

# SAFE HAVENS 2015

10–11 DECEMBER

## Dear friends

I wish to welcome you to the Safe Havens 2015 conference in Malmö. The first of three planned annual gatherings of activists, organizations, artists, cities, writers, journalists – or activists, which is one of the terms we will discuss in this meeting. In Sweden and the Nordic countries the Cities of Refuge movement has grown rapidly over the last few years through the ICORN-system in collaboration with individuals and organizations, of which several are represented at this meeting. Now this movement is growing all over Europe and at last reaching out and connecting with cities in Africa, Asia, North- and South America.

Philosopher Jacques Derrida, in a meeting which is sometimes referred to as the birth of the network of Cities of Refuge, spoke for the International Parliament of Writers on the topic of cosmopolitanism and the concept of hospitality,

“In committing ourselves thus, in asking that metropolises and modest cities commit themselves in this way, in choosing for them the name of ‘cities of refuge’, we have doubtless meant more than one thing, (...) we have been eager to propose simultaneously, beyond the old word, an original concept of hospitality, of the duty (devoir) of hospitality, and of the right (droit) to hospitality. What then would such a concept be? How might it be adapted to the pressing urgencies which summon and overwhelm us? How might it respond to unprecedented tragedies and injunctions which serve to constrain and hinder it?”  
(On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness by Jacques Derrida, 2001)

The city of Malmö is such a city of refuge and a member of the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN). We have since joining ICORN tried and discussed this idea of hospitality. What does hospitality really mean for the city council and its administration; can there be a starting date and an ending date to hospitality? If so, how do we secure that there is a continuation of the hospitality in the civil society and the cultural life once the time of official hospitality must end? As someone said: if you have invited a guest for dinner, you would not let the guest leave your house if you knew there were wolves in the forest. Hospitality can turn into friendship and inclusion and thus a sense of belonging, where the act of hospitality has been transcended, and instead given way for active ownership of a new context.

Yet the act of providing a long term residency; an asylum or an exile as ICORN, Scholars at Risk and others do, must be considered almost an extreme measure reserved for those who must get out from a very dangerous situation – and soon. There are also many initiatives, large and small around the world to support and to protect artists, writers, musicians, journalists and academics inside the borders of the danger zone and between countries, cities and organizations. We are very pleased to see that so many of these experienced and knowledgeable activists, artists and representatives of prominent organizations and several cities of refuge have decided to take this opportunity to meet in Malmö and discuss how we can work even better together for the global artistic freedom and against oppression and censorship.

Welcome to Malmö and the conference Safe Havens 2015

**Elisabeth Lundgren**

Director of Culture

City of Malmö Culture Department

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## About Moriska Paviljongen



In 1901, the Polish-Jewish architect Aaron Wolff Krenzisky was commissioned by the labor movement to draw an entertainment palace in Malmö's Folkets Park (People's Park). The house would be a place for fun and recreation for those who did not at the time feel welcome in the established bourgeois salons. He chose to create an oriental fairy pavilion, in vogue at the time!

In 2011 Moriska Paviljongen was relaunched by Re:Orient as a cultural crossover venue, which hosts a restaurant, several bars, events, seminars, conferences and clubs. Moriskan is today partly a non-profit cultural venue whose core values prioritise on working with minorities and cultural events.

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“Where they are burning books today,  
they will be burning people tomorrow”

As Heinrich Heine, the German poet and essayist, once wrote, “Where they are burning books today, they will be burning people tomorrow.” Indeed, there is a strong correlation between burning books and burning people. “Books are humanity in print,” Barbara W. Tuchman once noted during one of her famous lectures. Inasmuch, the sordid act of book burning – libricide, the technical term – has been a recurrent part of crimes against humanity that unfolded throughout human history.

Take one recent example. Earlier this year, in February, the thuggish warriors of the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) ransacked the Mosul library in northern Iraq – burning more than 100,000 books and manuscripts including some items listed in a UNESCO rarities list. As *The Independent* (UK) reported: “ISIS militants broke into the library and constructed a huge pyre of scientific and cultural texts as university students watched in horror.”

The same month, ISIS also released a grisly video depicting the execution of Muath al-Kasasbeh – a Jordanian pilot and prisoner of war. In this meticulously choreographed video, al-Kasasbeh was seen wearing an orange jumpsuit doused in some kind of flammable liquid. He was then locked inside a cage and burned alive. The world watched in horror.

Earlier in August, we were once again horrified as ISIS beheaded the world famous scholar of antiquities, Khaled al-Asaad, in the Syrian city of Palmyra. According to a report in *The Guardian*, al-Asaad’s mutilated body was hung “on a column in a main square of the historic site because he apparently refused to reveal where valuable artefacts had been moved for safekeeping.” This was an act of scribicide.

