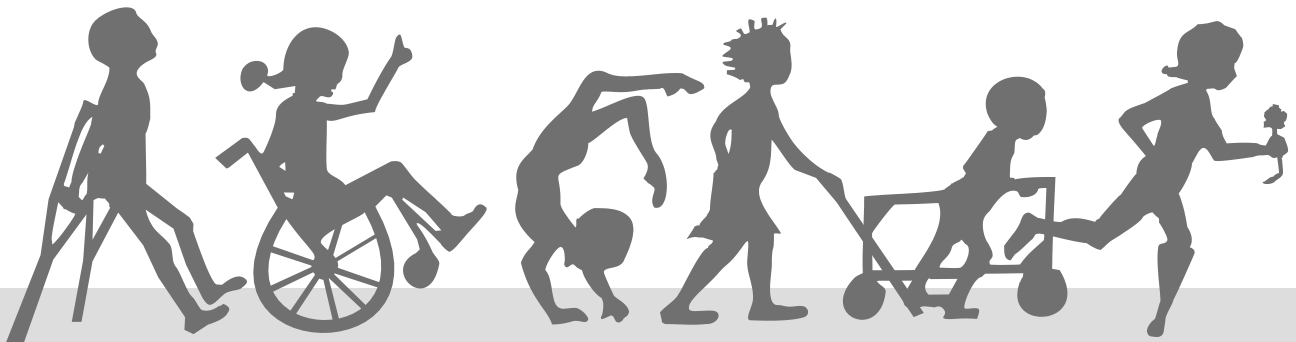


Behinderung und Dritte Welt

Journal for Disability and International Development



Schwerpunktthema: Kunst und Behinderung



Zeitschrift des Forums Behinderung und Internationale Entwicklung



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Liebe Leserinnen und Leser!

Liebe Leserinnen und Leser!

Was ist Kunst? Die vorliegende Ausgabe der Zeitschrift *Behinderung und Dritte Welt* will darauf keine Antwort geben, sondern betrachtet den Kontext von Behinderung, Kunst und *Dritter Welt*. Hierfür stellen wir Ihnen eine Reihe von Beiträgen zur Diskussion, die in ihrer Vielfältigkeit in kaum einer anderen Ausgabe ihres gleichen finden. Ein sich durch alle Beiträge ziehendes Thema ist die Frage nach Grenzen, die durch Kunst überschritten werden – sei es in der Diskussion um die Funktion von Kunst und *disability culture* für politische/gesellschaftliche Veränderungen, sei es in der künstlerischen Auseinandersetzung mit gesellschaftlichen und baulichen Barrieren für Menschen mit Behinderung, sei es in der Begegnung und der gemeinsamen Arbeit von Künstlern mit und ohne Behinderung aus aller Welt oder in der Rolle von Kunst und Kreativität in Rehabilitation, Einkommenssicherung und Selbstverwirklichung.

In dieser Ausgabe über Kunst erlauben wir uns selbst mehr künstlerische Freiheiten bei der Gestaltung: Die Autoren sind in vielen Fällen selbst Künstler – entsprechend bietet diese Ausgabe mehr Illustrationen und Fotos, sie bietet weniger wissenschaftlich-theoretische Abhandlungen als plastische Erfahrungsberichte aus erster Hand. Hierbei sind wir diesmal in der glücklichen Lage, sowohl einen brandaktuellen Bericht (*Spotlight*, März 2008) zu bringen, als auch ein Projekt vorzustellen, das sich im Vorbereitungsstadium befindet und 2008 verwirklicht wird (*eARTH vision*).

Colin Barnes (Großbritannien) verfolgt in seinem einführenden Artikel die geschichtlichen Wurzeln von *disability arts* und deren Einfluss auf Kultur, Politik und Gesellschaft. Abschließend wird Ihnen mit dem kolumbianischen

Künstler Sergio Giraldo ein Vertreter dieser Kunstrichtung und sein Werk vorgestellt. Abasi Kiyimba (Uganda) gibt anhand ausgewählter Beispiele Einblick in die Reproduktion des gesellschaftlichen Bildes von Menschen mit Behinderung in bagandischen Sprichwörtern, welche eine zentrale Rolle in einer Kultur mündlicher Überlieferung spielen. Im nachfolgenden Artikel geht Irmgard Merkt (Deutschland) auf die integrative und integrierende Bedeutung der *unsichtbaren Kunstform* – der Musik – ein. Darauf folgen einige Projektbeispiele verschiedenster Art: Der niederländische Choreograph Joop Hoekstra schildert seine Erfahrungen in einem Theaterprojekt in Vietnam, Andrea Palframan beschreibt ein von künstlerischen und kreativen Aktivitäten getragenes Projekt für Menschen mit Behinderungen in Lesotho und Jo Parkes zeigt die Stationen eines integrativen Tanzprojektes in Kambodscha unter der Federführung von *Epic Arts* auf. Weitergehende Informationen zu *Epic Arts* liefert Rachel Duncombe-Anderson, Irmgard Merkt berichtet von deren neuesten Aktivitäten in Kambodscha, dem *Asian Festival of Inclusive Arts*. Abschließend wirft Andrea Schödl einen Blick voraus auf das geplante Ausstellungsprojekt *eARTH vision*. Einige daran beteiligte Künstler und ihre Werke stellen wir Ihnen auf den darauf folgenden Seiten vor.

Durch die Zusammenstellung der Beiträge erheben wir keinen Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit – wir nähern uns dem Thema von vielen Seiten, aber es bleiben sicher auch Aspekte unberücksichtigt. Das Vorhandene wie das Fehlende möge Sie zu einer fruchtbaren Auseinandersetzung mit dem Thema anregen.

Ihre Redaktionsgruppe



Generating Change: Disability, Culture and Art

Colin Barnes

Since the emergence of the international disabled people's movement in the mid twentieth century, disabled people have increasingly begun to explore their experience of oppression in various cultural forms. Disability politics and the disability arts movement are now inextricably linked and a world wide phenomenon. This paper explores the links between disability politics, culture and art, provides a broad overview of the disability arts movement, and critically evaluates the implications of these phenomena for both disabled and non disabled people and the struggle for a more inclusive society.

Introduction

During the latter half of the twentieth century, disabled people across the world began to express themselves in a variety of cultural forms including painting, sculpture, literature, poetry, music, theatre and dance. This is not necessarily a new phenomenon however. People with accredited impairments have been involved in cultural production - the arts and sciences - since the ancient world of Greece and Rome. Indeed, for centuries impairment and suffering have been seen as an almost necessary prerequisite for creativity and artistic endeavour. What is significant about recent developments within the context of disability art is that since the emergence of the international disabled people's movement in the 1960s, disability art has become inextricably linked to a radical new disability politics and culture; its aim is to bring about a more equitable and inclusive future. In this article I will start by exploring the relationship between culture, politics and art. After this I will provide a brief overview of the emergence of the disability arts movement, and finally I will critically evaluate some of the important implications of disability art and a disability culture.

Disability, culture and art

It is important to note at the outset that culture is a particularly elusive concept that means many things to many people. In the broadest sense, for example, it is inevitably linked, in one way or another, to politics and is often used to refer to an overarching set of values and norms associated with a particular group, community, nation or society. Hence, parliamentary democracy, freedom of choice and the English language are generally associated with western culture (Giddiness 2006).

But, historically, the word culture has also been used with reference to what is considered the best that has been thought and said in a particular society and age. Here culture encompasses the sum of the *great ideas* to be found in

the classic works of literature, painting, sculpture, music and philosophy. Highly prized and appreciated by often only a relative minority, such works are frequently referred to as *high culture*. More recently, but within the same train of thought, the term has been used with reference to the more widely distributed artefacts of everyday life. Examples include television programmes, pop music, pulp fiction, art design, fashion, leisure activities and lifestyle. This is referred to as *mass or popular culture*. High culture versus popular culture was, for many years, the classic way of framing debates about culture, with both terms carrying a value judgement - *high* culture being good, and popular culture being for *mass* consumption and thus somehow debased or construed as bad and of less value (Hall 1997).

It is worth mentioning that discussions about the relationship between mainstream or *hegemonic* culture and minority or *subcultures* are also significant. Dominant cultures are often perceived as oppressive by some sections of society. In response oppressed groups sometimes develop their own cultural norms and values. These then provide members with an individual and collective defence mechanism against oppression, as well as a form of cultural resistance. Well known examples include Afro Caribbean Rastafarian culture, and Gay and Lesbian cultures. Besides contributing to mainstream pop culture in terms of music and fashion, these subcultures also constitute an alternative lifestyle. In many ways therefore, these and other sub-cultural forms are important mechanisms for generating social change in the sense that they represent a growing and general dissatisfaction with dominant cultural values (Hall/Jefferson 1976).

From this perspective, therefore, subcultures constitute a kind of *counter hegemony* with the potential for challenging and, in the long term, changing mainstream culture. All of which has relevance to the debates about disability culture and art. Indeed, as many disabled activists and



scholars have pointed out western culture is replete with negative images of disabled people. It is therefore a predominantly non-disabled culture - its norms and values are those of non-disabled people (Scott 1969; Rieser/Mason 1990; Morrison/Finkelstein 1992).

Disability culture, on the other hand, is therefore a minority, sub, or subordinate culture. It emerged from within, and is associated with, the international disabled people's movement, and reflects the norms and values of disabled activists, their supporters and allies. Key elements of disability culture are the redefinition of disability by disabled people and their organisations, and the radical socio/political interpretation or social understanding of disability commonly referred to as the social model of disability (Barnes/Mercer 2001, 2003).

This radical socio/political interpretation of disability entered the political arena in 1974 following the groundswell of political activity amongst disabled people across the world during the previous decade. The critique of *able-bodied* society and orthodox individual medical interpretations of disability was first codified into a radical alternative by Britain's *Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation* (UPIAS). Comprised exclusively of people with physical and sensory impairments, the UPIAS manifesto entitled *The Fundamental Principles of Disability* (1976) contains the profound assertion that it is society that disables people with impairments.

"In our view it is society which disables physically impaired people. 'Disability' [emphasis added] is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society." (UPIAS 1976: 14).

The UPIAS analysis of the disabling society is built on a clear distinction between the biological (impairment) and the social (disability), and is contained in their *Policy Statement* of 1974. Here Impairment denotes "Lacking part or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organ or mechanism of the body". So disability is described as:

"The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities." (UPIAS 1976: 3-4)

Clearly, the medical conceptualisation of physical impairment has been retained, in con-

trast to the definition of disability in socio-political terms.

Such an approach renders the use of the phrase *people with disabilities* problematic since it blurs the crucial conceptual and analytical distinction between the biological and the social. This has caused considerable confusion outside the *United Kingdom* (UK) since many non-English speaking countries have no equivalent, or are unhappy, with the term impairment. The confusion is further compounded by the tendency amongst academics and professionals to ignore the theoretical and investigative implications of the UPIAS construct.

Nonetheless, the UPIAS approach was later adopted and adapted by many organisations controlled and run by disabled people including, in 1981, the *British Council of Organisations of Disabled People*, renamed the *United Kingdom's Disabled People's Council* (UKDCP) in 2006 (BCODP 2008) and *Disabled People's International* (DPI), to encompass all forms of impairment whether physical, sensory or cognitive (Barnes 1991; Driedger 1989). The UKDCP is Britain's national umbrella for organisations controlled and run by disabled people and DPI is the international equivalent for national agencies such as the UKDCP (DPI 2008).

This holistic approach is based on the insight that in a society geared almost exclusively to the needs of a mythical non-disabled ideal, physical, sensory and cognitive impairments are inevitably interrelated. Also impairment specific labels have little meaning beyond the need for appropriate medical treatments and social supports. They are also socially and politically divisive.

Moreover, this re-interpretation of disability has facilitated the construction of a *social model* (Oliver 1981) or *social barriers model* of disability (Finkelstein 1991). This approach focuses on the various barriers: economic, political and cultural, encountered by people with accredited impairments. Thus *disability* is not a product of individual failings but is socially created; explanations for its changing character are found in the organization and structures of society. Moreover, although its value is contested by some academics (see for example Shakespeare/Watson 2002; Shakespeare 2006), social model inspired thinking has had a significant impact on the shaping of disability policy, both at the national and international levels. In the UK, the social model forms the basis for the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit's programme for *Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People* (PMSU 2005). It lies at the heart of the *Commission of the European Communities Disability Pol-*



icy (CEC 2003) and was instrumental in the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Disability and Rehabilitation Team's *Rethinking Care from the Perspective of Disabled People* initiatives (WHO 2001) and their redefinition of disability as the *International Classification of Disability Functioning and Health* (WHO 2002).

Disability culture may be differentiated from mainstream culture in other ways too. First, interacting with other disabled people is often especially important for people with accredited impairments, because in the majority of cases disabled people are unable to share the same experiences as non-disabled people or conform to mainstream norms and values. Second, within the context of disability culture there is an acceptance of impairment as a symbol of difference rather than shame, and recognition of the significance and value of a disabled lifestyle. This can mean anything from articulating the experiences of impairment and disability openly and without shame, through to the rejection of prostheses or other artificial aids designed to conceal or minimise the visibility or effects of impairment. Thus the cause of the problem - impairment, is inverted to become a source of individual and collective empowerment and pride. Finally, since the 1970s, disquiet over the prevalence of disablist imagery in popular culture and the arts among the disabled community has prompted the development of a positive alternative, now known as the disability arts movement (Barnes/Mercer 2001; Sutherland 2003).

Consequently, disability politics and disability arts are intimately connected. For the disabled activist and writer Alan Sutherland:

"Disability arts would not have been possible without disability politics coming along first. It's what makes a disability artist different from an artist with a 'disability' [emphasis added]." (Sutherland 1997: 159)

This is important because the relationship between impairment, culture and art is intertwined and extremely complex.

Indeed, throughout recorded history impairment and *suffering* have been viewed as an almost necessary prerequisite of creativity and artistic endeavour (Sontag 1982). There are many examples of famous writers, poets, artists and musicians with long term illnesses or accredited impairments. For instance, although his existence is open to conjecture, Homer, the Greek philosopher and poet, is but one important example. Other well known examples include Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827), Lord Byron (1788-1824), Vincent Van Gogh (1853-90)

and Henri de Toulouse Lautrec (1864-1901). The stereotype of the flawed artist remains as strong as ever within western culture. Post-punk singer Ian Curtis, of the cult rock band *Joy Division*, for example, owed some of his reputation for tragic extremism to his epilepsy. But while impairment may on occasion be said to add to the appeal or the insight of a particular artistic figure, it is important to remember that many artists with accredited impairments have denied or ignored this aspect of their lives. Others have reacted in a personal rather than a political way. Contemporary examples include musicians Ray Charles, Jacqueline du Pré, Evelyn Glennie, Stevie Wonder, Hank Williams and Ian Dury (Barnes/Mercer 2001; Kingsley 2006).

However, the connection between biology and art represents a complete contrast with art as therapy. Traditional responses to the issue of disabled people and the arts have been based on paternalism. Those disabled people viewed as inadequate and incapable have been given art as therapy in the context of segregated special schools, day centres, and residential institutions. Such initiatives have not just individualised and depoliticised creativity, but also in some cases exploited it for commercial purposes without the artists' knowledge or consent. Whilst there is arguably a place for art therapy, disabled people do not deserve this presumption of perpetual infantilisation, and increasingly, have refused to put up with it. For Allan Sutherland:

"The term 'art therapy' is one of those phrases, like 'military intelligence', that contains an internal contradiction. Art therapy uses the forms of art for entirely unartistic ends. In particular it leaves out communication; for it assumes we (disabled people) have nothing to communicate." (Sutherland 1997: 159)

By way of contrast disability arts is all about communication. In particular, it stresses the role of the arts in developing cultural (and by inference political) identity:

"Disability arts ... provides a context in which disabled people can get together, enjoy themselves and think in some way about issues of common concern. But it goes deeper than that, as disability culture really does offer people a key to the basic process of identifying as a disabled person, because culture and identity are closely linked concepts." (Vasey 1992: 11)

Disability art is, therefore, about exposing the disabling imagery and processes of society. There is also a role to play alongside conventional political activities:



"Arts practice should also be viewed as much as a tool for change as attending meetings about orange badge provision ... Only by ensuring an integrated role for disability arts and culture in the struggle can we develop the vision to challenge narrow thinking, elitism and dependency on others for our emancipation. To encourage the growth of a disability culture is no less than to begin the radical task of transforming ourselves from passive and dependent beings into active and creative agents for social change." (Morrison/Finkelstein 1992: 11-12)

Therefore disability art is potentially educative, transformative, expressive, emotionally exploratory, participative, and involving. It is a conception of cultural action that owes much to playwrights such as Bertolt Brecht and educationalists like Paulo Freire, because it is radical, challenging and progressive at an individual and social level. Brecht was a well-known German Marxist dramatist whose plays and songs focus on oppression and injustice, and Freire, a Brazilian teacher and writer, perceived education as an important means of transforming people's political consciousness.

It is a sign of the maturity and confidence of the disabled people's movement that disabled people are able to celebrate difference, and work together to create and discuss images of their own choosing. Mainstream arts have not confronted disability as a socio-political issue. Moreover, disabled people are often disempowered, if not excluded, by arts training. Therefore, developing their own art, in environments controlled by them, is seen as critical if disabled people are to develop as creative producers, and compete with artists in the mainstream.

It is for this reason that the disabled people's movement has supported and nurtured its own artists and sought to provide for them opportunities to experiment and develop the necessary experience and confidence (Cribb 1993). Hitherto, the difficulty has been to avoid imposing a non-disabled view of quality. It is vital to recognise the process on which people are engaged, the struggle against barriers involved in getting there, and the context in which work is presented (Pick 1992).

There is little doubt that there has been a lack of a positive cultural identity for disabled people to draw upon, and in the face of extensive cultural oppression disability culture and art has had to be created almost from scratch.

The origins of disability culture and art

There is little doubt that disability culture and art as defined above is a product of the late twentieth century, and that the process of exclusion has played a significant role in its development. It is highly likely however that disabled people throughout recorded history - in various circumstances and to varying degrees - have developed alternative value systems based around their own values and unmet needs rather than those of the dominant majority.

Certainly, ever since the ancient world of Greece and Rome disparate sections of the disabled population have found themselves thrown together whether through choice or otherwise. Indeed, in eighteenth century in Europe the practice of segregating the most severely impaired members of the community into institutions of various kinds was gradually extended to include other sections of the population. In the UK it was a practice that continued well into the 1960s and 70s (Scull 1984; Stiker 2001). Given the tendency among all other marginalised or outsider groups to develop alternate value systems, it is almost inconceivable that those excluded on the basis of perceived impairment would not have done the same. This process of exclusion generates a shared experience for inmates. Examples include the experience of separate schooling, segregated transport, dealing with professionals, welfare services, rehabilitation agencies and charities. Many people born with congenital impairments will experience the same institutionalised educational experiences, just as people who acquire impairments will often share the same medical experiences.

To this extent it is possible to talk of a shared culture, albeit one based on the experience of oppressive institutional settings. Certainly the seeds of a proactive disability culture are clearly visible in the early writings of Paul Hunt, himself an inmate of various residential institutions for most of his adult life:

"I would suggest that our role in society can be likened to that of the satirist in some respects. Maybe we have to remind people of a side of life they would sooner forget. We do this primarily by what we are. But we can intensify it and make it more productive if we are fully conscious of the tragedy of our situation, yet show by our lives that we believe this is not the final tragedy." (Hunt 1966: 156)

The process of exclusion was fundamental to the development of Deaf culture. For the American writer Lennard Davis, Deaf culture



has its roots in the eighteenth century, with the discovery of *deafness* and the development of schools for deaf children. Of course many authors had written about deafness before then. But for Davis the emergence of these schools signals a major qualitative shift in deaf people's individual and collective experiences. Hitherto, they had had no shared experience. On the whole they remained isolated from each other and were therefore, without a shared, complex, language (Davis 1995; Pad-den/Humphries 2006).

However, in understanding the cultural experience of deafness, it is important to distinguish between sign language users and non signers. Many people with hearing impairments acquire their condition during the life course. As a consequence although they may be described as deaf or hard of hearing, signing may not be their first language. People born with hearing impairment are likely to have grown up in an environment in which signing is the primary method of communication. Hence they may refer to themselves as a Deaf person; the use of the capital D denoting membership of to a cultural or linguistic minority. This is analogous to other minority ethnic groups who are similarly likely to be excluded from mainstream culture as English is not their first language. At the same time, they resist identification as disabled people or people with impairments. This political approach has sometimes proved a stumbling block to relations between deaf people and the disabled people's movement as a whole (Corker 1998). It is notable however that the *British Deaf Association* (BDA), a national organisation controlled and run by deaf people formed in 1890 was a member of the BCOOP from the outset and some of its members were active in the campaign for *Anti Discrimination Legislation* for disabled people during the 1990s (Barnes 1991).

A further element in the development of disability culture and the arts that should not be over-looked is the relationship between disabled people and the *entertainment* industry. Historically, people with perceived impairments or 'abnormalities' have provided an important source of entertainment for the non-disabled majority. The ancient Egyptians, for example, used blind people as musicians, artists and masseuses. Deformed slaves were highly prized among the Greeks and Romans. The custom of keeping these people as enslaved entertainers became popular during the Hellenistic era. People of short stature or *dwarfs* were particularly popular in Athens and Imperial Rome (Garland 1995; Edwards 1998).

