



16-17 October 2015 Part

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1. Schedule Day 1-October 16 2016

09:00-09:20 Welcome by Akram Hesso, Prime Minister of Canton Cizîre, Rojava

09:20-09:50 Jonas Staal, artist and founder of the New World Summit

Block I: Democratic Confederalism

09:50-10:00 Welcome by chair Judy Osse 10:00-10:40 Amina Osse (Democratic Unity Party, PYD) 10:40-11:20 Janet Biehl (political writer) 11:20-12:00 Audience Questions

12:00-13:00 Lunch Break

Block II: Gender Equality

13:00-13:10 Welcome by chair Judy Osse 13:10-13:50 Amina Omar (Foundation of Free Women, Weqfa Jina Azad) 13:50-14:30 Natalie McGarry (Scottish National Party, SNP) 14:30-15:10 Audience Questions

15:10-15:40 Break

Block III: Secularism

15:40-15:50

elcome by chair Judy Osse 15:50-16:30 Akram Mahshosh (Legislative Council Cizîre) 16:30-17:10 Ilena Saturay (National Democratic Movement of the Philippines) 17:10-17:50 Audience questions

17:50-18:20 Break

Block IV: Self-Defense

18:20-18:30 Welcome by chair Judy Osse 18:30-19:10 Hussein Shawish (People's Protection Units, YPG) 19:10-19:50 Sana Soleiman Elmansouri (World Amazigh Congress) 19:50-20:30 Audience Questions

Day 2-October 17 2016

09:00-09:20 Welcome by co-mayor of Derîk, Hussein Heso

Block V: Communalism

09:20-09:30 Welcome by chair Judy Osse 09:30-10:10 Hadiya Yousef, (Movement for a Democratic Society, Tev-Dem) 10:10-10:50 Quim Arrufat (Popular Unity Candidacy, CUP) 10:50-11:30 Audience Questions

Block VI: Social Ecology

11:30-11:40 Welcome by chair Judy Osse

11:40-12:20 Ziyad Rustum (Deputy Minister of Environment and Archeaology, Canton Cizîre)

12:20-13:20 Lunch Break

13:20-14:00 Katerin Mendez (Feminist Initiative, FI) 14:00-14:40 Audience questions

Reflections of the delegation

14:40-15:30 Reflections

<u>Closing words at the construction</u> <u>site of the new parliament</u>

16:00-18:00 Closing words

2. Program Introduction

Amidst the civil war of Syria, Kurdish revolutionaries together with Assyrian, Arab and other peoples of the region declared the autonomy of Rojava. Together, they drafted what they called their collective "Social Contract."

Ever since, the peoples of Rojava have created local assemblies that govern their own neighborhoods and cities, enacted laws that demand gender-equal representation in all areas of public life, initiated workers cooperatives and build new universities while its people's and women's protection units (YPG/J) defend the region against continuous attacks of the Islamic State.

Rather than demanding statehood, the Rojava Revolution follows the ideals of "democratic confederalism," or what revolutionary leader Abdullah Öcalan has called "democracy without the state." Rejecting the notion of the state as an imperialist and capitalist construction, he instead proposes decentralized democratic structures that recognize the political, cultural and religious diversity in the region.

The program of this 5th New World Summit entitled "Stateless Democracy" is divided in six subsequent thematic blocks that form the core principles of Rojava's autonomous political structure of self-administration, namely Democratic Confederalism, Gender-Equality, Secularism, Self-Defense, Communalism and Social Ecology. Throughout this New World Summit program we will explore the theory and practice of stateless democracy, and seek for parallels with other international autonomist and independentist organizations

DAY I

Block I: Democratic Confederalism

The unique political model that has been established in Rojava from 2012 onwards is called "democratic confederalism," and was theoretically developed by revolutionary Abdullah Öcalan. He describes this model as a form of "democracy without the state." This model of stateless democracy takes notions of self-government, voluntary association, cultural and religious diversity, gender equality and communal economy as its points of departure.

This first block brings together Amina Osse, representative of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Rojava and co-initiator of this New World Summit, and political writer Janet Biehl who extensively researched models of assembly-based democracy together with her collaborator Murray Bookchin, whom is referenced by Öcalan as an important inspiration for his political vision.

