

Academy in Exile Newsletter

19 JANUARY 2024

At this time of intense global conflict and environmental perturbation, AiE sends new year's greetings. We recognize the suffering and personal losses experienced by people around the world, including many of those in our fold.

As we work to foster dialogue and understanding, and to promote the values of democracy and civil society through our support of displaced and at-risk scholars, we issue a plea for peace and stability.

May there be justice in the face of injustice, and strength and consolation for those in need. Above all, we wish you good health and good cheer.

Vanessa Agnew, Associate Director, AiE



Fellow Highlights

Adnan Çelik received an Einstein Junior Fellow Scholarship at Humboldt Universität.

Dezso Mate received the Romani Rose Fellowship at the Forschungsstelle Antiziganismus, Historisches Seminar, Universität Heidelberg.

Tomeka Kitlinski received a senior fellowship at the Institute of Art and Music at TU Dresden and a position at the Academy of the Arts in Szczecin, Poland.

Jeiran Moghaddam Charkari was awarded a Philipp Schwartz Initiative Fellowship and will be hosted by Susanne Zepp-Zwirner at Universität Duisburg-Essen.

Fawad Poya received a research fellowship at the Center for Governance and Markets at the University of Pittsburgh.

Adnan Çelik et al. published *Laboratories of Learning: Social Movements, Learning and Knowledge-Making in the Global South*, London: Pluto Press, 2023.

Fatemeh Rezaei showed her photography in Cincinnati and New York and appeared on a panel on the humanities at risk at the University of Cincinnati.

Fawad Poya presented “Afghanistan: Concerns Regarding Political Prospects and Washington-Kabul Relations” at the Negotiating Difference and Pluralism in the Way Ahead Conference, convened by the Center for Governance and Markets at the University of Pittsburgh, US Institute of Peace, American Institute of Afghanistan Studies, and Hollings Center for International Dialogue, University of Pittsburgh.

AiE fellows participated in the Philipp Schwartz and Inspireurope Stakeholder Forum, May 23–24, 2023, in Berlin. Along with some 500 other international researchers and displaced scholars, they networked with stakeholders and policymakers, explored avenues for furthering their academic careers, and discussed the conditions for academic freedom.

Bir Büyük Dönüşümden Kesitler: Dünya ve Türkiye, a volume edited by AiE alumnus Bülent Eken and Barış Ünlü, was published by Dipnot in October 2023. Özbek contributed a chapter on the politics of the past in Turkey.

Fellow Highlights

Farzana Wahidy taught two courses at Bennington College in Vermont: “Alternate Visions: Seeing the World through Women and LGBTQIA+ Contemporary Photographers” and “Introduction to Photojournalism.”

Lida Nazarian offered “Art and Relaxation” classes addressing refugee women’s mental health needs, and she held counseling sessions for Afghan and Persian-speaking women in coordination with the Interkulturelle Frauengruppe and VielRespektZentrum in Essen.

Zainab Qadiri contributed to the production of Journals of Exile and Underground Birds, plays developed as a collaboration between Kula Compagnie and Simorgh Theatre in Berlin. Simorgh Theatre and Afghani performance artists’ works in Germany were covered in a report in Emma magazine, no. 1 (366), January–February 2023. Zainab is a member of Simorgh Theatre.

Mohammad Dawood Sokhanwar and co-authors published “Investigating the Relationship between Communication Skills and Students’ Self-Efficacy: Case Study Kabul Education University,” Findings of Educational Science 2, no. 4 (2023): 51–68.

Firooza Omar discussed with Dr. Maryam Jami proposals to the 53rd UN Human Rights Council session regarding human rights and the education of women and girls in Afghanistan.

Hijratullah Safi published “The Ethical and Criminal Responsibilities of Medical Doctors: A Perspective from Afghanistan Law and The International Islamic Charter of Health and Medical Ethics,” Nangarhar University International Journal of Biosciences, 2023.

Azita Ibrahimi presented her research on Afghan embroidery at the Textile Research Center in Leiden, the Netherlands, in March 2023.