Throughout the medieval period, society's apparent fascination with perceived abnormalities persisted. Many royal courts in Europe between 1600 and 1800 retained people of short stature as court jesters or kept a complement of *fools* (these were people with learning difficulties or others who feigned idiocy for amusement). During the Middle Ages and thereafter, people with accredited deformities and intellectual impairments were often displayed for money at village fairs and on market days, festivals and holidays. Such practices became institutionalised in the nineteenth century with the development of the *freak show*, a phrase used to refer to "the formally organised exhibition of people with alleged physical, mental or behavioural difference at circuses, fairs, carnivals or other amusement venues" (Bogdan 1996: 25). Freak shows flourished throughout Britain and North America in the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. Although these exhibitions were undoubtedly frequently the site for the uncontrolled exploitation and degradation of people with impairments, for some they provided a welcome refuge from the pathologising gaze and controlling influence of the newly ascendant medical profession. Many viewed themselves as professional performers and an essential part of show business (Gerber 1996). This is clearly reflected in Todd Browning's classic 1932 film *Freaks* (Hawkins 1996; Browning 2001).

Due in part to the economic, political and social changes of the 1940s and beyond, the popularity of the freak show has declined markedly. Moreover, since the politicisation of disability in the 1960s and 70s disabled people's involvement in the performing arts has changed considerably.

The disability arts movement

Clearly then disability arts, recently referred to as the "last remaining avant-garde movement" by the writer and broadcaster Lord Melvin Bragg (Bragg 2007: 1), is not simply about disabled people obtaining access to the mainstream of artistic consumption and production. Nor is it about simply expressing the individual experiences of living with or coming to terms with an accredited impairment. Disability art is the development of shared cultural meanings and collective expression of the experience of disability and struggle. It entails using art to expose the discrimination and prejudice disabled people face, and to generate group consciousness and solidarity. For a growing number of people around the world, the main forum for



positive cultural representations of the disability experience is only located within the context of disability arts.

Early initiatives in the disability arts movement include the production of *Link*, a television programme specifically for disabled people, by a British independent production company; and the production of newsletters and magazines by the disabled people's movement. Examples include *The Disability Rag*, the unofficial newspaper of the *American Independent Living Movement* started in 1980; *In From the Cold*, the magazine produced by *Britain's Liberation Network of People with Disabilities*, established in 1981 - the last edition appeared in 1987; *Coalition*, the magazine of the *Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People* (GMCDP) - it first appeared in 1986 and is still going strong, and the *DAIL (Disability Arts in London)* Magazine. Whilst all these periodicals include articles, features, reviews, and commentary on disability issues, culture and art, the latter, as its name implies is devoted exclusively to arts practice. *DAIL* began operations in 1987. In 1999 it had a national circulation of 3000, and an estimated 8000 readers (*DAIL* 1999). It is now available under a new name *Arts Disability Culture* as a reflection of its national audience (*LDAF* 2008).

Further illustrations of this trend include the setting up of *London Disability Arts Forum* in 1986, and a general upsurge in conferences, exhibitions, workshops, cabaret and performance throughout Britain. All of which has generated a wealth of artefacts including paintings, sculpture, novels, poetry, plays, music and performance art both in Britain and the rest of the world. Indeed, recent research by the newly formed *Edward Lear Foundation* shows that in 2003 there were more than 50 organisations and agencies involved in the development of disability art in the UK alone. Moreover, a chronology of the development of disability culture and art in the UK has been produced by the disabled writer, comedian and activist Allan Sutherland (2003).

Also, there is an increasingly politically aware disability voice reflected on film and in other media produced by disabled people. It represents a growing body of work that takes:

"Legitimate and conscious account of the film maker or artist's encounter with and progress through the experience of disability." (Pointon 1997: 237).

Well known early examples include Steve Dworskin's *Trying to Kiss the Moon* (UK) and Billy Golfus's *When Billy Broke his Head and Other Tales of Wonder* (USA) (for a comparative

review see Darke 1995).

Moreover an American organisation *Culture! Disability! Talent!* based in Berkeley, California staged its *27th International Disability Film Festival* in June 2007. Thirteen films were shown from six countries featuring a diverse array of disability stories. Audio description and *American Sign Language* (ASL) interpreters were provided. Braille and large print screening schedules were available and the venue was wheelchair accessible (*Culture! Disability! Talent!* 2008). The *Moscow International Disability Film Festival Breaking Down Barriers* of 2004 included entries from film makers all over the world including Georgia, Germany, France Russia and Spain. A similar event entitled *The Other Film Festival*, is planned for 2008 (*Breaking Down Barriers* 2004). In the UK the *London Disability Arts Forum*, supported by the *British Film Institute* is to stage its *8th Disability Film Festival* at the *National Film Theatre* from the 14th to the 19th February 2008. Established in 1999 the Festival has grown in size, quality and impact every year. In 2005 for instance, it included 47 events spread over five days with audiences of more than 2600. It returns in 2008 with a host of new ideas and contributions. It has served as a model for other disability film festivals in Canada, Finland, Greece, and Turkey. The organizers insistence on accessible premises, facilities and programming has resulted in it becoming a beacon of best practice (*X08* 2008). It is notable that despite this apparent success the future of the *London Disability Arts Forum* is unclear due to recent cuts in funding by the Government sponsored *Arts Council* (Masefield 2008).

It is important to remember too that the disabled people's movement is truly international. There are organisations controlled and run by disabled people throughout the developing nations of the majority of the world engaged in the struggle for a more equitable and just society (Albert 2007; Barnes/Mercer 2005). An example of how politics and art are linked is evident in Rebecca Yeo and Andrew Bolton's (2008) study *I don't have a problem, the problem is theirs*. The report documents the lives and aspirations of disabled people in Bolivia in both words and pictures. It includes;

"the raw voices of disabled people. Not leaders or the conventionally articulate, but in the voices of ordinary disabled people talking about their lives. And ..., through the creation of public murals ..., painted their lives and aspirations." (Yeo and Bolton 2004: 1)

The report contains twenty colour photo-



graphs of these images.

Clearly then the emergence of the disability arts movement tends to contradict the Canadian writer Susan Wendell's (1996: 273) assertion that:

"It would be hard to claim that disabled people as a whole have an alternative culture or even the seeds of one."

Furthermore, in recent years film makers in Hollywood and elsewhere have produced a panoply of films that arguably reflect different aspects of the *disability* experience. There are also more *disabled* characters (although not all are played by actors with impairments) in British soaps and dramas (Pointon/Davies 1997). Whilst these developments might not go far enough for some disabled activists, there can be little doubt that there is a much greater range of mainstream material dealing with disability issues available.

It may also be argued that the impact of disability culture and art is having quite tangible effects within the context of mainstream culture. In the USA for example, *The Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) forced suppliers of television sets to build in a decoder chip so Deaf people could receive *closed caption* (a type of subtitling system for viewers with hearing impairments). In the UK, £50,000 of *National Lottery* funding has awarded to Derby's *Royal School for the Deaf*, to help build Europe's sign language video library. This is the first phase of the establishment of a £1 million *National Sign Language Video Centre*. There has also been a consistent growth in the number of signed theatre performances for deaf people (Pointon 1997). There has also been a general expansion in the number of *positive* images of disabled people. Indeed, in the mid 1980s Paul Longmore (1987) commented on these developments in American advertising with disabled characters appearing in advertisements for Levi Jeans, McDonalds Hamburgers, and Kodak films - a trend which has yet to cross the Atlantic.

Discussion

The emergence of disability culture and its relative success raise a number of important issues that are not easily resolved. Notions such as *disability pride* and the *celebration of difference* are for many people quite problematic. This is particularly the case with reference to those whose impairments are debilitating, painful, or likely to result in premature death. Whilst other oppressed groups may proclaim that *black is beautiful* or pronounce themselves *glad to be*

gay, it is harder for many disabled people to make similar claims. While agreeing that the main determinants of disabled people's quality of life are social, not medical, many would contest the optimism of Jenny Morris' suggestion that:

"We can celebrate, and take pride in, our physical and intellectual differences, asserting the value of our lives." (Morris 1991: 189)

It may be necessary to develop an attitude of ambivalence towards impairment: on the one hand, asserting the value of people with perceived impairment/s, and on the other hand, refusing to glorify incapacity. Central to this process is the distinction between impairment and disability. It is possible to celebrate the resistance and strength that the collective movements of disabled people have demonstrated throughout the world in the last few decades, and to take pride in the survival and self-organisation of disabled people and their organisations.

Moreover, the development and very existence of disability culture and art may itself be exclusionary, and in turn, compound the difficulties experienced by disabled people as it can very easily alienate potential non-disabled allies. By definition disability culture and art are the outcome of a *minority group* consciousness. As a consequence, their potential for initiating meaningful and radical political and social change may be limited. In addition, the overwhelming majority of people with impairments have acquired conditions and have been socialised into a mainstream cultural environment that remains wedded almost exclusively to a non-disabled ideal. As a result they are often reluctant to accept a disabled identity and align themselves with the disabled people's movement. Additionally the disability arts movement has yet to make a significant impact on other sub-cultural groupings. Furthermore, as various aspects of disability culture and art are assimilated into mainstream culture their political significance may be effectively neutralised.

Final word

Despite these concerns there is clear evidence that the last few decades have witnessed the emergence of a burgeoning disability culture and arts movement. Undoubtedly a new phenomenon, disability culture can be likened to other sub-cultural forms. Its roots are long and varied and lie in the complex relationship between perceived impairment and the creative arts. Whilst there is little doubt that the disabili-



ity arts movement poses a significant challenge to conventional assumptions about impairment and disability, its very existence and relative success raise a number of important questions that have yet to be fully resolved. But how and in what ways these questions are to be addressed can only be decided by disabled people themselves.

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Zusammenfassung: Seit Beginn der internationalen Behindertenbewegung Mitte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts haben Menschen mit Behinderung immer mehr ihre Erfahrung der Unterdrückung in verschiedenen Kulturen erforscht. Behindertenpolitik und die Kunstbewegung der Menschen mit Behinderung sind jetzt miteinander verwoben und ein weltweites Phänomen. Dieser Artikel erforscht die Verbindungen zwischen der Behindertenpolitik, Kultur und Kunst. Er gibt eine allgemeine Übersicht der Kunstbewegung der Menschen mit Behinderung und bewertet kritisch die Implikationen dieser Phänomene sowohl für Menschen mit und ohne Behinderung und für den Kampf um eine inklusivere Gesellschaft.

Résumé: Depuis l'émergence du mouvement international des personnes handicapées au milieu du vingtième siècle, les personnes handicapées ont progressivement commencé à explorer leur expérience de l'oppression dans différentes formes culturelles. Les politiques du handicap et le mouvement de l'art handicapé sont aujourd'hui inextricablement liés et sont un phénomène mondial. Cet article explore les liens entre les politiques du handicap, la culture et les arts, offre une vue d'ensemble sur le mouvement de l'art handicapé et évalue les implications de ces phénomènes pour les personnes handicapées et non handicapées et la lutte pour une société plus inclusive.

Resumen: Desde el comienzo del movimiento internacional de las personas con discapacidad en la mitad del siglo veinte, éstas comenzaron en explorar su experiencia de opresión en diferentes formas. La política de la discapacidad y el movimiento del arte de la discapacidad hoy están unidos y son un fenómeno mundial. Este artículo examina la conecciones entre política, cultura y arte en el área de discapacidad; da a conocer una vista de conjunto sobre el movimiento de este arte y evalúa las implicaciones de este fenómeno para las personas con y sin discapacidad y la lucha por una sociedad mas inclusiva.

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Sensations of life

A very normal life until being 25 years of age when I was diagnosed with a degenerative disease called Frederich's Ataxia (hereditary disease damaging the nervous system in progressive and fatal way with symptoms ranging from walking and speaking troubles to heart diseases). Until that instant, I had never thought on anybody's disability and far less on mine. This disease degenerated until the moment that I was forced to use a wheelchair. At first, accepting the new situation was very hard; it was the time to make decisions in my life, but accessing life in community, having a disability, not only in Colombia, but in a lot of countries, is almost impossible. So, in 1993 I decided to opt for Art as my living option, although my relation with it was null until then (I had never observed a picture, I had never drawn, I had never painted...). I decided to start and never stop! Without studying at any school, alone in a small room at home (220cm x 150cm), where I continue to work at present.

In 1995, I carry out my first collective exhibition for people with disabilities in Colombia. I also achieve my first individual exposition this year with about 20 artworks; the next two years I work in order to accomplish in 1997 another individual exhibition. Besides, I was chosen to represent Colombia at the International Visual Arts Institute in Washington D.C., and would attend a workshop as fellow Yamagata, held at the Corcoran School of Art, together with other people selected from India, France, Mexico, Ja-



Without borders - Video-Installation

pan and the United States to share our experiences as disabled artists in front of the world. In 1998 I was awarded at the *IX National Contest of Artists Universidad de Antioquia* in Medellin,



Without borders - Installation

Colombia, because of the professional character of my work. In the meanwhile I exhibit my work collectively at galleries in Washington D.C., New York, Beverly Hills, and Nagano-Japan. I begin to experiment with more contemporary artworks, such as the installation (Art uses sculptural materials and other media to modify the way we experience a particular space. Installation art is not necessarily confined to gallery spaces and can be any material intervention in everyday public or private spaces. Installation art incorporates almost any media to create an experience in a particular environment. Materials used in contemporary installation art range from everyday and natural materials to new media such as video, sound, performance, computers and the internet.), so, in 2001 I won the first prize at the *XII National Art Salon for People with Disability* in Colombia. I also exhibited installations and interventions in Medellin. During the individual



City Horizons - Video-Installation

exhibition in 2002, I showed painting artworks and installations. In 2003, I was awarded at the *X Colombian Artists Regional Salon*, the most important exhibition of the artistic zones in my country. In 2004 I made a large-dimension installation at the *39th National Artists Salon of Colombia*, held at the *Bogotá Modern Art Museum*, the maximum expression of the *Colombian Contemporary Art*. This year I was also chosen to represent Colombia at the *International VSA Art Festival* (for artists with disabilities) in Washington D.C., together with representatives of Canada, India, Panama, Japan, France and the United States. In 2005 I was granted a *Pollock-Krasner Foundation Inc.'s* fellowship to improve my living standards as an artist and help me in my degenerative disease. My commitment before the foundation in New York was to make artworks and to labor in the artistic field with people with disabilities in Medellín. In 2006 I was granted the *Pollock-Krasner Foundation Inc.'s* fellowship again to continue to help me in my degenerative disease, with my commitment to evolve as an artist. Additionally, during the last 3 years, I exhibited collectively at the *United Nations Headquarters* in New York, *Joseph D. Carrier Gallery* (Connections 2 Abilities Festival: A Celebration of Disability Arts and Culture), Toronto, Canada, *City Museum of Washington D.C.*, U.S.A., *Gallery of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Art*, U.S.A.

In 2007 I fulfilled an individual exhibition at the Congress of the Republic of Colombia. This year I was chosen to participate in the *XII Regional Colombian Artists Salon*.

Project A Life Without Borders

We, the people with disabilities, are a part of the society too, but it is very difficult to negoti-

ate the architectonic barriers (bridges, sidewalks, stair steps, buildings, etc.) and cultural barriers (discrimination, lack of employment, compassion, lack of reliability, etc.)

To eliminate the first ones (architectonic barriers) it's only necessary to incite the political will to enforce the existing laws (in almost all the countries it is compulsory to make good accesses for people with disability in the new buildings) in order to improve our living conditions. The cultural barriers have to be modified too or eliminated to make a change in the way how the person with disability is seen, and can reach his/her integration into the society. Much is to be done yet especially in the developing countries.

Taking the above into account, I have been elaborating, from my experience as an artist and a person with disabilities, a series of contemporary artworks with the main objective of integrating Art and Disability. Initially, the artworks must have certain artistic requirements (concept, quality, cleanliness, etc.) so as to make possible their exhibition, but then, the audience of the artwork is everyone who even without knowing much about art is simply willing to experiment sensations.

This project's artworks have been made in different years, but all of them, as a whole, have formed a project of living called *A life without borders*; I'll continue to make contemporary artworks about disability as long as the disease allows me to do so.



Untitled - Mixed media (No. 50)

The spaces where there are different ways of living and cultural customs perceivable (e.g. museums) are special places to show the lack of equity toward the people with disabilities. So, in 1991 I started the project with an intervention (to intervene a space) on the stairs of a gallery in the city of Medellín, leaving tracks of my wheelchair. A year later, I retook this art-



work and repeated it on a few streets of Medellín, linking cultural places with the tracks. This trace of presence is clearly denoted in the real limits by people in a situation of disability (we can't enter buildings or museums, we can't go up the stairs), but most of the time *the walker* isn't able to feel these architectonic obstacles. In order to make the work more participative, I try to share my artistic experience with other people of the city, also in a situation of disability.

Bringing into sight, through a map on the floor, the zone where I live in the city of Medellín – which I face regularly – is a critical part of the installation *Without Borders*, carried out in 2001. I interfere in this map with steps of stair representing the imperceptible – for many people – but insurmountable –for us- thresholds, and add the track of presence to those places, and a viewfinder (small device to see the map) as a part of the wheel to find one's place in the city. Additionally to its physical constructions, the urban spaces also have cultural constructions intended by individual perceptions of use that haven't taken the genre equity into account.

The cities should be accessible for all, where private and public things relate to one another. So, in 2003 in the city of Medellín, and in 2004 in the city of Bogotá, I carried out the video-installation *Without Borders*. The percipient of the artwork is encouraged to mark, on the aerial pictures of the city of Bogotá D.C., the place having significant importance for him/her. The floor of the artwork is a large ramp, on which the city map is spread, and inside, there are videos of a journey throughout the city in my wheelchair. Although there is still a great urban cultural resistance toward the use of the public spaces by us, the people in this situation of disability, we must contribute to get equality.

The comparison between my visual horizon from the view of my wheelchair and *a walker's* visual horizon in front of the city is the essential part of the video-installation *City Horizons*, carried out in the cities of Pereira and Medellín in 2007. On the floor, into a great cube, there are printed images of architectonic obstacles of the city, such as stairs, sidewalks, bridges, etc; on the front wall, an imaginary city is repeated several times and, on every side, a window to the inside of this city with videos from an objective horizon, and another one from a subjective horizon are installed. Every city is different in the representation of its beliefs, concepts or happenings and its territory. Even if it isn't seen from the same visual horizon, the actions of the diverse individuals have their space there,

which makes them identical. So, I build up an interaction between *walker* and *not-walker*, nomadic and sedentary people in the city, which creates with its thresholds imperceptible, almost utopian limits, as well as a relation with the



Untitled - Mixed media (No. 48)

world joining the cities of Bogotá D.C., Medellín, Washington D.C. and New York in a photographic montage, accessing their inside through images in movement from my horizon.

The Painting Artwork

Developing an integration of sensorial impressions (*perception*), a conscious mental process where ideas, objects and happenings are suggested (*imagination*), and a mental evocation of previous experiences or recognition (*memory*) is an indispensable condition for the complete satisfaction when looking at my work. Note that as to do it that way, the spectator has to be predisposed to a process through which consciousness integrates the sensorial stimuli on objects, so that they are transformed into useful experience; that's all, to be of a mind to see it without any prejudices, not with the reason of artistic arguments and definitions, but accepting the sensations being roused by it in a subjective



manner. Differently from the works that I have elaborated for the project *A Life without Borders*, in my artwork of painting I don't pretend to communicate nor, at the very least, to persuade; I simply want to provoke a sensation in a subjective way, offering a bunch of feelings and energy, capable of arousing a response that generates an artwork in the soul. To do this way, I resort to time relations between man and his nature, which are always linked to changing emotions. The exploration of different not-pictorial substances, such as tar, cement, sisal, fabric, etc. and elements found around has led me by the line of informality with emphasis on matter, giving greater importance to the impression that can be transmitted by these elements to the percipient more through the

senses than by the form itself. These heterogeneous elements are applied with the hand most of the time by making scrapings, cracks, attenuations and rips on the surface; sometimes fire and acid play an important role too, so that objects and hidden sensations leading to a poetic universe emerge from those full-of-texture surfaces. In the moment that the elements of the object-as-artwork can interact with the living being, they turn into a stimulus for an answer by the percipient. My artwork doesn't imply its relation to the object itself, but to the feelings or thoughts of the one who is looking at it; to everything existing in his/her internal reality.

Sergio Giraldo Giraldo

Perceptions of Disability in the Proverbial Idiom of the Baganda

Abasi Kiyimba

This paper examines the perceptions of disability in selected proverbs of the Baganda, and discusses the extent to which these perceptions serve to consolidate the prejudices against disability and disabled persons. The disabilities handled in this paper include: physical as well as visual and hearing impairments. The general thrust of the paper is that the proverbs of the Baganda promote attitudes that ultimately hold up persons with disability for ridicule and regard them with amounts of hostility that literally make their lives nightmares. By so doing, they continuously service and generate a viciously negative perception of disability that gets logged in the collective psyche of the Baganda as a people. They thus strengthen the societal mechanism that prevents the disabled persons from enjoying fundamental human rights.

The Scope of the Paper

This paper examines selected proverbs¹ of the Baganda that feature disability, and uses them to contribute to the understanding of how attitudes towards disabled persons are formulated, sustained and transmitted from one generation to another. The paper argues that while the Baganda do not ordinarily use abusive language against disabled persons, their proverbs are indicative of deeply-rooted but subtle hostility towards disability. The paper further argues that by repeatedly using disability-unfriendly images, proverbs strengthen established stereotypes against disabled persons and generate a viciously negative perception of disability that becomes part of the collective psyche of the Baganda. This in turn strengthens the societal mechanism that prevents the disabled persons in this society from leading dignified lives.

The meaning and connotation of the term *disability* can vary widely "depending on the cultural background and social environment."

(Bruhns 1995: 5). Helander (1992: 14) defines a disabled person as "one who in his or her society is regarded or officially recognised as such, because of a difference in appearance and/or behaviour, in combination with a functional limitation or even an activity restriction".

The paper includes within its definition of *disability* the conditions of barrenness and impotence. While these conditions do not answer to traditional understandings of disability, there is a sense in which their victims are equally as socially and psychologically vulnerable as the physically disabled persons, and need to be treated with sensitivity and understanding.

