in 2019. All contributions are welcome, both large and small donations are valuable and helpful!

- 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.