Borrowing, primarily, from the works of Rebecca Knuth on libricide, I define scribicide as the systematic and widespread killing or persecution of intellectuals including journalists, writers, scholars and artists. That is to say scribicide is neither isolated nor random. This persecution is very much a process in the machinery of repression imposed on a people not only by groups like ISIS but also sovereign governments and their agents of violence. Scribicide is a recurrent feature of the politics of massmurder, genocide and ethnic cleansing. And, it is also a process in the politics of repression, especially in political systems which we call the national security state.

In our work in defence of fundamental freedoms (especially for those who are engaged in developing safe havens for writers, artists and intellectuals), understanding scribicide remains a crucial task. Indeed, if we are to fight and defeat the systems of repression that routinely put artists, writers and academics across the globe under mortal danger, we must have a clear understanding of those very systems – how and why they function and who are their primary targets. For a start, this we can do by looking at a few cases concerning some of the participants at Safe Havens 2015 and events unfolding in their homelands.

Take the case of Monirah Hashemi – playwright, director and actress from Afghanistan. Hashemi arguably is one of the staunchest and most creative opponents of the system of patriarchal oppression (“prejudice, injustice, discrimination [and] inequality”) in her country. As *SVT Kultur* noted in a piece published in 2014, Afghanistan is often described as “one of the most dangerous countries for women.” What is often ignored, however, is the fact that Afghan feminists – especially, feminist writers, artists and intellectuals – pose the greatest threat against the repressive sociopolitical order in this tortured nation. An order which was so threatened by Hashemi’s theatrical productions (advocating women’s rights) that she had to flee her homeland for refuge in Sweden.

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Hashemi, of course, comes from a long line of Afghan freedom fighters like Meena Keshwar Kamal and Malalai Joya whose very existence threatened (and continues to threaten) the feudal overlords of Afghanistan. It is, thus, not surprising that feminist intellectuals and artists like Hashemi remain the primary targets of scribing in Afghanistan.

This is the case also in neighbouring Iran, where the primary targets of scribing are feminist writers and journalists like Parvin Ardalan, Shadi Sadr and Shiva Nazar Ahari, whose very existence threaten the theocratic order of the Islamic Republic. These opponents of the system of repression (including the system of gender apartheid) are targeted for persecution through the widespread and systematic use of imprisonment and torture by the security forces. In Iran, in other words, scribing is carried out by the sovereign government led by the Ayatollahs and their agents of violence.

In another part of the world, in Palestine, we have another paratheocratic order of oppression and control imposed on the people of Gaza by the Hamas-led government. Here we see that individuals like the hip-hop artist Khaled Harara are treated as "internal enemies" because they threaten the authoritarian rulers of this besieged city. Arguably artists like Harara and their songs pose a greater threat to Hamas and its legitimacy than the occupying Israeli army and its missiles. Scribing in Palestine, indeed, is targeted more towards the new generation of young artists who not only challenge the Israeli occupation but also challenge the brutal rule of Hamas. Accordingly, the Hamas government persecutes them through arbitrary detention, torture and execution.

Elsewhere, in Nigeria, like many other African nations, homophobic laws are now being promulgated as part of a new system of political repression. A system that is being opposed and challenged by writers like Jude Dibia. Here, writers and artists who advocate for fundamental freedoms are especially under threat of scribing. A threat so serious that activists like Dibia and Leo Igwe are now being forced into exile. We also of course remember the case of the Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa who, to date, remains the most well-known victim of the Nigerian scribing.

The victims of scribing, we must note, are not to be seen in a context of victimhood. These are the individuals who threaten the systems of repression through the most creative and efficient ways possible. And, that is the very reason why they are targeted and feared by groups like ISIS or Hamas and the national security states and their governments. This fear of the creative intellectual, indeed, lies at the heart of the politics of scribing.

If we are to challenge the system of repression and fear that is now being imposed on us in different parts of the globe, we must then develop a global system of protection that will not only offer refuge to the intellectual (the artist, writer, journalist or scholar) but also enable her (or, him) to carry on her struggle against oppression.

*Tasneem Khalil is the editor and publisher of Independent World Report*

# SAFE HAVENS 2015

## Safe Haven Beyond Borders

The focused and compact dimension of my journalistic and feminist work and our common struggle in Iran proved that creativity and communication were the foremost tools of civic engagement that the regime fiercely feared. Our simple equality demands were as powerful as the universal dot in the end of a sentence. No comma signs, no parentheses and no slashes for any alternatives for the injustices facing Iranian women.

The global effort such as safe havens is multilayered. The preparation and facilitation before the arrival of practical matters are only the basics that should be equally matched by the willingness of the cultural institutions and organizations to co-operate with new horizons, different methods in multiple languages and voices. Hence the multi communicative abilities of all involved was challenged in order for me to engage in active partnership in a social, cultural and political context of the city of Malmö. I was able to raise the voices of our causes in Iran in the new context, of my being in Sweden.

