

The logo consists of a solid orange shape that is a quarter-circle on the right side and a rectangle on the left. The text "Arts Rights Justice" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font, stacked vertically within the orange shape.

**Arts
Rights
Justice**

ARTS RIGHTS JUSTICE

TOOLKIT COMPANION



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of the European Union



COMPANION INTRODUCTION

In July 2016, the Arts Rights Justice working group supported by Culture Action Europe published its public Toolkit on promoting and protecting freedom of artistic expression for use by arts and culture practitioners. It is aimed at people who are providing training for others, presenting information on cultural rights, and as a source of inspiration for generating discussions.

COMPANION INTRODUCTION

This Companion works alongside the toolkit, providing cases that illustrate many of the issues and ideas raised in the Toolkit as an aid to readers and trainers. There are examples of artists and artworks that have been censored that show the many forms of censorship of the arts globally, with a special focus on Europe.

It highlights initiatives by Arts Rights Justice members and other arts, human rights and freedom of expression organisations to tackle repression of freedom of artistic expression and production. Illustrations include advocacy and publicity campaigns, work with international mechanisms such as the United Nations, lobbying to change legislation, and guides for artists at risk, among others.

COMPANION INTRODUCTION

The Toolkit and Companion together aim to help build capacity within the arts and culture sector on how to exercise their rights and to support our collaborative partners; to support and encourage arts organisations and cultural workers to protect and defend artists and cultural operators facing censorship wherever they may be; and to encourage better collaboration between the arts, culture, free speech and the human rights sectors.

COMPANION INTRODUCTION

New inspirations and issues will be constantly arising and it is planned that this companion will be updated to include them. Do send any ideas for future updates to: ARJCAE@gmail.com

COMPANION SHEETS

1. Statistics and Some High Profile Examples of Censorship

2. Foreign Governments Censor Artists Abroad

3. Policing Art

4. Art and the 'anti-terror' response

5. Religious Offence and Obscenity

6. Film Censorship

7. International Commemorative Days and Celebrations for Advocacy Work

8. Petitions and Statements

9. Providing Guidance and Training for Promotion of Arts Freedom at Home and Abroad

10. Effecting Legislative Change

11. Arts as Advocacy Platforms

12. Grants and Awards

13. Engaging with the UN, EU and other International Organisations

14. Individuals at Risk Safe Havens

SOME HIGH PROFILE EXAMPLES OF ARTS CENSORSHIP

Photo by Hafenbar via Wikimedia Commons



China

In 2015, China had 20 reports of serious violations - with another 120 instances of censorship.

Ai Wei Wei is the most well-known among China's artists under censorship, and indeed worldwide. His imprisonment and censorship contributed to his fame, and he has become an advocate for freedom of expression for others.

China

However there are other examples of attacks on Chinese artists such as the November 2015 banning of an exhibition marking the UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Work by 60 artists, more than half of them women, were denied to the public. Earlier that year five feminist activists were briefly detained for planning events around International Women's Day. The show's curator, Cui Guangxiao, had himself been held in prison in 2014 for being part of the Hong Kong democracy protests. The images from the exhibition which were widely circulated on line, such as this image, 'Angels' by Cui Youwen.

Image: "Angels" by Cui Youwen, (Wechat/Cangjia) found on [Quartz http://qz.com/560647/beijing-just-banned-an-art-exhibition-on-violence-against-women-but-you-can-view-the-work-here/](http://qz.com/560647/beijing-just-banned-an-art-exhibition-on-violence-against-women-but-you-can-view-the-work-here/)



Works that are denied to the public through banning orders, often find their way round the restrictions through various on-line sites and at times becoming better known than they would had they not been censored. Artists can help others who are banned by sharing their work on their own social networks. Even if blocked in their country of origin, this way other audiences can be found and censorship thwarted.

Iran

Iran had 15 recorded instances in 2015. Among them were the musician Mehdi Rajabian and his brother, film-maker Hossein Rajabian, who alongside a second musician, Yousef Emadi, were given three year prison sentences for making underground music. They had suffered torture in early months of their arrests. Artists and free expression groups, among which ARJ led by Freemuse, sent a protest to the Iranian authorities and lobbied the UN that led to a joint statement from three UN experts addressed to the Iranian authorities demanding that 'Artistic Expression is Not a Crime'.



Joint approaches to UN and other international mechanisms by arts freedom advocates are valued by the UN officers as expert and reliable sources of information. Joint appeals give weight to submissions and enables the rapporteurs to make strong and impactful governmental interventions.

Atena Farghadani, source: A Farghadani Facebook



Iran

Happier news came with the release in May 2016 of cartoonist Atena Farghadani who spent 18 months of a 12-year sentence for her cartoon satirising Iranian parliamentarians. Cartoonists world-wide had rallied to her support, publicising her case and petitioning the authorities. Leading them was Cartoonists Rights International who awarded Atena their 2015 International Courage in Cartooning Award. Her father was able to tell her of the award during a prison visit, news that gave her great comfort. Immediately she was freed, Atena resumed her cartooning, as she shows on her Facebook page (left) in June 2016. She says she has no plans to leave Iran and will continue drawing, no doubt strengthened by the support of her fellow cartoonists

Artists' solidarity for persecuted writers, including writing letters to them in prison, to their families and supporters, publishing their work, creating art inspired by their situation and giving awards is an invaluable source of courage enabling them to survive their ordeal.

FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS CENSOR ARTS ABROAD

The covering up of nude classical statues in Rome to stop offence to the Iranian President Rouhani in January 2016 caused mockery for the Italian government. It was not clear whether the Iranians had requested that the sculptures be concealed or that it was simply over zealousness on the part of an Italian government keen not to cause offence. But other governments, notably the Turkish and Israeli, have, often with success, made more serious indents to arts censorship outside their own countries.

Boxes covered nude statues in the Capitoline Museum in Rome during the visit by Mr. Rouhani.

Photo by Giuseppe Lami/ANSA, via Associated Press.



In early 2016, in an extraordinary turn up that caused reverberations across Europe, Turkey's astute legal team dug out an old, unused law in Germany to force a **German comedian Jan Böhmermann** into the courts. His admittedly coarse poem brought the comedian foul of a law that criminalises offence to foreign heads of state. Germany had no option than to agree to prosecute.

The incident had other EU governments frantically digging out their own law books. The Netherlands instantly moved to scrap Article 118 of its criminal code that makes it an offence to “intentionally insult” the head of a friendly nation. Where else could Erdoğan's busy litigation team reach in Europe? They have four other options: Poland, Italy, Greece and Switzerland. In Switzerland, the Turkish embassy in Bern went on to threaten a photographer's display outside the UN Palais des Nations in Geneva that included an image of a child killed during the Gezi protests.

Jan Böhmermann, photo by Jonas Rogowski.

