

SCHWARZ FOUNDATION



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The Schwarz Foundation is a non-profit organisation that supports contemporary cultural production. While based in Germany, the Foundation has a branch in Athens and operates an exhibition venue, Art Space Pythagorion, on the island of Samos, where it also organises an annual international, transcultural music festival, Samos Young Artists Festival.

In light of the fact that Europe is experiencing significant transformations which call for new ways of thinking, the Foundation's activities aim to contribute to this process of re-evaluation and re-thinking the continent, particularly South East Europe and its relation to its surroundings within a global context.

The Foundation supports projects that relate to this geopolitical space, including art productions, live music concerts, publications, and other events in Greece, Germany, and other European countries, residencies for visual and music artists on Samos, a curatorial fellowship, symposiums, exhibitions, and publications.

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ART SPACE PYTHAGORION

Art Space Pythagorion opened in 2012 with an exhibition by filmmaker Harun Farocki. Formerly a modernist-architecture hotel in the 1970s, the venue was renovated by Samos-based architects Penny Petrakou and Stelios Loulourgas specifically to host Farocki's show. Since then, it has been used as a contemporary art exhibition space.

Uniquely located directly on the harbour of Pythagorion, Art Space offers a magnificent backdrop. This white cube, however, is also meant to be interpreted in a symbolic manner: The view from the building looks out over the nearby Turkish mainland – which lies just 1.2km from Pythagorion – thus becoming a focal point for the border between the Orient and the Occident.

In addition to the ancient theatre, Art Space is one of the main venues for the Schwarz Foundation's programme on the island of Samos. The building complex includes an exhibition venue as well as accommodation for artists and curatorial fellows. Since renovating the building, the Schwarz Foundation has been able to use it for many different events as well as educational programmes directed towards the local community, thanks to the generous support of the municipality.

Every summer, the Schwarz Foundation organises an exhibition at Art Space Pythagorion. In 2016, Katerina Gregos was appointed as curator of the Schwarz Foundation's visual-arts programme. This year, Katerina Gregos is curating a group exhibition at Art Space Pythagorion – Anatomy of Political Melancholy. In 2017, Gregos curated for the Schwarz Foundation the exhibition Summer of Love – On the Unlikely Liaison between Love and Politics; in 2016, she curated the exhibition A World Not Ours, which explored the ongoing refugee crisis in Europe, which played out on the shores of Samos (and other neighbouring islands). Following its highly successful stint at Art Space Pythagorion, this exhibition travelled to La Kunsthalle Mulhouse, where it was featured during Art Basel. Previous exhibitions include: Hotel Marina Lučica by Aleksandra Domanović (2015), Borderline by Nevin Aladağ (2014), and Long Legged Linguistics by Slavs and Tatars (2013). In addition, the Foundation supports a curatorial fellowship programme, which runs parallel to the exhibitions, hosting up to eight young curators from all over the world over two terms. The building is also provided to the citizens of Samos for community events, including educational projects, film screenings, and presentations.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

During its summer exhibitions, Art Space Pythagorion provides free educational workshops and activities for children. Using a fun approach, the programmes aim at familiarising children with topical issues, such as migration, the refugee crisis, tolerance and solidarity through contemporary art. The educational programme is designed by the visual artist Katerina Zacharopoulou and implemented by the curatorial fellows.

Languages:

- The educational programme has been held in Greek, English, Arabic, and Farsi.

Audience:

- Schools, visitors to the island, unaccompanied minors, refugee children.

Attendance:

- Over 700 children attend the programme each year.

“The mission of an artist is to create and express feelings and thoughts about what is happening in the world.”

Jana, 15, Lebanon

CURATOR, KATERINA GREGOS

Katerina Gregos is a Greek curator, author, and lecturer based in Brussels since 2006. Her curatorial practice explores the relationship between art, society, and politics, with a particular view on questions of democracy, human rights, capitalism, crisis, and changing global production circuits. She is currently chief curator of the 1st Riga Biennial (2018) and curator of the Schwarz Foundation, Munich.

She has curated numerous large-scale exhibitions and biennials, including, more recently: *Uncertain States: Artistic Strategies in States of Emergency*, Akademie der Kunst, Berlin (2016); the Belgian Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale, *Personne et Les Autres*; the 5th Thessaloniki Biennial, *Between the Pessimism of the Intellect and the Optimism of the Will* (2015); *No Country for Young Men: Contemporary Greek Art in Times of Crisis* at BOZAR, Brussels, 2014; *Manifesta 9: In the Deep of the Modern*, Genk, Belgium, co-curated with Cuauhtémoc Medina and Dawn Ades (2012). In 2011, she curated *Speech Matters*, the critically acclaimed international group exhibition on freedom of speech, for the Danish Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennial. Previously, Gregos served as founding director and curator of Deste Foundation's Centre for Contemporary Art in Athens; Artistic Director of Argos – Centre for Art and Media, Brussels; and Artistic Director of Art Brussels. Gregos regularly publishes on art and artists in exhibition catalogues, journals and magazines, and is a visiting lecturer at HISK (Higher Institute of Arts) in Ghent and Jan Van Eyck Academy in Maastricht.

SAMOS YOUNG ARTISTS FESTIVALS

In 2010, Chiona Xanthopoulou-Schwarz and Dr Kurt Schwarz founded Samos Young Artists Festival on Samos, one of the largest islands in Greece. Diverse influences over many centuries have contributed to the emergence of an especially fertile intellectual and creative atmosphere on the island of Samos. It was here that philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras discovered the foundations of tonality in music; Aesop told his well-known fables; the historian Herodotus – as well as Epicurus and pre-Socratic philosophers – also lived on Samos. It is, therefore, almost natural to revive this intellectual heritage in a new form today. Globalisation and a new definition of religions and cultures, as well as the increasing influx of refugees, encourage us to think.

