

Culture moves outdoors for the summer months: this is the season of festivals, the focus of this latest edition of our Newsletter. Many of these open-air cultural events are staged well away from the big urban centres, once again raising the question of the significance of periphery and centre. This theme will be broached by means of visual arts on 1 July in the idyllic setting of the Älgi Alp pastures. Further food for thought is provided by the debate on the boom in cultural events and the pressure of competition in the world of theatre.

Goodbyes and new beginnings are the dominant themes of the current activities of the Pro Helvetia liaison offices in Poland and Slovakia. You will also find information about events in Japan, Paris, Cairo and Tetovo (Macedonia). Furthermore, we would like to invite you to find out more on our sponsorship activities over the past year, in the recently issued 2004 Annual Report of Pro Helvetia.

Happy reading!

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## LATEST NEWS

### Summer of Festivals and Theatre 2005

Summer is the season of festivals. When the theatres and concert halls shut their doors, the open-air season begins. A whole range of festivals will be presenting theatre, dance, music and art; summer after summer, for more than two decades, cultural events and experiments on offer at the «Belluard Bollwerk International» in Fribourg, the «far» (Festival des Arts Vivants) in Nyon, the Geneva Festival «La Bâtie» and the «Zürcher Theater Spektakel» have attracted a wide audience. Festivals are a prime opportunity for event organisers and promoters from Switzerland and abroad to discover new groups and productions. **More...**



### Bex & Arts: Sculpture in the open countryside

From 4 June to 25 September, some 60 sculptors from Switzerland and abroad will be showing new works in Bex in the Canton of Valais. This year's «Bex & Arts» event is entitled «Der Geschmack des Salzes» (The Taste of Salt). The exhibition on the sweeping terrain of the Szilassy estate is staged every three years, and enables its numerous visitors to discover artistically accomplished contemporary sculpture. Pro Helvetia is supporting the event. To find out more, visit [www.bexarts.ch](http://www.bexarts.ch)



### A frenzy of sound beneath the skies of Rümlingen

The Rümlingen Festival (BL) is a testing ground for new musical performance formats. The spectacular backdrop for this year's event is provided by 50 overseas containers on a plateau of the Jura. Between 6.00 p.m. and 1.00 a.m. on 19 and 20 August, "Inbound ISO 1496", an event featuring drama set to music, will be staged. The bulk of the works (installations, robots and music machines) are premieres. Pro Helvetia is supporting the festival, which breaks free of the confines of genre with experimental relish. The Rümlingen Festival brings art of international significance to the so-called provinces. To find out more, visit [www.neue-musik-ruemlingen.ch](http://www.neue-musik-ruemlingen.ch)

### Symposium on the Älgi Alp: Periphery as Centre

On 1 and 2 July 2005 in the heart of Obwalden, Switzerland's geographical centre, the Swiss Art Association is organising a symposium in the best tradition of Ancient Greece: eating and drinking are combined with a debate on the theme of «Periphery as Centre», reflecting on the significance of art for modern society. The programme includes short presentations, discussions and workshops, as well as a range of artistic events, created especially for the occasion and the location. The «Musée de Point de Vue» art project by French- Swiss artist Jean-Daniel Berclaz provides the stimulus for the debate. **More...**



### Swiss video landscapes and book art in Japan

As part of the 0406 SWISS CONTEMPORARY ARTS IN JAPAN cultural programme, a selection of Swiss experimental films and art videos is being screened in various Japanese cities until the end of July. From 6 July to 2 October 2005, an exhibition in Watari-um in Tokyo will showcase the creative output of book designer and publisher Lars Müller, alongside works by Beat Zoderer and Silvia Bächli, for whom Lars Müller has designed books. **To find out more, visit ...**



### Symbols of everyday life: An exhibition in Paris

From 18 June to 9 October, under the theme «Signes quotidiens», the Centre culturel suisse in Paris (CCSP) will be devoting itself to everyday life and the objects, symbols and images that we encounter on a daily basis. The exhibition will also feature parts of the design collection of the Zurich Museum of Design. In addition, every Thursday, there will be debates, concerts, theatre and film screenings through which the CCSP explores the «art of living and communicating» («l'art de vivre et de communiquer»). For more details, visit **[www.ccsparis.com](http://www.ccsparis.com)**



### Cultural encounters between Egypt and Switzerland

Periods of residence for artists from different cultural backgrounds often lay the foundations for enduring cultural contacts and fruitful artistic encounters. And this can be achieved with relatively modest financial resources. During the summer months, four artists from Switzerland will be living and working in Cairo: Harpist Asita Hamidi, together with bass player Björn Meyer, will be exploring the world of Arabic music and, in September, will give three concerts with Egyptian «oud» player Ahmed El Sawi, while video artists Ingrid Wildi and Mauricio Gajardo will be forging contacts with Cairo's local video scene. For more details, visit **[www.pro-helvetia.ch/cairo](http://www.pro-helvetia.ch/cairo)**

