



ERATO

News from the
International Lesbian &
Gay Cultural Network



Stockholm Autumn, 2005 www.ilgcn.tupilak.se

From the ILGCN (*International Lesbian & Gay Cultural Network*) Information Secretariat

Next Stop: London, October 7-9, 2005

MOONBOW 'FESTIVAL in EXILE' for BELARUS in STOCKHOLM

Stockholm – An international cultural and political solidarity event in support for rainbow colleagues in Europe's last dictatorship took place in the Swedish capital September 23-24, 2005 – with seminars, art, song, music, poetry and pledges of future support from a number of human rights organizations.

“Our Nordic-supported events in Minsk have earlier been attacked and harassed by police and threatened by both the regime and neo Nazis – so a “happening in exile” seemed to be the only possibility,” says **Bill Schiller**, secretary general of the ILGCN Information Secretariat in Stockholm.

“This meeting is very important for us, since the difficult situation for all NGO human rights group in Belarus is getting worse,” maintains **Slava Bortnik**, head of the Belarus LGBT Amnesty International group. His visit to Stockholm was made possible by the Swedish Institute. (*continued on page 2*)
Slava Bortnik

ILGCN World Conference 2006 in Moscow, Jerusalem, Minsk

Stockholm -- The stages of the annual ILGCN World Conference on Lesbian & Gay Culture will be in **Moscow: May 24, 2006** (part of the first IDAHO (International Day Against Homophobia) conference in the Russian capital May 24-27 and following the international IDAHO day on May 17), **Jerusalem** as part of **World Pride: August 6-12** and **Minsk: October 7-8** (part of the Belarus solidarity events in “exile” and “underground” in this the last dictatorship in Europe).

Plans continue under discussion about a possible stage in **Istanbul** in 2006 or as soon as possible in support of the courageous Turkish lesbian and gay rights movement facing renewed homophobic attacks from politicians and others. (*continued on page 2*)

2nd stage after Krakow, ILGCN Women's Secretariat Created

ILGCN World Homo Culture Conference 2005 Ends in Tallinn

Tallinn/Stockholm - - The 2nd and final stage of the 8th International Lesbian & Gay Cultural Network's world conference on homo culture ended in the Estonian capital -- part of the Moonbow-Tallinn human rights and homo culture festival August 8-14 and sharing the Polish city's threats and violence from neo Nazis -- adding bomb threats as well. *(continued on page 3)*

World Homo Cultural Conferences 2006... (from page 1)

ILGCN co-ordinators and cultural ambassadors -- since the large size and number of other sub conferences in Montreal will make it difficult to hold a separate conference on rainbow culture on the sidelines," says **Bill Schiller** of the ILGCN Information Secretariat in Stockholm and ILGCN conference co-ordinator.

"Our original plans to have an ILGCN world conference stage at the giant Montreal "Right to be Different" conference --July 26-29, 2006 will be substituted hopefully by a seminar on ILGCN international solidarity and panelled by a number of ILGCN co-ordinators and cultural ambassadors -- since the large size and number of other sub conferences in Montreal will make it difficult to hold a separate conference on rainbow culture on the sidelines," says **Bill Schiller**, ILGCN conference co-ordinator.

"But we are convinced that this pioneering conference in Montreal will give a crucial and enormous input into the homo rights movement all over the globe -- especially in Eastern Europe where both the local activists and supporting international brigades are fighting life-and-death battles on the barricades."

Stockholm 'Moonbow in Exile' for Belarus... (from page 1)

The Stockholm meeting also included a focus on the lesbian and gay rights situation in **Estonia and Latvia** -- only a few years ago part of the Soviet empire and even today facing homophobic press and politicians, bomb threats and neo Nazi attacks.

"Several Belarus delegates were trying to attend our Moonbow festival in Tallinn this year, but they were stopped at their border," says **Krissu of Mea Culpa** of the ILGCN Women's Secretariat and co-organizer of the pioneering Moonbow festival in **Estonia**. "We are also still fighting against very negative media coverage of lesbians and gays, and neo Nazis harassing the Pride march." Her travel to Stockholm was sponsored by the **Nordic Council's** information office, **Norden i Fokus**, which also provided one of the venues for festival seminars.

"The **Latvian** movement is still plagued by an enormous fear of coming out in a situation where neo Nazis and other homophobes -- especially from the large Russian minority -- join forces against lesbians and gays," says Swedish veteran activist, **Kjell Rindar**, who has been teaching at Latvian universities.

