

**ALL THAT IS
BANNED
IS DESIRED**

ALL THAT IS BANNED IS DESIRED

World Conference on Artistic Freedom of Expression

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BANNED DESIRED

Welcome to the first world conference on artistic freedom of expression, *All that is Banned is Desired*. Over the two days of the conference, more than 50 artists and individuals involved in the arts will address vital and complex issues concerning artists' freedom of expression. The very fact that we are convening around this topic affirms the proposition made by the Arab proverb from which the conference takes its title, that "all that is banned is desired."

Censorship is characterized by the contradictory fact that by imposing limits it produces reactions to those limits, by curtailing speech today censors set the conditions against which many more will speak tomorrow, and by limiting freedoms the desire of the oppressed becomes stronger to claim even greater freedom.

To honor the histories of struggle to advance the freedom to make and use art, we have placed the artists at the center of this gathering. Artists will share both their experiences of censorship and the many strategies developed to claim, defend and advance their freedoms as well as the freedoms of other artists and those who wish to experience the art they create.

The program moves rapidly through a series of topics and across a wide range of regions, mixing moderated discussions with prepared statements, film screenings, music recordings and live performances.

This conference is the beginning of a concerted effort to enhance the monitoring of and defense against violations of artists' freedom of expression worldwide. In recent years, hundreds of artists have been attacked, persecuted, imprisoned and even killed because they insist on expressing themselves through their art. Many have become symbols of resistance against dictatorial regimes, religious extremists, corporate greed, and oppressive cultural, gender and sexual norms.

Thank you for joining us - the programme committee

Marie Korpe and Ole Reitov, Freemuse
Bente Roalsvig and Rune Eraker, Fritt Ord

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2012

09:00: **Registration**

09:40: **Doors open**

10:00: **Doors close**

Session 1

10:00: **BEAUTY UNDER PRESSURE**

Zarganar, Comedian, Actor, and Film Director (Burma)

Min Htin Ko Ko Gyi, Poet and Filmmaker (Burma)

Win Maw, Musician and Composer (Burma)

Moderator: **Frances Harrison**, Writer, Journalist and Broadcaster (UK)

Session 2

10:40: **RELIGION AND ARTISTIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

Svetlana Mintcheva, Director of Programmes, National Coalition Against Censorship (USA)

Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti, Playwright and Screenwriter (UK)

Azhar Usman, Comedian, Activist and Lawyer (USA)

Moderator: **Kenan Malik**, Writer, Lecturer and Broadcaster (UK)

Session 3

11:40: **MORAL PANICS: SEXUALITY AND ART**

Zanele Muholi, Visual Artist (South Africa)

Pang Khee Teik, Arts Consultant and Human Rights Activist (Malaysia)

Robert Sember, Artist and Researcher (South Africa/USA), Moderator

12:30: **Lunch**

Session 4

13:45: **CORPORATE CENSORSHIP**

Larissa Sansour, Visual Artist (Palestine/UK)

Nadia Plesner, Visual Artist (Denmark)

Fredrik Gertten, Film Director (Sweden)

Session 5

14:30: **PUBLIC SPACE AND ART CLASHES**

Mustapha Benfodil, Writer and Visual Artist (Algeria)

Lars Ø Ramberg, Artist (Norway/Germany)

Alessandro Petti, Architect and Researcher (Italy/Palestine), Moderator

Session 6

15:15: **HUNGARY: ARTISTIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AGE OF XENOPHOBIA**

Adam Fischer, Chief Conductor (Hungary)

Yngve André Søbørg, Soloist at the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet (Norway)

15:30: **Coffee break**



Session 7

16:00: **TIBET: ARTISTS IN EXILE**

Tenzing Rigdol, Visual Artist and Poet (Tibet)

Tenzin Gönpö, Musician (Tibet/France)

Moderator: **Frances Harrison**, Writer, Journalist and Broadcaster (UK)

Session 8

16:30: **THE INVISIBLE RED LINE: MANOEUVRING CHINESE ARTS CENSORSHIP**

Si Han, Curator (China/Sweden)

Moderator: **Frances Harrison**, Writer, Journalist and Broadcaster (UK)

Session 9

17:00: **THE DAY THE MUSIC STOPPED: MALI**

Manny Ansar, Festival Director (Mali)

Terakaft, Performance (Mali)

FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2012

08:45: **Doors open**

09:00: **Doors close**

Session 1

09:00: **OVERCOMING: WOMEN, ART AND EGYPT**

Sherine Amr, Singer (Egypt)

Sondos Shabayek, Writer, Theatre Director and Actress (Egypt)

Petr Lom, Filmmaker (Czech Republic/Canada), Moderator

Session 2

09:45: **STOP THIS FILTH: ARTISTS UNDER THREAT**

Deeyah, Music Producer (Norway/UK)

