

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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MILLER-ZILLMER FOUNDATION

MILLER-ZILLMER FOUNDATION

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Miller-Zillmer Foundation

c/o GUTES STIFTEN GmbH

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The background is a complex, abstract composition. In the upper left, there is a stylized, high-contrast face in profile, rendered in shades of orange, red, and brown. The face has a large, expressive eye and a prominent nose. Below and around the face are various geometric shapes, including triangles, rectangles, and irregular polygons, in a palette of muted colors like sage green, dusty rose, ochre, and slate blue. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-20th-century abstract art or a collage.

“THINKING WITHOUT A BANISTER”

Hannah Arendt

The Life of the
Mind (posthum
published 1978)

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WELCOME

2025

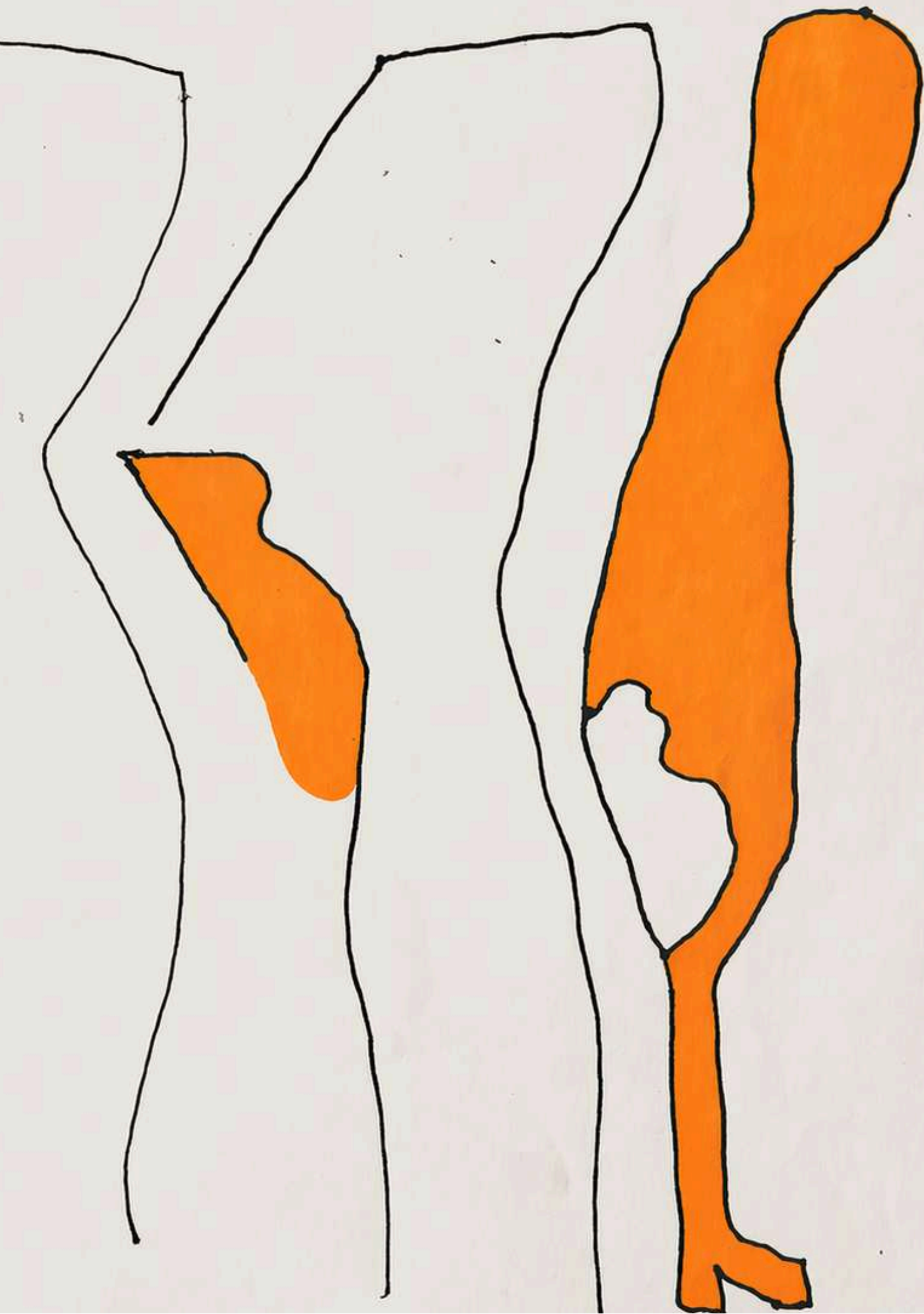
Would you like to stay up to date with the initiatives and activities of the Miller-Zillmer Foundation?