The Legal Context of Disability in Uganda

Legislation on the subject of disability in Uganda is positive and direct. The *Workers' Compensation Act 2000* defines a disabled person as a person "[...] who experiences a restric-



tion or lack of ability to perform any activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for human beings, within the cultural context". And the constitution of Uganda categorically outlaws all forms of discrimination, including that which may be committed against disabled persons. Article 21 (2) unequivocally states that: "A person shall not be discriminated against on the ground of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion, or social or economic standing, political opinion or disability." And article 35 makes an even more precise declaration to the effect that: "(1) persons with disabilities have a right to respect and human dignity and the State and society shall take appropriate measures to ensure that they realise their full mental and physical potential." Clause 2 of this same article also tasks parliament to "enact laws appropriate for the protection of persons with disabilities".

The constitution also tasks the state to "promote the development of a sign language for the deaf" (Article 24). There are many other laws that are quite direct on the rights of the disabled. For example, the *Traffic and Road Safety Act 1998*, section 132 has provisions intended to ensure adequate safety for cyclists, pedestrians and drivers who are disabled and the provision of track or ramp for vehicles of conveyance operated by people with disabilities. The same Act also declares: "no person shall be denied a driving permit by reason of disability."

With a disability-friendly legal regime such as that implied by the above references, this paper should not be necessary in Uganda. Ugandans only have to follow the laws of the land to the letter, and there would be no discrimination or stigmatization against the disabled. However, the fact that such direct legislation should arise is in itself indicative of a fundamental problem. The reality is that Ugandan societies, like many of their counterparts elsewhere, have negative mindsets that make the society subtly discriminative of the disabled, to the extent of necessitating unequivocal legal protection for them.

Indigenous Philosophy on Disability among the Baganda²

The Luganda word *Abalema*, which is generally used as a translation for *disabled*, lexically means *lame* in the *physical sense*. The root of the word *lema* also means *fail*.³ But as already suggested, the term *disability* as used in general discourse on this subject refers to a variety of impairments including deafness, blindness

and others; and this is the sense in which it is used in this discussion. It should be noted however that as several scholars such as Bruhns (1995: 1) have observed, while disabled persons face negative attitudes, rejection and even isolation in many societies, the concept of disability, as a distinct and recognisable category does not exist in many African societies (Albrecht 1999; Gbodossou 1999; Kisanji 1999; Ingstad/Whyte 1995).

The society of the Baganda has a value system that enables members to accord places of respect to disabled persons who fulfilled certain social obligations, the general stigma attached to being lame or blind notwithstanding. On the whole however, a person's physical disability served as a general indicator of his/her *otherness*, and constituted a starting point for the social construction of what that person is capable of or worth.

The Baganda believed in a supreme God known as *Liisoddene* (the big-eyed one), but below Him were many smaller gods/deities (*Lubaale*), with whom people interacted on a daily basis to sort out the little problems of life as they arose. Even the big problems were presented to the smaller gods first, who forwarded them to the bigger God, if they were unable to handle them.⁴ The Baganda also believed that their dead ancestors possess spiritual powers, and that they watch over the living on a daily basis, and even occasionally intervene in the affairs of the living (*okululuma*). Therefore, it was as important to appease the ancestors, as it was to pray to the gods.⁵ Medicine-men gave to their supplicants charms to treat a wide variety of diseases, to get money, to fight enemies, to get children, to be spared deformed children, and in the case of men, to get many women.

The Baganda believed that children were given by god *Mukasa*, and failure to acknowledge him with the right sacrifices could also be an explanation for the child becoming lame or being followed by a lame sibling. Unpleasant behaviour such as murder, adultery, incest and disloyalty to a blood friendship⁶ was tabooed. The gods and ancestors could punish the offenders in various ways including killing them or killing one they loved. They could also make them insane, sterile or cause them to bring forth children with disabilities. The breach of cultural taboos, such as the restriction against women eating chicken, eggs, pork, grasshoppers and mutton could also anger the gods and cause the offender to bring forth a disabled baby. It is wrong to ridicule, imitate or laugh at the disabled people. This might provoke the aggrieved party to curse the offender. The cursed



person could beget a child with disability or become disabled himself/herself or get disabled persons among his/her descendants.

The expression to the effect that *Baseka bumpi, tebaseka bulema* (It is alright to laugh at a short person, but it is abominable to laugh at a lame one), is both common and carries a lot of weight in day today interaction among the Baganda. It was also believed that disability could sometimes result from witchcraft action by a person who was offended in some way or who is driven by envy.⁷ Many of these beliefs are still widely held among the Baganda, and are only toned down by the general acceptance that disability can also be caused by fate, and is not always a punishment or the result of hostile action by a fellow human being.

In some cases, a disabled child can receive a higher rather than diminished status, especially if he/she is associated with divination roles. Such a child is believed to be under the protection of the god of disabilities called *Wannema* (literally meaning master of disabilities). This encourages members of society to accept disabled children, because it was not possible to be sure whether a disabled child was under *Wannema's* protection or not. It is clear however that no matter how accommodative the society tried to be, no one looked forward to begetting a disabled child. When it happened, it was looked at as a misfortune. Indeed, gods were beseeched to spare one from begetting children with disabilities. In addition, sacrifices were sometimes offered to correct certain disabilities.

Proverbs and Social Questions

The study of proverbs, in search for an understanding of social questions, is increasingly becoming an important element in the scholarship of African oral literature. There is wide acceptance that proverbs play a vital role in influencing thought and action in the society where they originate. Taylor (1994: 9) observes that proverbs "give us as clear an idea as we can hope to get about the forces that influence [people] and the ideals that they hold... In difficult situations [people] turn to proverbs for answers, and they find them there".

Discussing proverbs and disability among the Igbo, Ezejideaku (2003) argues that proverbs "touch on every facet of human experience" and "constitute the one veritable source of information of Igbo world view, including their perception of disability and their relationships with the disabled among them" (Ezejideaku 2003:161). He argues that they are quite bal-

anced in their perception of disability as opposed to the general tendency to see disability only from the negative angle.

Yusuf and Mathangwane⁸, in their study of *Proverbs and Aids*, describe proverbs as strategies for dealing with situations, and can therefore be "justifiably expected to help provide a deep understanding" of societal problems like HIV/AIDS, and "guide the society in its conduct towards HIV/AIDS patients. They premise their study against the assertion that because proverbs are relatively short, generally witty and deal with often-repeated, traditional or experience-based expressions," they are memorable and recallable, and this enhances their value as instruments of socialization. In particular, they are significant as strategies for instructing, explicating, advising, praising and admonishing members of society on important social questions, and for consoling and encouraging vulnerable members of society. This makes them very valuable in assessing societal perceptions of important questions such as disability.

After reviewing several studies of African proverbs, Bhuvanewar⁹ suggests that the claims that proverbs represent the world view of society and that they touch on every facet of human experience need not be taken for granted since there is no empirical evidence to support it. He argues that what usually comes through as the *worldview of society* may actually be the worldview of a particular group within that society, since people like the disabled can not be expected to own those proverbs that depict them negatively. He also questions the widely held view that proverbs are expressions of social wisdom, and suggests that it may be more accurate and "safer to consider them as expressing 'social practices', which is a wider term that can account for those which do not have wisdom in them." Bhuvanewar argues that many societies have proverbs that can hardly be described as wise because of the uncritical way they present issues like wife beating. Such proverbs, he suggests, could be more accurately described as allusions to *social practice* than expressions of *societal wisdom* since this act can not be described as *wise*. By so arguing, Bhuvanewar seems to miss the point about the deep probe that proverbs make into the conscience of society, and the wider contexts and situations in which proverbs can be used, beyond the images they draw on to constitute their surface form.

The arguments can go on and on; but what is not in doubt is that proverbs are valuable social instruments. Even without getting entangled into the complex epistemological questions



of the extent to which literature – oral or written – can be relied on for *truth*, there is no doubt that proverbs offer deep insights into the thought processes of a people, and can also influence social direction on vital social issues.

Physical/Visible Disabilities in the Proverbial Imagery of the Baganda

As noted earlier, the Baganda do not ordinarily use abusive language against disabled persons, but their proverbs are ridicule-rich. References to disabilities are often made in ways that make listeners laugh *inspite of themselves*. The images used in the proverbs are indicative of deeply rooted but subtly expressed prejudices against disability. These disability-unfriendly images get logged in the collective psyche of the Baganda and strengthen established stereotypes against disabled persons, and continuously service the negative perceptions of disability.

The selected proverbs below are about physical/visible disabilities. In their day today use, they are intended to make general comment on life and to give instruction on subjects that go beyond disability as a physical state. But it is instructive to remember that these proverbs are used during public fora that are attended by the disabled as well as others. Regardless of the context and wider social meaning of the proverb, the image used greatly discomforts the person afflicted by the condition mentioned in the proverb. Indeed, the very use of such images in the presence of people who are affected by the problem raises serious ethical questions, and is a pointer to an inbuilt social insensitivity within the society.

Proverb 1 below states a grim truism:

- 1: Azaala omulema, taba mugumba
One who begets a lame child, can not be referred to as barren

No doubt, the parent of a lame child cannot be called barren, but this is beside the point. The proverb is the child of a social mindset that perceives disability as a calamity and the disabled as useless. The value of the disabled child in this case is simply to save the mother from the social burden of barrenness. The existence of this proverb in the folklore of the Baganda is indicative of a fundamental problem within the community's perception of disability. It is ordinarily unimaginable that the parent of a disabled child could ever be called *barren*; but as Dundes (1980: 39) notes, "if an item (of folklore) remains in a tradition, it must have meaning for the carriers of the tradition."¹⁰

Proverbs 2 and 3 seem to be simple state-

ments of fact:

- 2: Obulema, tebujja dda
Disability may befall one later in life
 3: Omulema, yamanya bwagenda
A lame person is the one who knows how he/she moves

The spirit of the proverbs need not be negative, but the images they use are a matter of concern and will sound like indictment and ridicule. One warns members against the imminent danger of disability, and the other seems to ridicule the locomotion maneuvers of the physically handicapped. While the proverbs could be used as general images to refer to a variety of situations, the glee that seems to be in-built in the tone of the proverbs can be very devastating to the disabled.

Proverb 4 and 5 also use images of disabled persons to talk about a general subjects.

- 4: Awali omulema, tewaweterwa lunwe
You should never bend your finger in the presence of a lame person
 5: Owebbango, bw'otamuwemukira tewebikka
If you do not tell off a hunchback, you never get a share of the bedding¹¹

Both proverbs emphasize the otherness of the disabled, even they are available for use in situations that may have nothing to do disability. Proverb 5 for example generates grim humour around the condition of the hunchback who has to be told off because the hump on his back is drawing away the bedding from his bedmate. The use of the image of the hunchback to signify *inconvenience*, and to generate humour without due regard for the feelings of the hunchbacked people in society, is the ultimate reflection of insensitivity on the part of the society towards disability.

Proverbs 6, 7, and 8 are a selection from a large body of proverbs that draw on teeth-related disability to deliver subtly conceived lessons on wider subjects.

- 6: Buno ddene, lisekera n'abassi
When your gum is oversize, it prompts you to laugh even with killers
 7: Binnyo nkondo, tekusibwa mbuzi
However big and pole-like ones teeth are, they can never be used for tethering a goat.
 8: Binnyo mbazzi, tebyasa nku
However big and axe-like ones teeth are, they can never be used for splitting fire-wood.

The proverbs use general truths about human anatomy to make sharp observations about life. In the context of this discussion, it is the images used in the proverbs that are more significant. They will particularly discomfort



people with big teeth and big gums, even if the subject under discussion was not related to this disability.

Another type of disability that is very prominently featured in the proverbial imagery of the Baganda is sight-impairment. The images used in the proverbs featuring this subject tend to raise more humour than sympathy for the condition of visual impairment. Proverbs 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 are a selection from a large body.

9: Naliiso limu, mu bamuzibe aba Kabaka

A one-eyed person is a King among the blind

10: Owerimu, anatemya ku w'abiri

The one-eyed person will signal to the two-eyed

11: Akusizza akasiiso, owendali kassa omwekkukumi

He has made you uncomfortable, like a squint-eyed person does to someone who is trying to hide. (Gives the impression that he is seeing you whereas he is looking in another direction)

12: Alya ne Muzibe, yeeteesa

When you share a dish with a blind person, you decide who will eat what

13: Ayogera kirabika, ng'owejjanga abika

He speaks the obvious like a jjanga¹² person announcing a death.

14: Kasobeza nga muzibe asiibula: Obandabira; nti era mbadde bulijjo bakulabira balabire!

As confusing as a blind person bidding farewell: he says: "See" them for me, as if he ordinarily sees them

In all the above proverbs, jokes are built around the sight status of members of society, without due regard to what the people affected feel. They thus provide premise for the argument that the proverbs of the Baganda promote disability-unfriendly attitudes.

Conclusion

There is wide agreement that proverbs express social truths and wisdoms. However, they are rarely interrogated for their possible impact on the people featured in their texts. It is also frequently observed by proverb scholars that images are used in proverbs to signal wider meanings of greater social significance. This discussion has not concerned itself with the broader meanings of particular proverbs; the focus has been on the images used and their implications for the persons directly implied by them.

We can conclude from the foregoing discussion that the use of disability-unfriendly images

psychologically undermines disabled persons, and contributes to the widespread denial of their legitimate position and dignity society. The fact of disability is grim, and it is bad enough that society is often unhelpful. The use of proverbs that raise laughs at the expense of the victims of disability only makes matters worse. It suggests that disabled persons are not perceived as normal persons, and can be laughed into seclusion, which is both insensitive and unethical. From the philosophy of the Baganda on disability, which is highlighted in section *Indigenous Philosophy on Disability among the Baganda*, it is clear that the traditional attitude towards disability is not always out rightly negative. It is possible to build on the positive elements within this philosophy to tone down the use and impact of the disability-unfriendly proverbs in the Luganda language. This would make society a more comfortable place for the disabled.

Notes

- 1 Proverbial idiom is a fluid term that encompasses various forms of distinctive use of language that are in their nature proverb-like. The term was preferred to *proverb* in the title of the work in order to make the paper more inclusive.
- 2 The Baganda are a Bantu ethnic group that accounts for about 25% of the 30 million people of Uganda. Before the coming of Europeans, the king of Buganda was both the titular and social head, and he wielded a lot of power. This power was greatly curbed by the colonial government and was later abolished by post-colonial leaders. The kingdom of Buganda was re-established in 1993 by President Yoweri Museveni under a new arrangement that does not give it executive power.
- 3 Indeed there are instances when the term is used to suggest that someone has *failed* in ways unrelated to disability.
- 4 The gods included Mukasa (god of fertility) and Kibuuka (the god of war). Other major deities included: Walumbe, Wangwa, Musisi, Wamala, Nnende, Mirimu, Kawumpuli, Nagawonyi, Nagadya and Wanema (the god of disability). In total, there were more than seventy gods. (See Kagwa 1993: 233).
- 5 Indigenous Baganda historians and sociologists such as Kagwa (1934), Kiwanuka (1972), Nsimbi (1989), Kalibbala (1946) and Kimala (1995), as well as expatriate ones like Roscoe (1911: 2), have made elaborate studies of the worship system of the Baganda.
- 6 When the friendship between two people became extremely intimate, they often strengthened it with a ritual that involved the two friends each swallowing a coffee bean that was smeared in the other's blood. This type of friendship was known as Omukago or blood friendship. The two became like brothers: they



had to assist each other when one had a problem, and one's enemies became the other's enemies. It was said that if one offended the other after they had gone through the rituals of a blood friendship, or hid an item that the other needed to borrow from him, there would be severe consequences including the possibility of death.

- 7 Disabilities that can be explained medically such as polio-related disabilities can be attributed to witchcraft by a neighbour, a co-wife or a stepmother, especially by the less educated (in the Western sense of the term education).
- 8 <http://www.bwenglish.tripod.com/conf/abstract.htm> (Ac. 2006-07-01)
- 9 <http://www.afriprov.org/resources/bibliogr.htm> (Ac. 2006-07-01)
- 10 See Dundes (1980: 31-61) on *Projection in Folklore: A Plea for Psychoanalytic Semiotics*.
- 11 In the translation, I have used the word *blanket* as the more accurate way of translating *Okwebikka* in context. For *okwebikka* literally means *covering oneself*. This may not bring the meaning out unless the context is explained fully.
- 12 A *jjanga* is a condition a person's eyes being watery all the time, making him/her look like they have just been crying or are about to cry.

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Zusammenfassung: Dieser Artikel untersucht die Auffassung von Behinderung in ausgewählten Sprichwörtern bei den Baganda. Die Wirkung auf die Vorurteile gegen Behinderung und Menschen mit Behinderung wird beschrieben im Bereich der Körper-, Seh- und Hörbehinderung. Sprichwörter der Baganda fördern feindselige Einstellungen, die dazu führen, dass Personen mit Behinderung verspottet werden und ihre Leben zu einem Alptraum wird. Mit dieser dauerhaften Haltung wird eine grausame und negative Auffassung über Behinderung gebildet, die sich in das kollektive Bewusstsein der Baganda einprägt. Damit wird ein gesellschaftlicher Mechanismus gestärkt, der Menschen mit Behinderung von grundsätzlichen Menschenrechten abschneidet.

Résumé: Cet article examine les perceptions du handicap dans certains proverbes du Badanga, et discute dans quelle mesure ces perceptions confirment les préjugés à l'encontre du handicap et des personnes handicapées. Il traite aussi bien des handicaps physiques que sensoriels, mais il inclut aussi sur la stérilité et de l'impuissance. Bien que ces problèmes n'entrent pas dans les catégories traditionnelles de handicaps, leurs victimes subissent des formes de moquerie et de stress similaires à celles dont sont victimes les personnes porteuses d'autres handicaps. L'hypothèse générale de l'article est que les proverbes du Badanga favorisent les attitudes qui considèrent finalement les personnes handicapées comme ridicules et posent sur elles un regard hostile qui rend leur vie littéralement cauchemardesque. De ce fait, ils alimentent et amplifient une perception sournoisement négative du handicap qui finit par s'ancre dans la psychologie collective du peuple Badanga. Ils renforcent



ainsi le mécanisme social qui empêche que les personnes handicapées jouissent de leurs droits humains fondamentaux.

Resumen: *El artículo examina las percepciones de discapacidad en diferentes proverbios del idioma Baganda. Por lo general, ellos promueven actitudes que ven a personas con discapacidad como personas ridículas y presentan una hostilidad que literalmente hace de sus vidas una pesadilla. Eso genera una percepción inmensamente negativa que entra en la psique colectiva de la gente Baganda, y por este hecho se refuerzan los mecanismos sociales negativos que impiden que las personas discapacitadas disfruten de los derechos humanos fundamentales.*

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Very Special Music? Musikkulturen der Welt und Menschen mit Behinderung

Irmgard Merkt

Das Phänomen Musik wird zunächst in seiner Universalität beschrieben. Alle Kulturen der Welt entwickeln musikalischen Ausdruck. Musik wird für alle Zwecke in Gebrauch genommen. Der Gebrauch der Musik in herausgehobenen, in nicht alltäglichen Situationen einerseits und in alltäglichen Situationen andererseits führt letztlich zu einer Trennung in Hochkultur und Alltagskultur. Orientiert man sich beim Themenfeld Musik und Menschen mit Behinderung zu sehr an den Leistungen der Hochkultur und zu sehr an Spitzenleistungen und Spitzenpositionen im Kulturbetrieb, werden bis auf wenige Ausnahmen Menschen mit Behinderung vom Kulturbetrieb ausgeschlossen. Sie sind weder Produzenten noch Rezipienten dieser Kultur. Der Aufsatz plädiert für eine offene Sichtweise auf Menschen mit Behinderung, die als Künstler leben, deren Potential zu künstlerischem Ausdruck oder deren Interesse an den Künsten zur kulturellen Teilhabe führt. Die umfassende kulturelle Teilhabe von Menschen mit Behinderung am Kulturleben ermöglicht einen neuen Blick der Gesellschaft auf die Menschen mit Behinderung. Beispiele aus verschiedenen Ländern machen deutlich, wie das Engagement einiger Weniger den Blick einer ganzen Gesellschaft auf Menschen mit Behinderung zu ändern vermag.