Arshad Hussain, Actor and Culture Activist (Pakistan)

Moderator: **Ole Reitov**, Program Manager, Freemuse (Denmark)

Session 3

10:05: **THE ART OF LOVE: CULTURAL TABOOS AND ARTISTIC REPRESENTATIONS OF ROMANCE IN TRIBAL PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN**

George Gittoes, Painter, Photographer and Filmmaker (Australia)

Moderator: **Frances Harrison**, Writer, Journalist and Broadcaster (UK)

Session 4

10:30: **ORGANIZING FOR FREEDOM: CULTURAL WORKERS IN RUSSIA**

Nikolay Oleynikov, Visual Artist (Russia)

10:50: **Coffee break**

Session 5

11:20: **ARTS IN RESISTANCE | RESISTANCE IN ART: SYRIA AND TUNISIA**

Rachida Triki, Film Director and Researcher (Tunisia)

Donatella Della Ratta, PhD Fellow (Italy), Moderator

Session 6

12:00: **FREEDOM THEATRE: WHAT KIND OF FREEDOM?**

Jonatan Stanczak, Co-Founder and Administrative Manager, The Freedom Theatre
(Sweden/Palestine)

Session 7

12:15: **ARTISTS IN AN INESCAPABLE POLITICAL CONTEXT: CUBA**

Tania Bruguera, Interdisciplinary Artist (Cuba/USA)

Session 8

12:30: **OUTSPOKEN**

Artist and Community Activist (Zimbabwe)



13:00: **Lunch**

Session 9

14:00: **NOTHING TO ENVY IN THIS WORLD**

Moderator: **Sigrun Slapgard**, Writer, Foreign Correspondent and Board Member of Fritt Ord

Session 10

14:20: **THE LASTING IMPACT OF THE RUSHDIE CASE**

William Nygaard, Publisher and Defender of Freedom of Expression (Norway)

Moderator: **Kenan Malik**, Writer, Lecturer and Broadcaster (UK)

Session 11

14:30: **TURNING OUT THE LIGHT: TURKEY**

Asli Erdoğan, Writer (Turkey/Austria)

Pelin Başaran, Researcher and Arts Producer (Turkey)

Moderator: **Kenan Malik**, Writer, Lecturer and Broadcaster (UK)

Session 12

15:00: **THE ARTIST VS. THE STATE: THE CASE OF LAPIRO DE MBANGA AND THE CAMPAIGN FOR PUSSY RIOT**

Maran Turner, Executive Director, Freedom Now (USA)

Alexander Cheparukhin, Music Producer, Promoter and Founder and
Director of GreenWave Music (Russia)

Session 13

15:30: **MANTA**, extract from a dance performance

Héla Fattoumi, Dancer and Choreographer (France)

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Session Titles and Descriptions

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2012

Session 1 - **BEAUTY UNDER PRESSURE**

10:00

To open the conference, Zarganar addresses the theme of beauty under pressure. This theme is inspired by the prolific creativity of Burmese artists even during long periods of imprisonment, detention and banning. Filmmaker Min Htin Ko Ko Gyi introduces and screens his film, "Uninterruptedness," a homage to the banned, Burmese writer, Min Ko Naing. Composer and musician Win Maw sings the Burmese language version of the song "Evil Go Away." As they share their works, the three artists will discuss the state of artistic freedom in Burma today.

Session 2 - **RELIGION AND ARTISTIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

10:40

Conflicts over religion and artistic freedom frequently stem from groups claiming the exclusive right to interpret holy texts. In the past years, conflicts over religion and artistic expression have transcended borders and cultures, and many artists now avoid addressing religious issues. But many cases still emerge and reflect conflicts within societies and within religious communities. The session includes discussions of current examples of religious-based censorship and self-censorship, and includes a performance by stand-up comedian and lawyer Azhar Usman.

Session 3 - **MORAL PANICS: SEXUALITY AND ART**

11:40

Expressions of sexual and gender diversity are frequently decried in impassioned and alarmist terms by conservative leaders who claim they threaten traditional moral values and are a danger to national wellbeing. The presenters in this session discuss how art works intended to advance lesbian, transgender, bisexual and gay individuals' and communities' claims to dignity and rights are particularly prone to being used to incite moral panics.

