

Where Creativity
Meets People



Window

BACTRIA Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

February 2008

Highlights

- 5 February
Cultural Coordination Meeting
(15:00)
- 8 February
Library Reading Room opening
(14:00)
- 9 February
Classical Concert
(15:00)
- 22 February
Exhibition opening
(18:30)
- 23 February
Classical Concert
(15:00)

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Message on the Board from Georgy

Well, let's see where we are at....

Bactria Cultural Centre was founded six years ago with the intention of filling a void in Dushanbe's cultural life by creating a space for artistic and educational activities that would attract the widest possible audience. The center has fulfilled its goals and has become a focal point for artists to exhibit their work and for students to participate in language classes.

But we've gotta move on ..

Challenges to our work are ever present. To attract large numbers of visitors, Bactria is striving to meet the cultural needs of the general public and to serve as an incubator for artistic creativity, attracting young talents and encouraging collaboration among artists. To deliver its programs in a systematic manner, Bactria organizes its programs under rubrics that direct visitors to the programs they are most interested in and give them an overview of the program.

Rubrics include Bactria_Sound, which presents our musical activities, classical, experimental and traditional alike. Another example is Bactria_ArtEdu under which information on workshops, master classes and discussions on various arts related topics can be found.

Lovers of alternative cinema do not despair! Through our

CinemArt project we are presenting a wide selection of independent, foreign and cult-movies followed by discussions among viewers.

Exhibition in a dingy basement? What else can be more bizarre yet adventurous? Our project ArtPodval has all these elements. As part of Bactria_ARTVision, a project that focuses on hosting exhibitions of different visual arts media, like painting, graphics, photography, drawing, video art, sculpture and installations, ArtPodval is for the young and hip.

Bactria has a library! It houses a large collection of foreign books and magazines and beginning in February, we welcome visitors to enjoy a cup of coffee in the new Reading Room. Public readings, poetry-slams and book clubs will be regular events, conducted in various languages. Pick a book off our Bactria_Bookshelf and familiarize yourself with the Tajik literary elite!

How many times have you thought to yourself - "Why did I waste my time learning French in school? I am living in Tajikistan!" Well, we have the solution for you - join one of our Language Coffee Hours and make use of your knowl-

edge while chatting with one of our native speaker hosts on a number of subjects, from the environment to Dostoyevsky.

Where can you find us and how will you know what is going on? Don't worry; soon you will notice posters all over town informing you of the latest activities. If you would also like to receive our newsletter, all you need to do is send us your email address and we'll make sure that you are always in the loop and invited to our events.

As for our New Year's resolutions... hopefully we will accomplish everything that was said above and more.

Our doors are open. It's your turn now.

Enjoy!

georgy mamedov

Program Director





ART-Podval

At present, Dushanbe's cultural life is severely lacking in club-like places where people can meet and concentrate their energy and ideas to plan creative activities related to art and culture around town. We are also used to viewing art purely from an academic point of view, not leaving room for art that is experimental in nature. To break from this habit and expand out horizons, Bactria's creative team is planning to present the first

project of alternative contemporary art, ArtPodval - in 2008. Under this project, once every two or three months our center will open its door to conceptual artistic novelties from all areas of the arts including music, theatre, literature, and visual arts. The idea is to provide a space for unknown contemporary artworks to be observed by the artistic community and the general public alike.

Bactria_ArtVision

In February we invite everyone to our three-day avant-garde painting and contemporary art exhibition of three artists- Eles Mamadjanov, Bahrom Ismatov and Jamshed Kholikov.

On page five you can read an interview with the latter artist, Jamshed Kholikov, who is also the information coordinator and curator at Bactria Cultural Centre.

**Exhibition Opening:
February 22, 18:30**

REGISTRATION DATES FOR ALL COURSES

February 13th - 22nd,
from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m.

Classes will start on
the 25th of February.

The whole payment
has to be made at the
beginning of the ses-
sion on registration
day.

For further informa-
tion concerning
courses, please con-
tact us at : 227 02 57 /
227 03 69
bactria.education@act
ed.org

Take courses at BACTRIA!