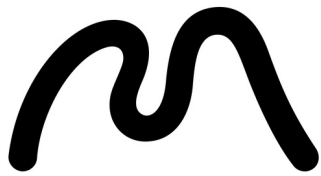
Transfer to Technische Universität Dortmund

In August 2023, AiE Director Kader Konuk took up a professorship in Germanistik and Associate Director Vanessa Agnew was appointed in Cultural Studies at Technische Universität Dortmund.

Coincident with this, after some five years based at the Universität Duisburg-Essen and as part of a consortium with Freie Universität Berlin, Forum Transregionale Studien, and Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut Essen (KWI), AiE transferred to TU Dortmund.

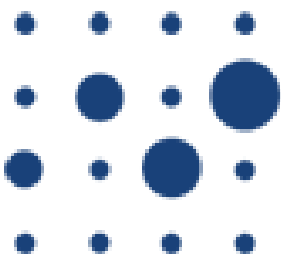
In the future, AiE fellows will continue to be hosted at KWI, with which AiE maintains a cooperative agreement.

Funding



Mellon
Foundation

Consortium
of **Humanities**
Centers and
Institutes



Volkswagen**Stiftung**

**ALLIANZ
FOUNDATION**

**OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS**



technische universität
dortmund

AiE received a generous new grant from the Mellon Foundation. Together with the sustained support of the Volkswagen Foundation and the administrative, infrastructural, and financial support of TU Dortmund, the grant will fund a new cohort of scholars at risk, help maintain programs and staff, and grow the work of AiE for the next three years.

Open Society Foundations funding has allowed AiE to extend its offerings for the benefit of displaced scholars. Funding for specific initiatives, including exhibitions, has been provided by the Allianz Foundation and the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes, facilitating public outreach and providing support for displaced artists.

Fellowship Program and 2024 Call for Applications

In addition to the AiE-supported scholars from Kashmir, Iran, Syria, and Turkey, in 2022–2023, AiE welcomed seven women and two men to the Afghanistan program.

AiE will publish a Mellon Foundation–funded call for applications in early 2024, offering eleven 24-month fellowships to postdoctoral scholars at risk worldwide. In addition, two 24-month fellowships will be offered specifically to scholars from Afghanistan. Three three-month stipends will be advertised for an artist-in-residence program.



Council and Advisory Board

AiE welcomed new members to its executive. In 2023, Universität Duisburg-Essen Vice-Rector for University Culture, Diversity & International Affairs, Professor Karen Shire, joined the Council, and Stefan Höhne took over from Hanna Engelmeier as the KWI representative.

Joining the Advisory Board were Kate Bowan (Australian National University), B. Venkat Mani (University of Wisconsin–Madison), Rosinka Chaudhuri (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata), Jane O. Newman (University of California, Irvine), Jo Vearey (University of the Witwatersrand), Susanne Zepp-Zwirner (Universität Duisburg-Essen), and AiE Alumnus Nyi Nyi Kwai (Chiang Mai University). AiE thanks the outgoing Council and Advisory Board members for their invaluable service in the past years.

Personnel

AiE is hiring a new staff member to support the academic coordinators, Frangis Dadfar Spanta (currently on parental leave) and Egemen Özbek.

A business manager will join AiE to oversee financial operations, and a production manager and a publications manager / science communicator will help support and disseminate the work of the fellows.

A guest professor and several student assistants will round out the team. AiE looks forward to welcoming the new staff in the new year and gratefully acknowledges the contributions made by former team members.