Then subscribe to our newsletter at

<https://www.miller-zillmer.foundation/en/about>

or follow us on social media.





WELCOME

In 2025, we continued to run our funded projects and entered into new partnerships, such as with the Deichtorhallen Hamburg on the pilot project “Alles Richie”. Superbooth, featuring workshops by the Modular Synthesizer Ensemble, was a resounding success. The artist collective OFF/TRACK embarked on its adventurous journey with EASTgoesSouth along the railway tracks in India. It was an exciting year which, despite the geopolitical crises, allows us to look back with satisfaction and look forward with optimism.

The annual report invites you to find out more about our projects and the people behind them, as well as our achievements and developments.

We would like to thank all our team members, supporters and our network for their commitment. We remain actively committed to pioneering new approaches to education, promoting the voice of art and preserving our cultural heritage, and look forward to continuing with your support. Thank you!

DIÁNE ZILLMER
CEO



PROJECTS & --- PARTNERSHIPS 2025

LISTEN TO
ONE
ANOTHER

Modular Synthesizer Ensemble

SHAPE THE
PROCESS
TOGETHER

MODULAR SYNTHESIZER ENSEMBLE

The 'Modular Synthesiser Ensemble' is a collaborative music project that offers people, regardless of their prior musical experience, the opportunity to work creatively together and make music as a group. The focus is on direct access to sound: participants actively and independently shape the process of creating electronic music using analogue modular synthesisers – from initial sound experiments and connecting modules right through to developing their own compositions.

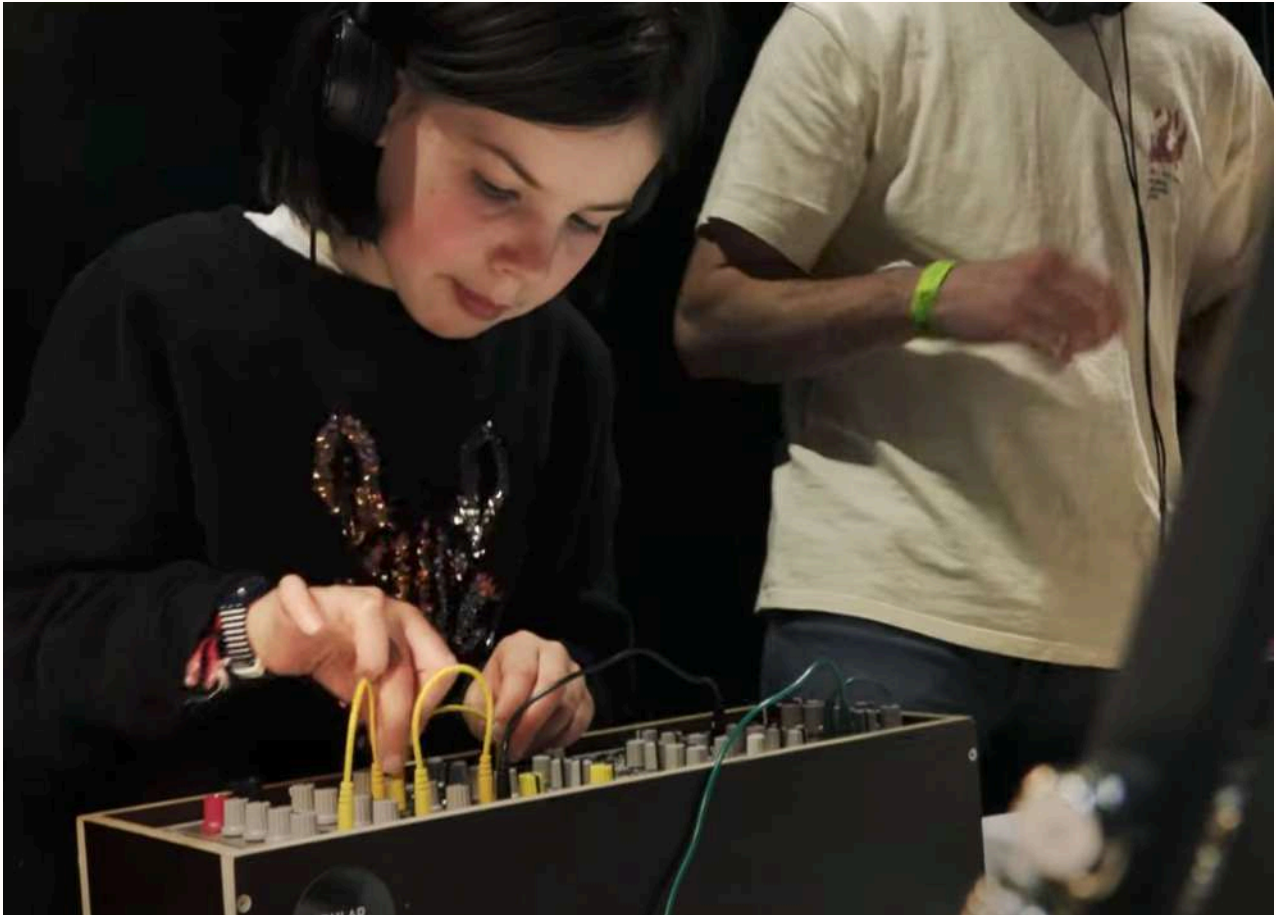
The approach is deliberately open and process-oriented. Participants experiment, improvise and compose without fixed hierarchies or traditional role divisions. Listening, responding and joint decision-making characterise the collaboration. This creates a collective soundscape in which individual ideas are taken up and further developed.