Bactria_Edu

LANGUAGE courses are organized into 5 month sessions, 2 times a week

English (from beginner to advanced levels)
French (from beginner to advanced levels)
German (from beginner to advanced levels)

Prices for former students

Pupils.....110 TJS for 5 months
Students.....140 TJS for 5 months
Employees.....210 TJS for 5 months

Prices for new students

Pupils.....120 TJS for 5 months
Students.....150 TJS for 5 months
Employees220 TJS for 5 months

COMPUTER Courses are organized into 2 months session, 2 times a week

Beginner level: MS Word, Internet, MS Excel-Beginner
Intermediate level: Photo shop, Power Point, MS Excel-Advanced

Prices:

Pupils..... 90 TJS for 2 months
Students.....100 TJS for 2 months
Employees120 TJS for 2 months

Certificate Ceremony

For all foreign language classes and for DELF exams

Bactria Cultural Centre congratulates all the students and teachers who have been working during our last session of foreign language courses.

Students will receive their diplomas on February 15th according to the schedule below.

Spanish Language: 15:00
English Language 15:30 German Language 16:00 French Language and DELF exams 16:30

All students, parents and teachers are invited. Representatives from the French, American and German Embassies will also attend the ceremony and we would like to thank them for their support.

Clin d'oeil aux étudiants ayant réussi les examens de DELF

Le Centre Culturel Bactriane et l'Ambassade de France au Tadjikistan aimeraient tout particulièrement féliciter les étudiants ayant obtenu leur Diplôme d'Etude de Langue Française et encouragent tous les étudiants ayant réussi cet examen à persévérer dans leurs efforts d'apprentissage de la langue française.

Avant-garde on Screen



The CinemArt project is based upon the traditional weekly screenings in Bactria, which were very popular a couple of years ago. This particular project is designed for true lovers of alternative cinema.

By 'alternative' we do not only mean 'art house' or 'avant-garde' cinema, but general 'artistic creations' vs. 'creative productions', which we would see on television or in DVD stores.

Our aim is to gather people willing not only to watch the film but also to discuss it with other viewers.

In 2008 Bactria will present several cinema subprojects curated by BCC creative team members.

CinemArt

The February project is called "CinemArt Basement Style." For this project we will offer a special selection of three avant-garde films from different periods, countries and different authors - Kirill Serebrennikov (Russia), Jim Jarmusch (USA), Wim Wenders (Germany).

The last Thursday of February will be devoted to a special collection, "Horror Laboratory" a selection of four French short movies made in 1946, 1957 and 1971. Each of these films will be shown in original languages with Russian subtitles.



FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Feb 7. Thursday, 18.00
Playing the Victim
 Director: Kirill Serebrennikov
 Language: Russian, no subtitles

Feb 14. Thursday, 18.00
Coffee & Cigarettes
 Director: Jim Jarmusch
 Language: English, Russian subtitles

Feb 21. Thursday, 18.00
Wings of Desire
 Director: Wim Wenders
 Language: German, Russian subtitles

Feb 28. Thursday, 18.00
Le Laboratoire I de L'angoisse (1971);
Les surmenés (1957);
Tous les garçons s'appellent Patrick (1957);
24 heures de la vie d'un clown (1946)
 Director: Patrice Leconte, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze, Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Pierre Melville
 Language: French, Russian subtitles

Concerts at Bactria

Bactria_Classics is a new cultural initiative of Bactria Cultural Centre for 2008. Under this project, every first and last Saturday of the month, classical music repertoire lovers are invited to Bactria's Music Hall for chamber concerts of European and Tajik traditional classical music. This project is also an open venue for young musi-

cians - students of music schools, colleges and conservatories.

In February Bactria's music hall will host two concerts; one on Sat, Feb 9, 15.00 by the students of Atoev Music School and one on Sat, Feb 23, 15.00.

Bactria_Sound

Furthermore we would also be happy to support young musicians and bands by providing them with space and instruments (grand piano and piano) for regular practicing in Bactria.

Meet the Team (cont. p5)

In each issue of our newsletter we will introduce one of Bactria's team members.

Jamshed Kholikov

Jamshed's contribution to the Bactria Team is his knowledge of curating exhibitions and his experience as an outstanding and extremely creative artist. Having graduated from the M. Olimov Art College in Dushanbe, he continued his education in Moscow at the Nemyrovich-Danchenko Moscow Art Academic Theatre School-Studio to be a stage-artist and stage designer.

As a designer he worked at the Tajik State Youth Theatre for eight years, then at various firms and organizations. He was also the culture coordinator and designer of the projects «Tajikistan Development Gateway» and «Naison» www.tajik-gateway.org; www.naison.tj. Both of these websites have received several awards from TANTIS - National Association of Development of New Technologies and Information Systems. Jamshed has participated in many contests and exhibitions including the 3rd Tashkent Biennale in 2005, the 2nd Bishkek International Exhibition of contemporary Art in 2006, the exhibition "ART FROM CENTRAL ASIA - CONTEMPORARY ARCHIVE" in Moscow in 2006, the 52nd Venice International Contemporary Art Biennale in 2007 and the 10th Istanbul Contemporary Art Biennale in 2007.