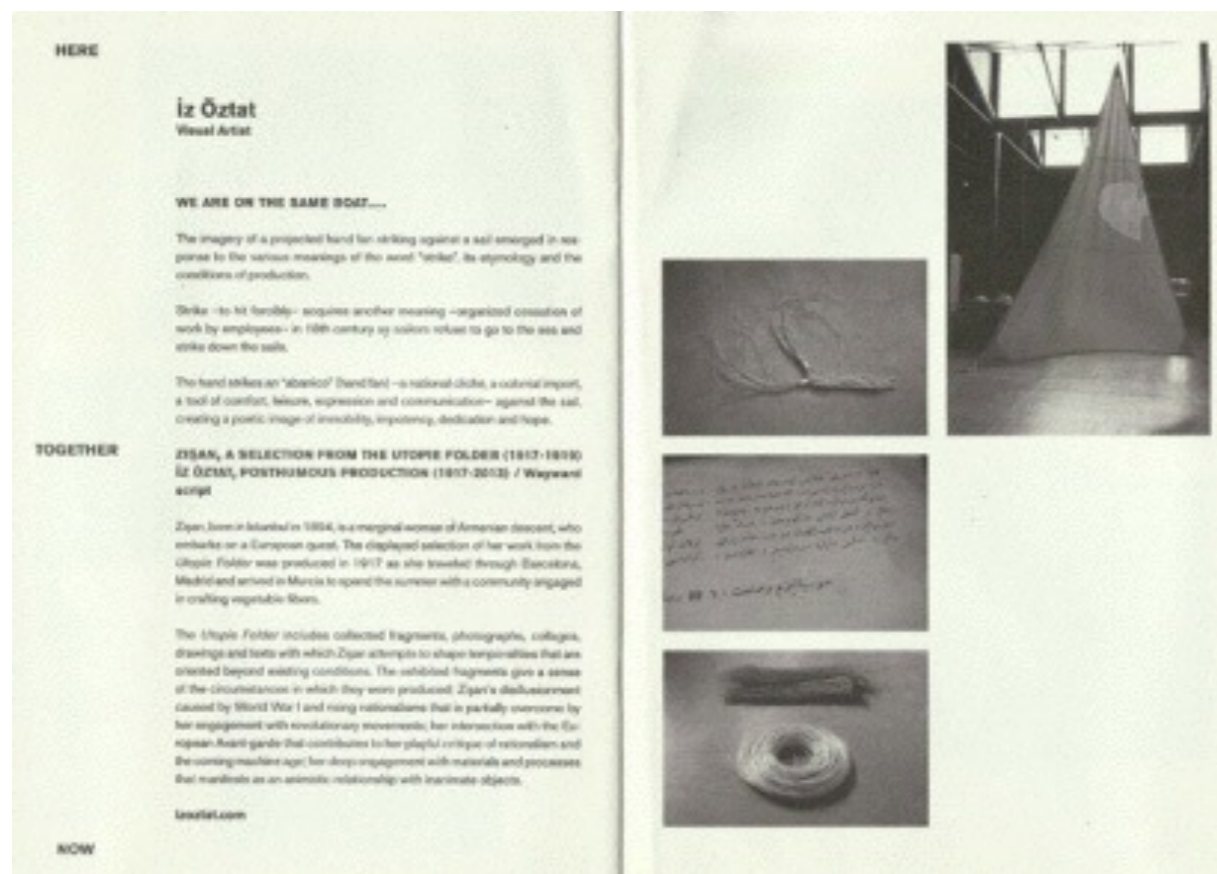


In April 2016, the **Dresdner Sinfonika** found the Turkish delegation to the EU demanding that the EU withdraw their funding of the German orchestra unless references to 'genocide' were removed from texts and brochures for its performance marking the centenary of the massacre of Armenians by Ottoman forces between 1915 and 1917. Although the Commission maintained its support of the orchestra, it did request that the term 'genocide' be removed.

The Dresden Symphony Orchestra performing "Aghet," dedicated to the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide. (Photo: Markus Rind) <http://www.dw.com/en/dresden-symphony-recalls-armenian-genocide/a-18880295>



In 2013, a reference to the Armenian genocide in a brochure produced for ARCOmadrid **International Contemporary Art Fair in Madrid** was censored. Turkey was the country focus that year and the event had support from the Turkish embassy in Madrid. It demanded the removal of the phrases 'Armenian genocide' and '1915' from the explanatory notes to the work of Turkish artist İz Öztat called A Selection from the Utopie Folder (Zişan, 1917-1919).



Israel has also moved to stifle artist freedom abroad. In February 2016 in France the **newspaper Libération** invited artists to re-interpret iconic covers from its magazine over the years. The 37 works were then to be auctioned in a fundraising drive for the media freedom group, Reporters Sans Frontières. But the auction had to be stalled for two months when the Israeli embassy complained about one work, a reinterpretation of a November 2004 cover marking Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's death by urban artist Ernest Pignon-Ernest. The original depicts a keffiyeh draped over a throne with the headline 'Et Maintenant?', Pignon-Ernest had inser-

ted into this image a portrait of Marwan Marghouti, a political prisoner in Israel, with a comment comparing him with Nelson Mandela. The embassy protested that image celebrated terrorism. The works had been publicly displayed in December 2015 without problems, and the plan was for an auction the following January. However, the auction house, concerned about the Israeli complaint, pulled out. RSF and the artists' collective involved sprang into action and two months later another auction house agreed to take on the sale which went ahead in March 2016.

Marwan Barghouti by Ernest Pignon-Ernest



Outdated legislation that may not have been used for decades can resurface unexpectedly and be revitalised by governments at home and abroad. Be sure that there are no hidden ghosts in your law books, and when advocating for legal changes, be sure that old laws are repealed and not simply shelved.

Don't ignore problems in your own country and be sure to advocate for complete freedom of expression and creation at home as well as abroad.

Be prepared for diplomatic representatives of other states to attempt to put pressure on artworks that raise issues that are censored in their own countries. Ensure that your own government stands by its commitment for freedom of expression even if it means some uncomfortable discussions.

POLICING ART – EXAMPLES FROM THE UK AND SWEDEN

UK

In the UK, art works by the **artist Mimsy** depicting popular toy 'Sylvanian Family' characters threatened by terrorists was pulled from an exhibition on freedom of expression in September 2015. The gallery was told by police that the figurines of threatened rabbits, mice and hedgehogs raised a risk of attack despite the fact that it had been shown at another exhibition earlier with no problems and to good reviews. The gallery was told that its safety could not be guaranteed unless it paid for additional security, at a cost of over £36,000. Unable to afford this, the gallery's Board decided not to show the work.

Photo by Mimsy



Police advice is thought to have been behind the closure of a play, Home Grown, just two weeks before it was to be staged in August 2015. Written and performed by young people aged between 15 and 25 it tackles the question of why young people become radicalised. The **National Youth Theatre** claimed that the play had been cut from their program for 'quality reasons'. The production team challenged this, pointing out that police had asked to see the script shortly before the decision. Also a local council where the play was due to be staged had not wanted to have the play performed in what it saw as a 'sensitive location' nearby to a school where young women had recently been recruited to ISIS. Director Nadia Latif blamed the 'landscape of fear' as censoring the work.

Cast of Homegrown, left to right, Vanessa dos Santos, Humaira Wadiwala, Marilyn Nadebe Photograph by Helen Maybanks/National Youth Theatre



Public threats lay behind police advice leading to the closure of a controversial performance at the **Barbican Gallery of Brett Bailey's theatrical installation** Exhibit-B that featured actors playing the part of caged human installation exhibits. The piece is a commentary on the European colonial history and pseudo-scientific experiments on African people. The exhibition came under attack from a coalition of anti-racism activists, artists and community groups who saw Exhibit-B as 'resurrecting an unjustifiable practice'. Fears for the safety of the actors, staff and audience and a no guarantees of adequate police protection led to the artwork being shut down. Index on Censorship published an analysis of the policing of the event and its implications for future works where public action threatens creative work.

Exhibit B, Photo: © Sofie Knijff / Barbican



Public protest served to shut down a production at the **2014 Edinburgh Fringe Festival** that was part funded by the Israeli government after consultants between the venue, police and Edinburgh University. A performance of *The City*, by the Jerusalem-based Incubator Theatre, described as a 'hip hop opera' aimed to build 'cross cultural relations', was disrupted by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. 50 of Scotland's leading creative artists, including the then Scottish Makar, Liz Lochhead, and writer/artist Alisdair Grey, had also petitioned the venue, Underbelly, to ban the show, causing a split between other artists who saw the ban as artistic censorship. Scotland's Culture Minister refused to support the ban, saying that while her government had made its concerns about human rights abuses in Palestine, she did not 'believe cultural boycotts are consistent with the rights of artists to the freedom of expression'. Ultimately Underbelly decided to cancel the show, citing that the 'logistics' of policing and stewarding the event made it 'untenable'.