In addition to artistic practice, the ensemble also fosters social skills such as communication, attentiveness and teamwork. It creates an inclusive space where different perspectives come together and enrich one another. In this way, the project combines musical exploration with collaborative learning and makes electronic sound generation an immediate experience.

This year, too, the project returned to Superbooth in Berlin with its workshops for young pupils. The participating school classes came from Berlin and Brandenburg. In just a few hours, project leader Gammon and the workshop participants were introduced to modular synthesis and developed their own compositions. Following the workshops, they put on an impressive performance that left a lasting impression on both the audience and the participants. At the same time, there is a marked increase in interest among teachers and parents in exploring this medium, which remains relatively unknown in schools to this day.



Project manager, Gammon, with his mobile synthesiser studio



"I was surprised at how quickly the children took to the Modular Table and began experimenting and creating music together as a group. This dynamic - facilitating and observing this experience of self-initiated activity - creates some very special moments. To me, it's like a gift!"

Gammon, Project Manager



Video excerpt from a workshop with pupils and Gammon, the project leader at the 'Modular Table'.



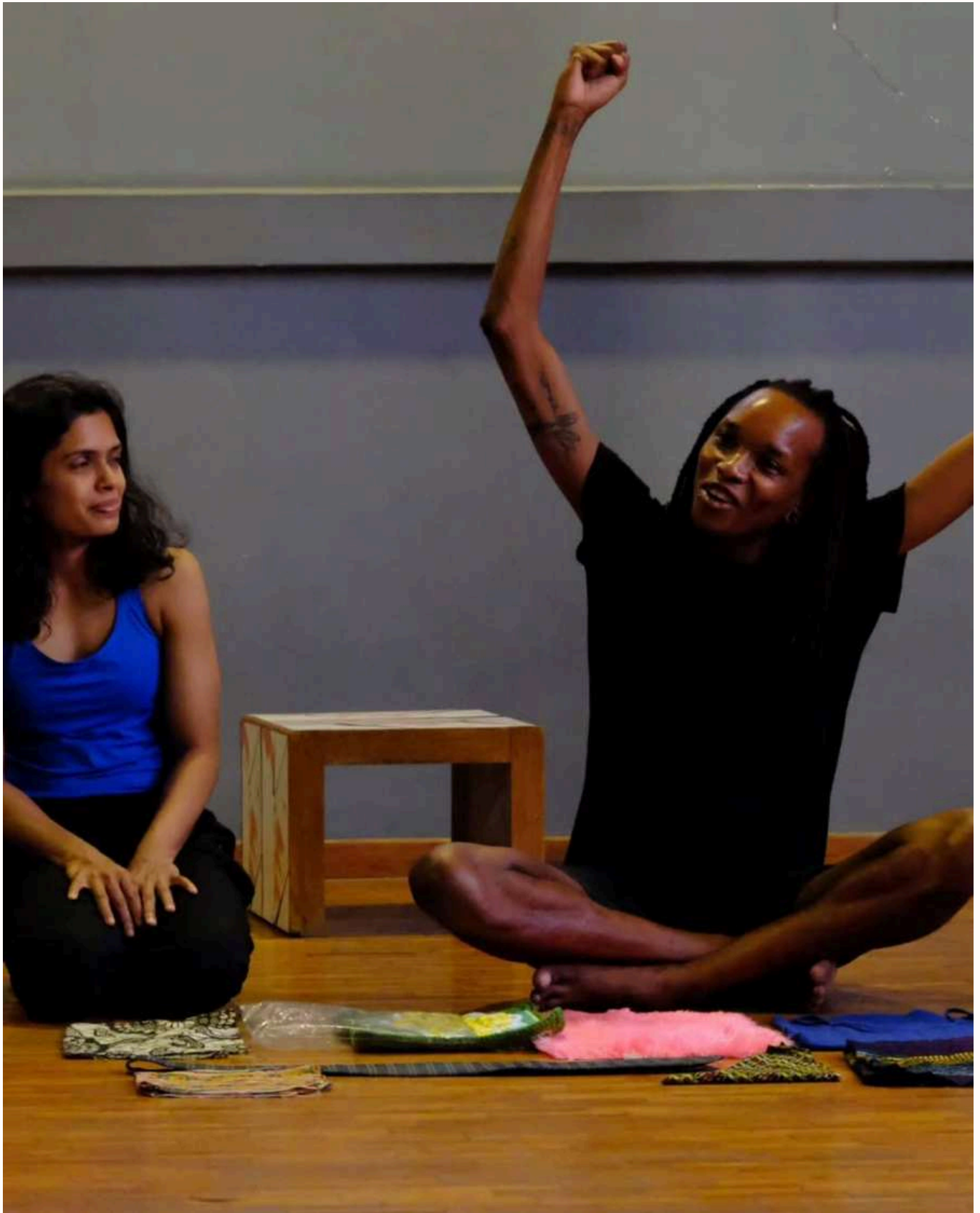
Set-up in the Superbooth auditorium at
FEZ Berlin





E.A.S.T. – EAST GOES SOUTH

An artists' residency and a creative adventure
along the historic railway routes of East Africa
and India.



EAST AFRICAN SOUL TRAIN

E.A.S.T. is a creative and artistic project inspired by the historic railway lines of East Africa. It brings together artists, cultural practitioners and academics from a range of disciplines, cultural backgrounds and countries of origin, creating a space for encounters, exchange and shared learning.