Osse and Biehl will discuss the history and daily practice of the model of democratic confederalism, its importance for the region and potential to inspire new, transnationalist democratic movements.

Block II: Gender-Equality

Women revolutionaries such as Sakine Cansiz played important roles within the revolutionary Kurdish movement from its very beginning and co-founded many of its organizations and institutions. The critique on patriarchy is one of the ideological foundations of the Rojava Revolution. Practically, the revolution has sought to enforce gender equality on all levels: from the sphere of politics, the economy and the need for self-defense.

This second block brings together Amina Omar of the Foundation of Free Women (Weqfa Jina Azad) in canton Cizîre in Rojava and Natalie McGarry, representative of the Scottish National Party (SNP) as well as its allied organization "Women for Independence."

Omar and McGarry will discuss the role of the women's movement in their respective organizations, and the influence these have had in defining new models of political autonomy and self-governance.

Block III: Secularism

While diversity in terms of language, political convictions and religious beliefs are protected and celebrated as part of the pluriformity in the region, the Social Contract protects the rights of children and women in particular through a secular system. Women have demanded and have been quaranteed equal participation in political life, equal rights within marriages and in relation to dowries and heritage, while children are protected from arranged marriages. Faced with the violent patriarchy and fundamentalism in the form of the Islamic State, a pluriform but principled system of secular self-governance is a key pillar of the **Rojava Revolution.**

This third block brings together Akram

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Mashosh of the Legislative Council of canton Cizîre in Rojava and Ilena Saturay of the National Democratic Movement of the Philippines.

Mahshosh and Saturay will discuss the understanding of secularism within their respective movements, and explain its importance in constructing political systems that guarantee broad and diverse alliances.

Block IV: Self-Defense

In the work of revolutionaries Öcalan and Cansiz, the concept of "self-defense" is crucial. This does not just refer to the right to armed struggle in response to military campaigns against Kurdish peoples, such as are perpetrated by the Turkish regime. In relation to the women's movement for example, self-defense also refers to the need to self-organize and self-educate to gain independence and women and an equal position in society. Self-defense is both about the mentality and the physical right to protect oneself.

This fourth block brings together Hussein Shawish of the People's Protection Units in Rojava, with Sana Soleman Elmansouri of the transnational World Amazigh Congress.

Shawish and Elmansouri will discuss the different understandings of the notion of self-defense in their respective movements.

DAY II

Block V: Communalism

The 1936-7 revolution in Catalunya, in present-day Spain, where revolutionaries of the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification (POUM) declared their political and economic autonomy while rejecting statehood is still one of the foundational moments in the history of establishing communalism. The **POUM revolutionaries fought against** the Stalinist Soviet army as well as against the fascist army of Franco in self-organized battalions and implemented workers self-management in Catalunya's industry. Often this communalist revolution has been compared to the revolution of Rojava, which fights the regime of Assad and the militia of the Islamic State while at the same time building a new political and economical model of society.

This fifth block brings together Hadiya Yousef of the Movement for a Democratic Society in Rojava and Quim Arrufat, politician of the Popular Unity party (CUP) in Catalunya.

Yousef and Arrufat will discuss the historical background of the notion of communalism, and compare the way the term is put to practice in the autonomists movements of Rojava and Catalunya today.

Block VI: Social Ecology

Revolutionary Abdullah Öcalan describes the model of stateless democracy as a step towards a new "ecology of freedom." With the term ecology he refers to the importance to defend and protect our natural environment, but also to an ecology of social relations. Öcalan's conviction is that stateless democracy as a self-governing society that enforces gender equality and develops communal forms of economy can change the very ecology of human relations. Öcalan's proposes to move from the paradigm of capitalist modernity to what he refers to as democratic modernity.

This sixth block brings together Deputy-Minister for the Environment in canton Cizîre in Rojava, Ziad Rustom, and Katerin Mendez, politician of the Feminist Initiative (FI) party in Sweden.

Rustom and Mendez will discuss the meaning of the notion of ecology in their respective movements, and discuss which institutional changes and transformations are necessary to bring about.