Bactria's Library, initiated by Amal Khonum Gajeva in 2002, is probably one of the most multilingual in town. We have books, magazines and newspapers in Tajik, Russian, English, French, German and Spanish languages. The Library collection has been gathered by the kind assistance of the French, American, German and British Embassies as well as many, many individuals, Bactria's friends and enthusiasts.

Language and Coffee

English Coffee Hour

6th - 15:00 Natural disasters in Tajikistan.

Guest: Zohra Ismail, PhD Student at Indiana University

13th - 15:00 Major environmental threats of the 21st century in Tajikistan.

Guest: Sylvia Wood - Program assistant in the Natural Resource Management unit of MSDSP

20th - 15:00 Biodiversity and protected areas in Tajikistan. Presentation by CARE International.

27th - 15:00 Ecotourism in the Parmis. Guest: Sarah Carrade - former Acted Base Coordinator in Murghab.

Club Voltaire

7th - 16:00 Lecture de Poésie française sur le thème de l'écologie
Invités: étudiants de l'Université Pédagogique.

14th - 16:00 La nature à travers la chanson et la poésie française
Invités: étudiants du Collège Chorégraphique

21th - 16:00 La nature à travers la poésie d'Omar

Bactria_Lingvo

Khayam
Invités: étudiants de L'Institut des Langues

28th - 16:00 Le thème de l'environnement comme support à la mise en scène théâtrale
Invités: étudiants de l'Université Nationale

Deutsch Klub

5th - 16:00 Thema: Moderner deutscher Film anschließend: Diskussion
Film: Sonnenallee
Regisseur: Leander Hausmann

More information on the BactriaLingvo initiative, see page6.

Reading Room Opening

We kick off this year's activities with the opening of Bactria Library's Reading Room, which will offer readers a cozy environment and a great variety of classical and contemporary fiction, 'world brands' foreign language dictionaries, books and magazines on arts and culture.

We hope that this room will become a special place for literary and philosophical discussions, poetry and prose readings and for meeting interesting people.

For the opening of the Reading Room which will take place on Friday, February 8th at 2 p.m. we invited a very special guest - American Poet and litera-

Bactria_Bookshelf

ture Professor, Brenda A. Flanagan who is visiting Tajikistan at this time.

Bactria's Library Team will also present a special selection of literature for the project BACTRIA Bookshelf - American Literature in BCC to visitors.

Brenda Flanagan and storytelling

Bactria_Bookshelf

Known internationally for her dramatic presentations of her stories and poems, Brenda Flanagan teaches creative writing, Caribbean and African-American literatures as well as literary analysis. Professor Flanagan has won numerous awards for her fiction and drama in the United

States and serves frequently as a cultural ambassador for the US Department of State, with recent visits to Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Chad, Panama and India.

Aside from being our guest at the opening of the new Library Reading Room, she will present some of her short stories in a Poetry Slam event, which will take place in the Mayakovsky Theatre on January 9th starting at 14:00.

Interview with Jamshed Kholikov

I've heard that you are going to the States to participate in one CEC ArtsLink s projects. What type of knowledge do you hope to bring back to Dushanbe? (see description of the organization below ed.)

The benefits of this program are endless; through meetings, workshops and discussions we will have the opportunity to exchange ideas about our experiences managing cultural institutions. Well-functioning cultural institutions stand as stars in the sky to be followed. Their expertise in programming, public events, recruiting members, attracting funds and donors is the program's most valuable asset. Adapted to the local social, economic and political situation in Tajikistan, we in Bactria will make attempts to reach out to a wide spectrum of audience and to bring high quality programs to the city.

What are your latest projects? What ideas are cooking in your head?

My latest project called "Stops" is a series of photos of bus stops around Tajikistan. Beyond the simple visual message of these bus stops, with their largely varied appearance, they stand as metaphors of our own personal life and history. These relics of the Soviet era, when even the remotest corner of Tajikistan was accessible on concrete road by public transportation, remind us of the speed of life that surrounds us. However, simple circumstances, like inadequate public transportation, force us to stop for a moment (sometimes even hours) and wait. And while we are waiting, our thoughts are unintentionally drifting away from our mundane lives toward our innermost feelings and we get lost in the maze of philosophical questions.