Photo of theatre picketers from BBC website



SWEDEN

Artists in Sweden who have seen a rise in attacks against them from the right wing, have complained that their concerns are not taken seriously by police. They have suffered threatening emails, swastikas painted on their doors, faeces push through letterboxes, verbal and other abuses. Police in some cases have been helpful in filtering emails on request of the artists to remove abusive texts, but some artists say that their complaints have frequently not been taken seriously. What they say are clearly hate crimes targeting LGBT, minority and feminist artists among others, and perpetrated by neo-nazis and extreme right wing organisations tend to be classed as harassment rather than hate crimes. These reports have spurred a study carried out in Stockholm on **threats to cultural workers, especially women**. For more read this report on the Artsfreedom website (artsfreedom.org/?p=8835).

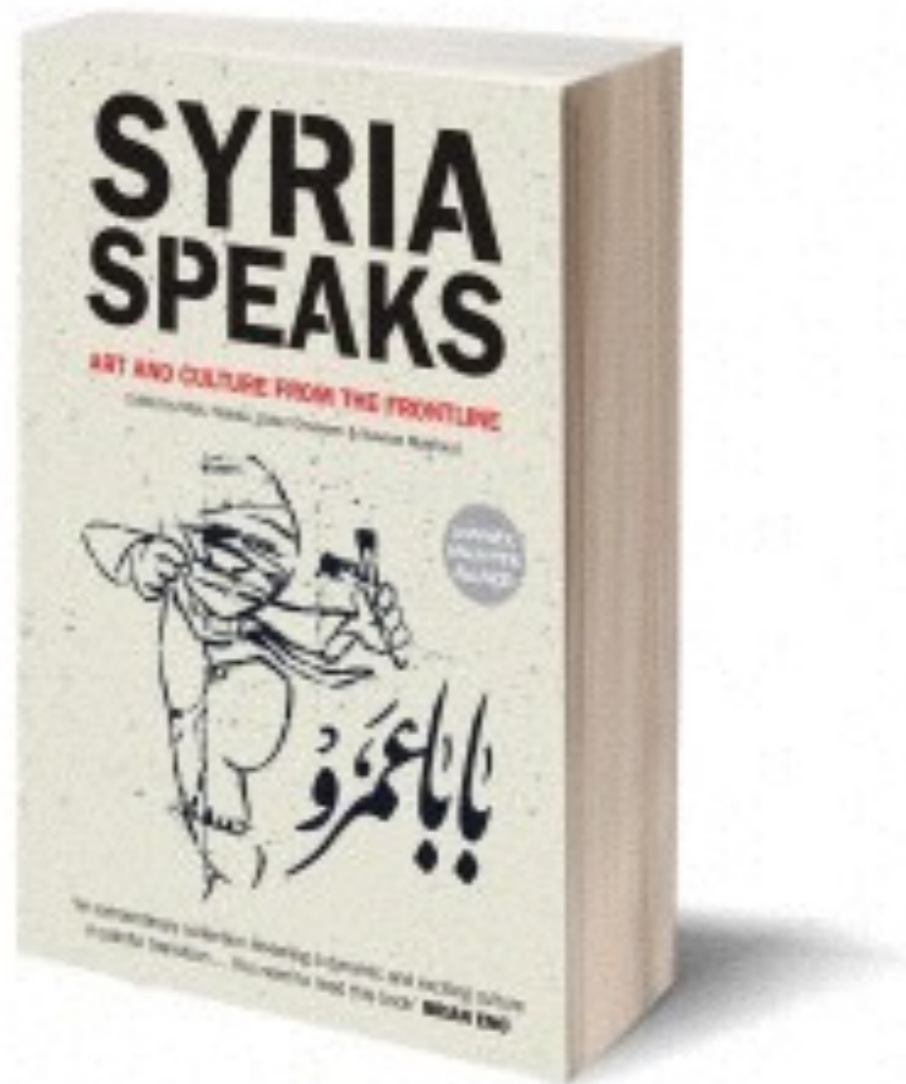
Where there are threats against arts and performance, actual or perceived, liaison with police, venues, local authorities on how to ensure freedom of expression while ensuring public safety is essential.

ART AND THE 'ANTI TERRORIST' RESPONSE

November 2015 saw the worst atrocity against artists and their audience in recent history in the **Bataclan massacre in Paris**. Eighty-nine audience members and venue staff were killed and many more injured. They were among 130 to die in a series of three suicide bomb and mass shooting incidents in the city, responsibility for which were claimed by the Islamic State for Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), it says in retaliation for French airstrikes on its bases in Syria. European artists, already under pressure from 'anti-terror' measures, the events in Paris had repercussions on performances.

Two weeks after the Bataclan murders, the Ramdam Film Festival, held in the Belgian city of Tournai for the first time since 2011, was forced to close when police said that there was a risk of terrorism against the cinemaplex hosting the festival. The festival is dedicated to 'disturbing films' that push boundaries and spark debate. A year later, in 2016, the 6th Ramdam Film Festival went ahead in the same multiplex without problem and with 18,764 people attending, a 42% increase on 2014, leading its organisers to send a message of thanks to the festival goers.





Audiences and readers can become suspect in this climate of anti terrorism. In July 2016, a British NHS worker, Faizah Shaheen, was detained under Schedule 7 of the **UK Terrorism Act** on 25 July, following suspicions about the book she was reading. Ms Shaheen was reading the English PEN-supported anthology Syria Speaks on her honeymoon flight. A member of the cabin crew reported her for suspicious behaviour on her outbound flight to Turkey and Ms Shaheen was questioned under Schedule 7 for 15 minutes on her return to the UK. Although this is a relatively minor incident, its impact is huge, as the book's editor Zaher Omareen says: "It shows how far stereotypes influence our cities under the otherwise understandable security and terror concerns. Judging individuals and even taking measures against them based on their race, their looks, their language, or the printed words they carry is unacceptable and unjustifiable".

For other examples of the impact of anti-terror legislation in the UK, see the 3.1 Mimsy and Homegrown cases listed under 'Policing Art'.

Although not linked to Da'esh/ISIL, in Spain, long standing issues around ETA led to **puppeteers Raul García and Alfonso Lazaro** being arrested after they put on a puppet show during the February 2016 Madrid Easter Carnival. The performance included scenes of the hanging of a judge and the rape of and murder of a nun. There were two issues, the first easy to resolve. Parents of children in the audience complained. The artists and the Mayor who had organized the event apologised, saying they were unaware that children would be present. What led to the puppeteers' imprisonment, was a complaint that there were phrases in the show that praised terrorism. The incident caused controversy, suggesting that the arrests were an overreaction. Some suggested that the case had been initiated by an opponent of the Mayor in a bid to discredit him. The two artists were in prison for five days before being freed on bail and not allowed to leave the country. The case was dropped in June 2016 when a court concluded that there was no evidence that the performance contained ETA slogans as claimed.

Photo from an article in the telegraph. No credit given.



Large numbers of political arrests in Turkey are under spurious anti-terror charges. In August 2016 renowned **author** Aslı Erdoğan was arrested for her columns for the pro-Kurdish newspaper Özgür Gündem. Erdoğan, who, like many of the more than 20 others arrested for their work for the paper, is not Kurdish, was charged under the Anti-Terror Law for connections with the banned Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK). She is part of a solidarity campaign where journalists, human rights activists and artists supported the beleaguered newspaper, constantly faced with bans, by becoming staff members and contributors, by contributing articles and taking turns as editor.

Photo of Asli Erdogan from PEN International site as per link. No photo credit given.



Uneasiness with opinions that might be seen to equate ordinary Muslims with terrorism led to the **sacking of two writers for a local Scottish newspaper**. In July 2015, a writer for the West Highland Free Press, Donald McLeod, was sacked for an article that stated that “in the event of Islamic dominance in Britain our friendly Muslim shopkeepers will have little option but to march behind the radicals”. Brian Wilson, founding editor of the newspaper, was also sacked when he came to McCleod’s defence.

At times of terrorist attacks, the authorities' response can be over harsh and even arts that have no links to terrorism can become targets of censorship.

Anti-terror laws are frequently invoked to penalise artists who comment on minority rights and human rights abuses.