3. Speakers

<u>Quim Arrufat</u> Popular Unity Candidacy (CUP), Catalonia

The Catalan autonomist movement supports the independence of Catalonia from Spain and France. In 1932 Catalonia was granted a statute of autonomy, which lasted until the Spanish Civil War and the Franco dictatorship. In this period the 1936-7 revolution manifested, during which armed libertarian-socialist organizations famously resisted Franco's rule as well as the Stalinist army, declaring parts of Catalonia under communalist self-rule. Following Franco's death Catalan autonomy was restored in 1977. One of today's leading autonomist groups is the Popular Unity Candidacy (Candidatura d'Unitat Popular, CUP) which is made up of local assemblies representing towns and neighborhoods. The highly decentralized nature of the party stems from a belief in eco-socialism and libertarian socialism. The importance given to municipal assemblies is also meant to avoid the hierarchical organization of most traditional political parties. During the most recent elections the CUP won 10 of 135 seats in the Catalan parliament.

Quim Arrufat is a Member of the Catalunyan Parliament for the Popular Unity Candidacy (CUP). He studied political science and public administration and has been working for the International Centre for Minorities CIEMEN. He has been an active advocate for the right of

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self-determination at the World Social Forum and the Human Rights Council of the UN.

<u>Janet Biehl</u> United States

Janet Biehl is a political writer and academic who developed the notions of libertarian municipalism and social ecology. From 1987 to 2000 Biehl and the American anarchist and libertarian socialist Murray Bookchin co-wrote and co-published the theoretical newsletter Left Green Perspectives. She is the editor and compiler of The Murray Bookchin Reader (1997); the author of The Politics of Social Ecology: Libertarian Municipalism (1998) and Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics (1991): and coauthor (with Peter Staudenmaier) of Ecofascism: Lessons from the German Experience (1995). Together with Murray Bookchin, she developed the political theories on notions such as confederalism and municipalism that Abdullah Öcalan credited as one of his inspirations in his development of the theory of democratic confederalism. In October 2015 her new book Ecology or Catastrophy. The Life of Murray Bookchin comes out at **Oxford University Press.**

In the last years, Biehl has been a prominent voice in congresses and debates on the Rojava Revolution. In 2014, she visited Rojava for the first time as part of an academic delegation, after which she wrote extensively on its models of cooperative economy and education. A series of watercolors she made during the travel were sold in an online auction with the profits donated to women's organizations in the region.

<u>Sana Soleman Elmansouri</u> World Amazigh Congress, United Kingdom/Libya

The Amazigh inhabit a vast territory in North Africa which stretches from the Oasis of Siwa in Egypt, through Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, the Canary Islands and the Sahara desert to the north of Niger, Mali, and Burkina-Faso. Amazighism is a political-cultural movement of ethnic, geographic, or cultural nationalism, started mainly in Kabylia, Algeria, and in Morocco and later spread to the rest of Amazigh countries in North Africa. In northern Mali, the Amazigh dominated Coordination of Azawadian Movements established the de-facto independent state Azawad in 2012. In post-Ghaddafi Libya the Amazigh fight for greater inclusion within the Libyan state, but they have been threatened severely by the larger nationalist party as well as radical Islamist militants. As an international organization the World Amazigh Congress aims to protect and promote awareness of the repression of Amazigh people's identity and culture across North Africa.

Sana Soleman Elmansouri is a representative of the World Amazigh Congress, Amazigh activist, journalist and television presenter, well known to be the first Amazigh television presenter in Libya and the first to present shows in the Amazigh language. She is an advocate for Amazigh and 10 Rojava Program

women's rights in Libya and internationally. During the Libyan uprising in 2011 she presented "Libya, Al Nass' (Libya, the People).

<u>Akram Mahshosh</u> Legislative Council, Canton Cizîre, Rojava

The legislative foundation of the **Democratic Self-Administration** in Rojava is located in the Social Contract, which was written by all the peoples of the region with the declaration of autonomy in 2012. Its first page states, "In pursuit of freedom, justice, dignity, and democracy and led by principles of equality and environmental sustainability, the Charter proclaims a new social contract, based upon mutual and peaceful co-existence and understanding between all strands of society. It protects fundamental human rights and liberties and reaffirms the peoples' right to self-determination." Crucial aspects of the contract revolve around the notion of secularism, and include the separation of religion from the political sphere, the banning marriages under the age of eighteen years, the banning of female circumcision and polygamy. and securing non-discrimination and equality between men and women, while recognizing the cultural, religious and political diversity of the region, amongst others through the recognition of all languages in the region, such as Arabic, Kurdish and Syrian.