Session 4 - **CORPORATE CENSORSHIP**

13:45

- a. Palestinian artist Larissa Sansour was nominated for the Lacoste Elysée Prize in 2011. Nation Estate, her science fiction-inspired work, envisioned a Palestinian state housed in a single skyscraper. The prize sponsor, French fashion giant Lacoste, declared the project “too pro-Palestinian” and revoked Sansour’s nomination.
 - b. Darfurnica, the painting Nadia Plesner created to draw attention to the media’s neglect of the atrocities in Darfur, includes an image of a Darfurian child holding a Louis Vuitton bag. The Vuitton company filed a lawsuit that was ultimately dismissed by a court in The Hague.
 - c. Fredrik Gertten and his company were sued by the Dole Food company when his film BANANAS!* tracked and documented a ground-breaking legal battle initiated by twelve Nicaraguan banana workers against Dole for their use of a banned pesticide that was known by the company to cause sterility.
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Session 5 - **PUBLIC SPACE AND ART CLASHES**

14:30

Public spaces are sites where citizens’ political rights are inscribed and collective social values are represented. Today, however, in sites across the world, public spaces are being “occupied” by institutional powers obsessed with security, surveillance and control. Rapid privatising of public space is also dismantling the commons essential to civic engagement. What is the relationship between these trends and public art? Are artistic interventions able to reclaim these commons?



Session 6 - **HUNGARY: ARTISTIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AGE OF XENOPHOBIA**

15:15

In claiming their freedom of artistic expression, artists confront a number of complex questions. What moral imperatives, if any, guide their exercise of this freedom? Are they obliged to use this freedom to advance the rights of others? Adam Fischer considers the responsibility artists have to work against growing intolerance, xenophobia, and racism as he discusses the campaign that prevented the staging of an anti-Semitic play in Budapest earlier this year. The session includes a performance by Adam Fischer and Yngve André Søbørg.

Session 7 - **TIBET: ARTISTS IN EXILE**

16:00

- a. Tenzing Rigdol discusses his installation, *Our Land Our People*, which involved smuggling 20 tons of soil out of Tibet. He connects this project with the plight of Tibetan artists in exile as well as artists currently imprisoned in Tibet.
- b. Tenzin Gönpo discusses how Tibetan artists living under Chinese government control disguise themselves and their work. He will perform “The Request of Yogi to their Protector Goddess Tara,” a song and dance accompanied by the *Dra-ngen*, an instrument from the lute family.

Session 8 - **THE INVISIBLE RED LINE:
MANOEUVRING CHINESE ARTS
CENSORSHIP**

16:30
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Art can both reflect and shape reality. It is the fear of this power to amplify and produce meaning that inspires censorship. In their quest for freedom of expression, Chinese artists have had to face a variety of censorship strategies. Some are rooted in politics while others hold to conservative moral and aesthetic codes. Curator, Si Han, references specific art works, artists and exhibitions as he discusses how the current threshold of acceptability for Chinese artists is being challenged.

Session 9 - **THE DAY THE MUSIC STOPPED: MALI**

17:00
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Once considered a democratic success story in a long-troubled region, Mali is facing immense problems after the coup in March 2012. Musically, Mali is one of the richest places in the world, but in March 2012 the music stopped in Northern Mali as Islamist separatists implemented a harsh system of Sharia forbidding all music. Since 2001 the region has hosted the unique Festival au Désert that attracts local as well as international names. The festival's founder Manny Ansar will discuss how artists and organisers respond to the threat they are under in the current context. The Malian group Terakaft performs music that is now banned in Northern Mali.

FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2012

Session 1 - **OVERCOMING: WOMEN, ART
AND EGYPT**

09:00

The Arab Spring appears to have done little to advance women's freedom of expression in Egypt. In fact, women's rights have deteriorated since the revolution. Yet the freedoms demanded and claimed during the revolution continue to resonate in the groundswell of creativity among young people, especially young women artists. The presenters discuss how young women artists navigate tremendous obstacles now that their art is inextricably tied to the political. The session includes performances by Sondos Shabayek and Sherine Amr.

Session 2 - **STOP THIS FILTH: ARTISTS UNDER
THREAT**

09:45

There are competing views within the Muslim world regarding whether and how artists adhere to the tenets of Islam. In recent years, several Muslim performers have been intimidated, attacked, abducted, and even killed because their work is considered to violate these tenets. Deeyah received death threats in Europe and Arshad Hussain was abducted in Pakistan. They discuss how the violence and intimidation they and other artists face affects their lives and artistic freedom.

Session 3 - **THE ART OF LOVE: CULTURAL TABOOS
AND ARTISTIC REPRESENTATIONS
OF ROMANCE IN TRIBAL PAKISTAN AND
AFGHANISTAN**

10:05

It is estimated that 6,000 men and women are killed each year in Afghanistan and Pakistan for having romantic relationships that violate customs and the wishes of family members. Cinema, music and dance are forbidden because they are believed to incite such romances. The filmmaker George Gittoes discusses what the conflicts between marriage conventions and individual desires in the tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan reveal about women's rights, property and the freedom of expression.