Exhibitions, Conferences, Talks



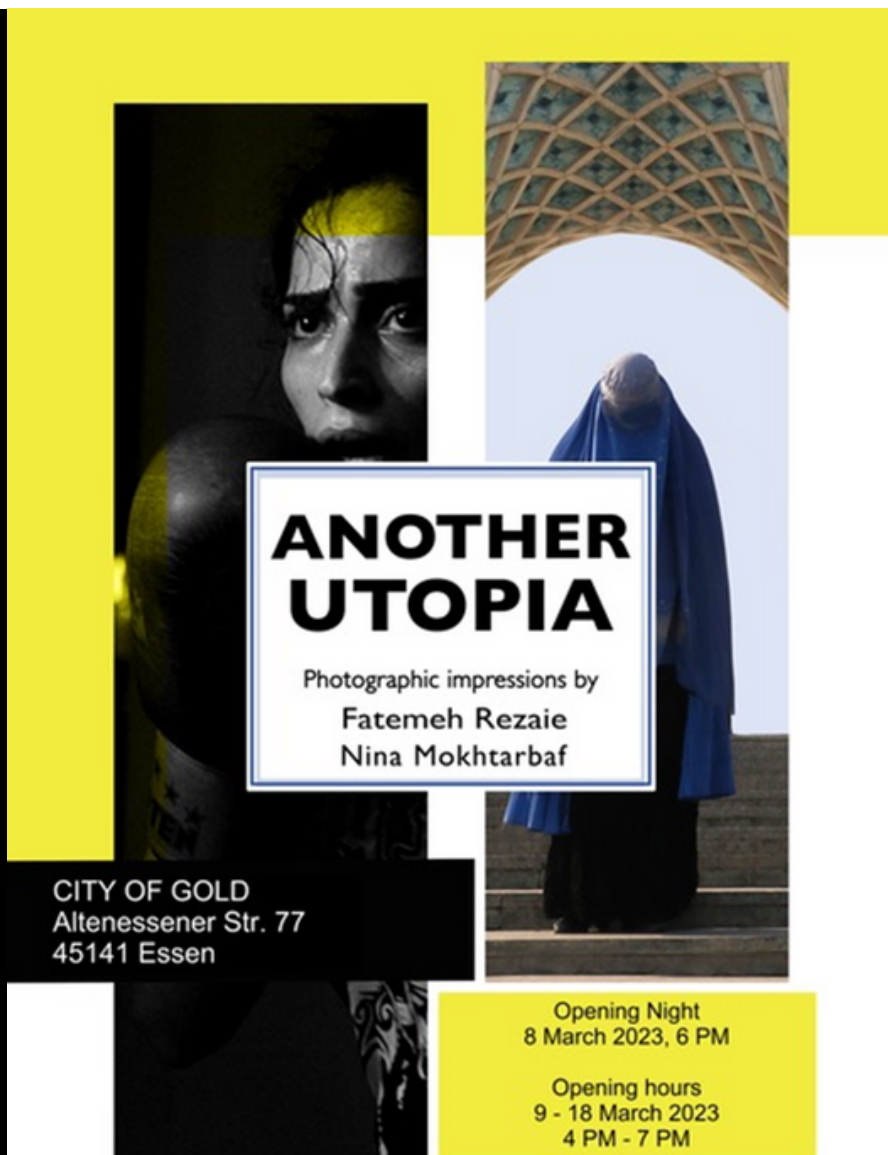
Fixing What's Broken

14-21 January 2023 | regular hours 4-7 pm
Exhibition
at Apartment Project Kulturverein e.V.

In January 2023, AiE exhibited *Fixing What's Broken* (co-curated by Vanessa Agnew, Çagan Duran, and Andrea Ries) to mark the end of the Allianz Foundation–funded artist-in-residence program. Held at Apartment Project in Berlin, *Fixing What's Broken* was organized in order to present the work of artists Kani Kamil, Liryc Dela Cruz, and Diren Demir; to facilitate a dialogue between the arts and sciences in exile; and to explore innovative ways of addressing and interpreting forced displacement and its causes.