Over the course of four project rounds to date, E.A.S.T. has connected more than 170 creative professionals from East Africa, India, Europe and North America. Both emerging and established artists, as well as key figures from the cultural and creative sectors, were invited to participate. The focus is on interdisciplinary dialogue, engagement with social and cultural issues, and the development of new perspectives and joint projects. By combining different artistic practices and academic approaches, new networks and creative synergies have emerged across geographical and cultural boundaries.

In 2025, this journey will continue in the new format EASTgoesSOUTH, shifting the focus to India's historic railway lines. Along these significant transport and cultural corridors, the participants will embark on a joint artistic and research expedition. The railway serves not only as a means of transport, but also as a symbolic and real space for encounter, where stories, identities and visions of the future enter into dialogue with one another. The journey began in Kochi, led to Bangalore, then across the country to Delhi, and finally culminated in Kolkata with a group of 6 artists, 3 producers and curators, and 4 guests from India, the UK and Africa.

EAST GOES SOUTH opens up new opportunities for international exchange and cross-cultural collaboration.

EASTgoesSOUTH 2025 is funded by the Miller-Zillmer Foundation and produced by OFF Track Collective and MeshWorks in collaboration with Artsforward India and Citizens Of Stage Co Lab.

Find out more about the OFF/TRACK artists' collective and their work here:

<https://www.off-track.xyz/east>



Everything that happens on a train journey tells the story of a coming together: reaching out to one another, venturing into uncharted territory, engaging in profound dialogue, and forging connections with one another as people and as artists. Participants in this year's programme have shared their thoughts on what it means to them to be part of this transcontinental and interdisciplinary journey.