Musik – (k)ein Versuch

Musik, die unsichtbare Kunst, ist nicht leicht zu packen. Seit Menschengedenken wird versucht, dieses Phänomen zu erklären, seinen Ursprung zu ergründen, seine Wirkung zu beschreiben. Musik gilt als Sprache der Götter, als Mittel der Stärkung oder Besänftigung, als Mittel der Heilung und Transformation. Sie dient vielen Zwecken und allen Herren. Die Physik erklärt uns die materielle Basis der Musik: Musik besteht aus Luftmolekülen, die mechanisch in Bewegung versetzt werden. Es entstehen – beschrieben in den physikalischen Gesetzen der Akustik – Luftdruckveränderungen, die von allen Lebewesen mit Hilfe unterschiedlicher Sensorien wahrgenommen werden können. „Musik ist of-

fenbar eine Art Schall. Schall ist etwas, das man hört.“ (Taylor 1994: 3)

Musik – eine Universalie

Universalie nennen wir ein Phänomen, das in allen Kulturen vorkommt. Musik ist eine dieser Universalien: „Wir wissen von keiner menschlichen Gesellschaft, die ohne Musik ausgekommen wäre oder auskäme“ (Knepler in Suppan 1984: 52). Alle Menschen erleben das Schallgemisch Musik, sie hören und interpretieren es, sie ordnen die Schallereignisse, bilden sinnvolle Einheiten, erkennen Ähnlichkeiten und stellen Zusammenhänge her. Das Gehörte lässt gleichzeitig körperliche Reaktionen und Emotionen entstehen. Seine Körperlichkeit macht den



Menschen zu einem *musikfähigen* Lebewesen. Die Fähigkeit, Musik wahrzunehmen und im Kopf entstehen zu lassen, gehört zu den biogenen Universalien. Jede Musik folgt Regeln und einer Art von Syntax – wir sprechen in der Folge von der syntaktischen Universalie. Musik geschieht immer in gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhängen – wir sprechen von der soziogenen Universalie (vgl. Födermayr 1998: 93ff). Die Parameter der Musik, gemeint sind Tonhöhe, Tondauer, Lautstärke und Klangfarbe finden in den Musikkulturen der Welt höchst unterschiedliche Anwendung. Im Aufbau der Melodie, in der Gestaltung des Rhythmus, im Gebrauch der Klangfarbe, im Umgang mit Lautstärke und Dynamik haben sich die Musikkulturen der Welt auf so unterschiedliche Weise entwickelt, dass sie sich im Laufe ihrer Geschichte gegenseitig immer wieder gerne ihre Unmusikalität bestätigen. *Lumpen-Music*, gespielt auf *Teuffels-Glocke und Rumpelfaß* wird die Musik der Türken um 1620 in Deutschland genannt (vgl. Merkt 1983: 63). Einen universellen musikalischen Ausdruck, einen universellen Musikgeschmack, gibt es also nicht – wohl aber die universalen Prinzipien der Wahrnehmung und Entwicklung, der Gestaltung und des Gebrauchs von Musik.

Musik – für alle

Man kann nicht nicht kommunizieren, sagt Watzlawik (1974: 72). So kann man auch nicht nicht hören: Die Schallwellen treffen auf den Körper auf, ob wir wollen oder nicht. Die Verarbeitung des Schalls ist Sache des Gehirns. Es verarbeitet die akustischen Signale zum Geräusch, zu Signalen, zu Sprache oder zu Musik. Alle Kinder wachsen in die Welt des Wahrnehmens und Hörens hinein. Bereits in der pränatalen Zeit finden die ersten Erfahrungen mit akustischem Material statt. Neugeborene erkennen die Mutterstimme vor allen anderen Stimmen und sie erkennen Musikstücke wieder, die sie im Mutterleib gehört haben. Die frühen Laute der Kinder und das zärtliche *motherese* der Erwachsenen haben musikalische Komponenten. Alle Kinder werden durch Singen, Bewegung und Tanzen, durch Hören und Machen von Musik in ihrer motorischen und sprachlichen Entwicklung gefördert. Auch hier sind die Prinzipien universal: Eine anregungsreiche Umgebung ergibt ein angeregtes Verhalten, Neugier, Offenheit, Kreativität. Kinder mit Entwicklungsverzögerungen brauchen erst recht eine anregungsreiche Umgebung, die ihre Sinne gleichsam dazu verführt, gerne zu arbeiten. Dies gilt für alle Kinder in gleicher Weise. Deshalb: *Very Special Music* gibt es nicht. Eine be-

sondere Musikpädagogik gibt es nicht, es gibt nur eine besonders gute Musikpädagogik. Das ist die besonders gute Musikpädagogik: Richtige Angebote zur richtigen Zeit. Die schöne Kunst wird in den Dienst genommen: Entwicklung aller Kinder mit Hilfe von Musik, Förderung aller Kinder durch Musik.

Gebrauchsgegenstand Musik

Es gibt eine Diskussion um das Wesen der Kunst, um das *eigentliche* Wesen der Musik. Musik, insbesondere Instrumentalmusik sei, so heißt es, frei von Zweckbestimmung. Musik sei, so heißt es, absolut und nur ihrem eigenen Ideal als Kunst verpflichtet. Dieser Argumentation des 19. Jahrhunderts kann man vieles entgegensetzen. An dieser Stelle nur soviel: Das Phänomen Musik hat in allen Gesellschaften wichtige Funktionen. Die Musikanthropologie beschreibt den *Gebrauchsgegenstand* Musik: Musik hat ihre Funktion in Kult, Religion und Medizin, in Politik und Recht, in Arbeit und Freizeit (vgl. Suppan 1984). Musik findet in den Zentren und am Rande der Gesellschaft statt, oben und unten in der Hierarchie. Den Fanfaren oder Trommeln der Herrscher stehen die *Lieder von unten* gegenüber, Lieder der Klage oder des Protestes. Der Hochkultur steht die Volkskultur gegenüber, manchmal gibt es auch gute gegenseitige Beziehungen. Mozart hat sich zum Beispiel darüber gefreut, dass seine Melodien auf der Straße gepfiffen wurden. Und Gustav Mahler hat ein Kinderlied in einer Sinfonie verarbeitet. Gut, das sind spektakuläre Beziehungsbeispiele. Sie dienen hier dem Verweis auf die Wanderung kultureller Phänomene – vom *Rand* in die *Mitte*, von *oben* nach *unten* – und umgekehrt.

Die Spitze

In den Kulturen der Welt gibt es Mythen, Märchen, Erzählungen und Beispiele, die von besonderen Menschen berichten, die Besonderes tun. Der blinde Sänger, Seher und Dichter, der Künstler sieht, was andere nicht sehen, der Sänger singt, was andere nicht sagen können, dem Schamanen gelingt der Kontakt mit den höheren Mächten. Solche *Besonderheiten* sind durchaus in der Mitte der Gesellschaft angesiedelt: Die Besonderen sind entweder selbst mächtige Personen innerhalb der Gesellschaft oder sie halten sich in der Umgebung der Mächtigen auf. In die Mitte oder an die Spitze der Gesellschaft führt ein Doppelphänomen: Eine dauerhafte körperliche Sondersituation wie Blindheit bzw. Körperbehinderung oder



eine zeitlich begrenzte Sondersituation wie die Trance verbindet sich mit einer besonderen Gabe oder Ausdrucksfähigkeit.

Diesen Besonderen, die das Nicht-Alltägliche tun, entsprechen in unserer Gesellschaft die Stars aller Klassen – und unter ihnen die Künstlerinnen und Künstler mit Handicap, die es bis an die Spitze des Kulturbetriebes geschafft haben. Das sind Künstler wie der deutsche Sänger Thomas Quasthoff oder die englische Schlagzeugin Evelyn Glennie, Stars auf jeder Bühne der Welt. Behinderung trifft sich mit Sonderbegabung. Als *Ausnahmefiguren* sind sie das Besondere, gleichzeitig sind sie Wegbereiter für neue Sichtweisen auf den Menschen und auf die Kunst. Die Ausnahmekünstler erzeugen zusätzlich zu ihrer Kunst das Erstaunen der Gesellschaft darüber, unter welchen Bedingungen Kunst entstehen kann, sie erzeugen zusätzlich einen neuen und bewundernden Blick auf ein Leben mit Behinderung.

Die Plattform: Künstlerinnen und Künstler

Unterhalb einer wie auch immer definierten Weltspitze wird die Pyramide schnell breiter: Eine Vielzahl von Menschen mit Behinderung versteht und definiert sich als Künstlerin oder Künstler, als Musikerin oder Musiker. Als Solist oder als Teil eines Ensembles, im Hauptberuf oder im Nebenberuf. Keine künstlerische Disziplin bleibt heute außen vor: Musik, Komposition, Malerei, Tanztheater, Video- und Medienkunst usw. Die Organisation VSA (*Very Special Arts*) 1974 gegründet von Jean Kennedy Smith in den USA, erweitert ständig ihr Arbeitsfeld. In 60 Ländern unterstützt und begleitet sie Künstlerinnen und Künstler auf dem Weg in die Mitte der Gesellschaft. Drei Bereiche stehen dabei im Vordergrund: Künstlerisch-pädagogische Programme für möglichst viele Kinder und Jugendliche, Information über Künstler mit Behinderung und Berichte über beispielhafte künstlerische Aktivitäten. Der Button *Meet the Artists* von VSA informiert mit Kurzportraits von Künstlern mit Behinderung über die eindrucksvolle Entwicklung der letzten Jahre – zumindest in den USA. Der Button *International Affiliates* führt zu den Ländern, die mit VSA zusammenarbeiten. Die *Erste Welt* ist natürlich dabei, erstaunlicherweise aber nicht die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, viele Länder Südamerikas und Afrikas sind dabei, wenige Länder Asiens. VSA ist eine große internationale, aber nicht die einzige Organisation: In der Bundesrepublik beispielsweise kümmert sich das Netzwerk *Eucrea* um die Belange und um die Karriere von Künstlerinnen

und Künstlern mit Behinderung. Immer mehr Gruppen und Einzelpersonen definieren sich über ihren künstlerischen Anspruch – und sie verlangen – logische Folge – auch angemessene Honorare. Die Musikkultur von Menschen mit Behinderung verlässt nicht nur unter diesem Gesichtspunkt die Nischen.

Die Basis: Pädagogik und Soziokultur

Kunst entsteht nicht von selbst, Kunst braucht Vermittlung im privaten und im öffentlichen Raum. Im Feld *Künste und Menschen mit Behinderung* in den Ländern der längst nicht mehr *Dritten Welt* gibt es viel zu entdecken. Die Politik der meisten Länder spricht offiziell viel von Inklusion – in der Praxis nehmen integrative Schulprojekte freilich nur langsam zu. Ein in vieler Hinsicht *klassisches* Projekt gibt es an einer integrativen Highschool in Hanoi. Blinde Kinder und Jugendliche sind in die Klassen integriert – und sie bekommen einen eigenen Musik- und Instrumentalunterricht. Der befähigt sie, in einer Gruppe traditionelle vietnamesische Musik zu spielen – bei allen möglichen Gelegenheiten mit und ohne Touristen. So wird der Übergang in ein Leben ermöglicht, das zumindest in Teilen selbstverantwortlich und selbstständig ist.

Noch häufiger trifft man allerdings auf nicht-schulische Initiativen, die von NGOs oder von *Auslandsinländern* angeregt und gesponsert werden. Ein Beispiel ist das Projekt der amerikanisch-vietnamesischen Pianistin Quynh Nguyen, die als Künstlerin ausschließlich europäische Klassik spielt. Sie unterstützt das *Hope-Ensemble* in Hanoi und hat große Pläne:

“To overcome the impairments of the few, it is proposed to fund the practice and performance of vision-impaired, blind young musicians who, after much effort and dedication, have graduated from the Conservatory of Music of Hanoi in Vietnam. Led by Faculty Members of the Conservatory, they are now performing as the Traditional Instruments Ensemble “Hope Ensemble”. Your charitable donations would support these young musicians, rent or purchase equipment, pay for other incidental costs of artistic performance, such as travel and venue.

To overcome the lack of exposure of the many, it is proposed to reach a quarter-million students from elementary to high school in the more than 500 schools of Hanoi alone - and many more in the surrounding provinces - through the presentation of traditional instruments music



concerts performed at those schools by that very same Traditional Instruments Ensemble "Hope Ensemble".

Tatsächlich wird mit einer privaten Aktivität wie dieser eigentlich ein Auftrag des öffentlichen Bildungswesens erfüllt. Müsste nicht die Bildungspolitik eines jeden Landes im Sinne eines solchen Projektes selbst tätig werden? So lange ein Land, warum auch immer, diesem Auftrag nicht selbst nachkommt, bleiben viele seiner Bürger auf die Initiativen und die Überzeugungskraft der Sponsoren angewiesen. Ein Zustand, der sich ändern sollte...

Das *Asian Festival of Inclusion* von 23.02 – 01.03.2008 ist ein Beispiel für die Arbeit einer NGO aus London in Cambodia: *Epic Arts* wurde 2001 in London gegründet. In London liegt der Schwerpunkt der Aktivitäten. Phnom Penh ist sozusagen eine Zweigstelle der Initiative, Schwerpunkt der künstlerischen Arbeit von *Epic Arts* ist eigentlich London. Die Vertreterinnen von *Epic Arts* bringen Bemerkenswertes zustande: Ein erstes Treffen von Gruppen künstlerischer Disziplinen mit behinderten Mitgliedern aus verschiedenen Ländern Asiens kommen zum Austausch und zur Präsentation ihrer Arbeit für 10 Tage nach Phnom Penh. Von diesem Festival wird berichtet werden.

Im Idealfall bringen diejenigen, die Kulturarbeit mit Kindern, Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen mit Behinderung machen, nicht nur neue Ideen ins Land, sie beziehen auch die dort vorhandene Kultur mit ein. Im Idealfall wird die Kultur des Landes aufgegriffen, gepflegt, weiterentwickelt und vielleicht sogar auch bewahrt. Warum sollten Kulturarbeiter nicht – nebenbei – Lieder und Bewegungsspiele dokumentieren, die sie im jeweiligen Land kennen lernen? Und warum sollten sie nicht den Kindern das Gefühl geben, sie lebten in einer angesehenen Kultur? Im Idealfall entwickelt sich so bei allen Beteiligten der Respekt für und der Stolz auf den jeweiligen kulturellen Ausdruck.

Ein Sonderfall: Venezuela

In Venezuela gibt es heute 125 Jugendorchester. Am berühmtesten ist das *Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela* unter der Leitung seines genialen Dirigenten Gustavo Dudamel. Das eher gesetzte Publikum der *Luzerner Festspiele* sprang im August 2007 immer wieder applaudierend von den Sitzen. Ein solch mitreißendes Musizieren gibt es nicht alle Tage. Was ist los in Venezuela? Ein charismatischer Mann, Jose Antonio Abreu, heute 66 Jahre, hat vor 30 Jahren seine Überzeugung umgesetzt: Das Erlernen eines Instruments verwandelt Kinder. Die

Idee: Kinder erlernen ein Instrument – und wenn sie zwei Tonleitern können, bringen sie das einem anderen Kind bei. *Learning by doing* von Anfang an: Vom ersten Ton an spielen alle Kinder in einem Orchester, auch wenn sie noch keine Noten kennen. Das Ganze nennt sich *El Sistema* und funktioniert offenbar hervorragend.

"Our first goal is not to create professional musicians," sagt Xavier Moreno, der Leiter der Organisation. "Our goal is to rescue the children." Erfolgreiches Retten sieht dann so aus:

"Lennar Acosta, now a clarinetist in the Caracas Youth Orchestra and a tutor at the Simón Bolívar Conservatory, had been arrested nine times for armed robbery and drug offences before the sistema offered him a clarinet. "At first, I thought they were joking", he recalls. I thought nobody would trust a kid like me not to steal an instrument like that. But then I realized that they were not lending it to me. They were giving it to me. And it felt much better in my hands than a gun."

Auch so geht Soziokultur. Mittlerweile spielen 250.000 Kinder ein Instrument, 90 Prozent von ihnen kommen aus armen und ärmsten Verhältnissen. Gespielt wird europäische und lateinamerikanische Orchestermusik. Die Soziokultur greift die europäische Klassik auf und macht künstlerisch etwas Eigenes daraus. Die Orchester spielen europäische Klassik in einem neuen, temperamentvollen Stil – und sie spielen ein südamerikanisches Repertoire, das hierzulande weitgehend unbekannt ist. All das funktioniert nicht nur, weil so viele begeisterte Musiklehrerinnen und Musiklehrer, so viele junge Dirigenten und Organisatoren dabei sind. Es funktioniert, weil die Würde der Kinder an oberster Stelle steht:

"I remember looking at the music on the stand at my first orchestral rehearsal. It was a Tchaikovsky symphony. And I thought, 'They are crazy!' But they never, ever say, 'You won't be able to do that.' Nobody ever said no to me in the orchestra. Never."

So Edicson Ruiz, 21, seit vier Jahren als Kontrabassist jüngstes Mitglied der *Berliner Philharmoniker*, dessen musikalisches Leben mit *El Sistema* begann. Die Basis für seinen Erfolg: Eine Pädagogik der Wertschätzung und Selbstverantwortlichkeit.

Musikalische Weltkulturen

Wertschätzung und Selbstverantwortlichkeit – ohne diese *Zauberworte* gibt es keine gerechte



Zukunft für die Länder der so genannten *Dritten Welt* – weder in wirtschaftlicher noch in künstlerischer Hinsicht. Kenntnis und Wertschätzung der eigenen kulturellen Wurzeln sind Voraussetzung für eine selbstbewusste und unabhängige Entwicklung – in jeder, auch in künstlerischer und musikalischer Hinsicht. Die eigene Musikkultur liebt man – in der Regel – so wie den Klang der Muttersprache. Freilich muss heute niemand in nur einer Musikkultur zu Hause sein – die Medien machen bis in den letzten Winkel der Erde musikalische Weltreisen möglich. Sich in unterschiedlichen Musikkulturen und Musiksprachen bewegen zu können – das kann zufrieden und selbstbewusst machen. Eine interkulturell orientierte musikalische Entwicklungszusammenarbeit kann einen guten Beitrag zur interkultureller Pädagogik und Soziokultur vieler Länder leisten.

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- www.gustavodudamel.com (Zg. 11. 02. 2008)
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- www.vsarts.org (Zg. 11. 02. 2008)

Abstract: *The universality of the phenomenon of music is described: All cultures across the world develop a way of expressing themselves in music. Music is used for many situations. The use of music in everyday situations, or in special fields means that it can be separated into everyday music or "high culture". In discussing music and people with disability and limiting the discussion to high culture music, then with a few rare exceptions, they are excluded from this aspect of culture: They are neither producer nor receiver of*

this culture. The article advocates for an open attitude to people with disability who live as artists and to allow their potential for artistic expression to develop as part of culture. Allowing people with disability to become part of culture through their music allows society to better understand their society. Examples from various countries make it clear that by doing this a whole new view of people with disability in a society can occur.

Résumé: *Le phénomène de la musique est tout d'abord décrit dans son universalité : toutes les cultures du monde développent l'expression musicale. La musique est utilisée dans toute sorte de buts. L'utilisation de la musique dans des contextes particuliers, non quotidiens d'une part et dans les situations quotidiennes d'autre part conduit à une séparation entre une culture de haut niveau et une culture du quotidien. Si l'on s'en tient dans le thème musique et handicap seulement aux performances de la haute culture et aux performances et positions de pointe dans le monde de la culture, alors les personnes handicapées sont exclues dans la plupart des cas de la scène culturelle: ils ne sont ni acteurs ni spectateurs de cette culture. L'article plaide pour un regard ouvert sur les personnes handicapées qui vivent comme artistes, dont le potentiel d'expression artistique ou l'intérêt pour l'art conduit à une participation culturelle. Une participation renforcée des personnes handicapées à la vie culturelle permet un autre regard de la société sur ces personnes. Des exemples de différents pays mettent en évidence comment l'engagement de quelques uns peut changer le regard de toute une société.*

Resumen: *Si uno se orienta en la temática música y personas discapacitadas solamente en los rendimientos de la cultura alta, personas con discapacidad están con pocas excepciones fuera de la percepción y del discurso. Ellas no aparecen como productores ni como receptores de esta cultura. El texto aboga por un punto de vista abierto y enfoca a las personas con discapacidad que lograron más participación cultural con su expresión de arte. Con ejemplos de diferentes países la autora enseña como los impulsos de algunos pueden cambiar los puntos de vistas de una sociedad frente a personas con discapacidad.*

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Muis Lebensfreude – Empowerment durch Theaterarbeit in Vietnam

Im Dunkeln schlingt Mui seine Arme um mich und drückt sich mit voller Kraft an mich. Auch ich nehme ihn fest in die Arme. Er hat in dem Stück mitgespielt. Eine Frau fragt: „Wie schaffen die Kinder es nur, sich all die schwierigen Bewegungen zu merken?“ „Sie haben sie selbst erfunden“, antworte ich.



Es ist die letzte Aufführung in Quang Tri, einer Provinz mitten in Vietnam. Ich habe mit einer Gruppe behinderter Jugendlicher ein Theaterstück gemacht. Sie spielen ein Collage-Stück rund um das Thema *Vergangenheit, Jetzt, Zukunft*. Kurze Szenen, in denen die Gruppe positive und negative Ereignisse aus der Vergangenheit darstellt. Ein Stück, in dem sie zeigen, was im Moment für sie am wichtigsten ist und was sie von der Zukunft erwarten, worauf sie hoffen. Es wird erzählt, getanzt, gemimt, gesungen. Manchmal sind die Szenen abstrakt, es gibt zum Beispiel eine Szene, in der drei Spieler auf der Bühne stehen und der mittlere erzählt, was für ihn wichtig ist. Die anderen Spieler stellen Sachen dar: die Freundschaft, das Lesen. Andere Szenen sind einfacher zu verstehen, zum Beispiel der Tanz der *Widerlinge*, bei dem

alle Spieler auf der Bühne aktiv sind, angeekelte Gesichter ziehen, eckige Bewegungen machen und mit den Händen die Luft zerkratzen. Nach und nach löst sich jeweils ein Spieler aus der Gruppe, tritt vor und erzählt eine kurze Geschichte über etwas Unangenehmes, das ihm widerfahren ist.

Das *Medisch Comité Nederland Vietnam* (MCNV) lud mich ein, ein Training zur Stärkung des Selbstvertrauens und der kommunikativen Fähigkeiten behinderter Jugendlicher zu geben. Mein Vorschlag war ein Theaterprojekt. In Zusammenarbeit mit den örtlichen Organisationen regelte das MCNV ein Hotel für die Teilnehmer, die aus allen Teilen der Provinz kamen, einen Proberaum und Orte, an denen die Vorstellung aufgeführt werden konnte. Ich habe drei Wochen mit der Gruppe gearbeitet.

