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Organising upcoming programmes for the first half of the year on the themes of interculture, dance, short film and theatre might well be going full steam ahead, but equally this is the time for preparing the second half of 2017! Cultural institutes, festivals, and our partners in North Rhine-Westphalia have until 15 April to submit their recommendations for international visitors and proposals for visits. Out of these recommendations, amongst others, will come our Visitors Programmes for the second half of the year.

We look forward to some exciting applications!

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Coming up...

Our upcoming Visitors Programme for April focuses on the huge challenges that the current post-democratic developments and regressive tendencies in political, social and cultural systems are causing. A symposium entitled “The Extreme Centre. On the Future

of Politics in Times of Populism?” will take place to kick off the next edition of PLURIVERSALE VI, which is organised by the Academy of the Arts of the World in Cologne. The former seizes on the title of a recently-published book by the British historian, Tariq Ali. It would seem, according to Ali, as if democracy no longer needs capitalism. Once reliable political categories such as ‘left’ or ‘right’ are being superseded by the ‘extreme middle’ – a neo-liberal consensus which, Ali goes on to say, is distinguished above all by a compliant servicing of the marketplace.

Alongside Tariq Ali himself, the following have been confirmed as speakers: the US-American sociologist and economist Saskia Sassen; Hungarian philosopher and Holocaust survivor, Ágnes Heller; German journalist and author, Andreas Speit, Croatian philosopher and activist Srećko Horvat, as well as medical doctor Teresa Forcades i Vila, who has a doctorate in theology.

As well as the symposium, which will premiere a new performance by Michael Portnoy entitled “Character Assassination“ and include a concert by Slovene band Laibach, the guests of the International Visitors Programme will visit the PLURIVERSALE exhibition “Enigmatic Majorities” in Cologne. The trip will include visits to cultural institutions and artists’ ateliers in Düsseldorf and Cologne to make direct exchange between the international guests and regional cultural professionals and artists possible, and to offer an opportunity to get to know their work.

m o r e



Behind the Scenes

Linn Meissner is not only the music specialist amongst our guides, but as a cultural manager, she is also a key contact for considering any questions about the cultural landscape of North Rhine-Westphalia!

Dear Linn, on occasion you work as a guide for the International Visitors Programme. What was your professional path up till now and how did you arrive at international cultural work?

I completed my studies in music, singing pedagogy and cultural management. I lived abroad as part of my studies, and during the course of that I also got to know the cultural scene in different

countries.

What appeals to you about international cultural work, and what are the challenges of your activity as a guide for the International Visitors Programme?

I had always been interested in talking with other creative artists about their work, the differences between the various cultural scenes, and debating the advantages and disadvantages of the cultural infrastructure of various countries in comparison to Germany. I think it is important to look beyond the end of one's own nose and that, through exchange, we can learn so much from each other. This is as much the case for artists and creatives as it is for cultural institutions and those promoting culture.

One challenge of my work as a guide is that I need to maintain the overview, as well as find solutions should there suddenly be changes in the schedule. Moreover, it is important to respond individually to the different visitors within the group and encourage them to talk to each other as well as to connect them up to local partners, so that the visit is fruitful for all those participating. To do that, a certain openness and social competence is required, but at the same time it is a lot of fun.

What spot in NRW would you absolutely want to show an international guest and why?

I find the „Dortmunder U“ very exciting. I went there for the first time only recently with a visitors group. Not only the museum inside but also the building and the external installation are really worth a visit. Generally, I find the museum scene and the music scene in NRW's cities particularly interesting for our international guests. The charm of the industrial in the Ruhr region and the urban down-to-earth chic in the Rhineland offers a mixture which provides fertile soil for creativity.

m o r e



“Klanglandschaften” is a series that the NRW KULTURsekretariat has been running for 10 years and which this year is offering a particularly exciting programme. In its current season, the series will concentrate on the musical cultures of Africa and the Mediterranean region, working in cooperation with Theater an der Ruhr and WDR 3. There have already been concerts since October 2016 that address this theme.

A particular highlight of the series will be the musical “MUTLULUK” by acclaimed writer Zülfü Livaneli. In this adaption of the Turkish novel of the same name, the historical material is brought to life using conventional musical theatre forms on the one hand, and enriched with traditional Anatolian, Aegean and Istanbul music and on the other, all played on traditional instruments.

The musical will be presented on 7th April at Theater Hagen, on 8th April at Theater an der Ruhr in Mülheim, and on 9th April at Schauspiel Dortmund.

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International Visitors Programme

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