Laws and procedures aimed at tackling terrorist threats need to be kept under scrutiny to ensure that they are not used to stifle legitimate freedom of expression.

RELIGIOUS OFFENCE AND OBSCENITY



In 2011, *Golgota Picnic*, a play by the Argentinian playwright **Rodrigo Garcia**, was set upon by the Christian fundamentalists in Paris, with police protection needed to safeguard the Théâtre du Rond-Point against crowds and death threats. They had deemed the play ‘blasphemous’ for its portrayal of Jesus in a present day consumerist society context, and for its nudity. Then three years later, in **2014, performances of the play in Poland** led to similar protests and threats, leading to some theatres cancelling performances, notably at the Theatre Festival Malta. There was international condemnation, with prominent artists petitioning the Polish government to intervene. Polish artists were at the fore of the outcry staging protests, theatre groups performing their own *Golgota Picnics* and readings from the script across the country, as well as lobbying and petitioning government. Despite blasphemy being an offence under Polish law, the Polish culture minister supported the play stating that “Freedom of Artistic Expression is the basis of democracy and the constitution.”

In June 2015, an installation by Belgian **video artist Chris Verdonck** where projections of oversized naked persons seemingly hold up a public building in Athens was withdrawn on the day of its instalment after just one complaint from a priest. This and other incidents led to a public debate on censorship held at the Onassis Culture Centre in Athens in March 2016 where numerous speakers took part, including Verdonck and Pigi Dimitrakopoulou, director of Nash's Balance, a play based on Greece's November 17 terrorist movement, performed at the Greek National Theatre where the final performances had to be cancelled in January 2016 because of protests.

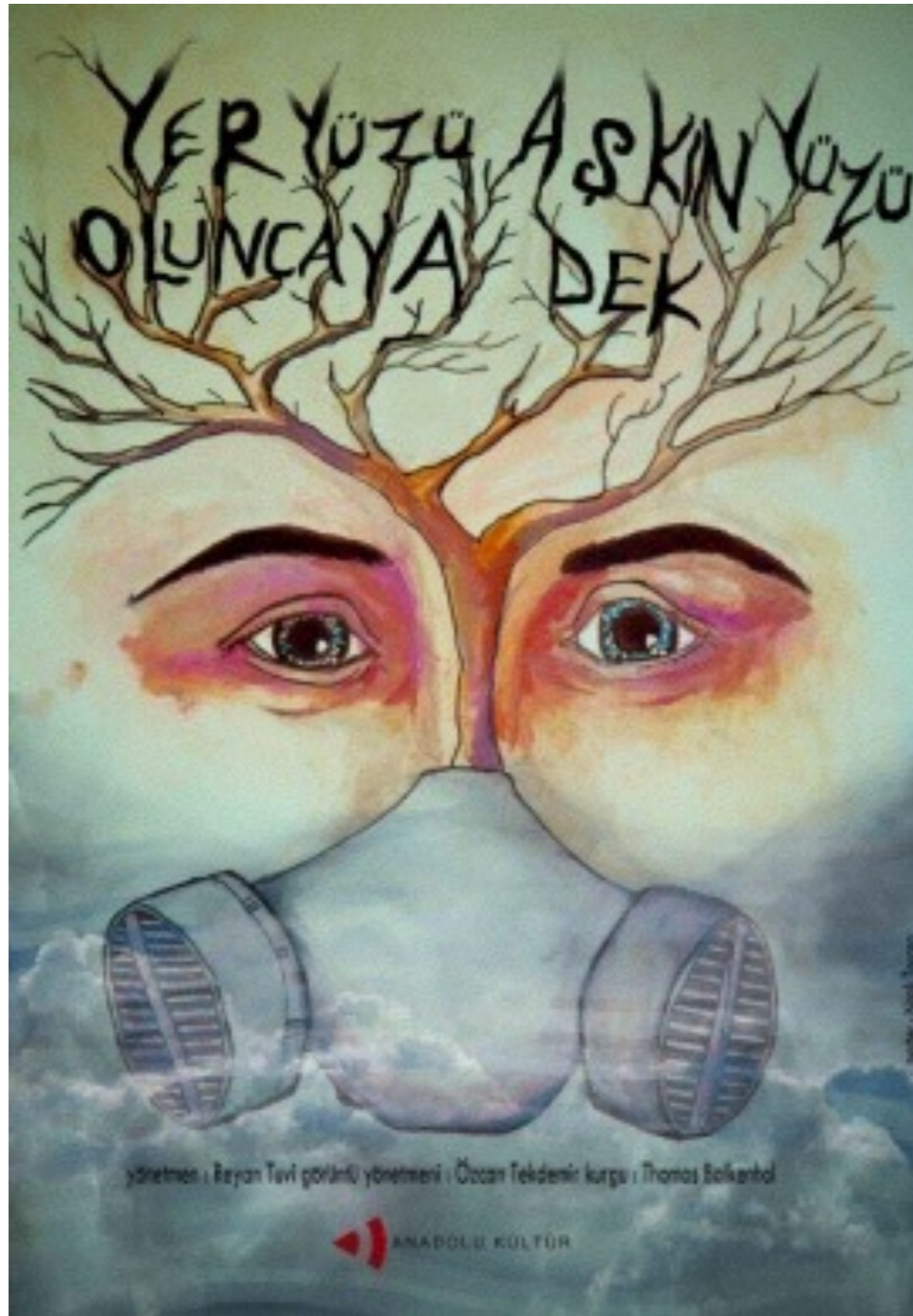
An image from the Stills work by Chris Verdonck
www.atwodogscompany.org



In Denmark, **photographer Mathilde Grafström's** exhibition Female Beauty depicting naked women in a project aimed at challenging body dissatisfaction and negative self-image was refused permission to be displayed in Copenhagen's Nytorv Square in December 2015 on grounds of indecency. She appealed, questioning why advertisements featuring nudes were allowed in public spaces, while her work was not. The decision was reversed in January 2016 and the exhibition went ahead in July 2016, although the photographer agreed that images showing genitals would only be displayed in small format.

FILM CENSORSHIP

Poster for *Yeryüzü Aşkın Yüzü Oluncaya Dek* festival



Siyah Bant has published a report on the growing pressure on Turkey's film festivals through politically biased film certification denials and threats of prosecution. A 2014 film on the Gezi protests *Yeryüzü Aşkın Yüzü Oluncaya Dek* (Until the Face of the Earth Becomes the Face of Love) was pulled from the 2015 Antalya Golden Orange Film festival for fears that it could be prosecuted as an 'insult' to Turkey's president. 14 jurors from various competitions resigned, and 13 out of 15 documentary makers withdrew their entries in protest.

The report also covers the introduction of rigid rules for registering films even for non-commercial screenings at film festivals, such as a documentary on PKK guerrillas that was pulled at the last minute from the 2015 Istanbul Film Festival when the Ministry of Culture and Tourism warned that it had not had the required certification documents. The report shows how film-makers see this new enforcement of bureaucratic tools, such as film certification, as part of a growing and insidious censorship across the arts.



The maybe surprising fact that the Catholic church in Italy owns over 1,000 cinemas gives it influence over what can be shown over much of the country. In 2016, the **British film maker Andrew Haigh's** **Weekend**, a story of a romance between two gay men, could only be shown in 10 cinemas in Italy after the Italian Conference of Bishops Evaluation Commission deemed it as 'not advised, unusable and scabrous (indecent/salacious)". Oddly maybe, the film has an age 14 rating in Italy, while in the UK it is age 18. The order had the counter-effect of exciting public interest and the film earned the top per screen average takings, leading to other 11 cinemas deciding to ignore the Vatican's advice and screen the film.

Health and safety regulations have also been used as an apparent excuse to shut down film festivals such as in Russia in May 2014 when the annual **St. Petersburg documentary festival** in what would have been its fourth year, was shut down ostensibly because of violations of building codes. The organisers suspected that the inclusion of two controversial films, one, Putin's Games, explores the environmental impact of the Winter Games planned for Sochi later that year, and the other was the award winning documentary 'Pussy riot: A Punk Prayer'.