Session 4 - **ORGANIZING FOR FREEDOM: CULTURAL
WORKERS IN RUSSIA**

10:30

Russia is currently witnessing the most visible political movements since Perestroika. Art workers are contributing to these movements by providing opportunities for constituencies to investigate what is lacking, what is going wrong and what is to be done to remedy the current political system in the country. Nikolay Oleynikov will discuss how cultural workers have become aware that addressing labour conditions and elaborating a political agenda is a key to artistic freedom.



Session 5 - **ARTS IN RESISTANCE | RESISTANCE IN ART: SYRIA & TUNISIA**

11:20

Artists who were on the frontlines of the Arab revolutions continue to challenge cultural, political and religious norms in their post-revolutionary societies. In the past two years, new art movements and forms have blossomed that employ art-based strategies to engage with constituencies and to contribute to critical processes of social transformation. Referencing specific art projects, the presenters discuss how artists in Syria and Tunisia contribute to revolutionary projects.

Session 6 - **FREEDOM THEATRE: WHAT KIND OF FREEDOM?**

12:00

“Culture as Resistance” is the *raison d’être* for the Freedom Theatre in Jenin refugee camp in occupied Palestine. The work of the theatre is integrated with the Palestinian resistance against the Israeli occupation while also challenging oppression within Palestinian society. The members of the Freedom Theatre have paid dearly for their work: founding member Juliano Mer Khamis was assassinated in 2011, and more than half of the theatre’s employees have been arrested by the Israeli army, most recently the theatre’s former Artistic Director. Jonatan Stanczak discusses the challenges of artistic freedom faced by the theatre.

Session 7 - **ARTISTS IN AN INESCAPABLE POLITICAL CONTEXT: CUBA**

12:15

Cuban artists are frequently judged by what Cuba represents rather than what the artists produce. What people imagine Cuba to be influences how they approach the work of Cuban artists. These artists are in turn directly affected by these imaginary conceptions of the country. Artist Tania Bruguera considers how artists manoeuvre and test limits in a country where politics has influenced all areas of social and individual life.

Session 8 - **OUTSPOKEN: ZIMBABWE**

12:30

OUTSPOKEN is the stage name of Tongai Leslie Makawa, a spoken-word artist, emcee and community activist from Zimbabwe. One half of the hip-hop group Dialectrik Blue, he is also the front man of his eccentric hip-hop band Outspoken and The Essence. He co-founded Magamba, the cultural activist network with fellow artist Comrade Fatso in order to fight social and political injustice through spoken-word events. Outspoken will perform extracts from his spoken word performances.

Session 9 - **NOTHING TO ENVY IN THIS WORLD**

14:00



Session 10 - **THE LASTING IMPACT OF THE RUSHDIE CASE**

14:20

In 1989, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini called for the execution of the writer Salman Rushdie, whose novel, *The Satanic Verses*, was judged to be blasphemous. William Nygaard argues that this case is an example of the political power exerted by fundamentalist Islam. Tracing reactions ranging from self-censorship to the publication of provocative artworks, he considers how the Rushdie Case still impacts our world and asserts that courage, tolerance and increased knowledge about different cultures lead to more explicit political responsibility and leadership.

Session 11 - **TURNING OUT THE LIGHT: TURKEY**

14:30

a. **Writing in Front of the Barbed Wire**

The critically acclaimed writer Asli Erdoğan will address the threat of prison faced by many Turkish writers and journalists. Persistent threats and routine episodes of incarceration are among the severest forms of silencing and censorship. Erdoğan will consider the complex and often contradictory relationship between freedom and identity experienced within conditions of repression, when one is not certain on which side of the barbed wire fence or prison bars one is positioned.

b. **Censorship in the Arts in Turkey: Modalities and Actors**

Pelin Başaran will share findings from the research and website monitoring project, *Siyah Bant*. The project was conducted in several cities in Turkey to search for the current modalities and enactors of censorship in Turkey. The project addresses the many effective ways in which censorship strategies, such as institutional-silencing, threats and targeting are employed, be it through the direct involvement of state institutions or by individuals who invoke state interests.

Session 12 - **THE ARTIST VS. THE STATE: THE CASE OF LAPIRO DE MBANGA AND THE CAMPAIGN FOR PUSSY RIOT**

15:00
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a. **The Case of Lapiro De Mbanga**

In 2008, Cameroon conducted a show trial of singer and composer Lapiro de Mbanga. He was imprisoned in New Bell Prison, known as “Hell on Earth”. Mbanga’s true crime was speaking out, through his music, against the Cameroonian government and President Biya. The three-year-long fight for his release mobilized governments and UN institutions. Maran Turner, executive director of Freedom Now, discusses international legal protections of the right to expression in light of this case.

b. **The Campaign for Pussy Riot**

The global campaign calling for a fair trial for and release of members of the Russian feminist punk group Pussy Riot involved parliamentarians, globally recognized stars, and large international human rights organisations. It set new standards for global collaborations in support of artistic freedoms. Music producer and programmer Alexander Cheparukhin, one of the brains behind the campaign, will reflect on the successes and criticism of the process.