In Women Making History, I have since 2012 been involved in re-writing "100 years of immigrant women's lives and work in Malmö", Sweden by re-interpreting the image of the city. Astonishing 50.000, one sixth, of Malmö's citizen are women born abroad. Their life and work is a tremendously important part of the city's history, but much of the women's experiences are invisible and lacking in the official history. Global activism is thus no more limited to multilayered perception but also the necessity of being multi-dimensional i.e. to expand and develop ones activism beyond national borders.

Historically activism is explained within the areas of participation, causes, tactics and tools. In Women Making History the inclusion, participation and contribution of the immigrant women are the core pillars of the work. The mobilization was formed by and communicated through various methods with both transparency and horizontal co-ownership. The significance of inclusion within social, economic and institutional structures is a key factor of plausible combating tactics against ostracism, isolation and extremism. Activism is my tool of choice, whether traditional or modern, locally or globally.

Today's unrecognizable mishmash of color pigments in the global political scenery where the red has transformed into blue, the green has feared backed into a yellow corner and the Anemone hepatica has shown its hidden brown color should be a reminder of the vital role of the multi-voiced activism, artists and activists, fighting against militarism and displacement. No matter if it involves legitimate states or criminal thugs, as in Daesh.

In this complex world we need to show our discontent and anger. We need to raise our voices. How can we sit tight behind the secure lines of our safe haven when barbed wires are being set up, mentally and around our borders?

*Parvin Ardalan is journalist, activist and project manager of Women Making History, City of Malmö*

# SAFE HAVENS 2015

## Freedom of Speech in Comics Today – Seven International Voices

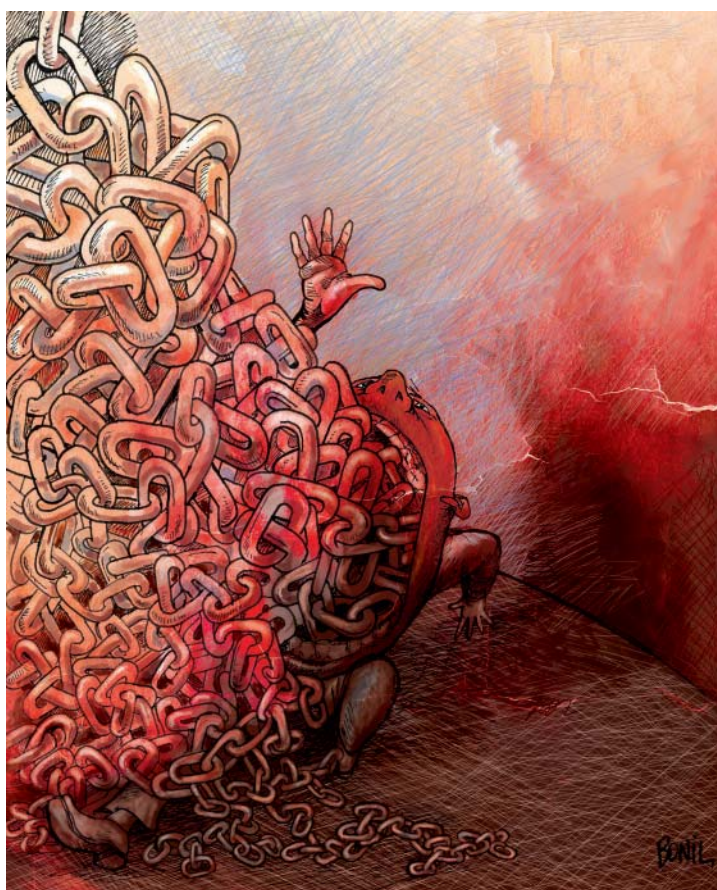
To express oneself freely is not possible in many places around the world, even closer than we think. Comics artists, together with journalists, authors and many others, are being persecuted for practicing their professions and expressing their opinions. They are being threatened, oppressed and even imprisoned as a result. We can now take part of the artists' work and hear their stories.

The exhibition presents seven artists from different countries: Bonil (Ecuador), Karrie Fransman (Great Britain), Fadi Abou Hassan (Palestine), Nina Hemmingsson (Sweden), Arifur Rahman (Bangladesh), Rayma Suprani (Venezuela) and Zunar (Malaysia). They all have different stories, but together they illustrate restrictions on freedom of speech – and freedom of drawing.

The issue of freedom of speech and censorship in comics has a long history and is part of Seriefrämjandet's background. The association was founded in 1968 with the mission to counteract the current negative view on the art form. During the decade before, there was a fierce debate that led to comics being censored, both from the outside and from within, which has had repercussions to this day. The question is still relevant today, perhaps more than ever before.

The exhibition Freedom of Speech in Comics Today is produced by Seriefrämjandet with support from Region Skåne and Längmanska kulturfonden.