INTERNATIONAL COMMEMORATIONS AND CELEBRATIONS - ANNUAL DAYS

PEN International's Day of the Imprisoned Writer held 15 November every year is an opportunity for its members to take global action. Activities centre around five individuals at risk that symbolise the type of repression that writers have faced the previous year. PEN Centres stage events including readings, petitions, vigils, letter writing campaigns and public performances.



Music Freedom Day, led by Freemuse every 3 March sees conferences, performances and recordings celebrating freedom of artistic expression. In 2015 it was celebrated in Sweden, Hungary, Germany Pakistan, Spain, Italy, Norway, Senegal, Turkey and the USA. A documentary on Malian musicians' struggle against the jihadist take over and banning of music - They Will have to Kill us First - was broadcast in 55 countries around the event.

Image from They Will have to Kill us First website <http://www.theywillhavetokillusfirst.com/trailer/>



Other days that can be used as advocacy ‘hooks’ include the 20 June **World Refugee Day** staged by the UN High Commission on Refugees. In 2016 ICORN took this opportunity to raise the growing number of artists and writers among those having to flee their countries. The weight of the refugee crisis has led to increased pressure on agencies dealing with immigration and are more in need of the support artists as individuals and organisations to highlight their plight.

Artwatch, the freedom of expression arm of the Arterial Network, monitors abuses in the region, recording 25 in 2015 and rising to 32 in just the first half of 2016. It brought arts freedom onto **UNESCO’s 3 May International Press Freedom Day** agenda with a statement on the ongoing problems of artists in Burundi in the previous year. These included the reggae band, Lion Story, that was forced to flee to a neighbouring country, the arrests in separate instances of the singer Eric Bigirimana, and comedian Kigingi, and the politically motivated murder of musician Kisuba.

The United Nations **International Human Rights Day** held every 10 December celebrates the International Declaration on Human Rights and is another focal point to raise artistic freedoms especially as it relates to Article 19 of the Declaration that protects freedom of expression.

Other international commemorative days that can be linked to artist freedom of expression is UNESCO’s **World Poetry Day** every 11 March, and to feature women artists, 8 March is **International Women’s Day**. No doubt there are other celebratory days nationally and internationally that a cause can be hooked onto.

Seasons' Greetings and Postcard actions

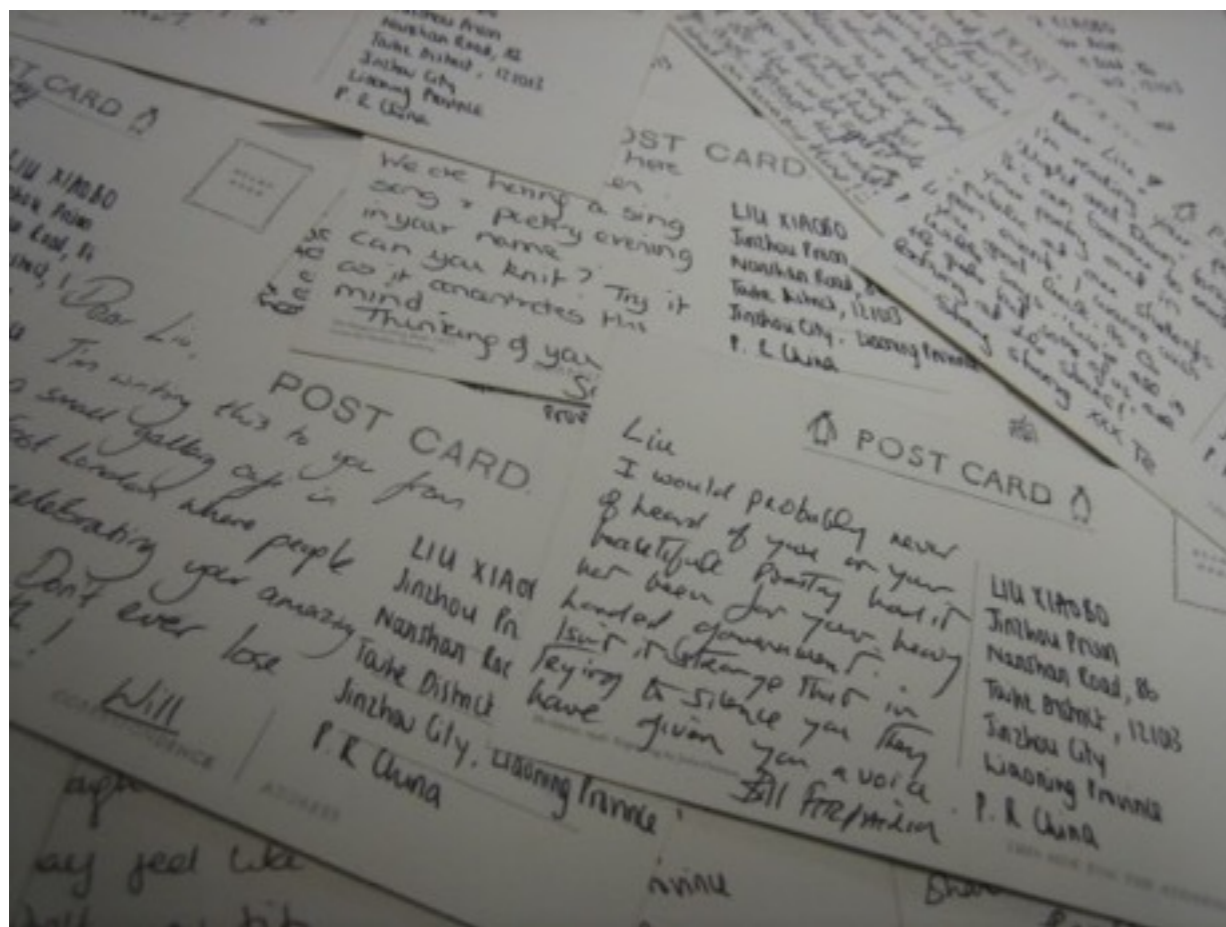
As Ai Wei Wei's Alcatraz-based 'Yours Truly' postcard campaign shows, inviting individuals to write letters to political prisoners is a great way to engage the public and to give hope to detainees at the same time. Ai speaks of how receiving messages while he was in jail helped him to deal with his sense of 'invisibility'.

Image: postcard from the Ai Wei Wei Yours Truly action



Many of the world's major religious festivals fall within a few months of each other, and are celebrated even by the non-religious. Some human rights groups such as **Amnesty International** and **PEN International** take this opportunity to stage Seasons Greetings campaigns where political prisoners or others suffering persecution are sent greetings to show support and give comfort. Recipients can get 100s of letters, a source of great comfort and also a message to the authorities. Campaigns usually start around November.

Image <http://www.sampsoniaway.org/blog/2012/01/10/pen-international-send-a-postcard-to-a-writer-in-prison/>



For letter writing suggestions, contact the local PEN Centre for details of how to join their campaign and they can provide you with a list of recipients and a guide of do's and don'ts for letter-writing.

But do be aware that it can be detrimental for messages to be sent to political prisoners in some cases, and that care should be taken that messages not include phrases that may jeopardise those who receive them. If in doubt, seek advice.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS

Artists were at the centre of international advocacy for **Tania Bruguera, the Cuban artist** who had been repeatedly harassed and arrested in 2014-2015 for her Taitlin's Whisper series 2015 performances and readings that celebrated free speech. In April, ARJ members signed a petition for an end to the harassment. Later that year her passport was given back and she returned to the USA. Speaking about the solidarity she had received, she said, "I am very happy ... even if it's cost me quite a lot. It was beautiful to learn how solidarity feels – we use a lot of important words, without knowing their real meanings – 'solidarity' is one, 'love' is another, so is 'friendship', 'support'. This year, I actually learned what these words mean."