Session 13 - **MANTA, extract of a dance performance**

15:30
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Manta developed from a fascination with the veil and its increased use and visibility in society. Choreographers H la Fattoumi and Eric Lamoureux see the hijab as stifling women’s individuality and limiting their freedom. To explore this issue, Fattoumi decided to wear one of these garments and explore through movement its impact on her understanding of women’s freedom to live their lives without restrictions and constraints.

ADAM FISCHER (Hungary) regularly conducts at major opera houses and leading festivals in Europe and the USA. In 1998 he became Chief Conductor of the Danish National Chamber Orchestra. In late 2010 he resigned as Music Director of the Hungarian State Opera to protest a controversial media law introduced in Hungary and the rise of anti-Semitism, homophobia and xenophobia in Hungarian society.

ALESSANDRO PETTI (Italy/Palestine) is chair of the Urban Studies and Spatial Practices program at Al-Quds/Bard College, Palestine, director of Campus in Camps, an experimental educational program centered in Dheisheh Refugee Camp, Bethlehem, and founding member and director of DAAR, an architectural office and artistic residency program that combines conceptual speculations and architectural interventions.

ALEXANDER CHEPARUKHIN (Russia) is an award-winning music producer, promoter and founder and director of GreenWave Music. He has produced numerous festivals, including the One World Festival (Moscow, 1996) and 60th Parallel (Surgut, West Siberia, 2006-2011). He has worked on Russian environmental causes, helped establish the charitable organisation, Children of Chernobyl, and organized an international campaign supporting Pussy Riot.

ARSHAD HUSSAIN (Pakistan) is an award-winning actor from Pakistan. He has also worked as a program specialist in the governmental and non-governmental development sector. Hussain was abducted in 2008. His kidnappers demanded he stop performing because it was unacceptable to the Pukhtoon Wali (code of honor) and religion. Following his release he founded an organisation for victims with similar experiences as himself.

ASLI ERDOĞAN (Turkey/Austria) is a Turkish writer. Her books have received numerous awards and are widely translated. In 1998, she began writing the column “The Others” for the newspaper Radikal, in which she addressed issues related to prisons, torture, Kurdish concerns, and women’s rights. She was twice fired from the newspaper. After starting to write a column for the Kurdish paper Özgür Gündem, she went into exile in Graz, Austria.

AZHAR USMAN (USA) is a comedian, activist and lawyer born in Illinois, Chicago, to Indian parents. Today, Azhar is a stand up comedian. He is a co-founder of the “Allah Made Me Funny—Official Muslim Comedy Tour,” which has toured over 20 countries. Usman has been described as “Bin Laughin” or the “Ayatollah of Comedy.”

DEEYAH (Norway/UK) is a critically acclaimed singer who was born in Oslo to Punjabi and Pashtun parents. Following years of constant intimidation, physical threats and a failed abduction attempt, she stopped performing in 2006. In 2007 she founded Sisterhood, which encourages young Muslim women's artistic expression. Deeyah also runs FUUSE, a social-purpose music and film company.

DONATELLA DELLA RATTA (Italy) is a PhD fellow in the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies' New Islamic Public Sphere Program at Copenhagen University, Denmark, and at the Danish Institute in Damascus, Syria. She writes about the production and distribution of Syrian TV dramas. Donatella has published several book chapters on Arab TV industries and two monographs on Pan-Arab satellite channels.

FRANCES HARRISON (UK) is a broadcaster and writer. As a foreign correspondent for the BBC she was posted in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Iran. Frances was the first woman to run the BBC office in Tehran. She has been Head of News at Amnesty International and was a visiting research fellow at Oxford University where she worked on a book of survivors' stories from the end of the Sri Lankan civil war, called Still Counting the Dead.

FREDRIK GERTTEN (Sweden) is an award-winning director and journalist and founder of WG Film. His film *BANANAS!** achieved international prominence when Dole Food Company sued the film company, producer and director. He documents the fight for the film and his freedom of speech in his latest film, *Big Boys Gone Bananas!**. Gertten is a recipient of the Anna Politkovskaya freedom of speech award.