Als ich die Gruppe zum ersten Mal sehe, ergreifen mich Zweifel. Wie soll ich mit dieser Gruppe bloß Theater machen? Wie soll es mir gelingen, diese Kinder zum Spielen zu bringen? Die Behinderungen sind sehr unterschiedlich: Ein kleiner Junge ist blind, die meisten haben motorische Probleme, einige haben Buckel oder andere Verwachsungen, ein paar Teilnehmer sind geistig behindert. Aber die Gruppe ist so verlegen und die einfachsten Spielübungen werden dermaßen hölzern und beschämt ausgeführt, dass es mir nicht gelingt, die Kinder mit einer geistigen Behinderung von den anderen zu unterscheiden – offensichtlich begreift hier einfach keiner was.

Eine ganz einfache Spiegelübung: Stellt euch jeweils zu zweit einander gegenüber, einer führt, der andere folgt. Macht genau dieselben Bewegungen, so dass der eine als Spiegel des anderen fungiert. Die Kinder schauen mich erstaunt an. Ich teile die Gruppe auf und arbeite einzeln mit den Kindern von 10 bis 15 Jahren und den Adoleszenten von 15 bis 20 Jahren. Vielleicht fällt es ihnen unter Gleichaltrigen leichter, sich bloß zu geben. Aber nein, auch das hilft wenig. Ich lasse die Älteren eine Rolle aufschreiben: arroganter Polizist, wütender Nachbar, aufdringlicher Verkäufer usw. Alle setzen sich in den Kreis, und dann soll immer ein Spieler bei einem anderen *anklingeln*, eben als wütender Nachbar oder arroganter Polizist. Aber die Jugendlichen spielen niemanden: Sie stellen sich vor einen anderen und sagen wörtlich: „Ich bin ein böser Nachbar.“ Ansonsten



geschieht nichts. Sie schauen mich an: Machen wir's so richtig?

Ich arbeite mit einer Dolmetscherin, einer Lehrerin, die mein Englisch ins Vietnamesische übersetzt. Das ist recht gewöhnungsbedürftig. Als Trainer habe ich einen bestimmten Stil. Erstens: Ich erkläre etwas. Zweitens: Ich erkläre das gleiche noch mal in anderen Worten, und drittens: ich fasse noch mal zusammen. Meine Dolmetscherin jedoch erklärt alles ein einziges Mal und dolmetscht meine Worte danach nicht mehr wörtlich. Beim zweiten Mal hört sie die Teilnehmer ab: „Was hat er gesagt?“, und beim dritten Mal sagt sie zu mir: „Das habe ich ihnen schon erzählt.“ Das kann schon sein, aber das ist eine andere Pädagogik, und so arbeite ich nun einmal nicht.

Manchmal lassen sich die Teilnehmer auf eine Diskussion ein – und zwar mit meiner Dolmetscherin und nicht mit mir. Dennoch, merke ich im Laufe des Projekts, dennoch gelingt es mir, meine Atmosphäre zu schaffen. In der eigenen Sprache arbeiten hat den Vorteil, dass man so wendig ist wie ein Speedboot, mit einem Dolmetscher arbeiten ist wie Fahren mit einem Öltanker: Dreht man am Steuer, hat dies minutenlang überhaupt keinen Effekt, dann läuft ein Zittern durch den plumpen Leib und langsam ändert das Schiff seinen Kurs. Das Fine-Tuning gelingt mir nicht, aber die Richtung des Projekts stimmt. Meine Teilnehmer sagen später, die Atmosphäre sei offen gewesen, sie hätten so viel machen können, sie hätten so viel Spaß gehabt.

Wenn man an einem Collage-Stück arbeitet, durchläuft man mit der Gruppe verschiedene Phasen.

Phase eins: Orientieren. Die Teilnehmer spielen Improvisationsszenen. Das Thema (in diesem Projekt: *Vergangenheit, Jetzt, Zukunft*) dient als Richtschnur. Ich erteile Aufträge wie: Male eine schöne Erinnerung. Ich lasse die Teilnehmer von ihren Bildern erzählen, manche Geschichten spielen wir anschließend. Und ich experimentiere mit Formen. Was können die Teilnehmer und was machen sie gern? Ich ma-

che viele Theaterübungen mit der Gruppe.

Phase zwei: Probe. Jetzt gehe ich zielgerichteter an die Arbeit. Aufträge sollen zu brauchbaren Szenen führen. Das Thema ist bestimmend. Ich frage die jüngere Gruppe zum Beispiel: „Was könnte in Zukunft geschehen?“ „Es kommt ein Geist auf die Erde“, sagt ein Kind. „Der frisst kleine Kinder!“, ruft ein anderer. Zunächst lasse ich die Kinder frei improvisieren, ich schaue mir an, was sie machen, und schließlich gebe ich eine Form vor: Drei Kinder bilden ein Monster mit sechs Armen, die sich

ständig bewegen, und mit denen es kleine Kinder fängt und auffrisst. Eine andere Zukunftspantastie lautet wie folgt: Es gibt ein Klavier, das man überall auf der Welt hören kann, und wir entwickeln eine Szene, in der ein Junge das Klavier ist und ein Lied pfeift, während die anderen Kinder die Kontinente darstellen. Die



Kontinente werden von der Musik geweckt und pfeifen das Lied mit. Phase drei: Auswählen und inszenieren. Aus der Vielfalt des Materials stelle ich eine Aufführung zusammen und schlage sie den Teilnehmern vor. Ist es so okay? Ein Junge in der älteren Gruppe wünscht sich noch etwas Spektakuläres. „Was denn?“, frage ich ihn. „Ich will auf dem Kopf stehen“, sagt er. Wir probieren es aus und eine Art Zirkusnummer entsteht.

Und dann kommen die Aufführungen. Tung vom MCNV hat die Spielorte geregelt. Vietnam erinnert mich oft an Italien: das Straßenleben, die Aufmerksamkeit für die Form, der chaotische Verkehr. Der Spielort erinnert an Fellini-Filme. Draußen an einem See wurde eine kleine Bühne aufgebaut. Das blaue Hintergrundtuch ist mit Werbetexten und bunten gestickten Blumen verziert. Vor die Bühne wurden zu beiden Seiten lange Pfosten in den Boden geschlagen. Dazwischen wurde Eisendraht gespannt und darüber ein rosafarbenes Band drapiert. Auf diese Weise wurde ein Rahmen um die Bühne gebaut. Die Bühnenbeleuchtung besteht aus einer Neonröhre. Zwei kleine Tannen stehen durch den Bühnenboden, sie sind mit



blinkenden Weihnachtslämpchen geschmückt. Schräg zu beiden Seiten der Bühne stehen lange Tische in Schlachordnung. Auf den Tischen Wasserfläschchen und Gläser. Das sind die Plätze für die Honoratioren. In der Mitte vor der Bühne gibt es einen offenen Platz: Hier sind die Steh- und Sitzplätze für das einfache Volk. Das Volk, das auf Mopeds angefahren kommt. Und auch auf den Mopeds sitzen bleibt, um zu schauen was sich dort auf der Bühne abspielt.

Ich habe zwei Vorstellungen gemacht, eine mit den jüngeren Kindern und eine mit den Adoleszenten. Die eine Vorstellung hieß *The River of Life* und die andere *The Vulcano*.

Die Gruppen spielen gut. Schönes Tempo und mit sichtbarer Freude. Die Eltern der Teilnehmer sind erstaunt: Sie hätten nicht gedacht, dass ihr Kind zu so etwas in der Lage wäre. Die Kinder erzählen mir von ihrem Erfolg: Alle wollen mit mir aufs Photo.

Und dann ist da Mui, der die Arme um mich schlingt und sich mit seiner gesamten Kraft an mich presst. Er hat in dem Stück mitgespielt und das ist seine Art und Weise, seinen Sieg mit mir zu teilen. Es berührt mich. Warum? Es ist seine Lebensfreude, die mich rührt.

Immer kam Mui mit begierigen Augen in den Proberaum. Jeden Tag diese jungen Hundeaugen, die fragten: Was machen wir denn heute wieder? Muis rechtes Bein ist seltsam nach außen gedreht, sein Fußgelenk unbeweglich, sein Fuß steht fast vertikal, seine Ferse be-



rührt niemals den Boden. Mui watschelt wie eine lahme Ente. Und er tanzt! Tanzt mit funkelnden Augen, tanzt mit schweißbedeckter Stirn, sein T-Shirt, ein nasser Lappen. Mui tanzt und fällt der Länge nach auf den Steinfußboden. Bamm.

„Hast du dir wehgetan, geht es?“ Verwirrter Blick: „Ja.“ „Wirklich ... nirgends Schmerzen?“ Erstaunter Blick: „Nein.“

Denn Mui hat nicht vor, sich seine Lebenslust auch nur einen Moment lang von seinem seltsamen Bein verderben zu lassen. Lebenslust emotioniert mich. Talent – das bekommt man. Hart arbeiten – das tun Angestellte, die sich von einer Besprechung zur nächsten schleppen auch. Aber Lebenslust, das bewundere ich.

Joop Hoekstra

From Emergency to Emergence: Rehabilitation and Self-realization through Art in Southern Africa

Introduction

Community to Community is a network that links communities in the north with those in the global south. C2C aims to empower communities to listen, learn, and co-develop. We work to support the integration of health, rights, food security and technology within a balanced relationship with natural and cultural systems. C2C works to link people, projects and ideas

through cultural, educational, and professional exchanges. We use media technology to provide context and continuity for global grassroots interaction. One of the projects that C2C supports is *Phelisanong Orphans, Disabled, HIV/AIDS and Vulnerable Children* project, located in Lesotho, southern Africa.



Lesotho: The Context

Art is a tool for social change as much as it is a path towards personal transformation. At the *Phelisanong* project, art is used to empower people through skill sharing and personal development, and as a way to generate income for those who are most vulnerable in Lesotho. This nation has one of the world's highest rates of HIV/AIDS, in addition to being a place where miners are repatriated, 50% of them coming home from South Africa disabled. Childhood illness and lack of access to health care compound the problem: one encounters tragic cases of clubfoot and polio related disability that result from untreated illness and incomplete immunization programs. Fetal alcohol syndrome, vitamin deficiencies, and malnutrition are a result of the endemic poverty that Lesotho is struggling to free itself from. Working with the most marginalized communities demonstrates that, given some investment of training and nurture, people who have special challenges are able to use art as a way to uplift themselves both economically and emotionally.

The Arts in a Resource-Poor Setting

In developing countries, art and the artisan tradition are often indistinguishable from the domestic arts: for example, traditional homes are built by hand, then decorated with murals of stone and paint, while broom handles are decorated with fanciful geometric designs. Baskets serve multiple functions as useful containers and as repositories for stories, patterns, and motifs that hold important cultural information and allow the maker her personal artistic expression.

Lesotho maintains many of its rural artisan traditions in spite of modernization. While cheap imports of soap and candles have eliminated some home industries, many things which are central to home and family tend to be handmade, including blankets, sleeping mats, receptacles, and some crockery.

The economy is not so formalized in rural Lesotho to allow an artisan class who gain their livelihood solely from what they produce. However, almost everyone is somehow involved in the arts in some capacity: shepherds whittle their *molamu* sticks and weave designs along their shafts with recycled telephone wires, thatchers cap their straw roofs with tin sculptures of birds, and farmers weave their own straw hats, adding their personal flourishes in the form of coloured bands, elaborate lacy brims, and loopy tops.

Phelisanong: A Community Emerging Through the Arts

At the *Phelisanong* project in Pitseng, Lesotho, these practical arts are being practiced by a unique group of special needs people. Founded in 2001, the *Phelisanong* project brings together disabled adults, who together work with their community of elders, particularly grandmothers, HIV positive people, people with albinism, and others who suffer from stigma in the greater community. These volunteers care for orphans and disabled children and youth from throughout the country. There are 67 resident children in the centre, and more than 12 resident adults, who, together with a pool of 100 volunteers, run a farm, a primary school, an orphanage, an HIV/AIDS outreach program, and a handicraft co-operative.

Handicrafts at *Phelisanong* are produced by the disabled youth and adults. The basic materials used by the group initially comprised locally available materials: indigenous grasses and recycled/found objects: for example, the straw hats that they weave are bound with thread made from recycled plastic shopping bags. Later, new materials and techniques were introduced, so that today, the disabled youth knit by hand and using knitting machines, the elder groups weave baskets and make pottery in addition to their hat-making, the mentally handicapped young men (ages range from 18 to 30) use leather to produce saddle bags, belts, and provide cobbler services to the community.

How is all of this production building the confidence and self-awareness of these disabled people? When we think of art in the north we tend to think of it as purely symbolic: as author Tom Robbins put it: "The great thing about art is that it is totally useless!" And yet, as stated earlier, the marriage of function with self-expression is a practical solution in a resource poor setting. Taking something *useful* and adding *useless* adornment is the playful, personal element that is added by the residents at *Phelisanong*: They have their own styles, and collectively have developed a series of motifs that are localized, adding the *Phelisanong touch* to traditional craft forms.

The Performing Arts: Weaving Out Loud

In southern African, the oral tradition is so strongly rooted that spoken word, performance, and music pre-dominate over the plastic/visual arts. People express themselves informally:



There is always someone singing at *Phelisanong* and given the slightest opportunity groups of farm volunteers, cooks, or children's caregivers will break into song. Every morning at the primary school, the children, mainly orphans from outlying villages, gather in the courtyard of the project and sing classic Basotho songs, and every day as school let's out the kids gather again and close the day with choral singing. The *Phelisanong* theme songs are not exclusively traditional: The HIV/AIDS outreach workers, known collectively as the Warrior Women, have developed a series of songs that they have written and arranged. The songs are about living with HIV/AIDS openly, declarative folk tunes that the Warriors perform in 3 part harmony. "Look at my chest, I am wearing a red ribbon, look, I am here, alive now!" says one tune (in clumsy translation: the songs are wonderfully rhythmic and rhyming). While it is debatable whether HIV positive people are by definition disabled, the motto at *Phelisanong* is "People with AIDS and disabled, we are one at the same time."

Music, as produced by rural Basotho in Pit-seng, is predominantly vocal and a-cappella, but as in many things, *Phelisanong* is exceptional in that the disabled youth group have developed their own instruments. Some are the traditional instruments of Lesotho, including the *sekhankula*, a tin can tied to a string that is played like a violin. Others are of the boys' own invention, from simple bucket drums to makeshift banjos pounded out of old shoe polish tin and carved wood, strung with wire. The sounds that come out of these instruments are caterwauling, but given the rhythms that everyone is taught from a very young age, the music that the boys' band plays is utterly danceable.

And dance, they do: Perhaps the most moving aspect of *Phelisanong's* artistic expression is the dancing. The disabled children have regular evening *talent shows* where their caregivers perform, and teach, the cultural dances like *mokhibo* a dance based on threshing and sweeping, and *olobonoya*, where female dancers wear short grass skirts and do a staccato series of movements that lift the skirts to reveal rows of chiming beer caps strung like beads beneath the skirts. When performed by children supporting themselves on crutches, surrounded by adults who clap and sing to encourage them, these dances are a beautiful example of how participating in the arts strengthens and empowers special needs people to be self-actualizing. In a culture where disabled people have traditionally been kept separate and hidden from the community, *Phelisanong's* open-

ness and celebration of their special needs children's talents is quite revolutionary. The children's dance troupe performs for visitors, recently entertaining the US Ambassador to Lesotho who came to visit a residential building which the American embassy had funded.

Community Development: North/South Creative Interactions

Recently, in part due to *Community to Community's* involvement with *Phelisanong*, volunteers have come from overseas to work with the community. Some of these volunteers have come to counsel orphans and vulnerable children, using art therapy as a way to reach children who are withdrawn or traumatized. Using beads as a basis for discussing emotions, therapist Sue Russell held workshops with children whereby they created jewellery for themselves, each bead representing something in their lives that they drew strength from. Another volunteer from Israel, Tamar Rachkovsky, worked with the albino and disabled caregivers, who look after the disabled children. She offered them a weekend long *art holiday*, where they painted, drew one another's portraits, made collages and produced still-lives. Eswyn Martin, a Canadian, shared her beadwork skills with the local youth group, while her mother, Heather Martin-McNabb, conducted basketry workshops, incorporating new materials into traditional styles. As *Phelisanong* has a child-sponsorship program with overseas families, who send monthly contributions and exchange correspondence, the resident children are often engaged in drawing and painting: those who are unable to write send their sponsoring families artwork that they produce.

Future Directions

Visual art has become part of the everyday life of *Phelisanong*, sitting comfortably alongside the singing and dancing as a means for people to express, release, and reflect. A typical morning at the project sees an overseas volunteer sitting with a group of grandmothers: the granies weave hats and share stories while their portraits are drawn by the visitor. Nearby, a group of youth sit in wheelbarrows knitting sweaters for the primary school kids, while a woman kneads mud and dung into a plaster for the walls of the kitchen. In the craft workshop, there may be a lesson in making clay beads being delivered, while in the primary school, a grade 6 class is outside in the grass in small groups, hunched over clay sculptures that they



are making. A physical therapist encourages a disabled child to walk by clapping and singing "Come here, come further" as the girl, who has laid down her cane, staggers five, then six, then seven steps before she falls laughing into the caregivers' arms.

In the future, the project aims to generate income for itself through handicraft production. A new craft shop has been built this year: it is sited beside the main highway that leads visitors to Lesotho to its' main attraction, the Katse Dam. This ensures that a steady flow of tourist traffic will have access to the products of *Phelisanong*. The shop will sell hats, baskets, clay pots, postcards made from photos taken by the residents, jewelry, weavings, and floor mats, with funds generated shared between the producers and the project's operating fund. Here is an opportunity for development agencies and cultural organizations, both for profit and none, to participate in the development of *Phelisanong*. Funds are always needed to ensure training, purchase of supplies, transport, and equipment for the craft department. Further,

the products made at *Phelisanong* require a stable marketplace, which will ideally comprise of a combination of local and international trade. An overseas volunteer, Mathabo Amos, is working with the craft department to teach quality control, production scheduling, and embellishment techniques from other parts of Africa where she has worked for many years with handicraft producers. These kinds of inputs will ensure that the product line that comes out of *Phelisanong* is marketable, reliable and consistent.

To connect with *Phelisanong*, visit the website at www.phelisanong.com, or email director Mammello Lehlotha at lehlothamb@yahoo.com. To view photos and film of the project, including videos of the *junk band*, disabled children's dance troupe, and children's primary school choir, visit You Tube at www.youtube.com/garymcnutt. Donors and prospective volunteers are asked to contact Community to Community by emailing andrea_palframan@mac.com

Andrea Palframan

Integrated Dance in Cambodia

September 2007 - Filmhaus, Cologne, Germany

Three Cambodian women dance before an audience of about fifty people. They are swathed in jewel-coloured fabric with gold decorations and flowers in their hair. With their arms extended to the sides, delicately arching, spiralling and flicking their hands, they float around the dance floor. At the centre of the trio, a dancer proudly sweeps her arm out to encompass the audience as her partner leads her graciously across the stage. She is Kim Sathia, Cambodia's first professional disabled dancer.

After the performance, Sathia's former colleague (with whom she danced before she became disabled) cries when speaking of her feelings on seeing Sathia dance again after many years. "When I got married, my family did not want me to invite Sathia to the wedding. They thought the presence of a disabled woman would bring bad luck. Some of my family did not come to the wedding because she was there. I can't explain what it is like to see her dance again. It is so wonderful."

September 2003 - Phnom Penh

English dancer Katie MacCabe arrives in Cambodia. Following the death of her father, who was disabled by polio as a child, Katie has recently married and accompanied her husband to Cambodia. She is deep in grief and a little overawed by her new surroundings. She needs to find how she fits into this strange new context.

Influenced by her father's disability and her late-mother's love of dance, Katie has worked for several years in the field of integrated dance – dance which brings together disabled and non-disabled performers. She hopes to establish a branch of *Epic Arts*, a charity she has co-founded in London, which works in integrated arts. But the idea of a disabled person dancing on stage is unheard of in Cambodia and somewhat paradoxical in a culture in which dance is perceived largely as classical and high-art, defined by its accessibility only to physically-virtuosic and classically-beautiful bodies. Katie begins offering workshops to disabled children, but knows that she needs a disabled partner with whom she can demonstrate the possibilities of her art.



On one of her trips to *Cambodia Trust*, a NGO supporting people with disabilities, she meets Kim Sathia, formerly one of the most celebrated classical dancers in Cambodia, now a wheelchair-user after a road accident. Sathia has not danced since her accident. She has resigned herself to working as a receptionist at Cambodia Trust. She no longer dances. She divides her time between work and sitting in the downstairs room of the two-room house that she shares with her father.

Sathia is what Katie has been searching for - a partner with whom to develop her work. But when Katie shows Sathia pictures of integrated dance projects in the UK, Sathia pushes them back to her. "No. 1 cannot" she says. Katie is devastated.



For over a year, Katie visits Sathia once a week to learn the Khmer dance vocabulary of hand gestures. Gradually a rapport - and trust - grows between the women. Then one day Sathia tells Katie what she has been longing to hear: "I think I want to dance again."

The story of what happened in the four years between these two events forms the basis of this article. Through the examination of the work of Katie and Sathia, I hope to draw wider conclusions about the potential impact of participatory dance projects for disabled people as well as investigating some concerns and challenges surrounding such work.

Background

I met Katie and Sathia just after they had decided to dance together. I was researching dance projects in development contexts and Adam Benjamin, one of the leading figures in integrated dance with whom both Katie and I studied, had suggested that I visit Katie. I am a choreographer, with a specialism in integrated work, so Katie was keen for me to work with her and Sathia. After trying out our chemistry for a few days, we decided we wanted to work together more. Eight months later, I returned

for three weeks to work with Katie, Sathia and Sophara, a deaf performer, to create the piece that would mark Sathia's return to the stage. The idea was that we would create a piece which would tour around schools, colleges and festivals to act as an advocacy tool to encourage the integration of disabled young people. The tour would be accompanied by workshops led by the dancers and discussions about the piece.