Images from the Havana edition of Tatlin's Whisper from Yoanni Sanchez's blog <https://generacionyen.wordpress.com/2014/12/31/from-tatlins-whisper-to-tatlins-cry/>



Nigerian street performer, Jelili Atiku praised his supporters who sprang to his support when he was arrested in January 2016. CORA, the Nigerian chapter of the pan-African arts network, Arterial and the Nigerian Artists' Association had petitioned for his release on bail, and subsequently, as other organisations including Freemuse joined in calls for the charges to be dropped and international media publicity, the case was dropped six months later. Atiku's work confronts local violence and corruption and had raised the ire of a local traditional chief. "Although I, as well as others have gone through a series of traumatic experiences - where I struggle with disturbing emotions, terrifying memories of threats to life and degradation and dehumanization treatments in Kirikiri prison; but I feel energized knowing that your collective support and efforts secured our bail. I wish to THANK YOU ALL on behalf of others and myself for being there and rescuing us from traumatic experiences and feeling overwhelmed. Mo dupe o!"

Image from Jelili Atiku's Facebook site



The banning of **'b7al b7al'** street theatre performances in Tangiers and Rabat in July 2015 led to a joint appeal signed by 21 ARJ members. The plays focused on the tense relations between Morocco and sub-Saharan Africa over migration. The statement underlined the importance of culture to act as conduits of understanding between communities under stress. The troupe was later able to perform in other venues.

Image found on ArtsRights ITI as per above link. No photo credit.



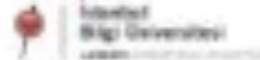
Well researched and carefully worded joint statements and petitions are powerful advocacy tools whether delivered in hard copy to government officers and embassies, or on-line, and can carry more weight than individual letters. They are also more likely to be covered by the media, especially if signatories include well known figures.

Do allow sufficient time to get comment, agreement and approval from all those you would like to sign onto petitions.

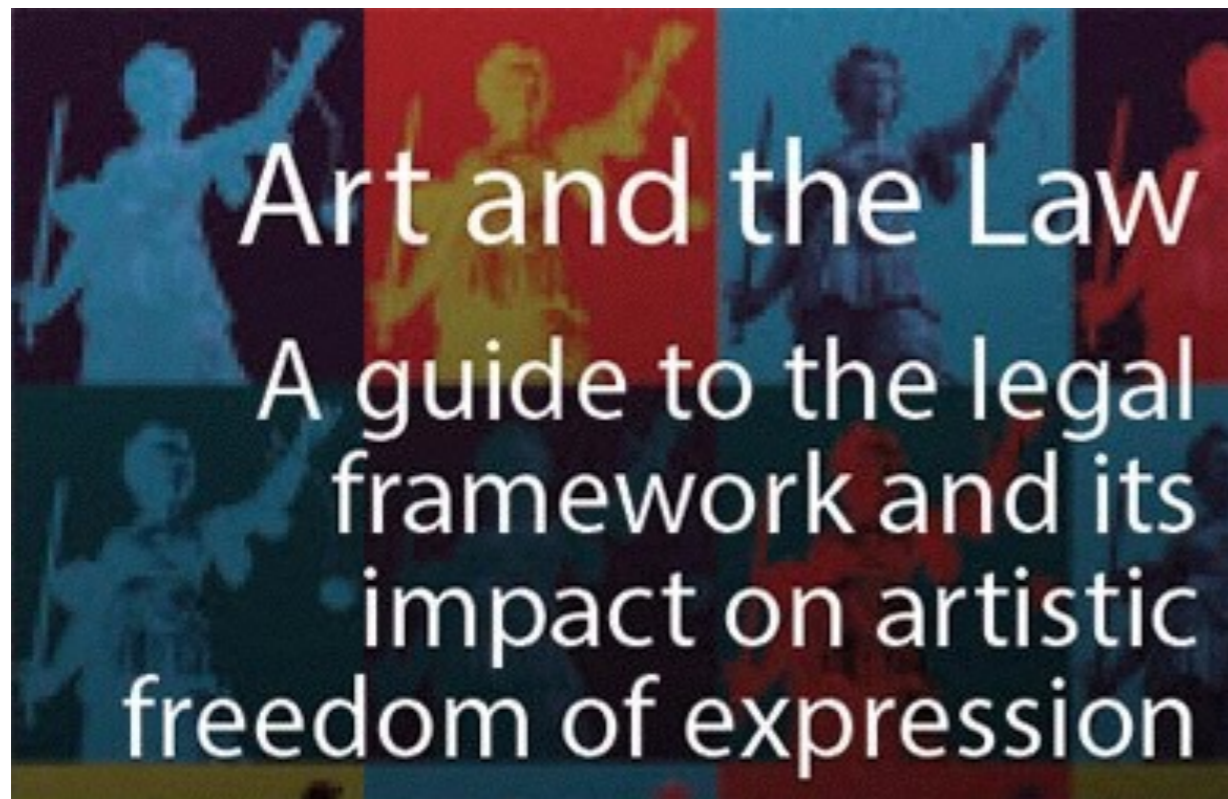
GUIDANCE AND TRAINING FOR PROMOTION OF ARTS FREEDOM AT HOME AND ABROAD

SANATSAL İFADE ÖZGÜRLÜĞÜ KILAVUZU

SIYAHBANT



Artists facing censorship can feel isolated and in need of advice. A number of arts organisations have issued guides and training. In **Turkey**, **Siyah Bant**, has produced a toolkit specifically aimed at artists in Turkey and giving advice a wide range of censorship issues, underlining artists' rights under Turkish and international law, and providing links to sources of support. Working with lawyers specialising in censorship, the toolkit has also been used in arts freedom workshops conducted at several universities.

