



The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), established in February 1997 by the participating Governments of ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), is the only permanent physical institution of ASEM. It is a not-for-profit foundation based in Singapore, whose aim is to promote better mutual understanding among the people of Asia and Europe through greater intellectual, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges. ASEF reports to a board of 39 governors representing the 38 ASEM countries and the European Commission.

ASEF carries out its mandate by initiating projects and fostering sustainable networks in the fields of art, youth, education, academic research, environment, and media. ASEF flagship programmes include: Asia-Europe Environment Forum, Informal Human Rights Seminars, Asia-Europe Youth Co-operation Network, ASEF University series, Asia-Europe Young Artists' Exchange, ASEMUS (museum network), SEA-Images (website on cinema), Asia-Europe Editors' Roundtables and Journalists' Colloquia.

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ASEF PROJECTS IN SUPPORT OF THE ASEM 6 SUMMIT (HELSINKI)

ASEF activities being prepared in support of the ASEM6 Summit (at the 10th Anniversary of ASEM) in Helsinki in September 2006 are:

- “The Year of Asian Cultures” (Cultural Exchange)
- 4th Asia-Europe Art Camp: “Sound and New Media Art” (Cultural Exchange)
- Multimedia presentation “Borderless Me!” (Cultural Exchange)
- ASEM@10: Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe (Intellectual Exchange)
- 3rd Asia-Europe Editors’ Roundtable (Public Affairs)

Cultural Exchange

Project 1: “The Year of Asian Cultures” (conducted throughout 2006)

Description: ASEF is supporting the Finnish Ministry of Education to co-organise 9 selected cultural activities open to the public to support ASEM6 and to render visibility. These include exhibitions, visual and performing arts, and multimedia involving diverse Asian artists and groups.

- February 2006: Exhibition of Asian Shadow Puppets
- March-May 2006: Puppet Theatre for Children
- May 2006: Dances from the Shores of the Indian Ocean
- May 2006: Asian Film Festival
- June 2006: Exhibition on Continuity and Change of Southeast Asian Textiles
- August 2006: Chinese Kun Opera Reconstruction
- September 2006: Chamber Music Series: Traditional Chamber Music from Asia
- October 2006: Series of lectures and small exhibitions on Asian literature
- November 2006: Japanese contemporary dance performances at Festival of Contemporary Asian Dance

Partners: Ministry of Education, Finland; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland; Helsinki Film Festival; Riihimäki Art Museum; Tampere City Library and other Finnish libraries; Helsinki City Cultural Office; Vapriikki Museum; Tampere Theatre Festival; various Finnish theatres; Helsinki Festival, etc.

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Project 2: 4th Asia-Europe Art Camp: “Hearing Helsinki” (12-20 June 2006)

Description:

The yearly series of Asia-Europe Art Camp has been conceived since 2003 as a learning experience (artistic ideas and experiences from Asia and Europe) and also as an opening in terms of professional future (learn how to work with people from different cultures and backgrounds; how to develop and nurture artists’ networks in an international dimension, etc.)

The camp focuses on the creative process more than on the end “artistic product”, while trying to offer a platform for exchange of information, contextualisation of art practices and sharing of inspiration. Since 2004, ASEF has been placing an emphasis on new media art in the series of art camps.



Art Camp 2004 in Tokyo

and in Bandung, in 2005.....Before Helsinki

The Fourth Asia-Europe Art Camp “Hearing Helsinki” will focus on observing, analysing and documenting the shared sonic environment that surrounds us. What kind of meanings and emotions are conveyed through sound, and how do these sounds affect us?

The programme will provide a forum for sharing and discussing sonic experiences amongst a multi-disciplinary group of 20 students, guided by a team of artists and new media practitioners, coming from 19 ASEM member countries.

Two main outputs expected from this event are: 1) A sound presentation is expected to be held at the ASEM6 premises; 2) A call for new projects will be launched at the end of the Camp, only open to the alumni of art camp students (2003-2006).

Partners: University of Arts and Design (Media Lab), Ministry of Education, Finland

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Project 3: Multimedia presentation “Borderless Me!” (10-11 September 2006)

Description: The multimedia presentation will consist of an installation (photo + video + sound) at the ASEM Summit venue that would reflect the rich diversity of ASEM cultures, and experiment with new technologies that could be used to enrich the Asia-Europe cultural collaboration. The interactive multimedia installation will present an exclusive preview of the ASEMUS Virtual Collection of Masterpieces (VCM). A series of 1,000 photographs representing the collection of participating institutions will be made available through a video presentation, accompanied by a “sonic environment” created in Finland, by the students of the 4th Asia-Europe Art Camp.

The process of creation will take place between March to September 2006 in both sides of Asia and Europe where varied ASEF projects are conducted. Series of interviews, photo shoot, filming, editing and creative multi-media installation/presentation will be undertaken to complete the project with ASEF’s partners and artistic collaborators: University of Art, Helsinki, ASEMUS VCM consortium and Walkscreen.

Partners: ASEM6 Secretariat (Ministry of Foreign Affairs); University of Art and Design, Helsinki (Media lab); and *Walkscreen* (Berlin based multimedia artists). With sponsorship from *Apple*.

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Interview in Jakarta.

Postcard ASEMUS VCM

Intellectual Exchange

Project 4: ASEM@10 - Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe (7-8 September 2006)

Description: Two-day conference with 60 representatives from NGOs, the business sector, the academe, media and research institutes to review the state of Asia-Europe relations with a focus on Civil Society partnerships and business links. The conference will feature plenary sessions and two workshops seeking to generate civil society input in the form of recommendations or messages to the ASEM leaders and officials. Two main topics of discussion will be on: a) Sustainable development; and b) Dialogue among cultures and civilisations

Partners: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland; International Institute for Asian Studies, the Netherlands; Japan Center for International Exchange (tbc); and the European Institute for Asian Studies (tbc);

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Public Affairs

Project 5: 3rd Asia-Europe Editors' Roundtable (9 September 2006)

Chief editors and senior journalists from prominent Asian and European media will be brought together to discuss issues that will preoccupy the Leaders at ASEM6. They will also be encouraged to follow and report on ASEM6 and its related events.

Description: The roundtable will comprise about 35-40 senior editors from the two regions, with even representation across the bi-regional ASEM community. There would be cross-participation of discussants from the ASEF Editors' Roundtable and those from the Connecting Civil Society conference (IE). The one-day programme will cover the following areas of common concern for Asia and Europe in the global context:

- a) Economic session: "Asia-Europe cooperation in resource management for sustainable development"; and
- b) Political session: "Dialogue among cultures and civilisations"

The participating journalists will be granted access to all official press briefings and encouraged to report on the Summit and related programmes.

Partners: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

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