"There is a certain kind of sensitivity that we were guided into that is hard to find frequently as a practising artist. I recall a moment where I was able to share personal stories in a train cabin with a fellow artist, creating an intimate bubble for us to talk about our preoccupations while we are surrounded by complete strangers."

Kat Kai Kol-Kes

Performer, Author, Educator - Botswana

"Creating on the move was wholesome. I could fully immerse in the super safe atmosphere provided. Delving into fond and bittersweet memories from the beginning of my time till present."

Snigdha Prabhakar

Performer, Teacher - India

"What touched me most was witnessing each person's unique journey: their backgrounds, their stories, all so different and yet somehow we all found ourselves in the same space at the same time, drawn together by a shared desire to connect, to feel, and to create something meaningful."

Deen Atger

Performer, Curator - UK



"THERE IS A CERTAIN KIND OF SENSITIVITY THAT WE WERE GUIDED INTO THAT IS HARD TO FIND FREQUENTLY AS A PRACTICING ARTIST. I RECALL A MOMENT WHERE I WAS ABLE TO SHARE PERSONAL STORIES IN A TRAIN CABIN WITH A FELLOW ARTIST, CREATING AN INTIMATE BUBBLE FOR US TO TALK ABOUT OUR PREOCCUPATIONS WHILE WE ARE SURROUNDED BY COMPLETE STRANGERS."

KAT KAI KOL-KES

PERFORMER, AUTHOR, EDUCATOR - BOTSWANA
EASTGOESSOUTH COHORT 2025

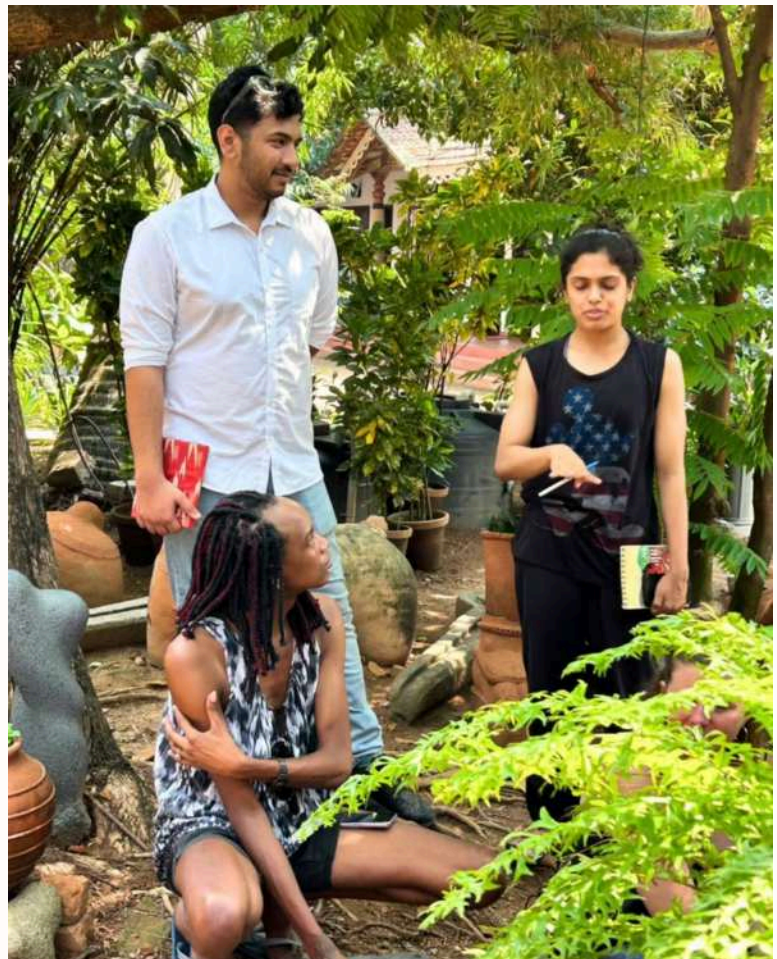




"CREATING ON THE MOVE WAS WHOLESOME. I COULD FULLY IMMERSE IN THE SUPER SAFE ATMOSPHERE PROVIDED. DELVING INTO FOND AND BITTERSWEET MEMORIES FROM THE BEGINNING OF MY TIME TILL PRESENT."