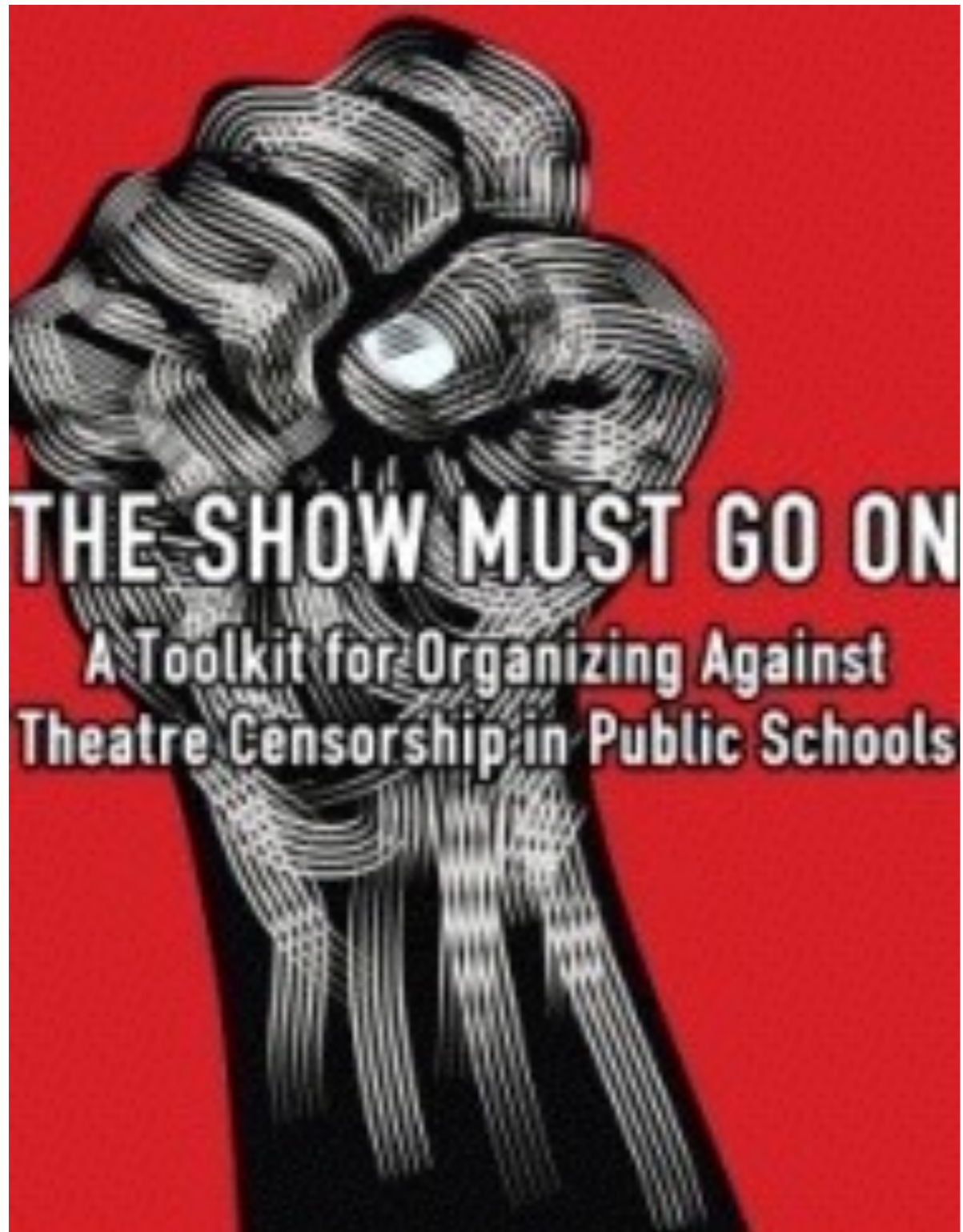


Index on Censorship's series Art and the Law: Guides to the legal framework and its impact on artistic freedom of expression address questions around freedom of expression and the arts. The five guides cover child protection, counter terrorism, obscene publications, public order and race and religion. Written in collaboration with other UK-based arts experts, they give overviews of UK laws, case samples and commentary. Although UK focused, much of what is covered in the series is applicable and can be adapted elsewhere in Europe and further. The series arose from a 2013 conference, Taking the Offensive, where arts professionals and institutions discussed self-censorship and other challenges to artistic freedom of expression.

The Arterial Network is a civil-society network of artists, cultural activists, entrepreneurs, enterprises, NGOs, institutions, and donors active in Africa's creative and cultural sectors. Its **Artwatch Africa** program works to assert, promote and defend artist rights. Among its activities are workshops on human rights and arts freedoms staged across Africa, such as a 4-day workshop held in December 2015 in Nouakchott, Mauritania bringing together artists, journalists and activists from civil society, and a public seminar on Individual liberty and Culture: freedom of creative expression for a cultural diversity.

Photo: Arterial network Training workshop in Mauritania – no photographer credit





The **New York based National Alliance Against Censorship** has issued a toolkit – The Show Must Go On - aimed at schools faced with the frequent instances of censorship of drama productions challenged by school officials, parents and the local community. Aimed at US students, the toolkit has useful guidance that can be adapted to other countries and arts communities facing similar obstacles.

EFFECTING LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

Arts groups, often working in collaboration with lawyers and human rights organisations, have been successful in changing government policy and legislation.

L'Observatoire de la Liberté de Creation was created by the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme in 2002 to work on attacks on freedom of artistic expression in France. For example in March 2014 it petitioned the French president François Hollande to honour his earlier promises to review legislation to “guarantee the freedom to creation and release works of art” as it had become alarmed by the growing number of attacks on artistic expression, specifically from religious groups. Its membership includes most trade unions representing France’s art world, including cinema, literature, theatre, visual arts as well as individual members such as artists and lawyers.

It was involved from the beginning of the drafting of a new law on artistic freedom that started in September 2015 and was adopted by Parliament in August 2016. The campaigners had lobbied for the inclusion of freedom of dissemination and programming of art alongside freedom of creation, arguing that one cannot exist without the other. Their argument was heard and accepted, and the new law was amended to include the phrase ‘guarantee artistic dissemination’. The final text however empties the specificity of the arts. The Observatoire will monitor its application and cases of censorship.

The **Arterial Network’s Artwatch** program has also worked to ensure freedom of artistic expression working in Gabon on the review of the "Statut des artistes", sending its contribution through its national chapter to the Ministry of Culture. In Swaziland, the organisation met with MPs to discuss arts policy and also made comments on the laws in place at national level. Arterial has also contributed to the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage in South Africa.

ARTS AS ADVOCACY PLATFORMS

Image by Lynx M Qualey @arablit



Saudi Arabia –

World wide readings and on-line arts

The death sentence served against Saudi Arabia-based Palestinian poet and artist Ashraf Fayadh in late 2015 was met with widespread shock that was not diminished by the reduction of the sentence to eight years in prison and 800 lashes. His plight kick-started international protests, led by artists and writers whose creative response, some creating their own works, others publishing Ashraf's, continues to ensure that his case is not forgotten.

1. In January 2015, the Berlin Literary Festival held a world wide reading of his poetry and writings where readings were held in over 200 sites with internationally renowned authors taking part. Ashraf's poetry collections have been translated and published in French, Spanish and English, making his work more widely known.
2. On 28 July 2016 a campaign was held Make a Noise and Beauty Day of Creativity for Ashraf, where artists created images posted online through the hashtag #freeashraf on Facebook, and Instagram.

Israel/Palestine –

Circus performers take to the streets

The administrative detention in Israel of Mohammad Abu Sakha, a Palestinian circus performer arrested in December 2015, led to an Amnesty International campaign Justice For Clowns. A group of around 200 clowns and circus performers wearing clown outfits, juggling, fire-eating and stilt-walking marched to the Israeli Embassy in London with a petition calling for his release. The campaign asked Israel to ‘stop clowning around’! The eye-catching event was carried in the local and international media.

Photo by Amnesty International, UK



AWARDS

Several organisations give annual awards to artists for their courage in the face of repression

Index on Censorship's 2015 **Freedom of Expression award** winners included Mouad 'El Haqed. Belghouat, a Moroccan rapper who has been banned and arrested several times in recent years.

Photo by Sean Gallagher for Index on Censorship



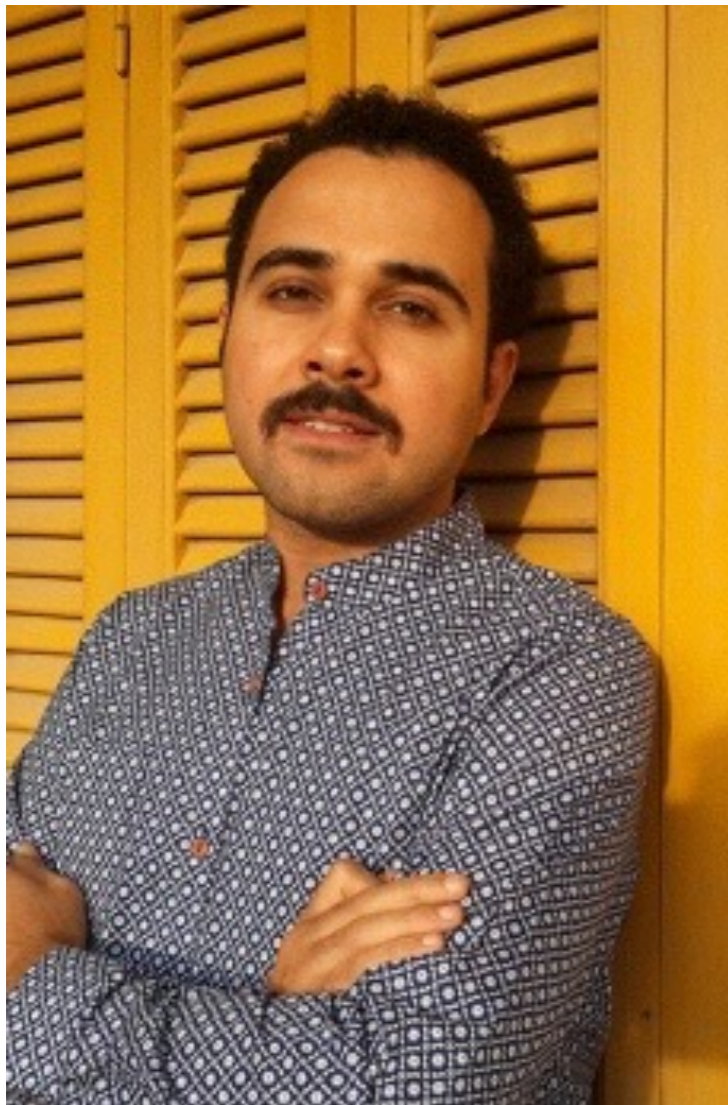
Sweden as host of the Eurovision Song contest was an opportunity for **Freemuse** to hold a side event at the Eurovision Village in Stockholm to present its award to the Belarus singer Lavon Volski, banned in his home country. He shared a stage with a previous Freemuse award winner, Egyptian musician and singer, Ramy Essam.

