

## QUATTROLOGE 20 PLUS – Sochi 2015

Twenty years ago, in 1995, the first QUATTROLOGE festival took place in Sochi. Since then, more than 100 artists from the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan area (Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar) and from Sochi in Russia have cooperated on various cultural projects within the German-Russian cultural exchange project QUATTROLOGE. Right from the beginning, the international cultural exchange QUATTROLOGE covered various genres. In addition to art and culture, the meetings always provided numerous opportunities for discussions and for an exchange of ideas.

In November 2015, 5 artists and 12 art lovers from the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan area (Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar) participated in the QUATTROLOGE 20PLUS festival on the Black Sea coast.

From November 2 to 6, 2015, there were 8 public cultural events held at different locations. These events were attended by more than 1000 persons and were described extensively in the print media as well in television programs.

The supporting program is also of paramount importance, particularly at QUATTROLOGE festivals. It encourages artists and guests to share their views, and gives visitors the opportunity to learn about the country and its people, for example during excursions to the Caucasus, to Krasnaja Poljana, to the Olympic Village, and to the tea plantations of Dagomys. During a hike to the Achun and to the Prometheus Rock with Sergej Jagupov, we learned about the multicultural history of the Black Sea coast. Visits to the ateliers of Olga Egorova, Oleg Kortschagin, Elena Kremena, and Sergej Sorokin gave us insight into what the support of culture means in Sochi in 2015. The group was also pleased to have the opportunity to talk with the civil rights activist Semjon Simonov (Memorial Sochi). Civil society organizations do not have an easy time in Russia, but some improvements have been made. Simonov emphasized that Memorial relies on continuity and tries to avoid confrontation. A focus of the work has been and continues to be efforts on behalf of the rights of migrant workers who have been working at the building sites since the Olympic Games in Sochi. Police monitoring by the small group of civil rights activists in Sochi has had a noticeably positive influence on the behavior of the police. The professor, journalist, and curator Tanja Ukolova presented short films by Michail Messteskij and Timofej Zhalnin in the alternative culture room PRAXIS, a socio-cultural center in Sochi. The film „Milana“ was shot at the Youth Art School (Jugendkunstschule). Diana Samartscheva and Polina Lukjantschenko documented the everyday life of a physically challenged girl in Sochi. The QUATTROLOGE 20PLUS culture program was very intense: Oleg Kortschagin, Igor Maksimenko and Barbara Straube are showing „Rhythmic Parallels“ at the Adler Airport in Sochi until December 2015. The title refers to parallels that might not be obvious at first sight, but that are felt „rhythmically“. The title of the exhibition, which was opened on the same day and which will run in the Sochi Art Museum until the end of November, also refers to a meeting place for German and Russian artists who want to sound out their opportunities and limits. A group of artists (Barbara Straube, Igor Maksimenko, Olga Chisanova, and Olga Egorova) explore the „Horizons of the Movement“ with photographs, sculptures, video art, and painting. The concept has proven to be successful. The public was enthusiastic about the „Movement“ in the museum and was interested in the other events. Performances, literature and music as well as paintings, were offered in the Art House (Kunsthau). The program „Howdo youdo Mister [M@jakowski?](#)“ of Daniil Da, Bernd Köhler and Claus Boesser-Ferrari focused on a revolutionary writer of the twenties who is currently very popular again in Russia. In addition to painting, photography, and performance, QUATTROLOGE always also has a musical component. The festival this year included some of the original musicians - Alexej Sobol, a prominent musician in Sochi, and Claus Boesser-Ferrari; both were amongst the founders of the cultural exchange project twenty years ago. Vitalij Filimonow, Alexander Prisiach, Sergej Semjanuchin and Dmitrij Zwerianishwili were also involved right from the beginning. Claus Boesser-Ferrari, who insisted on participating in the festival in Sochi between performances in Norway and Mexico, commented: “It is a great joy to play together with such fantastic musicians. We were able to improvise together marvellously.”

Dr. Lida von Mengden, curator from the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan area (Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar), was particularly impressed by the interaction of the arts. "it was exceptional how the musicians could adapt to one another and to the art of Igor Maksimenko, creating a unique work of art." After twenty years of cultural exchange, the interest in new discoveries has not faded, and the ability to communicate has reached new heights. The distance that was noticeable in the first years has almost disappeared. Despite all differences, there are more points in common. It is to be expected that Majakowski texts would be of interest to Russian artists. The fun that Jörg Fischer, Monika-Margret Steger and Olga Odischarova had while performing the story of „The Youth who went Forth to Learn what Fear Was“ („Von einem der auszog das Fürchten zu lernen!“) spread to an enthusiastic public. Oleg Kortschagin comments: "QUATTROLOGE is a cultural event, but also an example of popular diplomacy. I am very pleased that these relationships have improved over the last 20 years. There are always new participants as well as those who have been part of QUATTROLOGE for 20 years. I hope that we can continue with our project". Olga Egorova sums up the resumé of the Russian artists : „We have learned a lot from each other, enjoyed a lot of art, and had a lot of fun together. “ Eleonore Hefner, spiritus rector on the German side, comments: “Such exciting and creative interaction as in 2015 is very rare! I am looking forward to its follow-up in Germany in November 2016!“

A big Thank You to all the sponsors and supporters of QUATTROLOGE 20plus.

In Sochi the festival was supported by Alexandra Anpilogova (Management / PR of the international airport of Sochi), Michail Barsykin (director of the alternative culture room Praxis), Peter Chrisanov (director of the Sochi Art Museum), Lidija Kusmina (director of the Art School of Sochi) and Jurij Prokatov (chairman of the art federation of the Art House of Sochi).

Jana Korsun (municipal administration of Sochi) and Vladimir Pyatin (Russian Consul General in Bonn) helped with the invitations and visas.

On the German side, QUATTROLOGE 20 Plus was supported by the Palatinate District Association (Bezirksverband Pfalz) and the Ministry for Science, Research and Art of Baden-Wuerttemberg (Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst Baden-Württemberg). Donations were received from RITTER SPORT and from private persons.

#### Organization

At the Russian end, the festival was organized by Olga Egorova, Oleg Kortschagin and Alexej Sobol, at the German end by Eleonore Hefner, Kultur Rhein Neckar e.V. Advisory assistance: Julia Smagina.

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