SNIGDHA PRABHAKAR

PERFORMER, TEACHER, NUTRITION EXPERT- INDIA
EASTGOESSOUTH COHORT 2025







EAST GOES SOUTH 2025

‘ALLES
RICHIE!’



DEICHTORHALLEN HAMBURG

Today, the importance of art and culture is often underestimated in society, a fact reflected in declining funding. One example is the cut in art lessons in schools in Hamburg in favour of a greater focus on IT, which makes art seem dispensable. Nevertheless, there remains a strong need for creative education and aesthetic learning to equip children and young people with emotional and social skills that go beyond technical abilities.

With the support of the Miller-Zillmer Foundation, the Deichtorhallen have therefore developed a pilot project that introduces children to contemporary art in a playful and engaging way through the museum's current exhibitions. The aim is to forge a connection between the museum and the children's everyday lives. In this way, access to cultural education for children, young people and families is to be secured in the long term – regardless of school curricula and social trends.

The video series “Alles Richie!” for children aged between 9 and 12 explores themes from the exhibitions in an entertaining and age-appropriate way, bringing them to life for the children. Always curious and full of energy – and with the help of a furry blue friend – presenter Richie sets off from his studio in the Deichtorhallen in every episode to meet people who know their way around art and life. Always on the same wavelength as the children, Richie explores the questions art can raise and how they relate to their everyday lives – only to conclude at the end of each episode: Once again, it's all Richie!

The pilot project is initially scheduled to run for one year, but is set to continue beyond that if successful.

About the Deichtorhallen Hamburg:

The Deichtorhallen Hamburg have been dedicated to contemporary art and photography since 1989. With their three venues – the Hall for Contemporary Art, PHOXXI/House of Photography and the Falckenberg Collection – spread across two sites and boasting an exhibition space of 10,000 square metres, they are one of the largest exhibition centres of their kind in Europe.



Richie Bielau ©Deichtorhallen

In the first episode, we are introduced to the Swiss artist Daniel Spoerri, whose works have been exhibited at the Deichtorhallen, and discover a remarkable connection between his work and modern archaeology. Very recommended:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQgxAJ84-d8>



 Giraffentoast Design &  Alex Blancke

About Richie:

Richie Biela (31) is a presenter and host from Hamburg with roots in Saxony-Anhalt. He started out as a breakdancer and organiser of dance events before venturing into presenting. He produces documentary-style content for various companies on YouTube and vlogs. Since 2022, he has worked as a presenter for, amongst others, the Sparkassen, Vattenfall, the Autostadt, Stepstone and IRONMAN. Since 2024, he has also been a sports commentator for the 3x3 ING Challenger Tour and the easyCredit Basketball Bundesliga.

[Faint, illegible handwritten text on a rectangular piece of paper pasted onto the left side of the page.]

VIRGULĀ

[A small, rectangular piece of paper with dense, illegible text, possibly a library stamp or a small note, located below the title.]

FREEDOM
OF
EXPRESSION,
CENSORSHIP
AND
THE ARTS

HUMAN LETTER

We are witnessing increasing social division and growing restrictions as a result of media, social and societal controversies. It is therefore essential to reflect on the significance of freedom of expression and to recognise its value anew.

Current developments not only pose a challenge to the formation of individual opinions, but also influence democratic culture as a whole. For this reason, we have launched a project on this topic in 2024 in collaboration with Simon Bonney (Crime and the City Solution), based on the personal experiences and perspectives of practitioners from the worlds of art, culture and journalism. The aim is to shed light on the background to these developments, highlight diverse ways of expressing opinions and identify potential consequences for society. The project seeks to demonstrate how important freedom of expression is for a vibrant democracy, what risks and opportunities arise in the current situation, and how individual stances can help to shape social dialogue in an open, respectful and constructive manner. In doing so, it examines the responsibility of the arts, the role of the media and the cultural influence of society as a whole. By sharing personal experiences and reflecting on the underlying causes of social developments, the project aims to initiate a process of thought on how freedom of expression can be strengthened and defended.

The aim is to contribute to a more conscious, tolerant society in which differing opinions are seen as an asset. This project seeks not only to inform, but also to inspire people to actively champion the values of our democracy and to foster dialogue between different social groups.