GEORGE GITTOES (Australia) is a painter, photographer and filmmaker. For the past three decades he has established mobile studios in regions of conflict and upheaval around the world that are usually the preserve of journalists. His works have addressed famine and peacekeeping in Somalia, the Kibeho massacre in Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia and, most recently, the effects of the War on Terror in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

GURPREET KAUR BHATTI (UK) is an award-winning British playwright. In 2004, following protests by the local Sikh community, her play *Behzti* (Dishonour), which explores sexual abuse in the British Sikh community, was closed by the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, and she was forced into hiding. In 2010, *Behud*, her follow-up to *Behzti*, led to the creation of "Beyond Belief," a case study exploring theatre, freedom of expression and public order, produced by Index on Censorship.



Participants

HÉLA FATTOUMI (France) is a dancer, choreographer and co-director with Éric Lamoureux of the National Choreographic Center of Caen/Basse-Normandie. Her work has addressed a range of social issues, including the concept of “homo-sensuality” in the Arab Muslim world and questions surrounding the Islamic veil. From 2001 to 2004, Fattoumi was Dance Vice President at the French performing rights organisation, and from 2006 to 2008, she chaired the Association des Centres Chorégraphiques Nationaux.

JONATAN STANCZAK (Sweden/Palestine) is one of the founders of the Freedom Theatre in the Jenin refugee camp. He became the theater’s general manager shortly after the assassination of its leader, Juliano Mer Khamis, in April 2011. Jonathan has been involved in numerous civil right activities including campaigning for the Palestinian call for boycotts, sanctions and divestments against Israel.

KENAN MALIK (UK) was born in India and lives in the UK. He is a presenter on BBC Radio 4s programme Analysis, and contributes regular columns to many of the world’s leading newspapers. He has written and presented a number of radio and TV documentaries. His books include *From Fatwa to Jihad: The Rushdie Affair and its Legacy* (2009), which was shortlisted for the Orwell Book prize, and *Strange Fruit: Why Both Sides are Wrong in the Race Debate* (2008).

LARISSA SANSOUR (Palestine/UK), an interdisciplinary artist, was born in Jerusalem. In 2011, her project responding to the failure of the UN to recognize Palestinian statehood was nominated for the prestigious Lacoste Elysée Prize. The revocation of her nomination sparked an international debate about censorship. As a result, the Musée de l’Elysée decided to cancel the prize entirely and broke off all ties with the sponsor, Lacoste.

LARS Ø RAMBERG (Norway/Germany) addresses topics such as national identity, symbolic architecture and language in his highly conceptual, theoretical and critically acclaimed art works. Ramberg’s winning entry for a monument to commemorate Norway’s 100th anniversary generated so much debate that the assignment was rejected. This work became his contribution to the 2007 Venice Biennale.

MARAN TURNER (USA) is Executive Director of Freedom Now, an organisation that works to secure the release of prisoners of conscience through focused legal, political and public relations advocacy efforts. Freedom Now has represented individuals all over the world, including notables such as currently imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Liu Xiaobo and former prisoner of conscience Lapiro de Mbanga, a composer and singer imprisoned in Cameroon for three years for a song criticizing the president.

MIN HTIN KO KO GYI is a poet, filmmaker and screenwriter living and working in Burma. He coordinated the 2012 Art of Freedom Film Festival in collaboration with Aung San Suu Kyi and the comedian Zarganar. The *Floating Tomatoes*, his award-winning documentary about the disastrous effect pesticides are having on Burma's Inle Lake, brought him international recognition. He is currently working on a documentary on Aung San Suu Kyi.

MOHAMED ALY "MANNY" ANSAR (Mali) is director and founder of Festival au Désert, which occurs annually in January in the region of Timbuktu and has become one of the premiere cultural events in Mali. The festival includes performers from across the world. Ansar was also the first manager of an internationally renowned Tuareg music group, Tinariwen. Before his career in music, Ansar worked in the humanitarian aid field for many years.

MUSTAPHA BENFODIL (Algeria) lives and works in Algeria and writes for *El Watan* daily newspaper. When he reads his plays and poems in the streets of Algiers during happenings he calls "Wild Readings," he is often confronted by the police and arrested. In 2011, the Sheikh of Sharjah removed Benfodil's installation concerning rape victims during the civil war in Algeria from the tenth Biennial of Contemporary Art of Sharjah.

NADIA PLESNER (Denmark) examines the disappearing boundaries between the editorial and advertising departments in the media. In 2010, Louis Vuitton sued her for a "threatening infringement of intellectual property" because she included their trademark in her painting *Darfurnica*, which denounced the Western media's coverage of the genocide occurring in Darfur. A court in The Hague rejected Vuitton's arguments.

