

ART AND CRAFTS

The renowned “Art & Crafts” movement that developed in Europe and North America from 1880 until 1920, supported the traditional work of the artisan, along with respective socioeconomic, in essence, anti-industrial claims.

At the foundations of this movement lay the general belief held until the 18th century, according to which art and crafts were indistinguishable. After all, this was indeed the ancient Greek perception of art, which had to have a practical application.

Taking into consideration the latest studies which highlight the economic contribution of culture as a vital factor of progress in the 21st century, as well as the significance the E.U. places on its new initiative Europe 2020, strategy for progress and employment, for culture professions, especially as a trigger for start-ups and

Taking into account the needs that result from the settlement, in Europe, of a great number of mostly Syrian refugees, concerning their welfare and integration, as well as understanding the opportunity that they may constitute a new, highly motivated work force,

The foundations Michael Cacoyannis Foundation and B& M Theodorakis

We have decided to collaborate in the development of a program for arts that will be addressed to refugees, but also to European craftsmen and artists.

In an effort to preserve techniques and traditions that have existed for centuries, and also to allow them to successfully transition into the digital era, our program will focus on those arts that are akin such as bookbinding, puppet-making, framing, musical instrument making, stonemasonry, carving, marble-crafting, furniture-making, pottery, stained-glass, costume design, wig-making, set-design, knitting, embroidery, etc.

Both the Michael Cacoyannis Foundation and the B&M Theodorakis Foundation, being institutions that serve the arts in a supplementary manner; the first focusing on theatre, cinema and concert music, and the latter in visual arts, chamber music and education, have decided to cooperate so as to collectively promote, through alliances and co-productions, their gracious goals.

As a first effort, in the context of this cooperation, they have decided to assist in the management/dealing of the major issue that Europe faces nowadays, which, regardless of its own difficulties and struggles, does not cease to

demonstrate its profound humanitarian culture/ethos. The focus is on the issue of the refugees that find themselves in a fragile circumstance, with soaring biological/practical and psychological needs.

Our approach is dictated by the nature and mission of both foundations and is inspired by the tradition of the “Art & Crafts” movement.

The effort comprises of:

1. Cataloguing the artisanal occupations, with special focus on those that are already obsolete or are threatened with extinction.
2. Accumulation of information regarding the demand of relevant products, local, European or other and its anticipated growth.
3. Cataloguing of the European experience as to the services supporting the professionals and businesses of the field (Italy, Germany, etc)
4. Creating a directory of specific artisanal professionals, for Europeans and refugees.
5. Creating a directory of refugees who wish to practice such professions.
6. Tabulate the local supply of education services relevant to arts professions: educators, agents.
7. Establishment of workshops and other educational programs for youth who wish to master the arts, as well as master-classes for current practitioners for furthering their art and pursuing additional specializations.
8. Development of thematic exhibitions with or without international collaborations, and with the involvement of artisans among the Syrian refugees.
9. Professional and business development, talent development.
10. Parallel practices, innovation

These actions will unfold in order to create a cluster of crafts that are relevant to art, and aim at preserving those endangered crafts but also mainly aim at the growth of new job opportunities in this field, especially with the varied participation of Europeans and refugees, so as to conduce to the assimilation in the work force, as well as in society overall.

The collaborating foundations will present, through a series of special exhibitions, the result of the aforementioned learning and specialization labs, while they will also create a special online hub with support material and information geared towards prospective program participants, as well as towards those already involved in the field.