This work is a long-term project and is due to be presented in 2026.



THE FOUNDATION

WHO WE ARE

The Miller-Zillmer Foundation was established in 2019 by Daniel Miller and Diáne Zillmer with the aim of supporting and connecting people – regardless of their social and cultural background – in the artistic and social spheres through audio, visual and audiovisual projects at an international level. A key concern for the founders is the link between artistic ambitions and socio-cultural needs. Daniel Miller, founder of the legendary music label Mute Records Ltd., has been dedicated to promoting and releasing artists for over forty years, combining this with his passion for modular synthesisers. Diáne Zillmer, who has been active in the arts and education for more than twenty years, focuses on projects with a social and artistic approach. Their visionary focus lies on education and cultural exchange, in each case linked to audio-visual art and social science research. Our international network brings together artists and cultural practitioners, socially engaged individuals and visionaries. Our board consists of Andreas Schneider (SchneidersLaden GmbH), Joe Dilworth (Bildband Berlin UG), our founders Diáne Zillmer and Daniel Miller, and our guest board member Tina Funk (Concord Music).

MOTIVATION

Education and culture are the cornerstones of an open and sustainable society. At a time when artificial intelligence and digital technologies are fundamentally transforming the way we communicate, learn and perceive the world, cultural education, creativity and personal interaction are becoming increasingly important. They create spaces for critical thinking, empathy and collaborative action – skills that no technology can replace. Digital media open up new possibilities for global networking and the transfer of knowledge. At the same time, there is a growing responsibility to preserve cultural identity and to foster direct dialogue between people. Art and music forge connections, transcend social and cultural boundaries, and open up new perspectives on social developments.

At the heart of our work lies the initiation of artistic and cultural processes that actively bring people together. Through audio-visual projects, we combine artistic forms of expression with social issues and create spaces for encounter, participation and shared learning. Our aim is to convey cultural heritage in a living, breathing way, to reach new audiences and, in particular, to enable young people to understand cultural diversity as a resource for an open and democratic society.

We regard the promotion of art, culture and education as a key task for the future. That is why we support innovative projects that rethink art and music in an increasingly digitalised world and place the dialogue between technology, culture and people at the centre.

Our work is based on two key pillars: education and socio-cultural initiatives, and our cultural and art collection.

Education and socio-culture:

We view education as an open, creative and lifelong process that goes far beyond the mere imparting of knowledge. Our projects combine music, photography and audiovisual art with socially relevant themes and create spaces in which people, regardless of age, background or prior knowledge, can learn, experiment and create together.

People are at the heart of what we do. Especially at a time when digital technologies are increasingly shaping our everyday lives, creativity, cultural participation and personal interaction are becoming indispensable. Our projects foster curiosity, personal responsibility and critical thinking, whilst also strengthening social skills such as empathy, cooperation and mutual respect.

The inclusive nature of our work is of particular importance. We bring together people from different social and cultural backgrounds and facilitate encounters that foster understanding, cultural exchange and social cohesion. Art becomes a shared language that connects people, opens up new perspectives and enables new forms of coexistence.

Culture and Art Collection:

We regard the preservation of cultural heritage as a responsibility towards future generations. Our collection comprises analogue and digital instruments of sound and visual art – including modular synthesisers, historical cameras, audiovisual works and documents relating to contemporary art and music history.

This collection is far more than an archive. It documents technical, artistic and social developments and highlights how creative forms of expression evolve within the tension between innovation and tradition. In the long term, it is intended to be made accessible to the public as a vibrant space for learning, research and experience.

Our aim is not only to preserve objects, but also the knowledge, stories and cultural contexts associated with them. This creates a space where the past, present and future engage in dialogue, and where cultural heritage can serve as a living resource for education, inspiration and social exchange.



Harry Partch Instrumentarium, Haus der Kulturen der Welt.



© Danielle de Picciotto - Humanletter Nr. 00

In accordance with its statutes, the Foundation supports the following charitable causes:

- Science and research
- Art and culture
- Education, public and vocational training, including student support
- Internationalism in all areas of culture and the promotion of international understanding.