NIKOLAY OLEYNIKOV (Russia) is an artist, cultural activist and member of the art collective *Chto Delat*. He is known for his didactic murals and graphic works in the tradition of the Soviet monumental school. Oleynikov is also a co-founder of the May Congress of Creative Workers, a small horizontal network of self-organized cultural initiative groups that focus on the conditions of the creative and artwork fields. The May Congress of Creative Workers has recently launched a month-long anti-censorship campaign.



Participants

OLE REITOV is a co-founder of Freemuse. A former broadcaster and culture journalist, he has worked as a consultant for Bhutan Broadcasting Service, a cultural co-operative Jamana/Sorofe in Mali, and for the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights. It was four years ago that Reitov first imagined a conference on artistic freedom of expression that resulted in “All that is Banned is Desired.” He initiated artsfex, a new global initiative for the protection of artistic freedom.

OUTSPOKEN (Zimbabwe) is the stage name of Tongai Leslie Makawa, a spoken-word artist, emcee and community activist from Zimbabwe. One half of the hip-hop group Dialectrik Blue, he is also the front man of his eccentric hip-hop band Outspoken and The Essence. He co-founded Magamba, the cultural activist network with fellow artist Comrade Fatso in order to fight social and political injustice through spoken-word events.

PANG KHEE TEIK (Malaysia/UK) is a multi-disciplinary artist, arts consultant and human rights activist. He was the Arts Program Director for the Annexe Gallery in Kuala Lumpur, and is the co-founder of Malaysia’s annual sexuality rights festival Seksualiti Merdeka (Sexuality Independence). The festival, which provides a platform to empower Malaysians of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, was banned in November 2011.

PELIN BAŞARAN (Turkey) is the founder and director of PARC (Performing Arts’ Research and Creation), from where she is coordinating the “Black Ribbon-Freedom of Expression in the Arts” project and is co-directing PERFORM2012. From 2006 until March 2010 she worked as a founding team member and international projects manager at garajistanbul contemporary performing arts space. Başaran contributed to the document “Turkish Cultural Policy Report—A Civil Perspective,” published in July 2011.

PETR LOM (Czech Republic/Canada) was born in Prague and grew up in Canada. He gave up a university career in 2003 to become a full-time documentary filmmaker specialising in human rights subjects. His award-winning films include *Bride Kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan* (2004), *On a Tightrope* (2007), about the persecution of the Uighur minority in China, and *Back to the Square* (2012), a film about injustice in the aftermath of the Egyptian revolution.

RACHIDA TRIKI (Tunisia) is a professor of Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art at Tunis University. She has organised contemporary arts exhibitions in Tunisia, and has directed twenty-five documentary films on Tunisian painters. She was the curator for North Africa in Dak’art 2010 and has published texts on the work of many North African artists.

ROBERT SEMBER (South Africa/USA) is an artist, public health researcher and activist based in New York City. He is a member of the international sound-art collective Ultra-red. Sember is the co-founder of the Arbert Santana Ballroom Archive and Oral History Project, an initiative by and for members of the African-American and Latino/Latina Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community in New York City.

SHERINE AMR (Egypt) is the founder of MASCARA (Massive Scar Era), the first all girls metal-rock band in Egypt. She has attended the Independent Music Workshop held by Hihat Music Studio in Alexandria, and has participated in workshops held by the Grammy Award winner Fathy Salama. In 2009, Sherine was selected to attend The Cultural Management Workshop held in Syria by El Mawred for cultural resources. MASCARA has toured Europe and the USA.

SIGRUN SLAPGARD is an award winning Norwegian writer, international reporter and documentary director. She covered the Iraq and Kosovo wars, and reported on conflicts in Central America, Southern Africa and the Middle East. Krigens Penn, her 2002 biography of the war correspondent Lise Lindbæk, was awarded the Melsom prize. Slapgard has worked as an anchor and made several documentaries for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation.

SI HAN (China/Sweden) is a curator of the Chinese collections at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm and is a guest professor at China Central Academy of Fine Art, Beijing. He is the curator of the Secret Love exhibition, which opened in the Fall 2012 and is the first major exhibition of Chinese contemporary art on the subject of taboo love.

SONDOS SHABAYEK (Egypt) is the founder of Tahrir Monologues, a recreation of the 18 days on the Tahrir Square using first-person accounts. Since 2007, Shabayek has helped organise the Bussy Project, in which actors perform narratives drawn from the lives of real Egypt women. In 2012, she performed a monologue in the show called “Don’t Tell Your Story,” which consists of material removed by government censors from previous “Bussy Project” performances.



Participants

SVETLANA MINTCHEVA (USA) is Director of Programmes at the National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC), a 38-year old alliance of U.S. national non-profit organisations united around the mission to promote freedom of thought, inquiry and expression and oppose censorship in all its forms. She is the founding director of NCAC's Arts Advocacy Programme, the only U.S. national initiative devoted to the arts and free expression today.