More information about the artist workshops can be found at **[www.artists-in-residence.ch](http://www.artists-in-residence.ch)**

### Macedonia: Securing peace through cultural projects

After ten years, the Macedonian town of Tetovo now has a cinema once again, and also boasts a cultural centre for freelance filmmakers and video artists. This was made possible through cooperation with Switzerland. The cultural programme for South-East Europe, run by Pro Helvetia on behalf of the SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation), supports the building of structures to revitalise cultural life in the Balkan states, and thereby raise harmony and tolerance levels in the population at large. The inauguration of the Multimedia Arts Centre in Tetovo was attended by more than 200 people. **More...**



### Commissioned compositions at the Alpentöne Festival (Alpine Sounds Festival)

Every two years, musicians from the Alpine regions, who develop a modern take on traditional folk music, converge on Altdorf in the Canton of Uri. This year, three compositions, commissioned by Pro Helvetia, will be premiered: the «La voce delle stagioni» suite, based on old songs and dances, by Ticino composer Pietro Viviani (12.8.), the intercultural «Album de voyage» suite by French Switzerland's Pascal Schaer for alpine horn, trumpet and African percussion (13.8.), as well as new interpretations of the «Hanneli-Musig» by Swiss accordion player Markus Flückiger and his Hujässler group (13.8.). For details of the festival, visit [www.alpentoene.ch](http://www.alpentoene.ch)



## PUBLICATIONS

### Pro Helvetia's 2004 Annual Report is now available.

Last year, Pro Helvetia handled 3570 funding applications, almost the same number as in the previous year. This figure is taken from the Swiss Arts Council's Annual Report, which, this year, was illustrated by Swiss photographer Marco Poloni. Yvette Jaggi shares her personal perspective of Pro Helvetia after seven years as the Council's President, and Director Pius Knüsel stresses the importance of the Council's programmes. **View the 2004 Annual Report here...**



### The professionalisation of culture: Conference papers on the Internet

Some 160 participants, with an interest in art, attended the symposium at Kartause Ittingen on 26 and 27 May, exploring the question of whether the increasing professionalisation of the cultural domain is more of a blessing or a curse. Opinions were divided and, as expected, conclusive answers were very few and far between. What the event did do was to raise new questions. The conclusion was, in essence, that the professionalisation of culture need not automatically sap the vitality of artistic endeavour. Everyone was reminded of the original meaning of the word «Professio» in the sense of «vocation». The presentation speeches are available online at [www.kunstmuseum.ch](http://www.kunstmuseum.ch)

## THE ARTS COUNCIL

### New faces on the Board of Trustees

A dance specialist, a literature expert and a film expert have been newly elected to the Board of Trustees of Pro Helvetia: **Anne Davier, Peter Egloff and Matthias Brütsch are introduced here...**

### 8 years of CCS Milan: Arrivederci a Roma

This summer, the Centro culturale svizzero in Milan will be moving most of its activities to the Swiss Institute in Rome (ISR). The CCS in Milan will remain open as a liaison office. A celebration event will be staged on 30 June 2005 under the theme «Eight years of CCS Milan. A new era at the ISR». A concert by Jew's Harp player Anton Bruhin with his barn dance band, «Mondgesang», featuring Irène Schweizer and La Lupa, the Stimmhorn Duo and addresses by Domenico Lucchini and Pius Knüsel will be the highlights of the event celebrating 8 years of the CCS. To find out more, visit [www.ccsmilano.it](http://www.ccsmilano.it)

#### New premises, fresh start: Pro Helvetia Warsaw

After 13 years, the Pro Helvetia Cracow liaison office is moving to the Polish capital. The farewell to Cracow was marked by a cultural festival, which included the performance, under the motto CH Spring, of Swiss video, dance, music and film. The opening of the new liaison office will be celebrated during the «Warsaw Autumn» festival in September 2005. **More...**

#### Farewell to our Liaison Office in Bratislava

A number of events were staged on 3 June to mark the closure of our Liaison Office in Bratislava; ending a local presence spanning thirteen years, Pro Helvetia has closed its office in Bratislava. In future, Pro Helvetia will be liaising with its partners from Slovakia's arts community directly from its headquarters in Zurich. The Arts Council of Switzerland aims to find new forms of co-operation to continue cultivating the close ties, built up during this period, with the Slovakian cultural scene. **More...**

## DEBATE

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#### Competition and Co-operation in Culture

Culture is thriving. While event organisers are under increasing pressure to stand out, the number of cultural events being staged is growing. To be noticed, you have to outdo the others. Cultural subsidies cannot keep pace with this development. This issue was tackled by Pro Helvetia's fifth Theatre Salon on 15 June. Martha Monstein, Head of Pro Helvetia's Theatre Department, reflects on the winners and losers and pleads for an up-to-date policy of cultural promotion. **More...**

## COLOPHON

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