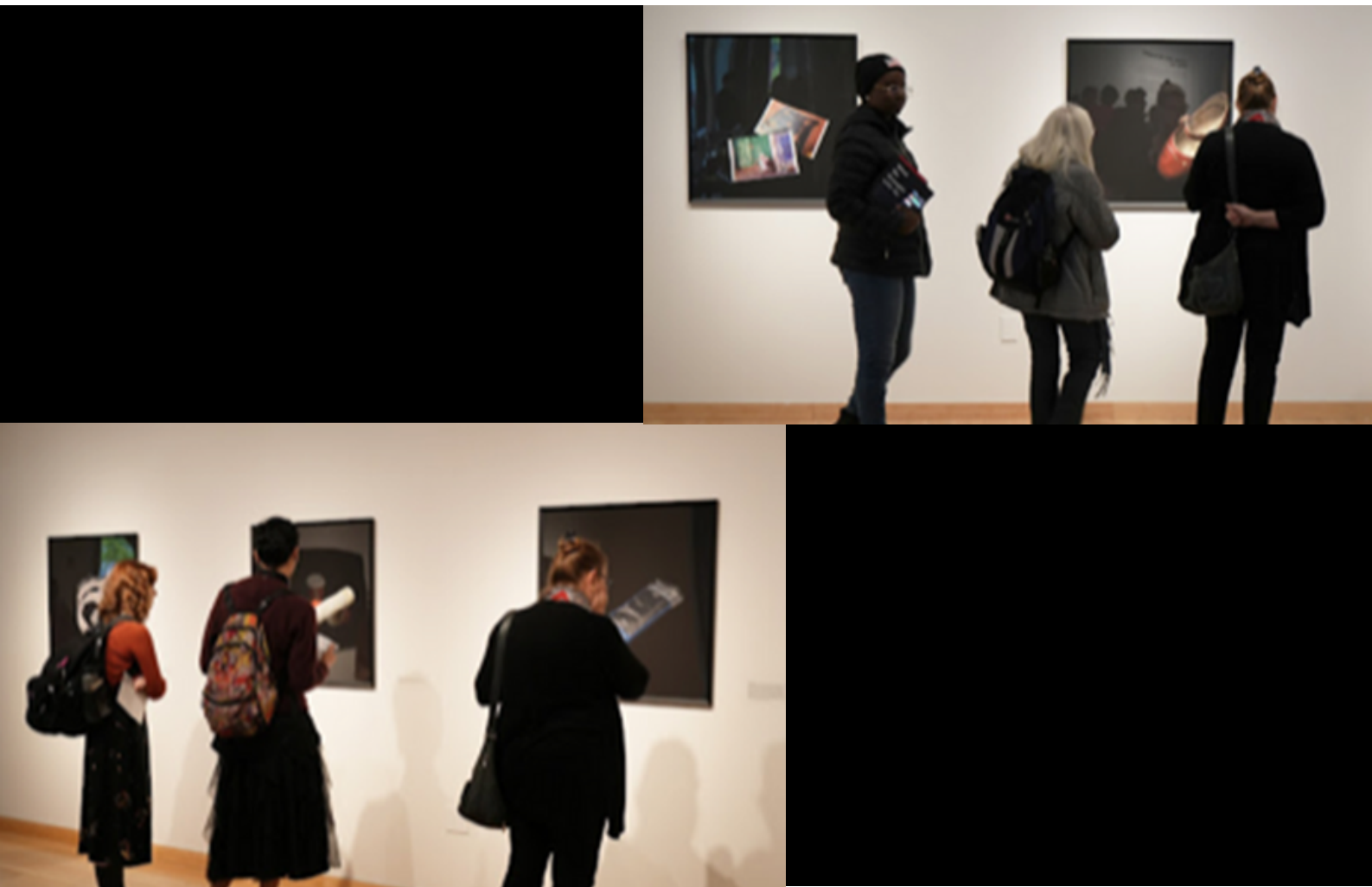


Fixing What's Broken exhibition, Apartment Project, Berlin (Credit: Çagan Duran)



On March 8, 2023, AiE opened Another Utopia, organized in cooperation with KWI and Folkwang Universität der Künste in Essen. The exhibition was held at City of Gold and showed photographs by AiE fellow Fatemeh Rezaei and Nina Mokhtarbaf.

Through her contribution, "The Stranger" (Pashto: Ajenda), Rezaei captured the social conflicts and contradictions experienced by Afghan women in Iran. The artists chose International Women's Day to raise awareness about women's lives in Iran and Afghanistan. The event was attended by colleagues, professional photographers, artists, and members of the public. Guest speaker Momina Yari served as Program Manager for the Women's Rights Development Section in the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, was Director of the Legal Department in the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Afghanistan, was a three-term Commissioner for the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan, and is a women's and human rights activist in the Afghan Women's Network in Germany.