*By Jamil Mani, Director of the  
Swedish Comics Association*



*Illustration: Xavier Bonilla,  
Bonil (Ecuador)*

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## Program

### DAY 1 Thursday december 10

12.00 Arrivals, light lunch and registration

13.00 Welcome

13.15 **Opening of the conference**

And introduction by conference host, activist and theatre director Monirah Hashemi

13.30 **Key Note speech**

By internationally renowned blogger, scholar and activist Lina Ben Mhenni

14.00 **Mapping out the landscape – a global view of organizations, NGO: s and initiatives to protect human rights defenders and how they intersect**

MaryAnn DeVlieg, expert on artists' mobility and cultural management

14.30 **Supporting young rappers in Gaza, presentation of a project**

Rapper and activist Khaled Harara

15.00 **Introduction of three workshops** by the workshop leaders

15.15 **Coffee/go to workshops.** Parallel workshops, sign up for 1 of 3:

#### **Nordic shelter initiatives for human rights defenders in visual arts**

Nordic Fresh Air, HIAP, Gävle Konstcentrum, Art Lab Gnesta. Hosted by curator Marita Muukkonen, Perpetuum Mobile/Nordic Fresh Air.

1

#### **"My power is the people!" – How to create professional networks**

Researcher Ulrika Lind and guest musician Ramy Essam present the report "My power is the people – A report on the implementation of Malmö's first safe havens guest program for musicians". Together with Jan Lothe Eriksen from SafeMUSE, Norway, the workshop will discuss the challenges and possibilities in creating relevant professional networks around guest musicians.

2

#### **Introducing North American initiatives with Nordic connections**

Presentations and discussions with Alison Russo from Artist Protection Fund, Reza Mazaheri from Artistic Freedom Initiative and Karin D. Karlekar who represents American PEN.

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## *Program*

### DAY 1 Thursday december 10

**16.45 Before the safe haven... another day in the office**

Ole Reitov from Freemuse gives an insight to a day at work with artists at risk and talks with Iranian musician Farzané Zamén and Sudanese musician Abazar Hamid.

**17.30 On the current refugee situation – what is our contribution/responsibility working with human rights from the perspective of shelter cities, artists/culture/independent media?**

Actor and director Monirah Hashemi , director Abdul Hakim Hashemi Hamidi, founder of Simorgh film and Khaled Harara in conversation with moderator Zandra Tufvesson.

**18.15 Activism; do the artistic disciplines benefit from activists to develop. Is the artistic**

**expression a need, an obligation, a right, or a convention?** Discussion between Daniel Gad, UNESCO chair, University of Hildesheim, Department of Cultural Policy and Ferdinand Richard, Chairman of the Roberto Cimetta Fund in Paris.

**19.00 Buffet dinner**

**20.30 – 22.00 Evening event**

with musicians and activists Ramy Essam, Farzané Zamén and Abazar Hamid  
(Directed by Teater Foratt)



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### DAY 2 Friday december 11

09.00 Introduction to day 2

09.10 **Risky business: Running a residency programme for persecuted artists. Do we know what we're doing?**  
ICORN programme Director Elisabeth Dyvik.

09.40 **LGBTQ perspectives on human rights advocacy and artistic freedom.**  
Writer Jude Dibia hosting a discussion with activist Bisi Alimi.

10.10 **Parallel workshops.** Sign up for 1 of 3:

**Setting up a brand new artist run short term residency for visual artists at risk – the case of Unicorn**

Artist Todd Lanier Lester, founder of free Dimensional and several other international initiatives for artistic freedom in a workshop with the new Swedish artist run initiative Unicorn.

1

**Cutting the distances – the case of a city to city initiative between Malmö and Cape Town**

When will we see the first African shelter city and how can we inspire a global movement? With writer Michael Schmidt, initiator of the South African ICORN project in conversation with Safe Haven Malmö and Helge Lunde, executive director of ICORN.

2

**How to Host: Best practices from the Scholars at Risk Network**

What must the hosting university consider in order to make the academic safe haven residency successful? Ragnhild Øien Guldvåg, chair of Scholars at Risk (SAR) Norway in a workshop with Peter Hallberg of Malmö University.

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### DAY 2 Friday december 11

12.00 - 13.00 Lunch

13.15 **Introducing the Hildesheim Arts Rights Justice - Summer Academy**  
With Daniel Gad, Todd Lanier Lester and Mary Ann DeVlieg

13.45 **Seriefrämjandet (Swedish Comics Association) in conversation with cartoonists Fadi Abou Hassan and Zunar on cartoonist's rights and the situation in Syria and Malaysia**  
Seriefrämjandet will also introduce a cartoonist exhibition on the topic of free speech and artistic freedom.

14.15 **Open Space** – feel free to write down a topic you want to discuss and gather other people for your group. Quiet areas will be set up for your conversations.