TANIA BRUGUERA (Cuba) is an interdisciplinary artist working primarily in behavior art, performance, installation and video. She is the founder and director of Arte de Conducta, the first performance studies program in Latin America, hosted by Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana and is a faculty member of The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Bruguera has participated in Documenta 11 (Germany), and has been included in several biennales, including Venice, Sao Paolo, Shanghai and Havana.

TENZIN GÖNPO (Tibet/France) was born in Lhodrak in south central Tibet, but was forced into exile in India. At the age of 12 he entered the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts in northern India, which was founded by the Dalai Lama to protect and develop Tibetan art. Gönpo plays several instruments, and has studied and taught traditional dances and songs for over twenty years. In 1991 he moved to France, where he works as a musician, singer, dancer and actor.

TENZING RIGDOL (Tibet) is a poet and contemporary artist working in painting, sculpture, drawing, collage, digital art, video installation, and site-specific and performance art. His site-specific installation *Our Land Our People* (2011) featured 20 tons of soil secretly smuggled from Tibet to Dharamsala, India, in order to transform a basketball court into a place where exiled Tibetans could walk over the soil of their homeland. Rigdol lives in New York City.

TERAKAFT (Mali) is a desert blues band made up of Liya Ag Ablil (guitar, vocals), Sanou Ag Ahmed (guitars, vocals) and Ahmed Ibrahim aka Pino (bass, vocals). They released their latest album, *Kel Tamasheq*, in August 2012. Music is now banned in the region of Northern Mali where Terakaft was founded in 2001 by Sanou Ag Ahmed. Like other bands from the Ifogha region, the group has had to settle in an area of the Sahara far from home.

WILLIAM NYGAARD (Norway) was chief publisher and managing director of the publishing house H. Aschehoug & Co. from 1974 to 2010. He chaired the Norwegian Publishers' Association from 1987 to 1990. In October 1993, William Nygaard was shot and seriously injured outside his home in Oslo. It is assumed that the assassination attempt was made because in 1989 H. Aschehoug & Co. had published the Norwegian version of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses*.

WIN MAW (Burma) is a Burmese musician, composer and video journalist. In 1981, he formed the band Computer Control, which was banned by the Myanmar/Burma government TV. In 2006 he started working as one of the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) video journalists and helped document the Saffron Revolution in September 2007. He was sentenced to 17 years in prison. Win Maw was released from prison on 13 January 2012, along with hundreds of political prisoners.

YNGVE ANDRÉ SØBERG (Norway) is a much sought after concert singer. He has made guest appearances with the leading Scandinavian orchestras. He made his opera debut in 2003 with the Copenhagen Opera. Since 2010, Sjøberg has been a soloist with the Norwegian National Opera. His prizes and awards include the Ruud Wallenberg stipend, which he was awarded several times. In 2007, he was also a finalist in the prestigious Belvedere Competition.

ZANELE MUHOLI (South Africa) is an internationally renowned photographer, video artist and sexual and gender rights activist. As a reporter and photographer she has researched and documented the realities of “curative rape”, assault, HIV and the murders of black lesbians. In 2002, she co-founded the Forum for the Empowerment of Women (FEW), a black lesbian organisation dedicated to providing a safe space for women loving women to meet and organize.

ZARGANAR (Burma) is a popular Burmese comedian, film actor and director. He was imprisoned multiple times for his participation in anti-government activities, and his work as an artist was increasingly monitored and curtailed. In September 2006, he was banned indefinitely from performing publicly or participating in any kind of entertainment related work. In November 2008, he was sentenced to 59 years in prison, but was freed in October 2011 in a mass amnesty of political prisoners.

FREEMUSE

FREEMUSE is the world's leading organisation advocating freedom of musical expression. As a recipient of several international awards, Freemuse has documented violations and censorship of music in more than 100 countries, initiated the annual Music Freedom Day, and campaigned for imprisoned artists worldwide. www.freemuse.org contains the world's largest database on music censorship.

www.freemuse.org



FRITT ORD

The FRITT ORD Foundation, Oslo, is a public utility foundation that aspires to promote freedom of expression and public debate. The Foundation allocates funding to applicants engaged in projects in the programme areas 'Media and Democracy', 'Information and the Public Debate', 'Grants and Training' and 'Art and Culture'. The Fritt Ord Foundation runs projects on its own and in collaboration with others.

www.fritt-ord.no



FRITT ORD

At www.artsfreedom.org you can read a series of commissioned in-depth articles on violations of artistic freedom of expression and feature stories as well as interviews with artists.

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ALL THAT IS BANNED IS DESIRED

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34 Acknowledgments

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