Mhashosh is an elected member of the Legislative Council of the Cizîre canton of Rojava

<u>Natalie McGarry</u> Scottish National Party (SNP), Scotland

Scottish independence is a political aim of some political parties, advocacy groups, and individuals in Scotland (which is a country of the United Kingdom) for the country to become an independent sovereign state. A national referendum was held in Scotland on 18 September 2014. Voters were asked to answer either "Yes" or "No" to the question: "Should Scotland be an independent country?" 55.3% of voters answered "No" and 44.7% answered "Yes", with a voter turnout of 84.5%. A leading force in organizing the referendum was the Scottish National Party (Pàrtaidh Nàiseanta na h-Alba, SNP), a Scottish nationalist and socialdemocratic political party in Scotland. The SNP supports and campaigns for Scottish independence. It is the third-largest political party by membership in the United Kingdom, as well as by overall representation in the House of Commons, behind the Labour Party and the Conservative Party, and is the largest party in Scotland, where it dominates both the Scottish Parliament and the country's parliamentary delegation to the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Its leader, Nicola Sturgeon, is the current First Minister of Scotland, The SNP further has seats in municipalities, in the British parliament as well as the parliament of the European Union.

Natalie McGarry is a Member of Parliament in Westminster for the Scottish National Party as a representative of Glasgow East. After studying Law, she has spent most of her working life in the voluntary sector. In the time leading up to the Referendum on Scottish Independence in 2014 she cofounded Women for Independence, an organization not only promoting Scottish Independence but also social equality and women's participation in politics.

<u>Katerin Mendez</u> Feminist Initiative (FI), Sweden

Feminist Initiative (Feministiskt initiativ, FI) is a feminist political party in Sweden formed in 2005. While the government of Sweden claims to have made gender equality into one of its key objective', FI has continued to emphasize the deeply engrained culture of patriarchy in all spheres of social life. The party further considers feminist politics as the crucial approach to a variety of political and social issues, and emphasizes the importance of solidarity with minorities, refugees and opposition to racism. The party defends an open border policy in the European Union, demands demilitarization and a control mechanism throughout the European Union to protect citizens from violence and (sexual) exploitation. Feminist Initiative demands gender equality in all aspects of life, both in the domain of political representation as well as labor and social life. The party further strives for a feminist ecology, which

relates both to the changing of the ecology of social relations within society as well as the protection of nature and the fighting of climate change. Feminist Initiative holds seats in many municipalities of Sweden as well as in the European parliament.

Katerin Mendez is a Member of the Malmö City Council for Feminist Initiative. She further works as a social worker and high school councillor.

Amina Omar

Foundation of Free Women, Weqfa Jina Azad, Rojava

The Rojava Revolution often refers to itself as a 'women's revolution', due to prominent role of women as fighters as well as political representatives and organizers from 2011 on. This has translated in fully autonomous women's cooperatives, political parties and self-defense organizations - the latter in the form of the Women's Protection Units (YPJ). There are quota established for women's participation in politics and all parties have a system of co-presidencies, meaning that there is always a female and male representative. These measures in essence are a form of self-defense against the culture of patriarchy, which the Kurdish women's movement has identified as inherently intertwined with the culture of capitalism and the nationstate. The women's movement claims the right to defend themselves both in a mental and physical sense against the abuses of patriarchy. In Rojava, this can be seen in the form of the

autonomous YPJ fighting the ultrapatriarchal and violent culture of the Islamic State, but also in the manifold academies and women's studies called "Jineology" (Science of Women) that strengthen the mental, social and political awareness of the role of women throughout history.

Omar is a representative of the Foundation of Free Women, Weqfa Jina Azad, and the Minister of Women's Affairs of Canton Cizîre, Rojava. The Foundation of Free Women develops and supports projects with the goal to improve the economic, social and political position of women within Rojava.

