

Report 5:

Formal Launching of the Art Exhibition on WIFHW Observance Art Exhibition at the Main Kolding Library

In cooperation with the Kolding Library, we got the permission to do the Art Exhibition from the 7th of February to the 27th of February. We experienced that the Art Exhibition last year was a success with the participation of 10-12 artists. This year we got the response of 17 artists, willing to express in their artworks the images of love, hope, friendship, compassion, mercy, peace and love for God's creation.

The library provided us 20 billboards to exhibit artworks of 17 artists. We got assistance from the library personnel. The artists helped each other to hang the paintings and made efforts to structure the exhibition on how the boards should be placed. We were more satisfied with the structural arrangement of the exhibition than the art exhibition we did last year. 43 artworks of 17 artists in WIFHW 2020! The exhibited artworks displayed 4 genres: paintings by acrylics and oil, drawings by charcoal, illustrative drawings and art that uses materials from nature, like collected stones or broken glasses to form images.

Two billboards at the entrance of the Exhibition scene, displayed the program of activities for the whole month of February, the introduction to the reason of the Exhibition, the history and the guiding principles of the UN World Inter Faith Harmony Week observance. On the same board were two frames of collage art, displaying different scriptural texts from Torah, Koran, Bible... some sayings from Judaism, citation from the Danish Queen, plus citations of religious leaders like Ben Melchior of the Jewish Synagogue in Denmark, citation from Martin Luther King, citation of a popular Danish composer and singer, Kim Larsen, plus some poems of poets from different countries, some of these poems were posted side by side with some of the hanged paintings.

The launching started at 15.30. But before that, the tables at the center of the Exhibition Scene were already prepared for coffee and tea, fruits, sweets - served or made available to people as they entered the library.

We were very pleased with the cooperation of our contact person on the Exhibition, Anni Schumacher of Kolding Library, providing us chairs and the sound system and microphone. Elizabeth welcomed the public and informed the structure of the program. Camilla gave the historical background of WHIFW and why we use art in this observance.

The Philippine Singing Group, dressed in their beautiful Philippine national costumes, sang two songs. First song in Tagalog language, *Mahiwaga ang Buhay ng Tao*, which is about the wonders in human life... when one has faith in God and when the human heart has love - taken as hope in our world.

The second song, “*Sa Labis ng Nayon*” is a song of freedom in the countryside seen in the freedom of the branches and winds, the beauty of nature, which is taken care of, and the celebration of the goodness of human hearts. This song was sung and danced by the group, accompanied by guitar.

Then our beloved Mayor, Jørn Pedersen, delivered his speech of encouragement how important it is to live in a community that values respect for every human being. He expressed his very positive support for the UN World InterFaith Harmony Week. He also thanked the organizers, the performers, the artists and the library for making it possible for people to come together, enjoy art and keep Love as the message of hope for our world.

Then the Philippine Singing Group presented their last song and invited everyone to join with them in singing the chorus: *“If we could consider each other, a neighbor a friend or a brother. This could be a wonderful, wonderful world, this could a wonderful world. If there were no poor and the rich were content. If strangers were welcomed, wherever they went, this could be a wonderful world. This could be a wonderful world.”*

The artists were presented to the public and the mayor opened the exhibition, welcoming the people to go around and see the works of art or get time to speak with the artists.

Reflection:

It was a very beautiful event. The story was posted at Facebook and Twitter. Each day Kolding Library records 1000 guests or visitors. This means that the information about the World InterFaith Harmony Week through art was able to be disseminated to a greater number of people in a period of three weeks.

Note: Kolding Library has already given us the permission to do the 3rd Art Exhibition related to WIFHW on February 5 to February 25, 2021. And there are now artists, informing their wish to be part of the next year’s exhibition.

Art and the love of art represent a common ground between cultures, religions and people. We felt this love of art and common ground between people shine through at the formal launch of the Art Exhibition “InterFaith”. People were talking and interacting with each other about the art and the paintings.