Day one of the project

Three men carry Sathia in her wheelchair up a dark, narrow flight of steps. She tilts backwards at an alarming angle and takes a sharp intake of breath. The men smile at her encouragingly as they strain lift her and her ancient wheelchair. Sathia looks down, refusing to meet their eyes - embarrassed. It takes ten minutes to negotiate the ascent of the steps leading to the room where we will rehearse.

We begin in pairs. Sathia lays the palm of one hand on the back of Katie's hand. Sathia closes her eyes and Katie takes time to bring her own breath onto the rhythm of Sathia's. Then she slowly begins to move, leading Sathia, who follows. Katie's task is to slowly explore how Sathia's body moves - to research her range of motion and get to know her body. Sathia's task is to follow Katie and also discover new things about how her own body can move by allowing herself to be led.

Starting with the individual

I use this exercise early in most projects. It is key to some fundamental issues in integrated dance. Integrated dance is about drawing-out and developing the movement capacity of each individual. It is about helping the dancer to expand their own movement range. It is, above all, *not* about teaching a person to move so that they look like some prescribed ideal. Thus we begin with our eyes closed and with the physical exploration of the movement range of each individual.

Much dance training is about a specific ideal of how the dancer should look and move. It is learned by copying the teacher, who instructs the dancers as to how they should move. It is predicated upon the exclusion of the majority of bodies. Classical dance forms like ballet or, in Cambodia, Khmer dance are the height of this exclusive practise. Dancers are selected for their extraordinary physical capacity and the aesthetic of their body and face. They are trained rigorously to learn a set vocabulary of movements.

Thus dance becomes about the exclusion of



all but the *perfect* and *beautiful* body. How many times have you heard people say, "I can't dance. I'm hopeless. I have two left feet. I'm like an elephant." In Khmer dance the *beautiful* body is young, flexible, thin, well proportioned and *not* disabled. Disability is the mark of bad luck, ugliness and exclusion from normality. One could say it is the antithesis of the classical dancing body. In Sathia's own words: "I was ashamed to see my friends. They are beautiful and I am no longer beautiful."

Before her accident, Sathia had been one of the best classical Khmer dancers of her generation. As her teacher puts it: "She was the role-model."

Day three of the project

We have been joined by Thom, a non-disabled former colleague of Sathia's who wants to dance with the group. His presence feels like a strong, positive symbol – that a non-disabled professional Khmer dancer wants to share the stage with Sathia is a reinforcement of the *seriousness* of her dancing. It gives the project more credibility.

I usually begin choreographing by setting tasks for the dancers. They create their own movement and then I work with what they create, selecting, refining and developing it to make the final piece. This allows each individual to work from a place where they feel comfortable. In a project which is concerned about the development of the individuals in the piece, it is important that each dancer feels that their contribution has been recognised and included. My role is to shape and form these contributions so that they contribute to a cohesive whole.

Each time I set Thom and Sathia a task together, they show me a set piece of classical dance which they used to perform together. I feel challenged by how to work with this material. Sathia and Thom share an enormous wealth of training and movement-vocabulary from their classical training. They want to use this and, as a choreographer, I am delighted by the possibilities which this offers. But I have concerns.

The question of vocabulary

If Sathia dances a purely classical vocabulary, I feel that this highlights what she has lost - quite literally she cannot move her legs so half of the set material is missing. To me this reinforces the negative image of the disabled body, rather than celebrating the beauty and virtuosity of her current physicality.

So we start to investigate how we might dis-

rupt the classical form to create a new vocabulary for Sathia. Thom and Sathia show me a duet which tells the story of the meeting of two lovers; his amorous approaches and her refusals. I decide to create a parallel duet with Katie and another disabled dancer, Denh, who has also joined the project. Denh has no dance experience and Katie is trained in a western contemporary style, so the movement that they create has a natural, informal feel against the stylized classical duet. I then recombine the couples and ask them to join their movement together – Sathia's classical Khmer with Denh's contemporary; Katie's contemporary with Thom's classical Khmer. In this way, we shift the focus away from the traditional form of the duet and to the interplay between the two movement vocabularies.

Day four of the project

Building upon our experiences of the previous day, I want to create a solo with Sathia which uses and expands her existing dance vocabulary. She creates a series of Khmer movements for me and then we begin to disrupt them. I ask her to turn one movement upside down; another she has to dance leaning out of her chair at an angle; another I want her to do reaching down to the floor. The challenge is to make what is familiar to the audience feel new and unexpected. Thus we hope to undermine their expectations about what dance looks like, while still showcasing Sathia's virtuosic skills.

The role of intercultural collaboration

It is here that the importance of intercultural collaboration becomes clear. In the UK there is a tradition of integrated work, beginning with the introduction of more open movement techniques in the 60s and 70s and continuing through the establishment of *CandoCo*, the first integrated dance company by Adam Benjamin and Celeste Dandeker in the early nineties. In the UK it is no longer that unusual to see a disabled dancer in a contemporary dance performance. There is an ever-increasing body of skills and experience which have accumulated over the years of experimentation.

On the other hand, our project was the first integrated dance project in Cambodia. There are no Cambodian dancers with experience of the field. Both Katie and I have trained with Adam Benjamin and between us have accumulated many years of experience. The exchange of this experience allowed the dancers to avoid having to *reinvent the wheel* – if you can forgive the pun. There are skills and techniques in integrated dance which are established and trans-



ferable e.g. tips for partnering a dancer in a wheelchair or choreographic tools to source individual movement. This allowed Sathia and Denh to develop their skills quickly but safely, using proven methodologies.

Day eight of the project

We have been experimenting with tilts; shifting the wheelchair off balance so that Sathia is at an angle to the side or the back. Sathia is comfortable and enjoying the physical challenges. But I want to go further.

In each of our tilts, Katie supports Sathia to make the off-balance line possible. I think this sends the wrong message about Sathia's strength and power as a disabled woman. I want Sathia to try lifting Katie from the floor. Suggesting this is a risk; it breaks so many rules of Sathia's dance training (men lift women) and also of her perception of herself as a woman (the weaker sex) and as a disabled person. If I suggest it and we do not achieve it there will be a sense of failure at very fragile time in Sathia's development. It will damage her confidence. But if we do achieve it, it will give Sathia an enormous boost. It will also shift her representation as a disabled woman on the stage: not the man lifting; not the western woman lifting; the disabled Cambodian woman lifting...

The importance of role models

This brings me to the importance of Sathia as a role model and as an ambassador. Before she began dancing again, Sathia had essentially tried to be invisible – she left the house only when she had to for work and never returned to the theatre where her friends and colleagues continued to dance. In Khmer culture, disabled people are often seen as the bearers of bad luck and socially excluded (remember the friend whose family did not want Sathia to attend her wedding).

For Sathia to put herself on the stage, for her to draw people's attention to her body by dancing before them, is an act of extraordinary courage and defiance. In performing, Sathia defies not only the prejudices of others about her body, but also those prejudices which she has internalised. Her presence on the stage challenges notions of who is allowed to be seen, in what context certain individuals are allowed to be seen, who can be deserving of attention and be indeed *beautiful*. Her presence asserts a right to be seen and be accepted. She is a powerful symbol for young people, with and without disabilities.

Hers is a lonely (yet very public) road. She is the first professional disabled dancer in Cam-

bodia and as such a trailblazer. She carries the weight of the role somewhat reluctantly and it can lie heavy upon her. It is here that international collaboration supports Sathia again. Hearing about, meeting and working with other disabled performers helps her to feel that she is not alone. It validates her experience of herself as a dancer and offers her role models to support her.

Day ten of the project

We have been joined by another dancer, Denh, who is nineteen and whose only experience of contemporary dance is an afternoon in a workshop with Katie. Denh had polio and walks with crutches or uses a wheelchair. He is excited and nervous.

After a morning of gently getting to know Denh and how he moves, we take a break. I watch as Denh whizzes round the room in his wheelchair, doing wheelies and tilts. Sophara borrows Sathia's wheelchair and starts to race him. Soon they are both flying around the room in a wild race, challenging each other to see who can be the most daring.



I decide to work with this fabulous new energy and we spend the afternoon working out just how adventurous Denh can be. Can he tilt backwards until he gets his hand to the floor? Can he do a handstand on the chair? Can he tip the chair up and roll backwards out of it if Katie supports him? Can he roll and slide on the floor?

Denh makes some great movement; rolling, diving and sliding on the floor. Katie starts to learn the movement that Denh has created – they begin rolling and sliding on the floor together. As the afternoon progresses, we make an exciting duet in which Katie and Denh push away his wheelchair and then duet on the floor, moving themselves with their arms. I hope that the duet will convey respect for Denh's movement vocabulary - that the non-disabled dancer



learns the movement of the disabled dancer and that this movement is challenging and virtuoso in a way which is different from, but equal to, the classical movement in the piece.

The choreographic approach

My approach to integrated dance is about sourcing the natural movement of the dancers and then selecting, refining and expanding this movement to create a dance piece. This approach requires different skills from both a choreographer and dancers than those needed to choreograph or dance in a classical form. In classical choreography, a choreographer can say "do this" and demonstrate or list a series of set steps for the dancer to combine. My approach is not to demonstrate (I do not want the dancer to look like me, but rather to be a heightened version of themselves) and there is no set vocabulary. I ask questions: For example, can you circle every joint in your body? I set improvisations: Experiment with throwing each body part away from you and letting your partner catch them.

This approach presents challenges when I work in Cambodia. Sathia's dance training was focused upon learning the precise execution of each movement of the Khmer classical vocabulary (she tells me there are 4,500). The concept of improvisation was absent from her dance training. I am told that this can also be said the general education Cambodia, where there is a focus on rote learning and following instructions.

Thus when I asked the dancers to respond to a question with some movement, or to improvise, they simply could not. They looked at me in confusion.

The (somewhat unsatisfactory) solution to the problem was to embody the question or improvisation in a series of instructions. I would touch a body part: "Throw this somewhere in space". Denh threw his arm forward. I touched it again: "Throw it somewhere else". Then a knee, then a shoulder, always one movement at a time. Then I began to offer him choices: "You pick a body part to throw. – Now pick two and throw them one after the other or together, as you wish." Slowly we all learned how to make movements and improvise together.

I may be crediting dance with too much and there is certainly no scientific evidence to prove my theory, but I believe that the experience of problem-solving, improvisation and imagining alternatives can be transferred into other situations. Sathia is certainly more flexible and open to new experiences than she was, slower to judge, needing structure a little less. She has

become increasingly able to articulate her point of view and her ideas in a collaborative process – whether in the studio or at the dinner table.

Day sixteen of the project

We visit the theatre where Sathia used to perform. It was once the home of the best classical performers in Phnom Penh. Sathia used to dance here. Foreign dignitaries would come to admire the indoor pond and aquarium, the glossy wooden stage, the beautiful, golden-clad dancers. It is now derelict after a fire. There are (of course!) three flights of stairs to negotiate. Three men sweat and grunt as they carry Sathia in her chair. She looks at them and smiles, tossing back her long dark hair. "When I visit you have to do sport!" she jokes.

We have come here today for Sathia to meet her former dance teacher and colleagues. It is the first time that they have seen each other since Sathia was rehabilitated from her accident. As her friends and teachers talk about Sathia as the best dancer of her generation and then remember hearing about the accident, they cry. One of Sathia's friends explains her feelings on hearing that Sathia was dancing again. "I asked myself, how can that be? We have the use of our legs, she is disabled, how can she dance?"

At the end of the interview, we shoot a scene for a film we are making about Sathia's story. Silhouetted against the derelict building, Sathia dances an elegant, reaching, stretching solo. She is proud and beautiful: sheer defiance in the most elegant, graceful form I have ever seen.

Two hours before the show

Sathia is late for her call on the day of the premiere. I know she is angry with me. She refused to participate in the last afternoon of shooting for the film – tired out by long rehearsals and demanding shoots in strange locations; she finally drew the line and refused to dance. That was the day before yesterday. She arrives and she will not meet my eyes. She is surly and uncooperative. When I try to get her to talk to me about what is wrong, she smiles and tells me everything is okay. She still does not look me in the eye. I know that in her culture, she cannot challenge my authority as choreographer and say how she feels but I know she is annoyed and unhappy.

I worry that we have lost her – not for the premiere – I know she is a professional and she will do it, but for the future. I worry that I have pushed her too hard.



The show

There is a buzz of anticipation among the audience of about 200 people, Khmer and international, collected at the *Sovannah Phom Theatre*. The small wooden stage is raised above rows of wooden benches. The stage and theatre is open to the elements on all sides. Sounds of passing traffic, vendors and gossiping passers-by intermingle with the excited chatter of the audience. To the audience's left, fifteen musicians tune their instruments and perform small rituals of preparation. The composer, Christopher Benstead, smiles encouragingly at the performers. Sven O. Hill, our cameraman and lighting designer, wrestles with the dodgy connections on the mixing board for the lights, smiling wryly when the lights come on of their own accord. People wonder loudly what the show will be like. A group of young deaf men sign excitedly. A cluster of disabled children laugh and wriggle in their seats. The lights snap to black and a light comes up on the stage. The audience falls silent.

Sitting in the light is Sathia, resplendent in a red top. She raises her arms and gestures slowly with her hands. One by one the other dancers join her – Katie walks proudly into the light, Denh rolls forward with a nervous smile, Sophara strides on stage and raises his arms majestically, Thom glides gracefully to join the group...

Ten minutes into the performance and the dancers have the audience in the palm of their hands. The audience laugh as Sophara mimes a love-struck woman, they applaud as Sathia lifts Katie, they gasp as Denh tips backwards in his wheelchair and rolls out. Sathia beams as she whirls around. She is a woman in her element.

As the performers bow, the cheers of the audience drown out the passing traffic and the noise of the street. Tears flow among the audience as they approach Sathia. She is surrounded by admirers, graciously receiving their complements. People shake my hand and tell me how moved they are to see Sathia dancing, how surprised they are that the piece was *real art* and how they forgot her wheelchair at times. I sneak away, exhausted by the tension of getting the premiere up and of worrying about Sathia and how to resolve our conflict. I lean against a wall, a cold glass of water in my hand, and watch as Sathia's friends come up to greet her, hand her flowers, embrace her. A gaggle of children look at her adoringly.

In the street outside, Sophara is surrounded by a group of frenziedly signing men. They slap him on the back and laugh. As the audience

drifts away, a disabled boy, supporting himself with his crutch, clammers onto the stage. He lies down on his back and starts to spin in a break-dance move. Another boy joins him. He runs and jumps around and pulls the first boy to standing. A slow smile spreads across my face. Exactly!

Nearly two years later

I am having dinner with Sathia and her two co-performers after the show in Cologne. A glowing Sathia orders for all three performers in quiet but clear English. She holds my hand across the table and meets my eyes with a shy smile. I am still reeling from the way she answered questions after the performance – her willingness to talk in front of so many people, her confidence.

Her co-performers, who are professional, non-disabled dancers, are quieter. Sathia is clearly the leader of the group. From being ashamed to meet her friends, Sathia has now become the person who facilitates them getting a well-paid job, which allows them to travel. It was she who selected the two performers to dance with her and she who choreographed the trio that they performed.

The Future

Since we made the piece in Phnom Penh, the original group have performed it more than 25 times, in village halls, under trees in remote villages, at international conferences and increasingly in large venues as part of arts festivals in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Hong Kong and Laos. This small project has mushroomed into an international performance group. Sathia has performed her own choreography in Norway and Germany. The group leads workshops wherever they perform. Denh has blossomed into a dynamic workshop leader and performer. Sophara still performs with the group. Thom has left the group and been replaced by another former colleague of Sathia's.

Katie and Sathia continue to work together regularly – performing and teaching. *Epic Arts*, Cambodia, now employs eight members of staff and is currently building an accessible arts centre in Kampot, a small town in the south west of Cambodia – one of very few accessible buildings in the country. Soon no one will need to carry Sathia up the stairs to the rehearsal room.

I will work with Sathia in Europe in 2008-2009. We will create a new piece together which will tour alongside the feature-length documentary film telling Katie and Sathia's story (and the story of our collaborative project) which we shot two years ago. As part of this



project, Sathia and several other Cambodian artists will train with six of the most experienced practitioners of integrated dance in Europe. We hope that this learning will feed back into the development of the work in Cambodia, giving the dancers more skills and strategies which they can pass on to others. It will also provide them with opportunities to work with experienced disabled performers in Europe, thus offering them role models and colleagues.

Each new project is an enormous challenge for Sathia and for *Epic Arts* who have found themselves managing the explosive growth of the project and learning many skills *on the job*. This has often led to struggle and conflict as the organisation learns to cope with its new role. Sathia regularly expresses a desire to stop dancing – she is too old, she says, a little tired. Yet as each new opportunity comes, she grasps it and rises to the challenge. She sees her future shifting towards choreography and I hope

that this next project will support her in this aim.

It is important that, as the international profile of the group grows, we do not remove resources from the core work of the organisation, which is to support the integration of disabled people in Cambodia. Each trip, tour and performance should feed back into this grass-roots work.

In Sathia's talent and growing skill as a choreographer and Denh's dynamic workshop-leading, I see the first steps of the future of the work which began when Katie met Sathia. I hope that the Cambodian artists will continue to create their own performance work and to inspire groups of young people, disabled and non-disabled, to dance together long after Katie has returned to the UK and long into the future.

Jo Parkes

Epic Arts: Touching Dreams

Epic Arts has been working on developing projects that focus on reaching excluded and marginalised groups - both in the UK and abroad. *Epic Arts'* work is founded on the philosophy that *Every Person Counts* (EpiC) and we therefore seek out those that society overlooks. We run arts workshops across the whole arts spectrum and aim to provide a supportive environment where people feel able to express and explore their creativity. We challenge people to push beyond preconceived boundaries of what they can and can't do.

Although *Epic* is based and works in the UK, our international work has always been a priority with our first project having taken place in China in 2001; then in 2003 an *Epic* office opened in Cambodia (NGO status from 2007). We believe that the arts act is a neutral tool in dealing with issues surrounding disability, especially in countries where people with disabilities often rank at the bottom of the social and economic ladder. These countries have non-existent or embryonic programmes in the field of integration and are keen to expand into this area.

In 2007 *Epic Arts* took a team of four artists to Nanning, Guangxi province, southern China, to carry out five arts projects and create a short film. Our main partner was *Handicap Interna-*

tional (HI) who set up two projects in special education schools working with children from the deaf community. One of the projects highlighted for us the hopelessness that young disabled people can feel, although from our experience this is not limited solely to developing countries. At the beginning of one of the projects we asked the teenagers to discuss their personal hopes and dreams; what they wanted to do or become in their lives. At first they all looked at us blankly, until one 16 year old girl came forward and using the signer/interpreter told us that she, of course, "*couldn't dream because she was deaf; there was just no point...*" By the end of the week, after much laughter, fun, some tears and much encouragement we began to see the pupils explore their hopes and dreams for the first time. The children's final performance, after a week of ambitious work, was aptly entitled *Dare to Dream*.

Through our work methods we were able to show the staff a new approach: Each workshop leader would seek to allow the student's work to shape the outcome rather than simply enforcing their own creative ideas - facilitation rather than dictation. At every workshop we ran, without exception, the staff were overwhelmed by what the participants achieved, both in visual art and dance. They would com-



ment on how surprised and delighted they were to see the young people being able to do such creative things. It was interesting to see that, at times, it seemed hard for teachers to separate a person's physical disability from their intelligence level.

During our trip we discovered real lives striving to embrace courage and hope. For us the question of whether things are changing for disabled people in China was answered through our work in a factory on the outskirts of Nanning – this factory is staffed by predomi-

nantly disabled workers and we were able to run two projects during our visit. This opportunity would have been unthinkable 7 years ago and shows that China is really beginning to grapple with the issues surrounding disability. This year the eyes of the world will be on the people of China as they host the forthcoming 2008 Olympics/Paralympics... There has never been such an opportunity for them to show the world how much they have progressed in the field of inclusion and integration.

Rachel Duncombe-Anderson

***Epic Arts: Spotlight* – An Asian Festival of Inclusive Arts**

23. Februar – 01. März 2008 in Phnom Penh, Kambodscha

Phnom Penh ist nicht gerade die Traumstadt aller Reisenden. Man assoziiert eine durchschnittliche asiatische Millionenstadt mit viel Armut und wenig Profil, man denkt eher an die Folgen des Pol-Pot-Regimes als an Kulturprojekte, Gegenwartskunst und Theater. Wie so oft, ist alles ganz anders. Vor allem die aktuelle künstlerische Szene der Hauptstadt Kambodschas hat Aspekte, die manche europäische Hauptstadt blass erscheinen lässt.

Zugegeben: Die Initiatoren des ersten Festivals von Künstlern mit Behinderung kommen aus England. Wie überhaupt ungefähr 1.000 NGOs die Entwicklung des Landes sehr beeinflussen. Eine dieser NGOs, *Epic Arts*, ist in Phnom Penh und auch anderswo in Kambodscha aktiv. Der zweifellose und spektakuläre Höhepunkt von *Epic Arts* war das erste *Asian Festival of Inclusive Arts*, das von 23. Februar bis 01. März viele Menschen bewegte. *Epic Arts – Every Person Counts* – bewegt seit 2001 allenthalben in London in Sachen Kultur und Menschen mit Behinderung. Seit 2003 ist *Epic Arts* in Kambodscha aktiv. Ins Leben gebracht wurde ein Kulturcafé in Kampot, einer kleinen Stadt in der Nähe des Golfs von Thailand. In diesem Café haben gehörlose und körperbehinderte Menschen einen Arbeitsplatz – und die Idee einer integrierten beruflichen Tätigkeit wird Wirklichkeit.