What We Brought with Us, University of Cincinnati's Philip M. Meyers Jr. Memorial Gallery
(Credit: Fatemeh Rezaei)

With the support of UA Ruhr Executive Director Priya Nayar; Kate Bonansinga, Director, School of Art, College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning, University of Cincinnati; and University of Cincinnati International Strategic Programs Executive Director Jenni Kim Sutmoller, AiE exhibited *What We Brought with Us* at the University of Cincinnati's Philip M. Meyers Jr. Memorial Gallery (September 5 – November 22, 2023). The exhibition, co-curated by Vanessa Agnew and Annika Roux, with photographs by Jobst von Kunowski, showed images of things AiE fellows took with them into exile. The images were accompanied by short narratives that explained the symbolic and literal value of their possessions. Additional selections of photographs will remain on display at the University of Cincinnati's Law School and Charles Phelps Taft Research Center.

HUMANITIES IN EXILE

Vanessa Agnew, Kader Konuk
TU Dortmund University

Utku Balaban, Nazan Bedirhanoglu
Xavier University

Fatemeh Rezaei
Academy in Exile

Kate Bonansinga, Amy Lind
University of Cincinnati



"Books", What We Brought With Us.

2:30 - 4:30 PM
OCTOBER 17
TAFT RESEARCH CENTER

COLLEGE OF DAAP SCHOOL OF ART | UC INTERNATIONAL | TAFT RESEARCH CENTER



The exhibition was accompanied by a symposium called Humanities in Exile (October 17, 2023) as part of a series, Humanities at Risk, organized by the University of Cincinnati's Charles Phelps Taft Research Center, directed by Amy Lind. The symposium created a forum for community engagement as well as regional and transnational discussion on the possibility of setting up a scholars-at-risk program in Ohio. Participating in the symposium was AiE fellow Fatemeh Rezaei, as well as faculty from the University of Cincinnati, Xavier University, and AiE/TU Dortmund. It is planned that What We Brought with Us will travel to other US institutions in 2024.



What We Brought with Us opening, Goethe-Institut New York (Credit: Priya Nayar)

In New York City, What We Brought with Us was shown at the Goethe-Institut New York (October 18 – November 15, 2023). A panel discussion entitled “Objects of Resilience: Exploring the Symbolic Weight of Refugee Things” was held with Vanessa Agnew, Ulrich Baer (New York University), Kate Bonansinga (University of Cincinnati), and Kader Konuk.



Objects of Resilience, panel discussion, Goethe-Institut New York (Credit: Priya Nayar)



Night Lab, German Center for Research and Innovation Future Forum 2023 (Credit: DWIH New York)

A digital version of What We Brought with Us was shown at the Night Lab event sponsored by the German Center for Research and Innovation (DWIH) Future Forum 2023 (New York City, October 20, 2023), which invited German and US researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs, innovators, and experts to share ideas, debate differences, and exchange experiences on the theme of “From Crisis to Resilience.”

The digital exhibition was shown together with Fatemeh Rezaei’s photographic collection “Identity Cards”, which deals with the effect of migration documentation on Afghans in Iran. Rezaei, along with AiE team members Egemen Özbek and Annika Roux, engaged with members of the public on the theme of “resilience” and the meaning of “home” at the event.



Night Lab, German Center for Research and Innovation Future Forum 2023 (Credit: DWIH New York)

09.11.2023, 9:00 - 16:00 (CET)

Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities Essen (KWI)
Goethestraße 31, 45128 Essen & Online (ZOOM)



Memory, Representation, Reparations

Opening Remarks by Prof. Dr. Julika Griem & Prof. Dr. Kader Konuk

Opening Address by Dr. Frank Reuter

Organized by Dr. Dezso Mate

AiE fellow Dezso Mate organized an international conference hosted by KWI, Critical Engagement with the History of Sinti and Roma, bringing together a diverse group of scholars, activists, and stakeholders from Europe and the US. Mate and colleagues plan to bring out a volume of conference proceedings from this singular and important event.



AiE Attendees at Critical Engagement with the History of Sinti and Roma (Credit: Egemen Özbek)

AiE Fall Colloquium

The AiE Colloquium met weekly throughout the academic year, providing a forum for fellows to workshop their research. The topics, with a strong focus on the women of Afghanistan and Iran, ranged from mental health, community theater, and activism, to photographic representation and the right to education.



