

SAFE HAVENS

Freedom Talks @MoM

1 2020

Dear friends in the Safe Havens; Arts, Rights, Justice Network

In order to stay safe, we will not be able to meet in real life for the annual *Safe Havens Conference* this year, <http://rorelsernasmuseum.se/publikationer/safe-havens-2/>. We very much regret this, as the wonderful interaction between participants at the Safe Havens meetings over the years have contributed to amazing collaborations and new friendships. We will meet this year however, through digital resources. Right now the team is busy looking at the best ways of organizing this global meeting in digital form in December 2020.

As we rise up to the challenge of the present times, let's not forget that the artists, writers, journalists and scholars around the world were not safe before the pandemic struck, and they are certainly not likely to be any safer from oppression, persecution and censorship than they were before especially now that many governments are applying 'state of emergency' to have a tighter grip on their populations.

This is one of the matters we will explore at the webinar *Safe Havens – Global Stream* in December 2020. Issues related to confinement are well known to artists and journalists around the world, who are political prisoners, restricted from leaving their homes, their regions and their countries, and censored or even

banned from practising their art in their regions. Perhaps the Covid -19 situation has opened people's minds to an experience which has long been common to artists at risk.

After the (northern) summer we will send out more information on how the Safe Havens-conference will be organized later this year in December between the headquarters in Malmö, the international steering group and the many stakeholders and collaboration partners globally.

Presently, however, we will begin with a series of events, leading up to the actual conference in December. Urgent situations, such as the case of the imprisoned Egyptian artists involved in the Balaha music video described below, arise on a daily basis and we are pleased to be able to launch a streamed programming series under the concept of *Safe Havens: Freedom Talks @MoM*, from the Museum of Movements in Malmö, Sweden.

Our new programming series **Safe Havens Freedom Talks @MoM** is closely connected to the annual Safe Havens conference **The Freedom Talks @MoM** series will once a month focus on issues regarding threats towards artistic freedom, free press and intangible heritage. Guests in the Freedom Talks @MoM series are extremely knowledgeable and prolific actors in the global Arts Rights Justice sector - fighting for artistic freedom.

You will be able to watch streamed ver-

sions of the talks monthly through our website and social media channels, and gradually we will open for an audience and on-site participants when the Covid-19 risks and restrictions are over. Keep your eyes open on our channels for updates.

SAFE HAVENS – FREEDOM TALKS @MoM
#1 – 2020; Ramy Essam and The Balaha Case

Friday, June 5 from 13:00 CET

Meet **Ramy Essam**, notable rock musician, human rights defender and an important voice in the Egyptian revolution, in conversation on the Balaha case with **Alfons Karabuda**, president of UNESCO founded International Music Council (IMC), **Andra Matei**, Director of Avant-Garde Lawyers – Defending Artists, **Sanni Kahilainen**, campaign lead and with **Ole Reitov**, consultant and founder of Freemuse as the moderator.

The music video Balaha and a new campaign video for Shady Habash, produced together with artist Ganzeer will be screened in the context of the conversation and you will be able to ask questions through social media.

THE BALAHA CASE

In February 2018 Egyptian artist Ramy Essam released a song and music video, Balaha. Lyricist of the song, poet Galal El-Behairy and Ramy's former social media expert Mustafa Gamal have been imprisoned in Egypt since. Director of the music video Shady Habash died in custody after being jailed for almost 800 days.

Shady Habash

After almost 800 days in prison, photographer and music video director Shady Habash died in Tora Prison, Cairo, on May 1st 2020. The death is believed to have

been caused by the failure of prison authorities to ensure Shady with timely access to a doctor and suitable healthcare. Shady was imprisoned since March 2018, because of directing the music video for Egyptian artist Ramy Essam's song Balaha. Shady didn't have anything to do with the content of the song. As an award-winning filmmaker Shady was constantly working on Middle Eastern projects, and Balaha was just one of the many music videos that Shady directed in his career.

GALAL EL-BEHAIRY

On 31st of July 2018, Galal El-Behairy was sentenced to 3 years on prison and a 10 000 L.E. fine by the Military Court in Cairo, for his unpublished book of poetry, The Finest Women On Earth. Galal also faced charges in a Civilian Court case concerning Balaha, which he has been released from. However, he remains imprisoned, having been sentenced already in the Military Court.

MUSTAFA GAMAL

Mustafa Gamal has nothing to do with Balaha. As a social media expert, he has helped many Egyptian artists with their social media platforms. One of his clients in 2015 was Ramy Essam – he only certified Ramy's fan page on Facebook, and this was the only connection between him and Ramy. When the song was released in 2018, he and Ramy had not been in touch since 2015. We are pleased to announce that Egyptian designer Mustafa Gamal has been ordered released from pre-trial detention in Egypt earlier this week.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS



Rock artist and human rights defender **Ramy Essam** is considered to be one of the loudest voices of today. His resilient journey from the hub of the Egyptian revolution to the international stages has included viral hits and awards as well as moments of struggle. With his background in being the voice of the streets of his country, Ramy today stands for social justice and human rights worldwide. In February 2018 Ramy released a song and music video *Balaha* aiming to raise discussion on the violence, oppression and corruption in Egypt. The video went viral with over millions of views in just days, causing controversy. Since then, Ramy's colleagues as well as others associated with him have been imprisoned, and Ramy himself has had an arrest warrant. *Photo: Patrick Fore*



Sanni Kahilainen has been coordinating the campaigning and communications around the *Balaha* case since March 2018. As the Head of Communications of the Finnish Musicians Union and Secretary General of the Finnish Music Council, she works with e.g. communications, human rights and Safe Haven musicians both locally and internationally. Having a background in ethnomusicology, sociology and gender studies, she is passionate about equality, musicians' rights and freedom of expression.