<u>Amina Osse</u> Democratic Union Party (PYD), Rojava

The Democratic Union Party (PYD) is a political party established in 2003 by Kurdish activists in Rojava. The PYD came under intensified persecution in the aftermath of the March 2004 Kurdish uprising across Rojava. The Syrian government saw the party as a particular threat due to its ability to mobilize large masses, and suspected it of organizing numerous demonstrations. With the outbreak of antigovernment demonstrations across Syria in early 2011, the PYD took a leading role in building the autonomous Democratic Self-Administration and building coalitions between the diverse peoples of the Rojava region. As part of the Movement for a Democratic Change (TEV-DEM) coalition, the PYD collaborates with other political

parties and grass roots movements in further developing self-rule in all domains of political, economic and social life.

Amina Osse is Deputy-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Cizîre canton of Rojava since 2014. Osse is a member of the party leadership of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) since 2012 and chair of the public relations office of the PYD. As such she represented the PYD in several international peace conferences, amongst others in the Syrian **Opposition Conferences in Cairo and** Moscow in the summer of 2015. Osse co-conceptualized the new parliament currently being built in the city of Derîk, Cezîre canton, in collaboration with the New World Summit.

Ziyad Rustum

Deputy Minister of Environment and Archeaology, Canton Cizîre, Rojava

Cezîre canton is the largest of three cantons in Rojava. As part of the ongoing Rojava campaign, its democratic autonomy was officially declared on 21 January 2014. Cezîre canton's population is composed of Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians-Syriacs and Armenians. While Kurdish, Arabic and Svriac-Aramaic are official languages, all communities have the right to teach and be taught in their native language. **Religions practiced in the canton** are Islam, Christianity and Yazidism. Between twenty to thirty percent of the canton's population is Christian of various churches and denominations. All four ethnic communities - Kurds. Arabs, Armenians and the Assyrians

- are represented in the canton's hundred and one-seat Legislative Assembly. Since the revolution of 2011, Cezîre has been the most stable part of Rojava, where one can witness the development of many new academic, educational and cultural institutions that recognize and promote the diverse and democratic ecology of the canton. Apart from an emphasis on social ecology, environmental development and the aim of creating a sustainable new society is a high priority, included in the Social Contract – the "constitution" of Rojava.

Ziad Rustom is Deputy Minister of the Environment and Archeology of the Cizîre canton of Rojava.

Ilena Saturay

National Democratic Movement of the Philippines, the Netherlands

What is today considered the National Democratic Movement of the Philippines consists of a variety of underground movements as well as (semi-)legal political parties and organizations with a strong leftist, Maoist signature. The National **Democratic Movement gained its** strength during the period of the USbacked Marcos dictatorship, from 1972 to 1986, as the Communist Party of the Philippines (founded in 1968) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (founded in 1969), rose to power in many localities throughout the country by mobilizing the peasant and worker populations by means of querrilla tactics. The Vietnam War had further fueled anger towards the ongoing colonial policies of the Americans

who, despite the formal independence of the Philippines in 1946, continued to control the country by supporting puppet regimes. Since the fall of the Marcos dictatorship, subsequent governments have continued to sell off land to foreign investors and their private militias, thus characterizing Filipino politics, in the words of leading revolutionary Jose Maria Sison as a "semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system under US imperialist control."

Ilena Saturay is a representative of the National Democratic Movement of the Philippines. Saturay is further an active organizer in several political and cultural groups, such as the Linganan Art and Culture Network, with an emphasis on social and political issues such as migrant rights, women rights and social justice. She is further a multimedia artist who involves her creative work to broaden her movement.

<u>Hussein Shawish</u> People's Protection Units (YPG), Rojava

The People's Protection Units (YPG) and Women's Protection Units (YPJ) are the self-defense forces of Rojava. Aligned under the Supreme Kurdish Committee they follow an internal democratic structure whereby spokespersons and commanders are directly elected by the fighters themselves. Since the start of the Syrian Civil War the YPG and YPJ have defended the people of Rojava from continuous threats from the fundamentalist Islamist organization Islamic State or "Daesh", most famously in the defense of the city of Kobanê and the rescue of Yazidi communities from Mount Siniar in South-Kurdistan in 2014. While the YPG and YPJ are aligned, the latter has its own command structure that is decided upon by the autonomous women's parties and councils in the region. Most recently, the YPG and YPJ were able to create a permanent corridor between the cantons of Cezîre and Kobanê. which had been separated by fighters of the Islamic State since the beginning of the revolution. At large, self-defense plays a crucial role in the autonomous region, especially in terms of strengthening women's communities, both in a physical and mental sense.