AiE Fall Colloquium 2023–24 (Credit: Vanessa Agnew)

Professional Development Workshops and Language Classes

Professional development workshops on professional communication, grant and graduate school applications, scholarly citations, CV writing, and research methods are being offered to fellows in the Winter and Spring. Fellows are also continuing to take English and German language classes.



Stella Nyanzi's talk, "African, Queer and Exiled: Narratives from Ugandans"
(Credit: Farzana Wahidy)

Stella Nyanzi—Ugandan scholar, social justice activist, politician, poet, and current scholarship-holder of the Writers-in-Exile program of PEN Zentrum Deutschland—visited Dortmund on November 15, 2023, and gave a talk entitled "African, Queer and Exiled: Narratives from Ugandans".

She read from her published poetry collections and talked about her experiences as an African, queer, and exiled person. Giving a deeply personal and sharp-witted performance, as well as addressing her role as an activist, politician, mother, and person living in exile, Nyanzi answered questions from an engaged audience.

At Home in Exile: Migrant as the Paradigmatic Figure

"The call for a critique of a new human condition no longer rests with the pernicious and perfunctory question of "WHAT IS MAN?" but in the most penetrating and profound question of "WHAT IS MIGRANT?"

PAVAN MALREDDY

was born and raised in South India and educated in Singapore, the Netherlands, and Canada. He now teaches in the English Department of Goethe University Frankfurt, where he specializes in 20th- and 21st-century comparative Anglophone literatures & cultures with a focus on East Asia, Africa, and South Asia. Malreddy investigates the topics of conflict, communal bonds, insurgency, populism, public life, and migrancy. His recent books include *Narratives of the War on Terror* (2020) and *Writing Brexit* (2022).



Copyright: Pavan Malreddy 2021

Malreddy will talk about the migrant as a paradigmatic figure in literary and cultural studies, related to his current book project *Homo Migrans*. He will hold a discussion and take questions from the audience.

17 January 2024
4-6pm

**IBZ (Internationales
Begegnungszentrum)**
Emil-Figge-Str. 59, 44227 Dortmund

Promotional Poster for Pavan Malreddy's talk "At Home in Exile: Migrant as the Paradigmatic Figure" (Design Credit: Kira Heetpaß)

Pavan Malreddy visited Dortmund on 17 January 2024 and held a talk about "The Migrant as a Paradigmatic Figure."

He brought insights into the topic by discussing questions of home and identity, and ending with one that is central to his next book project: "The call for a critique of a new human condition no longer rests with the pernicious and perfunctory question of "WHAT IS MAN?" but in the most penetrating and profound question of "WHAT IS MIGRANT?"

An engaged audience asked thoughtful questions that furthered the discourse about what it means to be a migrant and presented comparisons to personal experiences and experiences as exiles.

New Initiatives

AiE / TU Dortmund University / UA Ruhr and the University of Cincinnati are joining forces with a multidisciplinary approach for a proposed “Gardens of Refuge” project. This initiative epitomizes a dedication to actively engaging with our communities, while also solidifying the Dortmund–Cincinnati corridor connecting the two regions.

The project draws awareness to the interconnections between authoritarianism, forced displacement, and climate change, creating shared spaces that will foster a sense of community and support for displaced and at-risk people worldwide. The “Gardens of Refuge” are physical spaces that transcend geographical boundaries and act as beacons of hope and resilience.

The gardens will be situated both at the University of Cincinnati and at TU Dortmund University. While planned as two spaces in two cities, they share a vision for a values-based, humanistic approach to the future that promotes sustainability, well-being, and cross-cultural understanding.

Tandem Teaching Program

AiE fellows from Afghanistan have expressed a desire to support students and colleagues in their home country—in particular, girls and women who have limited access to education. Recognizing that these realities are unlikely to change in the near future, the Afghan fellows are developing courses as part of AiE’s tandem teaching initiative.