15.30 **Final discussions with selected participants:** what did we learn and where can we go from here. Final words

16.00 – 17.00 The venue will be open for those who wish to stay to have coffee and network for a little longer.

*...with artistic interventions and some magic moments as well.*

*The conference is initiated by Safe Haven Malmö with support from Kulturkontakt Nord, the Swedish Arts Council, Region Skåne, Film i Skåne and Amnesty.*

**KULTURRÅDET**



**norden**  
Kulturkontakt Nord



**film i skåne**  
part of business region skåne



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## *Biographies*



### ABAZAR A. BAGI HAMID Musician Singer Songwriter.

Grew up in the cultural belt between Sudan and the Gulf, and his music is both rooted in traditional Sudanese and African music characteristic of the Gulf area, and heavily inspired by reggae and Afro-Latin music. Abazar Hamid started singing for peace in Sudan at an early age, and formed his first band, "Balsam", at university. In 1997, he became well-known at regional level when he joined "Igd Elgalad Band", and in 2005, he quit his job as an architect to start his solo career, launching the project "Rainbow Songs". The project brought together musicians from across Sudan, aiming to slip lyrics about Human Rights and dignity past the music monitoring committee. Abazar Hamid released his first solo album, "Sabahak Rabah" ("Good Morning Home") in 2007 but experienced increasing censorship in his home country. Songs dealing with social and political issues riding Sudan were especially scrutinized, and after severe censorship and verbal threats, Abazar chose exile and moved to Cairo in 2008. In 2009 he established the project "democratizing music" in collaboration with other Sudanese and Egyptian musicians, as a forum to share resources rather than fighting each other. Abazar arrived, as Norway's first official town-musician, in Harstad the 10th of December 2014.



### ABDUL HAKIM HASHEMI HAMIDI

Graduated from Herat University in Afghanistan, majoring in history. Currently he is completing a Master in Human Rights and Humanitarian Action at Sciences Po, Paris School of International Affairs. Hamidi started his human rights activities when he was living in Iran as a refugee. Working for Afghan refugees' rights, he was arrested by the police and jailed. After returning to Afghanistan in 2004, he continued the activities of human rights, especially for women's and children's rights as a human rights defender. In consultation with a number of colleagues he established Simorgh Film Association of Culture and Art (SFACA) in Herat province. Since almost 10 years, he has been involved in social development programmes at Simorgh Film Association in Herat, Kabul, Bamiyan and Kunduz. As a general director and artistic director of SFACA, he has produced short and long films; TV serials with human rights focus, specifically addressing women's rights. Hamidi has written articles for websites, newspapers and social media outlets in Afghanistan for public awareness.

### ALISON RUSSO Joined IIE in September as Director of the Artist Protection Fund, having most recently left her post curating the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Programs and managing their arts portfolio.

As an artist, she has worked collaboratively to create original devised work with a focus on site specificity, integrated media and civic engagement; her collaborations include live performance, installation and video projects, she has made work and been involved in projects in the U.S., Europe, the Balkans and East Africa. She is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and holds her MFA from California Institute of the Arts.

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**ANNA LIVION INGVARSSON** Is head of Gävle Konstcentrum that is a part of the municipality of Gävle and a platform for Swedish and international contemporary art. Artistic freedom of expression has become an important profile for the art center. Gävle Konstcentrum compasses a hall of art with exhibition of contemporary art and a programme which includes comprehensive art education activities. Gävle Konstcentrum is also responsible for public art in Gävle, which entails directing new public art projects for municipal properties and public spaces Gävle Konstcentrum is responsible for Gävle's municipal art. The decision to make municipality of Gävle to a safe haven was followed by political and juridical processes, that finally gave Gävle the right to be part of the network of ICORN – International Cities of Refuge Cities.



**BISI ALIMIM** Is a **CONTROVERSIAL, PASSIONATE, ENGAGING** and **POWERFUL** internationally renowned researcher, public speaker, policy analyst, television pundit, campaigner and community builder with expertise in sexual health and human and LGBT rights. Alimi was the first Nigerian to openly declare his sexuality on national television in 2004 and this led to threats to his life and his resulting move to the United Kingdom where he was a refugee until December 2014 when he was granted British citizenship. He has engaged with the media for social change ever since. His TEDx talk, "There should never be another Ibrahim" has been listed as one of the 14 most inspiring queer TEDtalk of all time. Alimi has many laurels for his work globally. He is a consultant with the World Bank on the Economic impact of Homophobia and serves on the World Bank advisory board on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. He was a 2014 New Voices fellow at the Aspen Institute and alumni of The Moth. He has been listed four years in a row on the UK LGBT list and was named 77 on the World Pride Power List 2014.

