

PRESS RELEASE

Solidarity for artists in Afghanistan.

ZKM offers to host threatened Afghan artists in Karlsruhe

The current situation in Afghanistan requires the solidarity of the world community - also and especially in the field of art and culture. Currently, the aid organization Artist in Risk (AR), with which the ZKM is associated, has published a letter of help from Afghan artists, which is addressed to all international governments. ZKM supports this action and asks all members of the press to publish the letter wherever possible in order to draw attention to the extremely difficult situation of the artists.

The human rights organization *Artists at Risk (AR)* published an urgent letter from Afghan artists and cultural workers to international governments at the beginning of December. The signatories are persecuted and live on the run and in fear of the Taliban. Ivor Stodolsky, co-founder and director of AR, says in the letter: *"Let us not forget the fearlessness with which they took on the fight against fundamentalism. At the core of western assurances to win over 'hearts and minds' against the ideology that fueled 9/11, these unarmed warriors, once blithely encouraged, have now been abandoned to a harsh fate."* The letter is an appeal to governments to stop ignoring the humanitarian emergency in Afghanistan and act by granting visas for the artists' departure. Marita Muukkonen, co-founder and director of Artist at Risk, describes the situation as follows: *"The window is still open. Flights have resumed and continue to leave Afghanistan. Land borders are by no means hermetic, and thousands have fled to neighbouring countries. The problem is fundamentally different: that western governments have stopped or stalled the issuing of visas."*

Peter Weibel, artistic director of the ZKM, asks for the help of politics: *"We all must now not only express our solidarity, but demonstrate it in action. The ZKM is ready to take in artists. We already communicated this in September as an offer to the Foreign Office."*

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**Solidarität für Künstler:innen
in Afghanistan****Kontakt**

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