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Afghanistan & Turkey added to Eligible Countries for Arts Awards
CEC ArtsLink expands geographic scope of its renowned ArtsLink Awards program

CEC ArtsLink expands its annual competition for arts professionals, ArtsLink Awards, to include Afghanistan and Turkey in addition to its long-established list of 30 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.

“This year we are proud to add Afghanistan and Turkey to our roster of countries and look to a future that will grow the region we work with in an informed and organic fashion. After CEC ArtsLink’s 48 illustrious years of cultural diplomacy in a region defined by the Cold War, this expansion is mandated by new geopolitical realities. Our goal is to engage international communities through the arts,” says Fritzie Brown, CEC ArtsLink’s Executive Director. “While Turkey has a sophisticated arts scene, we recognize the challenge of working with Afghanistan. This move is driven simply by our wish to expand cultural conversation to an even more diverse group of artists and arts managers, and to increase awareness and appreciation within US audiences of these many rich cultures. We are tremendously grateful to the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation for the vision which inspired the broadening of our geographic purview.”

ArtsLink Awards has distributed more than \$4.3 million to support over 1,200 artists, arts managers, and arts organization from the US and overseas for professional residencies and collaborative projects. Recent activities epitomize the artistic integrity and social engagement of the projects we fund: last fall, Czech sculptor Martin Papcún sliced into the walls of an abandoned home in Cleveland—the epicenter of the foreclosure crisis—and literally turned them inside out, creating a public installation that gave a deeply personal view of the crisis. Also, this summer, award-winning composer **David Lang** (New York), while master composer at the **Dundagas Workshop** in rural Latvia, performed and conducted contemporary music workshops with student composers.

The deadline for the U.S. artists and arts administrators in media and visual arts is January 15, 2011. The deadline for the arts professionals from the 32 eligible countries in performing arts & literature application is December 1, 2010. More info about the guidelines and application can be found at cecartslink.org.

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CEC ArtsLink promotes international communication and understanding through collaborative, innovative arts projects for mutual benefit. We support and produce programs that encourage the exchange of visual and performing artists and cultural managers in the United States and other parts of the world. As an international organization, we believe that the arts are a society's most deliberate and complex means of communication and that the work of artists and arts administrators can help nations overcome long histories of reciprocal distrust, insularity and conflict.

Our organization was founded in 1962 to enable citizens of the United States and the Soviet Union to accomplish what their governments would not do—open doors, share ideas and build mutual trust. Our lasting partnerships abroad enable us to build and broaden our international reach, as today's transformed and complex world makes citizen diplomacy more urgently necessary than ever.

Support for ArtsLink Awards is provided by the generous individuals, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Trust for Mutual Understanding, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Ohio Arts Council, the Kettering Fund, the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, with additional support from the Romanian Cultural Institute and the Polish Cultural Institute.

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