**DR. DANIEL GAD** Is the Managing Director of the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy for the Arts in Development at University of Hildesheim since 2012. Since November 2015 he is the Network Coordinator in projects with refugees in the city of Hildesheim of the Faculty of Cultural Studies and Aesthetic Communication of the University of Hildesheim as well as Assistant director of the Bachelor Plus Study Program "Cultural Studies, Aesthetics and Applied Arts – Cultural Policy in an International Context" at University of Hildesheim. Dr Gad has been involved in various projects, commissioned studies and conference management as a freelancer. He has also been a free-lance musician and is a member of the Cultural Policy Task Group of Arterial Network, Cape Town in South Africa. He is currently preparing The Hildesheim Arts Rights Justice - Summer Academy with international colleagues.

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**ELISABETH DYVIK** is Programme Director of ICORN, a position she has held since 2007. She is responsible for the ICORN residency programme for persecuted writers and artists, handling applications and placements, following up ICORN writers and artists with residency in the cities of refuge, as well as external network building. She has particular expertise within visa and migration issues. Dyvik has a background in working with international affairs, culture and free speech. From 1994–1997, she was Head of the Secretariat for Freedom of Expression in the Municipality of Stavanger, and project manager for the Norwegian Authors' Unions' 100 years celebratory conference on Freedom of Expression. She came from a position as the Head of Newroom research and archive at the national Norwegian newspaper Dagbladet (1985-1995).



**FADI ABOU HASSAN** is a widely published and award-winning Palestinian freelance cartoonist. He lived as a refugee in Syria until the uprising in 2011, and is known for his many cartoons commenting on the everyday life and political events in Syria and the Middle East in general. His cartoons focus on human rights, women's rights, and political violence taking place in the country. He is very critical of the political elite in Syria. He was Drøbak City of Refuge's guest writer from 2013 to 2015.



**FARZANE ZAMEN** Musician, songwriter from Tehran - Iran Born in August 1983, Started music with classical guitar from age 17, have written lyrics in English and Persian. Started producing professional music from 2008 , have released 5 singles and 1 album.

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**FERDINAND RICHARD** Is the Chairman of the Roberto Cimetta Fund. The fund is working on mobility and fair exchanges between Europe and the Arab World, and supporting structuration for small initiatives there. The fund is engaged in a support process for arab artists and cultural activists which are in exile, especially in the neighbouring countries of the conflict zones. There are several hundreds of cultural activists in Lebanon only, with serious visa/permits problems, and living in a very precarious situation. Ferdinand Richard is also involved in Unesco International Fund for Cultural Diversity since many years, and an active expert for United Cities and Local Governments network on the cultural rights and cultural development issues.



**HELGE LUNDE** (1961), executive Director of ICORN, the International Cities of Refuge Network. Was the director of Kapittel, Stavanger International Festival of Literature and Freedom of Speech from 1998–2005. In the same period he was responsible for Stavanger as City of Refuge for persecuted writers, and worked together with Norwegian PEN to develop the network throughout Norway and beyond. Mr. Lunde was among the main figures behind establishing ICORN, the International Cities of Refuge Network ([www.icorn.org](http://www.icorn.org)) in 2005. He became its first executive director, a position he has been holding since.




**JUDE DIBIA** Is an author and equal rights activist from Nigeria. Jude is the author of three successful novels and a number of short stories, which have been featured in both local and international anthologies and magazines. Jude is also a recipient of the Ken-Saro Wiwa Prize for Prose in his native country. In 2005 when his debut novel, *Walking with Shadows*, was published the rights and freedoms of LGBTI persons in his country was under extreme scrutiny with the Nigerian legislature pushing for harsher punishments and laws to proscribe homosexuals. *Walking with Shadows* was bold in addressing the existence of homosexuals in Nigeria and some of the abuses they endure. Jude has continued to write about the abuses of LGBTI people in Nigeria in his short stories. With the passing of the Anti Sam-Sex marriage law in Nigeria in January 2014, Jude made the decision to leave Nigeria before he becomes a target for his writings and stand against the harsh law that criminalizes homosexuality. Jude is the current guest writer of Malmö City of Refuge.

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**KHALED HARARA** Was born 1987 in Yemen. He is a renowned Palestinian hip-hop artist who has lived as a refugee in Gaza. His texts discuss the political situation in Palestine from a humanitarian and social perspective and criticise the lack of freedom of expression and the suffering in Palestine under the Hamas rule. In Gaza, Khaled Harara was the first to organise hip hop workshops for youth, focusing on writing texts and on different ways of expressing oneself. As a result of his artistic expression, and his participation as a soldier of the PLO forces, Harara is considered an “enemy of the state”. More than once, he has been to prison, tortured and subject to rough interrogations. In fear of continuing reprisals, Khaled Harara stayed on in Denmark after participating in the festival “Rapolitics”. Khaled Harara was Gothenburg City of Refuge’s guest writer – and the first musician that ICORN accepted – from 2013 to 2015. During his stay in Gothenburg Khaled Harara has taken part in several public events, debates and workshops. He released two new singles with the jazz rock band Makten & Härligheten in May 2015.



