

Swiss Cultural Programme

Center for Contemporary Art Plovdiv



Country / region or city:

Bulgaria / Plovdiv

Name of Cooperation Project:

Center for Contemporary Art

Partner organization:

**ATA, Arts Today Association
(Plovdiv)**

Coaching-/Monitoring Partner:

**Euro-Bulgarian Cultural
Center (Sofia)**

Duration of project:

**January 2004 – December
2006**

The artists' organization ATA is establishing a regional and international center for contemporary art in the former Turkish bath of the city of Plovdiv. A multimedia lab enables young artists to gain new techniques in artistic production and learn new methods of socially engaged art.

Cultural life in Bulgaria is strongly concentrated on the capital Sofia. Regional centres usually are not only lacking lively cultural activities, but also know-how and experience in how to realize bigger cultural projects. At the same time a local audience interested and engaged in contemporary cultural activities has still to be developed.

In Plovdiv, second biggest city after Sofia, the city council put the former Turkish bath at the disposal of the artists association ATA. In this space, ATA is organizing different exhibitions and performances. The SCP cooperation project's objective is to establish a well functioning and vibrating centre for contemporary art, the first of its kind in Bulgaria.

www.arttoday.org

Art Office Foundation
Karnigradska Str. 2A
BG-1504 Sofia
arteofficesofia@gmail.com
www.artoffice.cult.bg

Pro Helvetia
Swiss Cultural Programme
Hirschengraben 22
CH-8024 Zurich
info@prohelvetia.ch
www.pro-helvetia.ch

Link:
www.deza.admin.ch
(Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC)

The project encompasses the following activity-lines:

- Capacity building of ATA in implementing big-scale artistic projects, for effectively managing the center and for developing income-generating activities
- Realization of regular exhibitions with local, regional and international artists
- Running of a Multimedia Lab, training and support of young artists in digitalized art production
- Residence program: Bulgarian and foreign artists have the opportunity to realize art projects in the Multimedia Lab and present their work during Open-door days

Every year the Contemporary Art Center organizes a **Week of Contemporary Art**. In October 2004, 52 artists from 11 countries participated at this event. Besides the Turkish bath, also the pedestrian area of Plovdiv and the main post were spaces for exhibitions and performances. Dance-, theatre- and multimedia performances and public debates made this week to an important cultural event not only for Plovdiv, but for the region and wider.

Another yearly exhibition for contemporary art is „**Art Positive**“ where artists from the region of Plovdiv show a wide range of works (installations, photography, sound projects, performances).

Every two years ATA is organizing a **Biennale of electronic and new media art and theory**. This is the biggest event of its kind in Bulgaria and consists of exhibitions, theoretical seminar, lectures, discussions and workshops.

The venue of the Turkish bath is also open to guest exhibitions – and ATA supports the organizers logistically as well as with public relations.

The Swiss Cultural Programme is a joint initiative of the Arts Council of Switzerland PRO HELVETIA and of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC. The SCP encompasses Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Kosovo and the Ukraine.

It supports local partners, which emphasize the variety, independence and performance of cultural life. The SCP cooperation projects focus on the capacity building and institutional development processes of cultural organizations. ■