One of the founders' intentions is to bring young artists and concert audiences to the island every summer in order to spotlight this unique location. Gifted musicians from all around the world are invited to Samos for one week in August to give concerts in the ancient theatre of Pythagorion and interact with one another. People from many nations work together intensively during this period, sharing the common language of music.

Each year, the festival is shaped by an artistic director, whose task is to draw up the programme and select artists. After five years under the direction of Daniel Nodel, two new directors have been appointed for the ninth edition of the festival. In 2018, the Samos Young Artists Festival's direction is shared by Munich-based Belarusian pianist Masha Ilyashov and Greek cellist Alexis Karaiskakis-Nastos.

From August 7 until August 14, internationally renowned artists and young rising stars from Germany, Greece, Georgia, Turkey, the U.S., and China meet on this Aegean island to perform eight open-air concerts in the ancient Theatre of Pythagorion. Alongside the artists, the audience is also invited to be inspired by the lightness of the Greek summer, the historical significance of the location, and the beauty of the music. Masha Ilyashov and Alexis Karaiskakis-Nastos created this year's programme as a journey through the European classics of the 18th and 19th centuries, Italian Baroque music, and traditional sounds of the Mediterranean. The festival concludes with a recital by the winner of Concours Géza Anda 2018.

As Daniel Nodel, Artistic Director of the Samos Young Artists Festival from 2013 until 2017, noted to mark the opening of last year's festival: 'We are delighted to welcome our audience to the beautiful ancient theatre of Pythagorion, where 2500 years ago Pythagoras laid down the laws of Music and Physics. This year, we will once again get a chance to resolve contradictions and contrasts. Audiences will have the opportunity to enjoy classical music and jazz, opera, folk, and world music. The festival brings together acclaimed artists and emerging talent from across the world. Here on Samos, where Orient and Occident meet, we seek to transcend borders and build bridges over national and artistic boundaries, bringing together the established and the new. Music brings people together, overcoming cultural, religious, and linguistic divides.'

Please find the full programme here: www.schwarzfoundation.com/en/samos-young-artists-festival

OTHER INITIATIVES

NIGHTS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

Since 2015, the Schwarz Foundation in collaboration with the Gennadius Library of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens has organised the annual festival Nights of Classical Music at the Gennadius Library with Curtis on Tour – The Nina von Maltzahn Global Touring Initiative. Each September, promising artists from the famous Curtis Institute of Music are invited to Athens to give concerts at the Gennadius Library. The initiative offers students real-world, professional touring experience alongside celebrated alumni and faculty. In addition to performances, musicians offer masterclasses, interactive programmes, and community engagement activities while on tour.

ATHENS NATIONAL GARDEN

The Schwarz Foundation contributes to bringing art events to the National Garden of Athens. In collaboration with the City of Athens and the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, the first Garden Concerts were organised in 2017.

DOCUMENTA 14

The Schwarz Foundation has supported Documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel through funding and consulting. Furthermore, it hosted several guided tours in Athens and brought together Greek and German art collectors, artists, curators, and art historians.

ATHENS INDEPENDENTS ART INDEX

Athens Independents Art Index is an initiative to highlight and map independent project spaces and platforms throughout the city of Athens. The Schwarz Foundation supported compiling an index of initiatives that were active during and beyond Documenta 14. A printed map with 21 venues was available at all Documenta 14 venues and other art & culture locations in the city. Since the crisis, these spaces have been important motors driving contemporary art in Athens. Independent art initiatives in Athens gathered together to create a network of contemporary art organisations that represent a cross section of the creative forces in Athens that are flourishing, reflecting, and thinking about the city, and providing an interface between the Greek cultural community and the international scene. Ranging from non-profit and artist-run spaces to residencies, community networks, and curatorial projects, these independent initiatives offer broad insight into contemporary-art production in Athens today.

SAMOS SUMMER ACADEMY

The Schwarz Foundation supports the first Samos Summer Academy to be held in Chora, Samos, in July 2018, co-organised by the Haute École de Musique de Genève and the Athens Conservatoire. Masterclasses are held under the title The Troubadours in the 4th Crusade, 1204.

A week of workshops and seminars will explore the music of the troubadours of the 4th Crusade and their activities in Byzantium in the 13th century. Focusing on the study of the relevant repertoire, the investigation of the relationship between poetry and music in the work of the troubadours, and their historical and cultural background will culminate in concerts on Samos and in Athens.

Students will be coached by Francis Biggi (Haute École de Musique de Genève) and Dimitris Kountouras (Athens Conservatoire). With the organisational support of Nikos Tsouchlos and Traute Lutz.

TRI-NATIONAL COOPERATION

Having supported the Istanbul Biennial since 2014, the Schwarz Foundation initiated a tri-national cooperation between Turkey, Greece, and Germany. Supported by, amongst others, the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation), the first project is a theatre production involving all three countries, staged in Altenburg (Germany), Istanbul (Turkey), and Samos (Greece). Further initiatives aim to bring together curators, artists, museum directors, and collectors to develop and implement collaborative projects.

NO COUNTRY FOR YOUNG MEN – Contemporary Greek Art in Times of Crisis

In 2014, the Schwarz Foundation was one of the sponsors of the exhibition No Country for Young Men at Bozar Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels. Curated by Katerina Gregos, the exhibition explored the state of affairs in Greece today. Bringing the issue of the Greek crisis in the foreground, the show shed light on how this crisis has affected Greece in terms of the social body, institutions, the landscape, the environment, as well as artistic production. This exhibition led to the Schwarz Foundation's collaboration with Katerina Gregos.