The first course co-developed by AiE fellows and AiE team members, “Afghanistan and the Arts”, is in preparation. The course will be offered through TU Dortmund, with digital materials made available for public distribution. External students will be able to enroll as guests of TU Dortmund and receive a certificate of participation. Additional courses on Peace and Education and Human Rights and the Law are in planning.

Transatlantic Working Group for At-Risk Scholars



Participants in Navigating Displacement: Sharing Knowledge and Strategies for Fostering Resilience event curated by UA Ruhr / AiE / DWIH New York (Credit: Fatemeh Rezaei)

An event entitled “Navigating Displacement: Sharing Knowledge and Strategies for Fostering Resilience” (October 20, 2023) was curated by UA Ruhr and AiE, in cooperation with the German Center for Research and Innovation (DWIH) New York to bring together stakeholders from Germany and the US in order to explore best practices, exchange ideas, and promote dialogue between academic institutions and multinational funding organizations in their support of at-risk and displaced scholars.

“Navigating Displacement: Sharing Knowledge and Strategies for Fostering Resilience” serves as the inaugural gathering laying the foundation for what is envisioned as the Transatlantic Working Group on Academic Freedom.

The lead institutions for this working group in addition to DWIH are UA Ruhr, AiE, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, the University of Cincinnati, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and Universität zu Köln.

Team Highlights

Frangis Dadfar Spanta was a panelist in the webinar “Taliban’s Gender Apartheid: Moving Beyond Condemnation”, Afghanistan Institute for Strategic Studies and University of Sussex, March 2023. She also appeared as an expert speaker on “Reasons for the refuge of Iranian women,” Challenges in Refugee Law, 29th Training Course for Administrative Judges, UNHCR, May 2023; and she spoke on “Afghan Women in Iran: Hopeful adaptation in a chosen home country or endless transit?” at the workshop Akkulturationsprozesse nach Deutschland geflüchteter afghanischer Frauen (1980–2018), Hannah Arendt Institute for Totalitarianism Studies, Leipzig, May 2023.

Egemen Özbek and AiE Fellow Fatemeh Rezaei presented their work on the “Art as Public History” panel, together with Marissa Petrou (University of Louisiana) and Sasha Gora (Universität Augsburg), at To Be Continued, Virtual National Council on Public History Conference, October 2023.

Egemen Özbek represented AiE at the Third Annual International Seminar in Historical Refugee Studies, Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research, Universität Duisburg-Essen, Duisburg, July 2023.

Egemen Özbek’s chapter “Commemorating the Armenian Genocide: Spatial Politics of Memory in Post-Imperial Istanbul” appeared in Critical Approaches to Genocide: History, Politics and Aesthetics of 1915, ed. Hülya Adak, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Ronald Grigor Suny, New York: Routledge, 2023.

Upcoming

tu technische universität dortmund

Mellon Foundation



VolkswagenStiftung academy in exile



WARUM EIN EXILMUSEUM?

„Bis heute gibt es in Deutschland keinen zentralen Ort, an dem die Vertreibung Hunderttausender durch die Nationalsozialisten ins Exil sichtbar wird. Das Risiko der Flucht, das verstörte Leben im Exil, Fremdheit, Angst und Heimweh. All das erleben Menschen bis heute jeden Tag. Umso wichtiger ist es, den Inhalt des Wortes Exil begreifbar zu machen. Erzählt man von den Geschichten damals, versteht man auch die Menschen besser, die heute in Deutschland Zuflucht suchen. Es wäre Erziehung zu Anteilnahme.“

Herta Müller

Seit 1987 im Exil, Literaturnobelpreisträgerin und Schirmherrin des Exilmuseums i.Gr.



CORNELIA VOSSEN

ist die künstlerische Leiterin und Kuratorin des Exilmuseums in Berlin. Ihr Vortrag widmet sich der Frage, warum ein Exilmuseum für Deutschland so wichtig ist, welche Relevanz Exilnarrative für die gegenwärtige Gesellschaft haben und was wir aus ihnen lernen können.

24. Januar 2024
16-18 Uhr

QR-Code zum
Zoom-Link:



Promotional Poster for the talk: “Warum ein Exilmuseum?”
by Cornelia Vossen (Design Credit: Kira Heetpaß)