Was in Phnom Penh eine Gruppe von neun Menschen in Bewegung gebracht hat, ist beispielhaft und besonders. Künstlerinnen und Künstler, Organisatorinnen und Menschen mit Behinderung aus vielen Ländern haben sich für mindestens ein Jahr zusammengetan, um auch

in Kambodscha zu zeigen, dass Menschen mit Behinderung große Kunst machen – und dass Kinder mit Behinderung in der künstlerischen Tätigkeit aufblühen und unglaubliche Lernzuwächse erreichen.

Stellvertretend für viele seien Hannah Stevens aus London, Jane Hartnell aus Australien, Cathy McIntosh aus Neuseeland genannt – und natürlich Poev Sovannarith und Poeng Sokheng aus Phnom Penh.

Das Programm des Teams war und ist nachhaltig angelegt. Das Prinzip: Es geht um Kunst. Künstler mit Behinderung zeigen ihre Arbeit, Künstler arbeiten mit Behinderten und Nichtbehinderten zusammen, Kinder mit Behinderung werden in künstlerische Arbeit eingeführt. So begann *Spotlight* schon lange vor dem 23. Februar 2008. In Siem Reap, dem Ort, der zum Weltkulturerbe Angkor Wat gehört, begann vor Monaten ein künstlerisches Projekt, in dem der britische Puppenmacher Jig Cochrane mit behinderten und benachteiligten Kindern riesige Vögel aus Pappmaché machte. Im Rahmen der Eröffnung von *Spotlight* schwebten die Figuren – getragen von vielen Kindern auf drei Meter langen Stöcken über den Alten Markt von Siem Reap. Dass Masken und Figuren durch die Straßen getragen werden, gehört zur Kultur. Insofern passt das Projekt in die kulturelle Welt Kambodschas. Das ist das ständige Anliegen von *Epic Arts*: Der Kultur Kambodschas nichts von außen aufzwingen, das aufgreifen und transformieren, was kulturell vorhanden ist.

Natürlich entwickeln sich mit neuen Medien auch neue künstlerische Formen. Die Fotografie ist auch in Kambodscha ein selbstverständliches Medium geworden. Dementsprechend gab es auch ein Fotoprojekt: Der kambodschanische



light. Für den Begrüßungsabend war eine Bühne zwischen den Mangobäumen aufgebaut. Hannah begrüßte die Eintreffenden – und insgesamt standen fünf Menschen auf der Bühne, um das Problem der Sprachen zu bewältigen. Gesprochen wurde Khmer und Englisch, gebärdet wurde in Khmer, in vietnamesischer und in internationaler Gebärdensprache. Der überaus heitere Abend war künstlerisch geprägt von Ramesh Meyyappan, Singapore, dem Marcel Marceau Asiens. Er zeigte seine Kunst als Pantomime – und auch

sche Fotokünstler Vandy Rattana arbeitete über vier Monate mit Kindern und Jugendlichen zwischen 12 und 19 Jahren. Kinder mit Körperbehinderung und Jugendliche mit Hörbehinderung lernten sich erstmals kennen – und sie fotografierten und interpretierten ihre jeweilige Realität. Die aus dem Projekt entstandene Fotoausstellung wurde in einem öffentlichen Medienzentrum eröffnet. Ein Foto, das alle bewegt: Ein Mädchen ohne Beine schwingt, auf ihren Stümpfen stehen, um Hüfte und Hals je einen Hula Hoop-Reifen und lacht voller Freude.

Drei Künstler aus Phnom Penh, Heng Ravuth, Veasna Tith und Meas Sokhorn entwickelten künstlerische Objekte unter dem Obertitel *The Box Experiment*. Entstanden sind drei begehbare Würfel von etwa 2 mal 2 Metern, die den Besuchern, die den Weg ins Innere wagen, einen physischen Eindruck von Blindheit, Taubheit und Körperbehinderung geben. Die Box *Blindheit* führt in absolutes Dunkel, in der Box *Taubheit* führt ein Kopfhörer in einen schalltoten Raum und in die Box *Körperbehinderung* fährt man mit einem Rollstuhl. Für viele sind das neue Erfahrungen – übrigens auch für Kinder mit Behinderungen, die ein Gefühl für die Behinderungen der anderen bekommen. Die drei Objekte wurden an verschiedenen Orten in der Stadt aufgestellt.

Die inoffizielle Eröffnung am 22. Februar brachte die Anreisenden aus Japan, Vietnam, Nepal u.a. und die schon Anwesenden im Cafe Gasolina zusammen. Das lateinamerikanische Gartencafe war die ganze Woche hindurch das logistische und menschliche Zentrum von *Spot-*

Kindern und Jugendlichen in einem Projekt gearbeitet. Menschlich geprägt war der Abend vom Kennen lernen: Künstler aus Japan, Vietnam und Kambodscha, ihre Begleiterinnen und Begleiter und das interessierte Publikum saß zusammen, wechselte die Plätze, tauschte Visitenkarten aus. Wir drei aus Dortmund – Irmgard Merkt, Ulrike und Aleksa Putinas, waren die einzigen Exoten aus Europa, die eigens wegen des Festivals angereist waren.

Der 23. Februar brachte Öffentlichkeit und Eröffnung. Die Parade der Gruppen und Künstler und Künstlerinnen aus allen teilnehmenden Ländern begann vor dem *Nationalmuseum Phnom Penh* und führte über die Uferpromenade zum *Chaktomuk-Theater* am Tonle Sap-Fluss. Eine so lustige und heitere Parade wird es so schnell nicht wieder geben. Angeführt von einer Motorradtruppe in pinkfarbenen Umhängen und drei Meter hohen Puppen, zogen Festwagen und Gruppen singend und tanzend über die Promenade in den Garten des Theaters. Welch eine Sensation für die Einwohner von Phnom Penh und für die Touristen! Die Wagen waren thematisch gestaltet. Ein riesiger gelber Elefant beispielsweise war mit einem Lexikon der Gebärdensprache in der Landessprache Khmer bemalt.

Das Theater war dann voll besetzt. In den vorderen Reihen fand sich Prominenz vor allem aus den Reihen der Sponsoren – und eine richtige Prinzessin. Eine Vertreterin des Königshauses – Kambodscha ist konstitutionelle Monarchie – saß tatsächlich auf einem kleinen Thron. In den Reihen dahinter saßen vor allem Japa-



ner: Vertreter der mächtigen und reichen *Nippon Foundation*, die einen erheblichen Teil der Aktivitäten gesponsert hatten. Hanna Spencer sprach die Begrüßungsworte in Khmer – eine Geste, die etwas von der Hingabe an die Arbeit und an die Kultur Kambodschas von *Epic Arts* zeigt.

Ein kurzer Gang durch das Programm des Eröffnungsabends steht für die Vielfalt der Aktivitäten der ganzen Woche. *See Ability Not Disability* – dieses Motto wird in jeder Aktivität eingelöst. Wir hörten Kong Nay, den blinden Sänger und *Meister des Mekong Delta Blues*, der sich auf einem traditionellen Saitensinstrument Chapei dong veng begleitete. Das Chapei dong veng ist eine Art Langhalslaute – ein Korpus mit einem langen Hals und zwei Saiten. Kong Nay, heute ein alter Herr, der die Schrecken der Roten Khmer überlebte, führte musikalisch durch das Programm. Wir sahen die Khmer-Tänzerin Kim Sathia, deren Biographie bald erscheint. Sie hatte als Kind die mörderische Zeit der Roten Khmer überlebt, weil einige der Soldaten gerne sahen, wenn Kinder tanzten. Später wurde sie hochausgebildete klassische Tänzerin, bis ein Unfall sie 1999 in den Rollstuhl zwang. Mit zwei ehemaligen Kolleginnen entwickelte sie für das *Spotlight*-Festival ein neues Programm – und sie stand als Rollstuhltänzerin zum ersten Mal seit 1999 auf der Bühne des *Chaktomuk-Theaters*. Aus Japan waren Mitglieder des Tanzprojektes *Creative SORA* gekommen – und wir sahen mit *Inochi, Meguru*, was soviel heißt wie *Leben – Verwandlung* einen Tanz eines körperbehinderten Mannes von großer Schönheit. Die

minimalistische japanische Choreographie verlangte große Aufmerksamkeit vom ganzen Publikum, auch von den vielen Kindern mit Behinderung – und es war mäuschenstill. Die letzte Vorstellung des Abends gab *Kosu Roa Taiko* ebenfalls aus Japan – eine Gruppe von Trommlern mit geistiger Behinderung.

Was gezeigt werden sollte: Behinderung ist kein Hindernis, künstlerisch tätig zu sein. Kunst und Menschen mit Behinderung können eine wahrhaftige Symbiose eingehen – und es entsteht eine neue, eine besondere Qualität. Die ganze Woche hindurch konnten alle Teilnehmer und Teilnehmerinnen ein Projekt nach dem anderen erleben – von außerordentlicher Qualität. Ein Erlebnis besonderer Art war es, dem blinden Künstler Mitsushima Takayuki beim Erstellen eines Bildes zuzusehen: Er klebte vorbereitete Streifen, Punkte und Formen auf Glas – und es ist faszinierend, zuzusehen, wie seine Bilder tastend entstehen und die Fläche füllen.

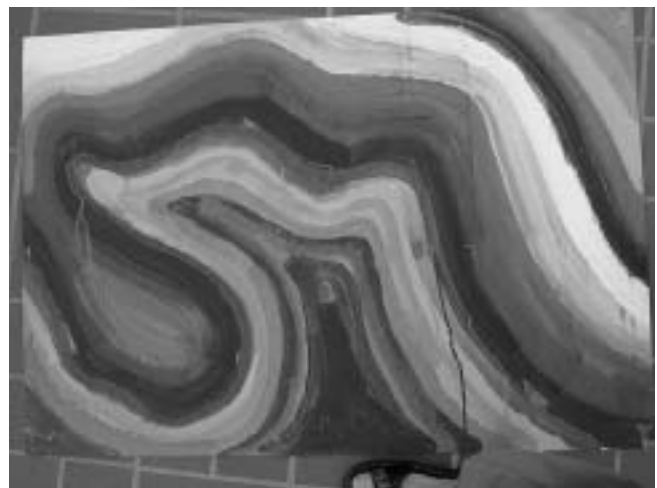
Spotlight und die Folgen müsste eine Dokumentation heißen, die in absehbarer Zeit entstehen sollte. Es bleibt zu hoffen, dass die Akteure die Energie dazu aufbringen.

Während eines der Treffen im Cafe Gasolina versprach der Vertreter der *Nippon-Foundation* eine weitere Unterstützung von *Spotlight*. Er hat sich sogar zu dem Versprechen hinreißen lassen, *Spotlight* zu einem jährlichen Ereignis werden zu lassen. Brauchen könnte das Land es natürlich dringend. Und wir würden gerne nicht nur aus der Ferne die weitere Entwicklung beobachten!

Irmgard Merkt

eARTh vision – Kunst als internationale Sprache der Verständigung

„Hundertwasser ist gut, aber ich bin besser“, das sagt Georg Brand, ein Künstler der kreativen Werkstatt *Alte Waschküch'*, von sich selbst. Er ist einer der über 33 anders begabten Künstler, die das arbeitsbegleitende Angebot der Eisinger Werkstätte des *St. Josefs-Stifts Eisingen* nutzen oder in den letzten Jahren genutzt haben. Zwei- bis dreimal in der Woche besteht für Werkstattgänger das Angebot, ihre Ideen, Wünsche und Ängste unter der kunstpädagogischen Assistenz von Stefan Leins und Dieter Roth in Formen und Farben umzusetzen. „Malen bedeutet Freiheit“, sagt Ralf Knorr, der seit einer Gehirnblutung auf den Rollstuhl angewiesen ist, und versinkt wieder in seinen Sonnenuntergang am Meer, an dem er gerade arbeitet.



Olaf Pawlowski: *Mainschleife*



Die Künstler Atsuko und Kunihiko Kato (Japan) sowie Marc Kuome (Elfenbeinküste) beim Besuch der Kreativen Werkstatt. Sie bringen erste Bilder mit.

Die Künstlergruppe *Alte Waschküch'* hat sich nun – mit Unterstützung der Regierung von Unterfranken – zu einem großen Ausstellungsprojekt entschieden: *eARTh vision* – Die Kunst als internationale Sprache der Verständigung. Seit rund einem Jahr sammelt das Organisations-team aus allen Teilen der Welt Kunstwerke von Menschen mit Behinderung, die ab Herbst 2008 in verschiedenen Ausstellungen zu sehen sein werden. Viele Menschen, insbesondere befreundete Künstler ohne Behinderung, die Mitarbeiter der deutschen Auslandsvertretungen sowie kirchliche und soziale Einrichtungen helfen tatkräftig mit, um Kontakte in alle Welt aufzubauen. Mit jedem begeisterten Mitarbeiter im Projekt rückt die Welt etwas näher zusammen.

Dieses Miteinander war die Vision, die am Anfang des Vorhabens stand. In vielen Ländern (auch in den industrialisierten) sind Menschen mit Behinderung von einigen Bereichen des öffentlichen Lebens ausgeschlossen. Den Begriff *behindert* könnte man deshalb auch mit *verhindert* austauschen. Dabei hält uns die Definition

der *Weltgesundheitsorganisation* (WHO) dazu an, die Menschen nicht mehr nach ihren Defiziten zu beurteilen, sondern nach ihren persönlichen Fähigkeiten. In vielen Sprachen hat sich diese Auffassung bereits durchgesetzt. Im Englischen beispielsweise bezeichnet man Künstler mit Behinderung als *differently abled artists*, also als anders begabten Künstler. Außerdem wird in vielen Sprachen von den ursprünglich benutzten negativ besetzten Wörtern Abschied genommen und zum Beispiel der Begriff *handicap* verwendet. Im Griechischen bezeichnet man einen Menschen mit Behinderung politisch korrekt als *άτομο με ειδικές ανάγκες*, d. h. eine Person mit besonderen Bedürfnissen.

So liegt die Intention des Projekts darin, die Talente von Menschen mit Behinderung in den Mittelpunkt zu stellen, um der Öffentlichkeit aufzuzeigen, welchen eigenen Beitrag diese Menschen für die Gesellschaft leisten können. *L'art pour l'art*: die Kunst steht für sich und spricht für sich, sie existiert unabhängig – das ist die Idee der Ausstellung. Um das Handicap aber in einer Ausstellung von anders begabten Künstlern in den Hintergrund zu rücken, beteiligen sich auch einige bekannte Künstler ohne Behinderung wie Atsuko und Kunihiko Kato, die mitgeholfen haben, Kontakte ins Ausland aufzubauen. Im Nebeneinander beeindruckender Werke unterschiedlicher Personen ändert sich beim Betrachter immer stärker die Perspektive: nicht mehr der Status des Künstlers (ob Behinderung, Religion, Nationalität oder ethnische Gruppe) zählt, sondern das Kunstwerk selbst.

Mit emotionaler Kritzelei hat das schöpferische Wirken behinderter Menschen nichts zu tun. „Es ist richtige Arbeit“, sagt Dieter Roth, „Arbeit an den Maltechniken, Arbeit an den Kunstwerken und Arbeit an der eigenen Identität“. Eine der ersten Persönlichkeiten, die sich mit der Kunst von Menschen mit psychischer Er-



Olaf Pawlowski bei der Arbeit in der Kunstwerkstatt



Georg Brand: Würzburg maximum

krankung auseinandersetzte, war der deutsche Psychiater und Kunsthistoriker, Hans Prinzhorn (1886-1933). Anfang der 1920er Jahre katalogisierte er an der Psychiatrischen Universitätsklinik Heidelberg eine Sammlung von Bildwerken psychisch kranker Menschen. Daraus entstand ein Aufsehen erregendes Buch, das die Fachwelt verstörte, aber die Kunstwelt begeisterte. Nicht wenige Zeitgenossen orientierten ihr kreatives Schaffen an der ehrlichen und direkten Ausdrucksweise der Bilder, so dass die Grundlage für neue Stilrichtungen geschaffen war.

Das Projekt *eARTH vision* beeindruckt nicht nur durch die Werke, sondern auch durch die Geschichten, die dahinter stehen. Alle Künstler finden ihren eigenen Zugang zum Bild. Diese Unterschiede finden sich schon in der kleinen Welt der Eisinger Künstlergruppe *Alte Waschküche*.

Georg Brand beispielsweise bevorzugt Faser-



Hyeshin Park: See im Abendlicht

Weltbild geben. Olaf Pawlowski sucht nach Ordnungsprinzipien in der Kunst. Seine regenbogenfarbenen Abstraktionen der Mainschleife, die immer wieder durch stilisierte Staufstufen oder Schlösser gebrochen werden, zeugen von überwältigender Spontaneität.

Wie viel spannender werden die Einblicke, wenn man die Welt einlässt. Die Koreanerin Hyeshin Park (*1984), die sich als erste Ausländerin an dem Projekt beteiligt hat, findet schon früh ihren Weg in die Kunst. Mit neun Jahren erhält die lernbehinderte Frau ihren ersten Zeichenunterricht, mit 15 ermahnt die Lehrerin sie freundlich, an sich zu glauben. Sie soll die Dinge mit dem Auge des Herzens betrachten und diese Dinge mit verschiedenen Materialien und Techniken auszudrücken. Ihre Bilder zeigen ihre Liebe zur Natur. Heute zeichnet sie nicht nur, son-



Die Koreanerin Hyeshin Park nach einem Geigenkonzert



dern gibt auch Violinkonzerte, von denen sie dem *eARTH-vision*-Projektteam eine Aufnahme geschickt hat. Katsumi Miyake (*1974) aus Japan ist Autist. Seit fünf Jahren malt er mit Fettkreide abstrakte Bilder und kratzt mit Nägeln bunte Bilder aus den übereinander liegenden Schichten. Die Effekte spiegeln seine Gefühle. Er malt, wie es ihm gefällt. Schon fünfmal hat er seine Bilder ausgestellt. Taga Tazezo (*1964) von der Behinderteneinrichtung AKIM Israel äußert sich kaum verbal. Er spricht nur wenig Hebräisch, aber über seine Kunst sagt er: „Ich male mit dem Herzen.“

Auf diese Weise ist *eARTH vision* auch Networking. Das Projektteam arbeitet daran, die unzähligen Kontaktadressen und Weblinks in den nächsten Monaten zu systematisieren und auf die Homepage www.earth-vision.de zu stellen. Interessierte können sich dann über die Lebensumstände behinderter Menschen in verschiedenen Ländern informieren. Mit der Ausweitung des Blicks auf die globale Situation werden die unterschiedlichen Ursachen von Behinderung deutlich: Nicht Erbanlagen und Unfälle sind in vielen Ländern die Hauptgründe für Behinderung, sondern Krankheiten wie Polio oder die Folgen von Kriegs- und Terrorakten.



Ralf Knorr an der Staffelei

Gerade in diesen Staaten verabschiedet die Politik zwar Maßnahmen zur Gleichbehandlung von Menschen mit Behinderung, doch oft bleiben die Betroffenen der Sorge der Familie überlassen. Wenn nun die Scham der Verwandten über ein behindertes Familienmitglied hinzukommt, dann gerät derjenige schnell in die Isolation.

Das Projekt *eARTH vision* kann die Welt nicht ändern, aber Akzente setzen. Viele Menschen in aller Welt helfen den Titel *eARTH vision – Kunst als internationale Sprache der Verständigung* in unterschiedliche Landessprachen und Dialekte zu übersetzen. Im plakativen Neben-



Ralf Knorr: Korfu

einander verschiedener Sprachen und Schriftsysteme wird sichtbar, dass die Kunst verbindet.

Termine:

01.05.2008

Stiftsfest, Stiftskirche St. Josef

Oktober 2008

Kloster Gemünden

28.10.2008 - 28.01.2009

Lesecafé, Stadtbücherei Würzburg

08.-28.01.2009

Sozialministerium in München

Andrea Schödl



Taga Tazezo: Ohne Titel



Kurzmeldungen

Behinderung in Entwicklungsländern im Entwicklungsausschuss des Bundestages

Am 5. März 2008 hat der *Ausschuss für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (AWZ)* des Deutschen Bundestages das Thema *Behinderung in Entwicklungsländern* zum zweiten Mal auf die Tagesordnung genommen. Das letzte Mal wurde das Thema im Jahr 2004 im Ausschuss behandelt. Anlass war die Ausstellung *Es ist an der Zeit...*, die auf den Zusammenhang zwischen den Millenniumsentwicklungszielen und Behinderung aufmerksam macht (www.bezev.de). Als Expertinnen zu der Sitzung eingeladen waren Gabriele Weigt von *Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit* und Rika Esser von der CBM (*Christoffel-Blindenmission*), die in ihrer Stellungnahme auf die internationalen und nationalen Entwicklungen der vergangenen Jahre in diesem Bereich eingingen und Empfehlungen für notwendige Umsetzungsschritte gaben.

Eine wesentliche Rolle dabei spielten die *UN-Konvention über die Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderung* sowie das Politikpapier *Behinderung und Entwicklung der deutschen Bundesregierung*. Mit beiden Dokumenten wird ein Paradigmenwechsel von der medizinischen, wohlthätigen Betrachtungsweise von Behinderung hin zu einem Menschenrechtsansatz eingeleitet. Zurzeit wird im Auftrag des *Bundesministeriums für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)* eine Studie durchgeführt, die Empfehlungen beinhalten soll, wie die UN-Konvention im Hinblick auf einen inklusiven Entwicklungsansatz in der deutschen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit umgesetzt werden kann. Dementsprechend richteten sich die Forderungen an den AWZ dahingehend, dass

- die UN-Konvention über die Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderung umfassend, vorbehaltlos und zügig ratifiziert wird,
- die Empfehlungen der BMZ-Studie im Sinne eines inklusiven und ganzheitlichen Entwicklungsansatzes zeitnah umgesetzt werden,
- die notwendigen strukturellen Voraussetzungen seitens des BMZ geschaffen werden, um diese zu operationalisieren,
- die deutsche *Bundesregierung* die Lage von Menschen mit Behinderung bei Regierungsverhandlungen in den Politikdialog einbringt,
- eine gemeinsame Strategie mit der Zivilgesellschaft zur Implementierung und zum Monitoring eines inklusiven Entwicklungsansatzes entwickelt und umgesetzt wird.