Andra Matei is a human rights lawyer specializing in freedom of expression. From 2012 to 2016, Andra practiced at the European Court of Human Rights where she assessed ways in which national judicial authorities upheld the rights of applicants in hundreds of cases dealing with freedom of expression, fair trial and the right to privacy, among others. In 2016 Andra designed and delivered the first series of courses on the right to freedom of artistic expression for the lawyers of the Registry of the Strasbourg Court. She is the creator of "*Brancusi v US*", a trial reenactment that asked the question "what is art and who defines it" and first-of-its-kind event performed in the hearing room of the Strasbourg Court with a cast of lawyers and judges. In 2017 Andra founded the Speak Truth to Power Project, a platform which uses theatre and role-play to challenge legal professionals in the human rights field to reflect on their own work from the victim's perspective. In 2018, Andra founded Avant-Garde Lawyers, a global network of lawyers delivering disadvantaged artists from all over the world with specialized and tailored legal support to protect their freedoms and secure justice. For each client, AGL creates a unique team comprised of both local and international lawyers, legal and art experts, researchers, and translators. With each case, AGL aims to offer an instrument that will impact not only the individual artist, but that goes beyond and is part of a broader strategy to raise the legal profile of artists. Alongside legal practice, Andra has lectured in human rights, comparative constitutional law, and freedom of expression at the Paris Bar School, the Global Campus of Human Rights in Venice, Pau University and NYU in Paris.



Ole Reitov is a global human rights defender, speaker, moderator, journalist and independent consultant. In 1999, he co-founded Freemuse, and acted as Freemuse Executive Director 2013-2017. In this period, he was the Freemuse representative to the UN Human Rights Council and even served as expert consultant to the UN Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights, Ms. Farida Shaheed. He was the first person to be appointed 2005 UNESCO Convention Expert on artistic freedom in 2015. His mandate has been renewed from 2019-2022. Coming from a background as cultural journalist with particular focus on music and cultural policy, he worked globally in for three decades in almost 50 countries for the Danish National Broadcasting (DR). He was co-organiser of Ramy Essam's last concert in Cairo in 2014.



Alfons Karabuda, born 2 December 1967 in Stockholm, Sweden, is a Swedish composer and EU cultural politics personality. Karabuda is the president of IMC (International Music Council) ECSA (European Composer and Songwriter Alliance), SKAP (the

Swedish Association of Composers, Songwriters & Lyricists). He was expert in the field of artistic rights to the UN Human Rights Council in producing the first ever UNHRC report on artistic rights in 2013. Karabuda is chair of Musiksverige (Music Sweden) and member of the board of The Royal College of Music in Stockholm and STIM (The Swedish Performing Rights Society). Karabuda is also chair of the Polar Music Prize Award Committee. As the president of ECSA, Karabuda has been a driving force in getting the EU to decide on the new Copyright Directive in 2019 and the formation of a European-American collaboration between the music creator organisations ECSA and SGA (Songwriters Guild of America). The organisations have focused on the global issues of artistic rights, free speech and authors' rights (in America, copyright), in joint actions such as the Fair Trade Music Initiative and 2019 promoting a legal entity with authors in governance to administer online mechanical rights in the US. As a member of the executive board of STIM, and during 2014 as acting CEO, Karabuda has focused on developing international strategy, improving distribution systems and adjusting the organization to the new EU directive on collective rights management. Karabuda's parents, Günes and Barbro Karabuda, were journalists and filmmakers. His sister Denize Karabuda is an actor and director. The Karabuda children grew up traveling during their parents' many assignments, to which Karabuda himself credits his cultural political involvement. Karabuda works in the areas of TV, film and theatre through his publishing company Naomi Musikförlag & Filmproduktion. Among his customers are SVT, SR, BBC, Zentropa and Stockholms Stadsteater.

About SAFE HAVENS

The annual *Safe Havens conference* is a global network meeting between artists, activists, NGO:s, lawyers and inter- governmental organizations - sometimes referred to as the Arts Rights Justice sector, on topics related to artistic freedom and the support to artists, writers and other culture producers who face threats, persecution and censorship. The conference has its starting point in a human rights perspective and aims to be a meeting place for human rights defenders within the arts and academia as a way to make visible cultural operators. The conference is organized in a process of collaboration between different cultural operators and organizations, where focus is directed on the connection between culture and human rights. Furthermore, the conference is a way of visualizing the significant position of culture and academia in human rights advocacy and moving towards sharing and using knowledge between cultural operators, scholars and major human rights and cultural organizations.

The conference has been held annually in Malmö, Sweden, since 2013, but starting with the Safe Havens conference 2019 it was planned to be on a global tour for at least three years before returning to Malmö. However due to the current Covid -19 situation the 2020 conference will be a webinar with participants around the world, with its base at the Museum of Movements (MoM) in Malmö and in close

collaboration with the international steering group: Safemuse, ARC, HART, Fristad Malmö and International Arts Rights Justice Advisors.

Over the years, the Safe Havens conference has been arranged in various collaborations, with the support of- or in partnership between funders and organizations such as the *Nordic Council of Ministers, the Swedish Ministry of Culture, the Swedish Arts Council, Nordic Culture Point, the Region of Skåne, Amnesty, PEN-America, SafeMUSE, Seriefrämjandet, City of Cape Town, Swedish Institute, Norwegian and Swedish Foreign Offices, Fritt Ord, and is hosted by the Museum of Movements.*