**KARIN DEUTSCH KARLEKAR** Is the director of Free Expression Programs at PEN American Center, the largest branch of the world’s leading free expression and literary organization with a membership of over 4,200 authors, journalists, editors, publishers, and graphic novelists. She focuses on global press freedom, digital rights, and broad freedom of expression issues. Prior to joining PEN, she served from 2001–2015 as director of Freedom House’s Freedom of the Press project, coordinating the production of a flagship annual report that tracks trends in global media freedom and rates every country in the world. As well as acting as an expert spokesperson on press freedom issues at conferences, meetings, and in media appearances, Dr. Karlekar has developed index methodologies and conducted training sessions on press freedom, internet freedom, freedom of expression, and monitoring dangerous speech; authored a number of special reports and academic papers; and conducted research, assessment, and advocacy missions. She also currently serves as a member of the governing council of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) network, and was its chair from 2006-2009.



**LINA BEN MHENNI** Is an activist, the author of the popular blog “ATunisianGirl”, a human rights defender, a teacher assistant of linguistics at Tunis University (Faculty of Human and Social Sciences). She was born in Tunisia 1983. Based in Tunis, she reported from all across her country during the, 2010–2011, revolution. She risked her safety as one of the few Tunisian cyber activists to criticize the repressive government openly on Internet and international broadcasts before the ousting of the dictator Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali. Indeed, under Zine Al Abidine ben Ali’s dictatorship, her blog was one of the most revealing and scathing criticisms of Tunisian society, focusing on issues like women’s rights and press freedom. She visited local hospitals and took pictures of those injured or killed by the police. She furthermore reported for many websites and news TV channels when foreign journalists could not access the country. Often described as one of the bravest bloggers in the world, much of Ben Mhenni’s writing focuses on freedom of expression and the rights of women and students. Currently, she writes about the incomplete state of Tunisia’s revolution and campaigns for continued reform and democracy.

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### MARITA MUUKKONEN

Is the Co-Director and Co-founder of Perpetuum Mobile (Helsinki-Berlin) ([www.perpetuummobile.org](http://www.perpetuummobile.org)). She has been Chairperson, Curator and Editor at HIAP, FRAME, FRAMEWORK; and held key functions at NIFCA. Marita has curated exhibitions and projects at museums such as in MoMA, Moderna Museet and Kiasma. Productions at biennials include the Perpetual Pavilion (Venice 2009), The Finnish Pavilion (2009), The Nordic Pavilion (2009), The Arts Assembly (Manifesta 8, 2010), the Nordic Pavillion at Dak'art Biennale (2012), and the School of Displaced Persons (Kiev Biennial, 2015). As co-director of Perpetuum Mobile, she has co-founded long-term thematic projects like Safe Haven Helsinki, the Re-Aligned Project and Pluriculturalism. Marita contributes to a variety of publications.



### MARY ANN DEVLIEG

Chair of the EU Working Group 'ARJ' on Arts, Rights, and Justice since 2011, Secretary General of IETM (international network for contemporary performing arts) from 1994–2013, DeVlieg was Senior Advisor to freeDimensional, helping artists and culture workers who are threatened, harmed or imprisoned by linking them with a range of shelters and pro bono services. DeVlieg works on individual cases of artists at risk, is a facilitator/consultant evaluating international and EU projects and sets up cultural management training programmes. With an M.A. in European Cultural Policy, she is a co-founder of artsfex, the Roberto Cimetta Fund for Mobility of Mediterranean Artists and Arts Organisers and founded [www.on-the-move.org](http://www.on-the-move.org) for artists' mobility.



### MICHAEL SCHMIDT

Is a veteran African journalist, published author, working class historian, media trainer, and free press activist. Long involved with countering discrimination, police repression and xenophobia, he founded the Anti-Repression Network in 2002. He was the founder in 2010 of the Professional Journalists' Association of South Africa, and runs The Ulu Club for Southern African Conflict Reporters. With Rasha Salti of Lebanon, he curates a project on massacre and memory, Not Night but an Absence of Stars. He is the convenor of the South African Cities of Refuge Project which aims to get four African cities to join ICORN.



# SAFE HAVENS 2015

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## *Biographies*



**MONIRAH HASHEMI** Playwright, actor and theater pedagogue has been working with women and children in Afghanistan since 2004. She is a founder and director of Theater Department at “Simorgh Film Association of Culture and Art” which have been used theater and film as a tool to address the most crucial issues of Afghanistan and reach to communities in isolation with less access to sources and information. Using theater as a platform to discuss the early and forced marriage, violence against women and children, social participation, democracy, health and hygiene and etc. In 2013, Monirah invited by Leif Persson, Riksteatern Varmland to talk about her experience under the title of “Exchange instead of charity, art and culture as a tool for active citizenship and democracy” but she also wrote her new play “Sitaraha – The Stars” based on facts in Afghanistan. The play has performed in Sweden, USA, South Africa, and Canada and will be performed in India, UK and Italy. Sitaraha – the Stars will be performed in Swedish, in spring 2016 which is going to be in a tour with Riksteatern. “The Scarecrow” written by Monirah Hashemi, is a children play, addressing the issues of migration.”



