

## **Policy Paper for the liaison office of the Swiss Arts Council in Southern Africa Pro Helvetia Cape Town**

**1**

The objective of Pro Helvetia Cape Town is to establish links between institutions and individuals operating in the cultural field in Switzerland and Southern Africa.

**2**

Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council, and Pro Helvetia Cape Town are non-aligned cultural foundations.

**3**

Pro Helvetia and Pro Helvetia Cape Town use the term culture, for pragmatic reasons, in a comparatively narrow definition, i.e. they occupy themselves with art. In addition, however, university and research programmes in art and art related sciences can fall within the work domain of Pro Helvetia.

**4**

Pro Helvetia and Pro Helvetia Cape Town aim to promote art in its creation, dissemination and reception, in accordance with quality standards which are subject to continual review, and with the financial means at disposal.

**5**

Pro Helvetia and Pro Helvetia Cape Town do not accord preferential treatment to specific regions or communities within Switzerland, nor in South Africa or Southern Africa.

**6**

Although Pro Helvetia Cape Town, in all its involvements, bears in mind the inequalities of the past and underprivileged positions of the present, it focuses on all cultural activities originating from or manifesting themselves in Southern Africa as it does in Switzerland.

**7**

The involvement of Pro Helvetia Cape Town in cultural exchanges is based on the understanding of equality, reciprocity and mutual respect. In other words, the cross-cultural encounter is the important factor rather than the presentation of cultural achievements in the respective countries.

**8**

The involvement of Pro Helvetia Cape Town in projects and exchanges is based upon the expectation that links created have a degree of continuance and sustainability.

**9**

The primary focus of Pro Helvetia Cape Town is on small and medium sized cultural organisations and projects in Southern Africa and Switzerland in addition to working with individuals directly.

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## 10

Pro Helvetia Cape Town focuses its support on cultural organisations and individuals who are already professionally active in the field of arts and culture.

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As spearpoints in its involvement Pro Helvetia Cape Town is interested in concepts of communication, translation and innovation in cross-cultural artistic activity. In addition, emanating from the current situation in South Africa, Pro Helvetia Cape Town focuses on capacity building in the cultural field. Special attention is paid to the mediation between Swiss and South African cultural parties through networking and the exchange of information.

## 12

In addition to mediating and operating between cultural parties in order to establish contacts, Pro Helvetia Cape Town aims to advance the arts through cooperation with national and international institutions operating in South Africa and Switzerland in the public, private, and non-governmental sectors.

## 13

Pro Helvetia and Pro Helvetia Cape Town act on their own initiative and react to outside initiatives. These two aspects, in fact, complement each other.

## 14

In its advancement of and mediation between Swiss and Southern African cultural parties, Pro Helvetia Cape Town can also include artists and organisations from other countries, particularly from sub-Saharan countries or regions naturally linked with cultural communities already existing in South Africa.

## 15

Any involvement of Pro Helvetia Cape Town in the cultural field must have a distinct relation to Switzerland.

## 16

Pro Helvetia and Pro Helvetia Cape Town do not support or fund projects, institutions or individuals whose aim in a cultural endeavour is

- commercial, or
- profit oriented, nor can it fund
- infrastructural costs of cultural projects, or
- educational stipends.

Approved by the Board of Trustees of the Swiss Arts Council at its session of 10 December, 1998.