

16. January 2020

## Dear members and friends of the EOA!

With the start of 2020 we can look back on another year of stimulating outsider art events. The highlights include:

The small and focussed exhibition “The Outside and the Inside” shown at the Lightbox Gallery in Woking near London from November to January. Organised by the charity *Outside In* it looked at the different forms of motivation behind outsider art.

An important contribution to the transnational awareness of this special kind of creativity took place at the EU Parliament in Brussels in October. The exhibition and event “Travel Agency”, was organized by the Scandinavian cooperation NOA (which consists of Kettuki, Kaarisilta, Art without borders, INUTI and GAIA Museum).

From February to June, the *Kunstforum* in Vienna showed “Flying High: Künstlerinnen der Art brut”, the largest exhibition of female outsider artists held so far.

Maybe the time has come for a queer outsider art overview? The last exhibitions about Ovariaci at the *Prinzhorn Collection* in Heidelberg, and now on show at the *Museum im Lagerhaus* in St. Gallen, could be seen as steps in that direction. It would be interesting to see projects about other important contemporary topics in our societies reflected by outsider artists, i.e. the debate about climate change.

The *Outsider Art Fair* in Paris, took place as usual in October, some new organisations attended including *Outsider Ville* from St Petersburg and the supported studio *Kunstraum* from Nuremberg. The board of the EOA held its second annual meeting at the fair and the committee gave a presentation on the aims of the EOA.

Our annual EOA conference and assembly took place in May and was a great success. INUTI organised the event and it was held at different venues in and around Stockholm. It was the EOA’s 10<sup>th</sup> conference which was celebrated with a party in Sala, a fun event which nobody participating will ever forget! The conference’s theme was “E-Quality” and was explored through a well-balanced program of lectures, panels and presentations which included a lot of artists and their artworks. Memorable also were the tours to outsider art venues in Stockholm and its vicinities.

For the second time, the whole event was thoroughly evaluated with questionnaires and interviews to provide an insight into how the conference was received. Kate Davey of *Outside In* wrote an excellent review of the whole event:  
<https://outsidein.org.uk/news/review-the-european-outsider-art-association-conference-2019/>

We are happy to announce that a few more organizations joined the EOA in 2019. A warm welcome to “Art Brut Biennale”/Netherlands, “List an Landamæra”/Iceland,

“Bilbao Formarte”/Spain, Pertti’s Choice Outsider Art Gallery & Agency/Finland, Casa dell’Art Brut/Italy, Galleria GliAcrobati/Italy, Culture and Quality/Sweden, Kondas Centre of Naïve Art/Estonia, Garvald Edinburgh/Scotland, Outsiderville/Russia, KUNSTRAUM/Germany and Croatian Museum of Naïve Art/Croatia! Several individual members joined as well. The more we are the more we can jointly do for outsider art in Europe.

The next EOA conference, on the topic “Outsider Art and Tradition”, will take place on Saturday, the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 at the *Museum im Lagerhaus* in St Gallen. It will look at different contexts in which outsider art is understood all over the world. The event is less focussed on including outsider artists in the event and more focussed on an academic perspective on outsider art. The focus has changed to balance different interests of EOA members which includes curators, authors and academics.

The conference is preceded by a tour program of outsider art related sites on the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> and followed by the general assembly on Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup>. The tour program prior to the conference will take us to Zürich, Winterthur, Wil and other places in Switzerland to see impressive outsider art environments, a folk art museum, and a unique private collection of art produced by patients with mental health issues. Do not miss these tours! They are a great way to find out more about outsider art and to meet and network with professionals in the field.

I hope to see many of you in St Gallen this year and look forward to finding out about all your many activities in 2020.

Sincerely,

Thomas Röske  
President of EOA

EUROPEAN **OUTSIDER ART** ASSOCIATION