**NICLAS TURESSON** (former Sandström) Born in 1977. Founder/artistic director of Teater Foratt since 2005. The theatre often explores meetings and glitches between Europe and the Middle East with several languages simultaneously on stage. Niclas has been awarded with several prizes for his work and is currently doing a show at the Swedish Radio Theatre and another show with Ramy Essam and Siham Shurafa at Teater Foratt. Board member of the Swedish Association of Stage Directors since 2011.



**RAMY ESSAM** Has been called “the man who wrote the soundtrack to the Egyptian revolution”. His music made him one of the leading activists at the Tahrir Square in Cairo during the Egyptian Revolution in the Spring of 2011. Several of Essam’s songs are based on slogans chanted at the Tahrir Square as the revolution evolved, slogans which, accompanied by Essam’s music, reached out to become a powerful way of attacking the regime without resorting to violence. He was subjected to arrests and torture and found it increasingly difficult to be able to perform in Egypt. In 2014 he was invited by the City of Malmö to be the first guest musician in the ICORN system, through a collaboration between the city, Freemuse and ICORN. During his first year in Sweden Ramy Essam has already toured America, Europe and played in Cape Town, South Africa and has signed record deals both in Sweden and the US. He has also studied at the Malmö Music Academy and worked closely with SKAP in artistic freedom advocacy. Ramy Essam’s song Irhal (leave) was elected the third most world-changing song in history by Time Out.

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**REZA MAZAHERI** Serves as AFI's co-Director, heading its program on immigrant and non-immigrant petitions for censored artists. For the greater part of his career, Reza dedicated himself to advancing human rights and safeguarding the public interest. Reza is the co-founder of Sethi & Mazaheri, LLC, a law firm dedicated to immigration and asylum law. He is also a former prosecutor and served as a law clerk in criminal court for the Superior Court of New Jersey. In addition to his extensive background in providing public interest based legal services, Mr. Mazaheri worked in the Middle East, North Africa division of Human Rights Watch. Reza received his BA from State University of New York at Stony Brook in Political Science and his JD from Seton Hall University School of Law.



**TODD LANIER LESTER** Is an artist, writer, and cultural producer. He lives and works in São Paulo, where he is developing Lanchonete.org – a project focused on daily life in the city center – with a group of fellow artists and city dwellers. He has worked in leadership, advocacy, and strategic planning roles at Global Arts Corps, Reporters sans frontières, and Astraea Lesbian Justice Foundation. He founded freeDimensional, a network that helps artists in danger by providing safe haven in participating artist residencies. Todd is a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute where he directs the Arts-Policy Nexus; a co-curator for the Arts & Society Team of Cities for People in Canada; and serves as a board member for arts, rights and literary organizations in India, Mexico, Brazil, and the US.



**ULRIKA LIND** Advisor/Researcher. Through various assignments Ulrika is one of those leading the development of the cultural sector and the positions of music and arts in society. Accessibility and digital venues are two areas covered by current assignments, as well as artistic freedom, cultural diplomacy and new approaches to traditional environments for arts and culture. On behalf of the City of Malmö Ulrika has reported on the implementation of Malmö's first guest program and safe haven for musicians at risk.

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**ZUNAR** (Zulkiflee Sm Anwar Ulhaque) is a political cartoonist from Malaysia. With slogan, “How Can I be Neutral, Even My Pen Has a Stand”, he exposes corruption and abuse of power committed by the government of Malaysia through his art. Zunar is now facing nine charges under the archaic Sedition Act and facing possible 43 years imprisonment. He was detained and locked behind bars twice under the Sedition Act – first time was on September 2010 for two days and recently on 10th of February 2015 for three days. Five of his cartoon books have been banned by the Malaysian government on the ground that the contents are “detrimental to public order.” His office in Kuala Lumpur has been raided a few times and thousands of his cartoon books were confiscated. The printers, vendors, and bookstores, have been harassed. Their premises have been raided and they have been warned not to print or carry any of his books or their business licence will be revoked Last October, three of his assistants were arrested and taken to the police station for selling his latest cartoon books. Zunar is the only Malaysian selected by Amnesty International as the first Malaysian for their biggest annual international campaign, ‘Write for Rights (#W4R) 2015’.



**ZANDRA TUVESSON** Political advisor to the minister of Culture and Democracy in Sweden Alice Bah Kuhnke. Background as a moderator and working with film and literature.