

## 2022 Annual Report of the Culture Committee

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

Chair: Marie-Simone Pavlovich

Members: Andre Frieden, Ursula Furrer, Sonja Manhart, John Paluch

As we began the year 2022, there were indications that we might be entering an early “post-pandemic” phase. Immunizations against Covid-19 were being made readily available and social distancing and mask wearing seemed to be providing good protection, especially for the vulnerable. The Culture Committee consulted regularly with cultural partners like the Alliance Française, the Goethe-Institut Chicago, the Chicago History Museum as well as our sister organizations (Swiss Club, Swiss-American Business Council, Sister Cities International – Chicago Lucerne Committee and the Swiss Consulate) to consider the possibilities for programming during our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year. Decisions about hosting live events were made on a month-by-month basis and the committee cautiously weighed the risks of programming as it decided on the events scheduled for the year.

As in 2021, the Alliance Française conducted the greatest part of *Le Festival de la Francophonie* with remote programming. Bruno Ryff and Jörg Oberschmied of the Swiss Consulate in Chicago were able to recommend Professor Dr. Olivier Jolliet from the University of Michigan for the annual Soirée Suisse. Dr. Jolliet’s research and teaching programs aim to assess environmental risks and impacts of chemicals and of innovative technologies in the environment and he has worked most recently on the impact of diet on health and longevity. Jolliet’s talk, streamed via Zoom, was introduced by Swiss Consul General of Switzerland in Chicago, Bruno Ryff, and Marie-Simone Pavlovich from the Swiss Benevolent Society.

The annual *Literaturlenz* with its presentation of Swiss, German and Austrian authors did not take place, but there are plans to restart this always popular evening of readings and discussion in the near future.

Since 2007, the Culture Committee has supported Chicago area artists who apply for residencies in our Sister City Lucerne. Photographer Nelson Armour and painter Kathy Weaver travelled to Lucerne in July and reported on making many contacts and finding valuable opportunities to work on their projects which focused on water issues and the environment. The Committee has also committed to supporting muralist Jeff Zimmerman in 2023 and the plan is for him to paint a mural in Lucerne.

The Sister Cities International - Lucerne Artists in Chicago program celebrated 20 Years of the Artist’s Atelier on North Damen Avenue in 2022. The Culture Committee was represented at all of the events associated with this celebration which included a reception by the Swiss Consul General, Bruno Ryff, a visit to the studio and the highlight of the whirlwind weekend of activities on Friday, May 13 at the Chicago Cultural Center – The 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show with dignitaries from Lucerne, Chicago and Swiss and Chicago artists presenting their work to a large and appreciative audience.

The tradition of working with the Swiss Club continues and once again, the SBS contributed the Swiss badges which are sold at their August 1<sup>st</sup> Picnic. Pro Patria celebrated 100 Years of 1<sup>st</sup> of August Badges in 2022.

The 1<sup>st</sup> of August reception organized by the Swiss-American Business Council was dedicated to the SBS and the celebration of its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We were lead sponsors of the event and facilitated a presentation by local historian Dan Savage on Beer Culture in Chicago at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The mission of the Culture Committee is to be a platform for projects that reflect the contemporary artistic ideal of Switzerland, that will reach a maximum number of people from Switzerland, but especially Chicagoans or visitors from other regions.

A very warm thank you to the Committee members for working to achieve our goals in our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie-Simone Pavlovich, Ph.D.  
Chair, Culture Committee  
March 20, 2023