You can find our full statutes here:

[Miller-Zillmer Foundation /Statutes](#)

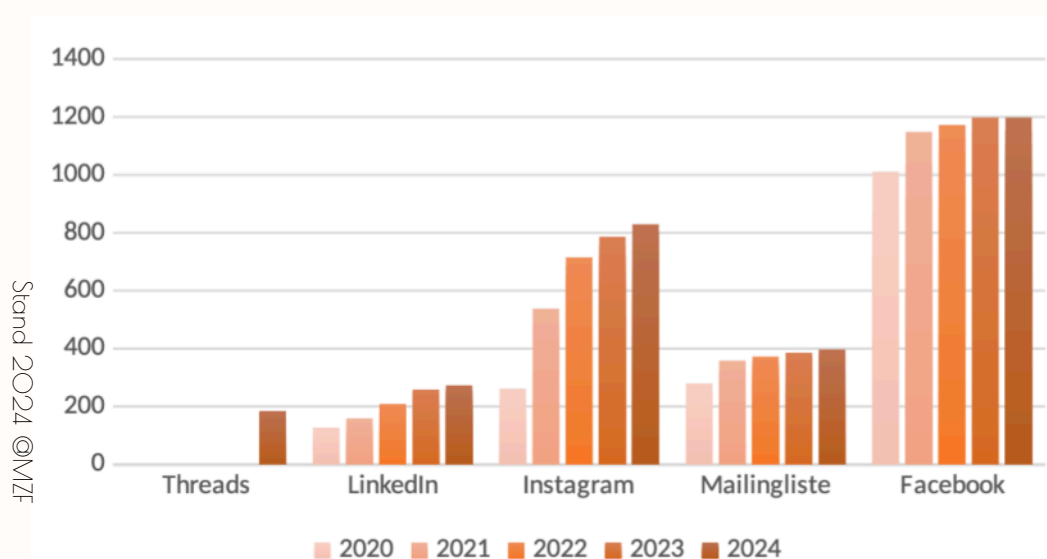


Excerpt from the 'ÁIRE' project, 2021 ©MZF

As the Miller-Zillmer Foundation enters its sixth year, we can look back on the steady development of our work and our network. Step by step, we have been able to develop new formats, forge collaborations and establish a variety of ways to achieve the Foundation's objectives in a sustainable manner. Alongside supporting artistic and cultural projects, our focus is above all on building long-term partnerships and raising the profile of our work.

Transparent and ongoing communication is an essential part of our foundation's work. Through our website, the foundation's regular newsletter and our social media channels – Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Vimeo and Threads – we provide information on current projects, events and collaborations. Furthermore, we take part in specialist events, conferences and panel discussions to actively shape the exchange with cultural practitioners, educational institutions and social stakeholders.

The steadily growing usage and reach figures for our digital communication channels reflect the public's interest in the themes of our work. This growing visibility has led, in recent years, to valuable new collaborations with artists, educational institutions, museums, cultural organisations and funding partners. Today, this network forms an essential foundation for our work and creates the conditions for developing new project formats, expanding international cooperation and tapping into new funding opportunities. Communication is not merely the conveyance of information, but also dialogue and networking.





PARTNERS





OUTLOOK

2026

2026 will be a year full of new challenges, developments and exciting collaborations for us.

In the spring, we're looking forward to Superbooth26 and the associated workshops as part of our funded project, the Modular Synthesiser Ensemble at FEZ Berlin. At the same time, preparations are already underway for a very special event this summer, which we will be organising together with a new partner. We can't reveal too much yet – but this much is certain: we have been working towards this moment for several years, and now it is becoming a reality.

At the same time, we are also feeling the impact of cuts in the arts and culture sector very keenly. In the face of numerous humanitarian crises, the arts, culture and education are increasingly being sidelined. This makes it all the more important for us to continue our existing projects and funding initiatives and to provide reliable spaces for cultural participation, education and exchange. We also hope to further develop and think about EASTgoesSOUTH in a new project format next year, if possible.

We therefore look forward to a year of change and further development with confidence, yet also with an awareness of the current challenges. Our aim remains to facilitate encounters through art, culture and education, to bring together different perspectives and, in doing so, to provide impetus for an open, diverse and democratic society.

To this end, we continue to rely on your support. Every donation – whether small or large – helps us to continue our work, make new projects possible and pursue our goals in the long term.

We would like to thank you warmly for your trust, your support and your loyalty.

The Miller-Zillmer Foundation

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Publisher

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Last updated

July 2026