

2015 REPORT OF THE CULTURE COMMITTEE

"Culture is what is left when everything else has been forgotten."
(Françoise Sagan)

Chair: Marie-Simone Pavlovich
Members: Andre Frieden, Ursula Furrer, Peter Keller

Since the closing of the Swiss Consulate in Chicago, the Culture Committee works hard to offer a program as diverse as possible to the American and Swiss public. This year we sponsored the following events:

- ❖ The **Piano Forte Foundation** started a new program consisting of making piano music available and accessible to the largest community possible. It awards 5 participants the opportunity to receive 32 weeks of piano instruction during the school year, with access to practice space and lesson materials. We worked on this project with the Education Committee. (January)
- ❖ In February, at the **Literaturlenz Series** at the Goethe Institut, we had the pleasure to hear Swiss author, Jonas LUESCHER, read from his latest novel, in partnership with the German and the Austrian Consulates, and with other partners, like the University of Wisconsin in Madison, the UIC, and de Paul University.
- ❖ In March we gave our support to the Lucerne Committee of the Chicago Sister Cities International that had invited the **Noggeler Guggenheimmusik** Luzern to perform in Chicago during the St. Patrick's Day weekend.
- ❖ March was also the month of the celebration of the French language, known as **Francophonie**. Since Switzerland was always represented in this event, we decided to bring it back into the picture. (Yes! Due to the Consulate's closure, it did not take place in 2013). For the **Soirée commune**, we organized the famous "raclette" enjoyed by all the visitors. And for the **Soirée suisse**, we had the great opportunity to have Charles Dutoit, the Swiss conductor, as our guest. Both events led to memorable evenings.
- ❖ The **Andrew Jackson Language Academy** has been organizing a European Awareness Day for several years, and has included Switzerland in their countries to be presented at the event; it is a great way to expose students and parents to the discovery of a new culture and at the same time to try some Swiss specialties. (March)
- ❖ For the **First of August** celebration we made a contribution to the Swiss American Business Association that decided to keep alive the usual gathering at the Mid America Club of Chicago. We also contributed the badges sold at the event organized by the Swiss Club for the First of August celebration, as well as some wine bottles for their outdoor festivities. [July/August]

- ❖ In September we had an unusual performance of **Swiss Poetry Slam** by Hazel BRUGGER (Swiss champion of 2013) and her partner, Thomas SPITZER from Germany that took place at the Goethe Institut.
- ❖ Finally the **Trio Leimgruber-Demierre-Phillips** was back in Chicago; it gave several workshops and a concert (November 3) at the Bond Chapel at the U of C.
- ❖ We did also sponsor the **Chicago Artist Studio in Lucerne**, placed under the auspices of the Chicago-Sister-City International Program. The Chicago artist selected this year was Jeff BARAKA; a broadcast and digital media personality and producer with an extensive background in urban/underground music, arts, and culture.

One resolution that we came to this year is the necessity to have a deadline when associations and individuals can present a request for a contribution so that we can organize our budget with the right frame of reference. From now on the due date will be: November 1st; beyond that we will not accept any further request.

In closing I want to thank all my Committee members for helping with the decision-making. In the hope to see you soon at forthcoming events I remain,

Respectfully submitted,
March 17, 2016

Marie-Simone Pavlovich Ph.D.
Chair, Culture Committee

Image 2

Charles Dutoit – Swiss Conductor – Soirée Suisse
Alliance Française – March 10, 2015

Image 3

Jonas Lüscher – Swiss Author - Literaturlenz
Goethe Institut - February 24, 2015