Photo by Iñaki Marconi



PEN America's annual **Literary Gala** provides the venue for presentation of its **freedom of expression award** which includes the **PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Award**. In 2016 Ahmed Naji, an Egyptian writer imprisoned for 'violating public modesty' in his novel *The Use of Life*.

Photo of Ahmed Naji, from pen.org website



Do make suggestions for likely candidates for these awards.

Approach other organisations that recognize human rights defenders to ask them to include artists.

ENGAGING WITH THE UN, THE EU AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

WORK WITH THE UN

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights both needs and welcomes input from civil society groups and artists' organisations are among those helping to inform and formulate strategy.

Several organisations working on freedom of expression in the arts hold consultative status at the UN enabling them to participate in meetings and submit reports. These include Freemuse, Article 19 and PEN International.

The UN's Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights is the central UN contact for arts freedom organisations. Freemuse worked as single consultant to the draft report to the first ever UN report on freedom of artistic expression published in 2013.

ARJ members were among the consultative group that contributed to the qualification of the report. In October that year, the then Rapporteur, Farida Shaheed, presented her report to the European Parliament at an event organised by ARJ. It included a panel debate that included Freemuse director Ole Reitov, filmmaker Vahid Evazzadeh, Iran and rapper Khaled Harara, Palestine. When Ms Shaheed's term expired, ARJ members drew up a 'checklist' of attributes necessary as a guide to the UN in selecting her successor to ensure the best possible candidate. ARJ was delighted to welcome Karima Bennoune who took up the post in 2015 and continues to work closely with us. The Special Rapporteur relies on civil society organizations to provide her with cases, legal changes and analysis of artistic freedom in different countries.

The **Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression**, currently David Kaye, is another natural ally for artistic freedom of expression who has frequently worked alongside the Rapporteur on Culture, issuing joint statements and interventions. In January 2015, he was a key participant in an Article 19 panel discussion held in the UN Palais des Nations where artists from Malaysia, Denmark, Cameroon and Belarus spoke of the challenges they face. Unusual for the UN, participants were given paper and crayons to contribute their own creative responses to the discussions.

Participant at UN event, Article 19. No photographer credited.



In January 2015, **ARJ members** alerted the rapporteurs on culture to the threats made in Thailand against the B-Floor Theatre Group's production Bang La Merd. The theatre company credits the response of human rights groups, including representatives of the UN in enabling to continue with the performance.

Image B-Floor Theatre Group



The **UN's Universal Periodic Review** is a mechanism whereby every UN state has to answer to their peers on their adherence to UN human rights standards every 4-5 years. The UPR provides an opportunity for CSOs to submit reports for consideration by the UN, and to lobby to ensure that their concerns are raised during the sessions. Freemuse has developed a comprehensive programme where they work alongside arts and human rights organisations to submit reports on freedom of artistic expression, bring artists to the UN to observe and participate, and to take follow up action on countries including Egypt, Belarus, Turkey and Zimbabwe, among others. In January 2015 Turkey was under UPR scrutiny. Siyah Bant had submitted a report to the process, and organised an event in Istanbul where artists, journalists, HRDs, and academics watched the live web-cast of the session, commenting on social media during the session, followed by a debate on how artists in Turkey can work together to tackle censorship.

Photo: participants in UPR event, Istanbul. Photo: Sara Whyatt



WORK WITH UNESCO

Arts organisations have contributed to UNESCO strategy making on artistic freedom providing advice, acting as consultants and taking part in panel debates. Their input was key to the 2015 UNESCO Report on Diversity of Cultures chapter on freedom of artistic expression (Chpt 10) written by Freemuse's Ole Reitov & Sara Whyatt. They were also contributors to UNESCO's global survey on the implementation of the 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist.



WORK WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The EC offers opportunities for artists at risk to have their voices heard and included in debates and policy making. One example is the EC's Voices for Culture Structured Dialogue between civil society and the EC on cultural issues. A call for suggestions for participants for a sessions in June and September 2016 on the role of culture on the inclusion of refugees and migrants led to Sudanese musician in exile, Abazar Hamid being among those taking part. A guest at the Harstad City of Refuge in Sweden, he had been recommended by ICORN to represent ARJ.

Image Douglas Sielski <http://icorn.org/article/abazar-hamid-barcelona>



INDIVIDUALS AT RISK | SAFE HAVENS

There are a number of organisations and institutions that provide placements for artists needing respite from persecution either as a regular programme or on an ad hoc basis

Most prominent and established is the International **Cities of Refuge Network** (ICORN). Since its establishment in 2006, it has recruited 50 cities across the globe who have given long term, but temporary, shelter to over 150 writers and artists who are under threat and persecution. ICORN has a rigorous assessment process that ensures placements from those most at risk and who can both benefit from the residencies and bring their own arts, culture and experiences to the host cities. Just one example of an artist who has benefited from an ICORN placement is Afghan artist and animator, Mohsan Hossaini, who got a placement in Drobak, Norway for respite from the pressures put on him for his work challenging war, religious and traditional taboos.

Photo by Mohsan Hossaini, credit ICORN



ICORN provides comprehensive guidance for applications on its website www.icorn.org

Newly established is the **Artists Protection Fund** that will take its first cohort of artists in 2016. A three year pilot programme, the Fund was set up in New York with funding from the Mellon Foundation. It will bring together arts organisations including university arts education programmes, arts centres and performing arts organisations, and other institutions involved in the arts across the globe to provide residencies for artists at risk from all disciplines. Information on the program including who is eligible to apply and the application process can be found on the APF website www.iie.org/Programs/Artist-Protection-Fund

The **Safe Music Havens Initiative** SafeMUSE offers artists at risk a safe place to stay and work with freedom of artistic expression. It works in close cooperation with hosting organizations (cities, regional authorities, organisations and others), with local and regional artists, musicians and bands/groups, and a network of partners and co-workers for mutual learning, exchange and development. It was established in December 2013 by musicians and composers in Norway, work in close cooperation with Freemuse, and other musicians' and composers' associations. SafeMUSE also organises one of the main annual Music Freedom Day events in Norway.

www.facebook.com/SafeMUSE

www.musicfreedomday.no

Others provide shorter residencies, such as La Lisière, based at the **Atelier Chroma** in the Drôme region of south east France. La Lisière is an art residency and research centre on artistic freedom, creating links between artists questioning artistic freedom and artists in danger who are in search of a safe haven, through a human rights based approach. In partnership with the city of Dieulefit, that has a past in hosting artists at risk, especially German painters during World War II, it provides one to two months residences for artists nominated by human rights organisations. Application details can be found here via the [Res Artis](#) website.

Photo from Res Artis website. No photographer credited.



Others whose focus is on providing shelter for human rights defenders have taken on artists, such as **York University in the UK** whose Centre for Applied Human Rights protection scheme has taken on artists including Afghan theatre director and film maker Abdul Hakim Hashemi Hamidi who needed respite from attacks for his work focussing on women's and children's rights.

Do make university arts departments, arts institutions and others working in the creative field aware of the needs of artists at risks and to consider offering placements or other support.

Advise artists at risk to consider ICORN, AFP and other safe refuge options.

Provide places where artists at risk can show their work.

CREDITS

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Culture Action Europe is the political platform for the arts and culture in Europe.

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