



Atelier Gregor Merten
und Carmen Dietrich
Herkensiefen 6
D-51399 Burscheid
Tel. +49-2174-780258
www.engel-der-kulturen.de
info@engel-der-kulturen.de

World Interfaith Harmony Week

Burscheid, 10th of March 2015

Report of our activities while the WIHW 2015

LandArt-Installation Angel of Culture in
Cooperation with Tent of Nations in Palestine

General informations about the project Angel of Culture

The **Angel of Culture** is an art project, created to promote the interfaith/ intercultural dialogue. We, the two German artists Carmen Dietrich und Gregor Merten, have conceptualised and are working on it since 2008. Its aim is to establish a symbol for peace and harmony between religions and cultures, in combination with active civic involvement.

The central component of the project is a ring-shaped graphic which contains the symbols of the three Abrahamic religions - a Cross, a Crescent and a Star in a balanced proportion. Together, these form - unintentionally - the shape of an angel. It symbolises intercultural peace and tolerance, mutual respect as well as the interdependence of faiths and cultures. The Art Project Angel of Culture and its art performances are supposed to show in a visual, illustrated and understandable way that nobody and no group can be detached from this circle, without leading to a deep damage of our common future. It sends a strong and clear message against any hostility towards foreigners and people of other faith. More than 70 cities and their citizens in Germany and different European countries are participating in the social sculpture Angel of Culture to express their desire for Interfaith Harmony in their countries and all over the world.

In a vivid and understandable way Angel of Culture is spreading its message into the increasingly globalized world:

We live in one world.

We give acceptance and space for free development to each other.

We are all aligned and can only create our future in peace and in common.

(For further informations about the project and its performances please read:
http://www.angel-of-culture.com/pdfs/brochure-angel-of-culture_englisch.pdf)

Interfaith Harmony Week 2015

Our activities while the WIHW 2015 are related to art performances with the Angel of Culture in Israel and the Westbank also during the previous year:

Already in octobre 2014 we installed the Angel of Culture in Tel Aviv-Jaffa - according to the wish of the Mayor of Tel Aviv - at the *Arab Jewish Community Centre* as a ring of steel in a diameter of 1.5 metres. Clearly visible and well-placed in the outside facade of the building it documents the peaceful cohesion of the different groupings to which here extracurricular education is offered in art, sport, technology and languages. In a ceremony with Muslim, Jewish and Christian children and young people the installation was inaugurated.

According to the compensatory character of our art project it was to us a concern to set a sign with the Angel of Culture also in the West Bank. In cooperation with the *Tent of Nations - People Building Bridges* - in Palestine we are working on the Angel of Culture in a diameter of 30 Meters as a long term project. It will be build with stones collected by hands of people from different countries, backgrounds, cultures and religions. In february 2014 we initiated the installation by placing a chunk of the Berlin Wall into the center of the chosen terrain, which we had solved personally shortly after the fall of the Wall in 1989.

The Angel of Culture at the *Tent of Nations* will show how people from different religions could live together in peace and harmony by working together to end the injustice and build up a better future based on acceptance of rights and respect of human rights. It also shows that religions must bring people together, forming an angel and it sends the message of faith, love and hope to all Nations.

Just the circle - without the 3 symbols - in a diameter of 30 Meters was already built in 2014. Since then a lot of people from all over the world already had the opportunity to put stones into the circle to fill the area - and they did this with enthusiasm. We had a lot of feedbacks in this connection.

While the **WIHW 2015** we created together with 2 young Germans and international guests of the *Tent of Nations* the complete external outline of the Angel of Culture by defining the symbols Crescent, Cross and Star with an exactly formed surrounding wall of natural stones. The total shape of the Angel of Culture is present in the landscape and visible from afar.

Now the sculpture is prepared to become filled with stones by the visitors of the *Tent of Nations* to express their vision of a peaceful togetherness. Young people,

volunteers from all over the world, groups which are engaged in the interreligious dialogue, international peace activists, and also pilgrims of all religions bring stones from their respective native countries as well as collect them in the area of the *Tent of Nations*. All this visitors are working continuously on the further realization of this LandArt-project Angel of Culture to build bridges between the members of the different faiths and to set a sign of hope for a peace solution also in the Middle East.

In order to support this central issues the big Angel at this place forms the backdrop for interreligious meetings and prayers. The Angel of Culture at that place underscores the motto of *Tent of Nations* as well: **We refuse to be enemies.**

Here like everywhere - this is our experience - the picture Angel of Culture doesn't need a lot of words. It works in every language and speaks directly to the hearts. Already in the occupation with the symbol its message is deeply penetrating the conscience of the people which take part in the artwork.

With kind regards
Gregor Merten and Carmen Dietrich

Please pay attention, that it is not possible to take fotos of the whole installation because of the size. So the pictures we send to WIHW just show different parts of it.

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