Als konkretes Ergebnis der einstündigen Diskussion wird sich der Ausschuss in einer der nächsten Sitzungen mit den Ergebnissen der BMZ/gtz-Studie beschäftigen, die März 2008 veröffentlicht werden soll. Weiterhin befürworteten viele Redner den Vorschlag, die Situation behinderter Menschen bei Regierungsverhandlungen einzubringen.

Quelle: http://www.bundestag.de/aktuell/hib/2008/2008_066/03.html

Behinderung im Entwicklungspolitischen Aktionsplan für Menschenrechte 2008-2010

Im neuen *Entwicklungspolitischen Aktionsplan für Menschenrechte 2008-2010*, der von Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul am 10. März 2008 vorgestellt wurde, sind Menschen mit Behinderung erstmalig aufgenommen worden. Dieses stellt einen großen Fortschritt dar, spielte die Frage der Menschenrechte mit Bezug auf Menschen mit Behinderung noch vor wenigen Jahren in der Politik des BMZ keine Rolle. Umso positiver ist zu bewerten, dass Menschen mit Behinderung mit zu den Gruppen gehören, die im Kontext von Armut und Ausgrenzung gezielt gefördert werden sollen. Dazu gehören der Zugang zu elementaren Ressourcen wie Bildung, Gesundheit, soziale Sicherung Wasser und Nahrung, Partizipation und Mitbestimmung.

Mit dem Aktionsplan soll die enge Verbindung zwischen den Prozessen zur Umsetzung der Millenniumsentwicklungsziele und der Menschenrechte vertieft werden, wobei benachteiligte Gruppen, wie Frauen, Kinder, ältere Menschen, Menschen mit Behinderung, Indigene und ethnische Minderheiten gezielt beteiligt werden sollen. Für Menschen mit Behinderung stellt dieses noch einmal die Stärkung des menschenrechtlichen Ansatzes durch die deutsche Entwicklungspolitik dar sowie eine enge Bindung an die Erreichung der Millenniumsentwicklungsziele.

Quelle: http://www.bmz.de/de/presse/aktuelle_Meldungen/2008/maerz/20080311_menschenrechte/index.html

Global disability and poverty efforts get key boost from agreement between *SU's Burton Blatt Institute* and *World Bank*

A promising new collaboration between the *World Bank* and *Syracuse University* could spur global efforts to reduce poverty for an estimated 400 million people with disabilities living in developing countries. The *Burton Blatt Institute: Centers of Innovation on Disability* at *Syracuse University* (BBI) and the *World Bank* have signed an agreement to support activities of the *Global Partnership on Disability and Development* (GPDD), an international disability network initiated by the *World Bank* and committed to promoting inclusive development as a means to achievement of *Millennium Development Goals*.

During the next six months, BBI and the GPDD will mobilize disability-led organizations worldwide – in cooperation with governmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector – to identify best practice strategies that promote inclusion in economic and so-



cial development.

Quelle: http://bbi.syr.edu/events/bbi-worldbank_partnership.htm

UN Commission Renews Mandate for Special Rapporteur and Agrees on Mainstreaming Disability in Development

The 46th session of the *Commission for Social Development* was held at *United Nations Headquarters* in New York. The theme this year was *Promoting Full Employment and Decent Work for All*. The Commission also discussed mainstreaming disability in the development agenda as an emerging issue on the Commission's agenda. The Commission agreed on two resolutions related to disabilities. The *UN Special Rapporteur on Disability*, Sheikha Hessa Khalifa bin Ahmed al-Thani, of Qatar, presented her annual report to the Commission on 8 February, highlighting her findings of a global survey of measures taken by Governments in support of the *Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities*. The *Special Rapporteur*, who has fulfilled this role since 2002, also reported on her activities in support of the new Convention.

After a few rounds of informal debates, the Commission adopted a consensus text that not only renews the mandate of the *Special Rapporteur on Disability* until 2011, but also expands the mandate to include awareness-raising and technical cooperation in support of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. The *Special Rapporteur* will continue to promote the equalization of opportunities by, for, and with persons with disabilities, and protect their human rights in support of the *Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities*.

A second resolution, entitled *Mainstreaming Disability in the Development Agenda*, was also adopted by the Commission, recognizing that the *Millennium Development Goals* cannot be achieved without mainstreaming disability into the development agenda, and requesting the *UN Secretariat* to focus on mainstreaming in its reporting on disability for the next *General Assembly*.

More information on the Commission, its documents, resolutions and panel discussion can be found at: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>.

Quelle: Enable Newsletter Issue No. 2, February 2008, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=406>

Statement by the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin

On February 22nd, 2008, in New York, the *United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit* affirmed the March 19, 2005 judgment of the *U.S. District Court* dismissing the lawsuit of Vietnam's Agent Orange victims against the

companies who manufactured this deadly chemical. This is an irrational, biased and unfair decision which does not respond to the reality faced every day by the Vietnamese victims whose suffering is caused by Agent Orange/Dioxin.

The demands of the victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin are completely legitimate. The Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin have no other option than to continue their fight for justice, continue to file their appeal in the *U.S. Supreme Court* and continue their campaign to gain stronger support from the public in Vietnam and abroad, including that of the American people.

Quelle: <http://www.vietnambassy-usa.org/news/story.php?d=20080225123314>

weltwärts auch für und mit Menschen mit Behinderung

Seit Januar 2008 können Freiwillige mit *Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V.* (bezev) *weltwärts* gehen. Zu diesem Zweck kooperiert *bezev* als anerkannte Entsendeorganisation für den BMZ-Freiwilligendienst mit verschiedenen Projektgruppen in Deutschland und auch direkt mit Projekten mit Menschen mit Behinderung in Afrika, Asien und Lateinamerika.

bezev vermittelt vorrangig Freiwillige mit Kompetenzen im Umgang mit Menschen mit Behinderung und Erfahrungen aus dem pädagogischen und therapeutischen Bereich.

Die erste Bewerbungsrunde ist abgelaufen. 26 Freiwillige wurden für eine Ausreise in 2008 ausgewählt. Interessierte können sich weiterhin bewerben und werden bei Eignung auf eine Warteliste gesetzt.

Für *weltwärts* kann *bezev* auf seine langjährige Erfahrung in der Vorbereitung von Freiwilligen zurückgreifen. Das erste 6-tägige Vorbereitungsseminar fand erfolgreich im Februar statt, der zweite Teil folgt von 21.-26. Juli 2008.

Weitere Informationen unter www.bezev.de.

Newsletter zum Globalen Lernen

Die Informationsplattform für entwicklungsbezogene Bildung bietet einen elektronischen Newsletter an, der monatlich mit wechselnden Schwerpunktthemen übersichtlich und kompakt über *Globales Lernen online* informiert. Er enthält Nachrichten, aktuelle Meldungen, Hinweise auf Veranstaltungen, Lernmaterialien und weitere Internet-Ressourcen zur entwicklungsbezogenen Bildung. Der Newsletter lässt sich bequem über die Startseite des Portals abonnieren: www.ewik.de/coremedia/generator/ewik/de/Newsletter/Service/Anmelden.html

Quelle: Eine-Welt-Nachrichten, Nr. 73, Februar 2008 (<http://www.globaleslernen.de>)



LITERATUR & MEDIEN

World Health Organization

Atlas: Global Resources for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (Atlas-ID)

2007, ISBN: 978-92-41563-50-5

The Atlas: Global Resources for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities 2007 represents for the first time the information on resources and services available for persons with intellectual disabilities around the world. It includes information from 147 countries, representing 95% of the world population. The Atlas has been produced by WHO in collaboration with *Montreal PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre for Research and Reference in Mental Health*. The results of the Atlas reveal a lack of adequate policy and legislative response and a serious deficiency of services and resources allocated to the care of persons with intellectual disabilities globally. The situation is especially worrisome in most low- and middle-income countries. Persons with intellectual disabilities are frequently the most vulnerable group and, on many occasions, are exposed to human rights violations and deprived of minimum services and dignity.

For more information on Atlas-ID, visit

http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/en/

Bezug: http://www.who.int/entity/mental_health/evidence/atlas_id_2007.pdf

Betsy VanLeit/Prum Rithy/Samol Channa

Secondary Prevention of Disabilities in the Cambodian Provinces of Siem Reap and Takeo: Perceptions of and use of the health system to address health conditions associated with disability in children

Report prepared for Handicap International Belgium
February 2007

The disability prevalence rate in Cambodia is estimated at 4.7% of the population, meaning that more than half a million Cambodians have a disability. Almost half of the population with a disability is under 20 years of age. This is concerning because disability early in life can have a negative impact on school attendance, quality of life and productivity for many years to come. The report highlights study findings from the 500 households where there was a child with a disability as well as the 500 additional general household interviews in Siem Reap and Takeo.

Bezug: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DISABILITY/Resources/News---Events/BBLs/070517HlrptCambodia.pdf>

Giampiero Griffo/Francesca Ortali (Eds.)

The participation of the organizations of people with disabilities and their families in the process of ratifying, monitoring and implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Ulaanbaatar, 2007, ISBN: 978-99929-56-23-2

This is a manual of active citizenship, exemplary product of a bottom-up capacity building, not only theoretical but concrete, in the field of the rights of persons with disability in Mongolia. Its foundations lay on the recognition of the intrinsic dignity of every human being, and extraordinary value of every person in her way of being alive.

Bezug: http://www.aifo.it/english/resources/online/books/cbr/manual_human_rights-disability-eng07.pdf

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre

Promoting the rights of Children with disabilities

Innocenti Digest No. 13

2007, ISBN: 978-88-89129-60-9 ISSN: 1028-3528

The Digest reviews concrete initiatives and strategies for advancing the social inclusion of children with disabilities. These initiatives are by no means confined to income-rich countries. Indeed, some of the poorest countries in the world are now leading the way through a combination of political will, partnership with local communities and, above all, the involvement of children and adults with disabilities in decision-making processes.

Bezug: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/children_disability_rights.pdf

UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund USA

Sexual and Reproductive Health of Persons with Disabilities

2007, ISBN: 978-0-89714-868-9

About 10 per cent of the world's population, some 650 million people, live with a disability. About 80 per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries, most without social systems to support them, and their sexual and reproductive health needs and rights are often overlooked. This brochure outlines some of their concerns, the international commitments that aim to protect their rights, and UNFPA recommendations for expanding their access to sexual and reproductive health care.

Bezug: <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/detail.cfm?ID=354>



Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd

Children With Cerebral Palsy: A Manual for Therapists, Parents and Community Workers

2007, ISBN-10: 0761935606

This is a practical guide to the effective treatment of cerebral palsy in children. It provides a set of principles by which to observe and analyze individual children's problems and then plan treatment. With the help of this book, non-specialists working with children with cerebral palsy can make decisions and choose the appropriate therapeutic activities for each child. *Children with Cerebral Palsy* includes examples of how to apply these principles to real-life situations, using easy-to-follow descriptions and illustrations. New to this revised edition is a chapter on sensory integration problems with children with cerebral palsy, which looks at ways of evaluating and then dealing with these problems. The author also integrates theory with practical skills more closely.

Bezug: www.amazon.co.uk

World Bank

People With Disabilities In India: From Commitments To Outcomes

May 2007

The recent *World Bank* Report entitled *People with Disabilities in India: From Commitments to Outcomes* reports that children with disabilities in India are four to five times less

likely to be in school than others, households with people with disabilities are significantly poorer than the average, and the employment rate of people with disabilities is lower than the societal norm. The report also found that persons with intellectual disabilities are in particularly poor positions when it comes to socioeconomic outcomes, social stigma, and access to services.

The report noted that only two states in India have drafted disability policies and called for additional policy measures to be undertaken to improve the quality of life for people living with disabilities in India.

Bezug: <http://go.worldbank.org/6HC9W87ID0>

African Union of the Blind (AFUB)

State of Disabled Peoples Rights in Kenya

Kenya, 2007

The study in collaboration with *Kenya Union of the Blind (KUB)* and *Centre for Disability Rights, Education & Advocacy (CREAD)*, with support from *Swedish International Development* was conducted in three main geographical regions: Rift Valley, Nairobi and Nyanza. The poverty level in the three provinces is 52.6 %. The three provinces also have a high concentration of disabled people as a result of being home to schools and vocational centres for persons with disabilities.

Bezug: <http://www.yorku.ca/drpi/files/KenyaReport07.pdf>
oder <http://www.yorku.ca/drpi/Kenya07.html>

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4. Symposium zur Internationalen Heil- und Sonderpädagogik 4. - 6. September 2008 in Oldenburg

Tradition und Innovation – das sind die zwei Grundelemente, die uns zu diesem 4. Symposium zur Internationalen Heil- und Sonderpädagogik zusammenführen. Der historische Rückblick zeigt, dass der internationale Austausch von den Anfängen der Heil- und Sonderpädagogik an stets von großer Bedeutung war. Mit dem Handbuch *Vergleichende Sonderpädagogik* (Klauer/Mitter) wurde in wissenschaftlicher Hinsicht 1987 ein Grundstein gelegt. Alois Bürli schuf mit seinen zahllosen Publikationen, besonders aber mit seinem Grundlagenwerk *Sonderpädagogik International* (1997) ganze Wissenschaftsgebäude.

Seit der Organisation des 1. Symposiums zur Internationalen Heil- und Sonderpädagogik in Görlitz 2004 wurde nunmehr auch der organisierte wissenschaftliche Austausch zur Tradition. Wer hätte vor wenigen Jahren geahnt, dass wir nach Wien und Zürich nunmehr in Oldenburg bereits das 4. Symposium organisieren? Dies zeugt von dem großen Interesse der Kolleginnen und Kollegen und der Bedeutung Internationaler Heil- und Sonderpädagogik.

Auf dem gleichen Feld, aber in anderem Kontext, schuf Peter Sehrbrock mit der Gründung der *Arbeitsstelle Behinderung und Dritte Welt* an der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg vor 20 Jahren eine Tradition.

Dies alles soll Anlass sein, zu einer Fortsetzung des Diskurses und der Weiterentwicklung unserer Disziplin einerseits und einem feierlichen Rückblick auf 20 Jahre *Arbeitsstelle Behinderung und Dritte Welt* andererseits einzuladen.

Wir laden somit ein zum
4. Symposium zur Internationalen Heil- und Sonderpädagogik von
Donnerstag, den 04.09.2008, 16.00 Uhr bis
Samstag, den 06.09.2008, 13.30 Uhr

an der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg,
Campus Haarentor, Uhlhornsweg, 26129 Oldenburg.

Organisation:

Carl von Ossietzky Universität
Institut für Sonder- und Rehabilitationspädagogik

in Kooperation mit:

Interdisziplinäres Zentrum für Bildung und Kommunikation in Migrationsprozessen
Arbeitsstelle Behinderung und Dritte Welt

Ansprechpartnerin:

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VERANSTALTUNGEN

- 19.05. - 22.05. 2008 *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: A Call for Action on Poverty, Lack of Access and Discrimination*
Organised by: *UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD)*, United Nations Conference Center, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Information: <http://www.lcint.org/?lid=4048>; HYouisif@uneca.org
- 20.05. - 21.05. 2008 VIKE Conference, Helsinki CRPD - Added Value? International Conference on the Implications of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - with Special Focus on Disability in Development
Information: www.vike.fi; <http://www.kynnys.fi/content/view/495/185/>
- 22.06. - 27.06.2008 4th WFD RS Asia-Pacific Deaf Youth Camp 2008
Hosted & Organized by Indonesian Association for the Welfare of the Deaf (IAWD) and Indonesian Deaf Youth Section (IDYS), Jakarta City and Sukabumi West Java in Indonesia
Information: Fax: +62-21-7443550 Email : info_4thAPDYC2008@yahoo.com
<http://www.deaf.co.nz/images/stories/2008Feb/2PDF%20AP%20Registration%20DYC%2008.pdf>
- 27.06. - 29.06.2008 *Leben unter Einem Regenbogen. Wie leben Menschen mit Behinderung in Afrika?* (Arbeitstitel) Seminar in Kooperation mit der Akademie Frankenwarte in Würzburg
Information: Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V., Wintgenstr. 63, 45239 Essen, Telefon 0201-4087745, Fax: 0201-4087748, E-Mail: info@bezev.de, Internet: www.bezev.de
- 21.07. - 26.07.2008 *Globales Engagement für und mit Menschen mit Behinderung. Lernen - Helfen - Verantwortung übernehmen (Teil 2)*
Vorbereitungsseminar für TeilnehmerInnen am Freiwilligenprogramm weltweit
Ort: Akademie Frankenwarte in Würzburg
Information: Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V., Wintgenstr. 63, 45239 Essen, Telefon 0201-4087745, Fax: 0201-4087748, E-Mail: info@bezev.de, Internet: www.bezev.de
- 25.08. - 28.08.2008 21st World Congress of Rehabilitation International - Quebec City, Canada 2008: *Disability Rights and Social Participation: Ensuring a Society for All*
Information: <http://www.riquebec2008.org/>
<http://web.hospitalite.com/Clients/RI/registration.html>
- 06.10. - 07.10.2008 *Toward Culturally Responsive Disability Services: An International Conference*
Location: Buffalo, NY, USA
An international conference on Culturally Responsive Disability Services
Information: John Stone, Email: jstone@buffalo.edu, Phone: (716) 829-3141 ext. 125, <http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/conference2008/index.html>
- 28.11. - 29.11.2008 *Tagung: Nichts über uns ohne uns - Menschen mit Behinderung als Akteure einer nachhaltigen Entwicklung (Arbeitstitel) in Berlin*
Information: Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V., Wintgenstr. 63, 45239 Essen, Telefon 0201-4087745, Fax: 0201-4087748, E-Mail: info@bezev.de, Internet: www.bezev.de



Zeitschrift Behinderung und Dritte Welt **Journal for Disability and International Development**

Behinderung und Dritte Welt ist die Zeitschrift des Forums Behinderung und Internationale Entwicklung. Sie erscheint seit 1990 dreimal jährlich in einer Auflage von 850 Exemplaren und wendet sich v.a. an deutschsprachige Interessierte im In- und Ausland.

Vor allem dank der Unterstützung der Bundesvereinigung Lebenshilfe e.V., Kindernothilfe, Handicap International, Misereor, Caritas International, Christoffel-Blindenmission und Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V. erreicht sie viele WissenschaftlerInnen, Fachleute und sonstige Interessierte in allen Kontinenten.

Ihr Anspruch ist einerseits, ein Medium für einen grenzüberschreitenden Informationsaustausch zur Thematik darzustellen und andererseits, die fachli-

che Diskussion zu pädagogischen, sozial- und entwicklungspolitischen sowie interkulturellen Fragen im Zusammenhang mit Behinderung in Entwicklungsländern weiterzuentwickeln.

Die Redaktion und der sie unterstützende Fachbeirat sind insbesondere darum bemüht, Fachleute aus allen Teilen dieser Erde hierfür zu gewinnen und einzubinden. Publikationssprachen sind Deutsch und Englisch; Beiträge in Französisch, Spanisch oder Portugiesisch werden nach Möglichkeit übersetzt. Das Profil der Zeitschrift zeichnet sich durch jeweils ein Schwerpunktthema pro Ausgabe sowie einen Informationsteil aus. Die Ausgaben der Zeitschrift Behinderung und Dritte Welt sind auch im Internet abrufbar unter: www.zbdw.de.

Dem Fachbeirat der Zeitschrift gehören an:

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Schwerpunktthemen kommender Ausgaben der Zeitschrift Behinderung und Dritte Welt

- 2 / 2008 Arbeit für und mit Menschen mit Behinderung in Osteuropa (verantwortlich: Harald Kolmar, Stefan Lorenzkowski)
3 / 2008 Bürgerkriege/Kriege überleben (Arbeitstitel, verantwortlich: Doris Gräber, Gabriele Weigt)

Interessierte Autorinnen und Autoren werden aufgefordert, nach vorheriger Rücksprache mit der Redaktion hierzu Beiträge einzureichen. Darüber hinaus sind Vorschläge für weitere Schwerpunktthemen willkommen.

	Ausgabe 2/2008	Ausgabe 3/2008	Ausgabe 1/2009
Hauptbeiträge	15. Februar 2008	15. Juli 2008	15. Oktober 2008
Kurzbeiträge	15. März 2008	15. August 2008	15. November 2008

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bitte informieren Sie uns über eine eventuelle Adressenänderung oder wenn Sie die Zeitschrift nicht mehr beziehen möchten. Geben Sie bitte ebenso Bescheid, falls Ihnen die Zeitschrift nicht zugestellt worden ist.

Forum Behinderung und Internationale Entwicklung

Das Forum Behinderung und Internationale Entwicklung ist ein Ort für Einzelpersonen und Organisationen, die sich wissenschaftlich und/oder praktisch mit dem Thema Behinderung in Entwicklungsländern auseinandersetzen. Beteiligte des Forums können daher sein: Fachkräfte aus dem entwicklungspolitischen und behinderungsspezifischen Kontext, an der Thematik interessierte Einzelpersonen, Organisationen der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, andere involvierte Institutionen/Organisationen sowie Hochschulen.

Das Forum will die wissenschaftliche und praxisorientierte Auseinandersetzung mit der Thematik unterstützen. Das Forum gibt außerdem die Zeitschrift Behinderung und Dritte Welt. Journal for Disability and International Development heraus, organisiert bei Bedarf gemeinsame Veranstaltungen und möchte die Vernetzung der am Forum Beteiligten fördern.

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