Hussein Shawish is a member and elected spokesperson of the YPG. Previously he served as the Deputy-Minister of Education of the Cirîze canton of Rojava.

<u>Hadiya Yousef</u> Movement for a Democratic Society, TEV-DEM, Rojava

The Movement for a Democratic Society (TEV-DEM) is a broad coalition of political parties and grass roots organizations that self-govern the autonomous region of Rojava. TEV-DEM is the largest and broadest political coalition in the region and includes organizations of people from different ethnicities and religions that strive for a decentralized self-organized society. Since 2012 TEV-DEM has established and supported committees, councils and cooperatives in neighborhoods and villages dealing with different social issues, such as economy, education, healthcare and women's rights. The representatives of the different community groups associated with the TEV-DEM come together in the "House of the People," the Mala Gel, which are located in villages or towns. TEV-DEM shares seats with the Kurdish National Council, another coalition in Rojava, within the overall coordinating political body of Rojava, the "Supreme Kurdish Council," which exists of thirty seats in total.

Yousef is the co-governor of the canton Cizîre of Rojava since 2014. Released from two and a half years of imprisonment under the Assad regime in 2012, she resumed her role as TEV-DEM representative. Yousef further holds a seat in the Supreme Kurdish Council on behalf of TEV-DEM.

Chair

Judy Osse

Judy Osse is the head of the coordinating body for NGO's and humanitarian aid in Canton Cizîre. Previously she worked in the National Kurdish Student Confederation and was the chair of the trade and industry department at the Center of Economic Development in Rojava.

4. Organization

The 5th New World Summit in Rojava is developed by the Democratic Self-Administration of Rojava in collaboration with the New World Summit.

The New World Summit is an artistic and political organization based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, founded by visual artist Jonas Staal in 2012. The New World Summit creates temporal parliaments and large scale international conferences hosting stateless political organizations that currently find themselves excluded from democracy. The first four summits took place in Berlin, Germany (2012), Leiden, the Netherlands (2012), Kochi, India (2013) and Brussels, Belgium (2014). The New World Summit worked with representatives of the Kurdish Women's Movement, the Basque Independence Movement, the National Liberation Movement of **Azawad and the National Democratic** Movement of the Philippines, and collaborates with international progressive lawyer and diplomatic groups. In 2013 the New World Summit founded its own academy in collaboration with BAK, Base for Contemporary Art in Utrecht, entitled the New World Academy. The latest work of the academv has been an English publication entitled Stateless Democracy (2014) with collected texts from the Kurdish Women's Movement.

www.newworldsummit.org

New World Summit Rojava team: **Conceptualized by: Sheruan Hassan** (PYD), Amina Osse (PYD) and **Jonas Staal: Production: Younes Bouadi; Project Coordination** International: Renée In der Maur; **Project Coordination Rojava: Ossama** Mohammad; Architectural design: Paul Kuipers; Visual identity: Remco van Bladel; Programming: Amina Osse, Renée In der Maur, and Jonas Staal; Urban planning: Hussein Adam, Deile Hamo; Construction and development: Tamer Kandal, Newzad Mohammed, Ibrahim Sado, Photography: Ernie Buts; Film: Rojava Film Commune, Michiel Landeweerd, and Ruben Hamelink: Press Officer: Cesar Majorana. Delegation coordination: Suzie Herman and Jannes Herman Mostert.

Partners:

- -Democratic Self-Administration Roiava
- -TEV-DEM
- -Democratic Union Party (PYD)
- -Yekitîya Star
- -Tev-Çand
- -Rojava Film Commune
- -Rohani TV
- -International Free Women Foundation
- -Free Women Foundation of Rojava
- -Kurdish Federation the Netherlands (FedKom)
- -Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)
- -BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht
- -Mondriaan Foundation
- -Center for Visual Art, Rotterdam