As always, my head is full of new ideas, waiting to be developed and executed, but now as part of the Bactria team I am integrally involved in planning a series of workshops designed to introduce art criticism to journalists. Unfortunately, at the moment in Tajikistan art criticism remains on the level of informing the readers about factual elements of the exhibition, but does not venture into the minds and intentions of the artists. Through training, students will receive the knowledge of understanding the process of art making and of being able to voice well-supported opinion on artworks. Art criticism must take a clear stand in appraising art and stake out the path for artistic creativity.

How do you communicate with your audience?

I chose media art like photography and video, and installations as tools to best express myself. This media frees me from the framework of a canvas and gives me ample possibilities to maneuver. I enjoy going beyond the ordinary and exploring new approaches to one subject. For the audience here video is still an unusual form of art, which makes it all the more interesting for me.

What are some of the issues you feel you need to address both as an artist and as a curator?

I don't even know where to start. Immigration, gender, energy crisis, ecology, bribery, corruption ..

I know that you participated in the project NaturArt. Did you enjoy working with other artists? What are the challenges of artist collaborations?

I am a firm believer in artistic collaborations. They provide exposure to various ideas and interpretations as well as forums for artistic debates and personal development. Physical seclusion often hinders ones ability to open up for multiple interpretation of an issue. I have participated in many artist collaborations, both with other professionals and with students, in the framework of workshops and artists get-aways. The challenges are always there, but that makes it all the more interesting, and they often bring unexpectedly creative results.

Do you think the audience is ready for something new, an "outside-the-box" like art experience?

People are open to see and hear new happenings even if at the beginning they might be perplexed by them. The long term plan for one of our previously mentioned programs, the training of art critics, is to help relieve the audience's difficulty comprehending such experimental activities. Educating and guiding the taste of the audience is a major task of art criticism. We have high hopes.



CEC ARTSLINK is an international arts service organization. Their programs encourage and support exchange of artists and cultural managers between the United States and Eastern and Central Europe, Russia, Central Asia and the Caucasus. Working with artists, arts organizations and community-based institutions CEC Art- sLink provides an essential structure for ongoing dialogue between the U.S. and these formerly isolated cultures.

www.cecartslink.org/



Language and Coffee

Bactria_Lingvo



Thanks to the support of the German, French and American Embassies and the DAAD in Dushanbe, Language Coffee Hours is an activity that have been organized and offered to students by BCC for several years now. The main objective of this activity is to provide a community-based approach to improving language skills. Learning through authentic, face-to-face communication with native speakers is ideal for people with a high fluency of the language as well as for beginners.

In 2008, the BCC will enhance its Language Coffee Hours by proposing a common monthly topic. Each month, native speakers will be invited to come and share their expertise with the students on various topics. Additionally, discussions on books, film screenings, and presentations on countries, cultures and traditions will also be part of the program.

February's topic is Environment; students will have opportunities to discuss both the environmental richness of their country as well as ways to protect it.

....des invités spéciaux pour le Club Voltaire

Afin de rendre nos Clubs Voltaire plus 'vivants', pour chaque club du mois de février nous avons invité des étudiants francophones de différentes écoles et universités de Douchanbé afin que ces derniers viennent participer activement a nos débats autour de l'environnement, que ce soit à travers des représentations théâtrales, lecture de poèmes,

Cultural Coordination

Cultural Coordination Meetings (CCM) were designed to create a forum for different actors in the field of arts and culture in Dushanbe to share information, ideas and experiences for better coordination and cooperation. The meetings were initiated by the German Embassy, ACTED and the Swiss Cooperation Office in 2003 and continued as a project in the frame of SDC' s "Promotion of Cultural Diversity" Program till 2007.

In 2008, Bactria Cultural Centre will host the CCMs with the intention of strengthening the coordination and cooperation within international, local, official and public

cultural institutions and agencies. It will provide regular informational support on arts and culture activities. In addition, through expertise-based discussions BCC will help develop new approaches and concepts to solve existing deficiencies and problems.

In February BCC proposes focusing on collaboration among cultural institutions, discussing its benefits and possible outcomes. In the seminar, participants will learn about successful cases of collaboration between international and national institutions, individuals.



ENGLISH COFFEE HOUR: 27th - 15:00 Ecotourism in the Pamirs. Guest: Sarah Carrade - former Acted Base Coordinator in Murghab.

The next meeting will take place on February 5th, starting at 15:00.

- February 2008 Sponsors:**
 ACTED
 French Embassy
 German Embassy
 American Embassy
 SDC
 UNESCO
 RSF
 Lu Edmonds
 Keiichi Sato

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