Festival participants agreed to join forces to hold an "underground" stage of next year's ILGCN world homo cultural conference in **Minsk** -- **October, 2006** (see separate press release) and continue with

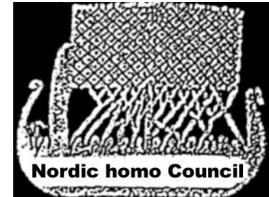
“exile” festivals in **Poland** and elsewhere to help break the isolation of the lesbian, gay and trans community in **Belarus**.

Support for such meetings and other solidarity work with Belarus been expressed during the festival by representatives of the **Swedish Helsinki Committee** for human rights, the **LGBT group of Swedish Amnesty**, and the **Swedish Parliament’s LGBT group**.



The follow-up “**Moonbow in exile**” for **Belarus** event takes place in **London, 7-9 October, 2005** -- organized by the **ILGCN Literature Secretariat** and others. The “moonbow” comes from the name of the alternative, international events organized in recent years on both sides of the **Baltic Sea**.

Supporters for the **Stockholm** event include the **ILGCN**, the **Nordic Homo Council**, **Tupilak** (*Nordic homo cultural workers*), and the **Nordic Rainbow Humanists**.



ILGCN World Conference 2005 in Krakow, Tallinn.....(from page 1)

The art, music, song and seminar-filled **Moonbow** event also approved the creation of the **ILGCN Secretariat for Women** -- hosted by **Mea Culpa, Tallinn**, a complement to the **Information Secretariat** in **Stockholm** and the **Literature Secretariat** in **London**.

"I, both as a person and as a representative of **Mea Culpa**, am very glad that the **ILGCN Women's Secretariat** was created in **Tallinn**. Women’s issues and cultural work are often neglected, as there is always something 'more important to do', change, accomplish," says **Krissu** of **Mea Culpa**. "But at the same time, those 'little' emotional things are the ones that keep us interested in life and losing them would harm our ability to dream and thrive for something better. The goal of **Mea Culpa** is to keep our dreams and hopes alive, and having the **Women's Secretariat** here will strengthen our chances to succeed."

In a message of support from the **Literature Secretariat**, **Ian Stewart** expressed the “best wishes to colleagues in the **Baltic** who have been able to organize this important stage of the **ILGCN** world conference at such short notice (replacing the stage planned for the postponed **Jerusalem World Pride**). “Many in **London** have been following closely developments in your region, and note with dismay the mounting homophobia there.”

New ILGCN ambassadors, co-ordinators

The world conference stage in **Tallinn** also approved new **ILGCN co-ordinators** and **cultural ambassadors** from **France, Estonia** and **Denmark** as well as a new co-ordinator linking the **ILGCN** and **IDAHO** (see below).

The conference announced the winners of this year’s **ILGCN** awards: The ‘**Arco Iris**’ – a **Hamburg-based researcher** working on Nazi persecution of homosexuals, the ‘**Ofeo Musica**’ honoring the northern Swedish singer, **Jenny Gabriellson**, the ‘**Clio**’ history award shared by **Tampere** historians for the 1st-ever rainbow exhibition in a **Finnish museum** and **British** teacher, **Sue Sanders** for bringing homo history to school classes, and the ‘**Arco Nordica**’ to the **Swedish** and the **Latvian Gay Camps** projects.

Paris 2005: ILGCN 'Orfeo Musica' award 2004 finally handed over to Legato – European Lesbian & Gay Choirs Association for outstanding promotion of cultural ties across international borders.



NORDIC SALUTE for IDAHO in STOCKHOLM

Stockholm -- A Swedish and Norwegian rainbow cultural ceremony took place in the Swedish capital on May 17th -- the 1st International Day against Homophobia -- with Norwegian opera singer Björn Haugan presenting the same song he sang at a ceremony in the Nazi concentration camp of Mauthausen in Austria in 2002 honoring the homosexuals who perished in the death camps.

Bill Schiller of the ILGCN Information Secretariat presented IDAHO greetings from groups in such countries as Bulgaria and the dictatorship of Belarus. He also presented examples of homophobic violence claiming victims around the world – from Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca to murdered young gays in Sweden and the U.S. to a gay soldier in Iraq -- brutally raped by others in the barracks and sent to his death on the mine fields.

Some participants of the Tupilak/ILGCN afternoon cultural ceremony then joined a rally for IDAHO in a downtown Stockholm square arranged by the youth section of the Swedish national LGBT rights organization, RFSL. Speakers there included the Social Democratic minister of discrimination questions and the minister for integration, the head of the opposition Left Party, a leader of the new Swedish Feminist Party, members of the Swedish Parliament's LGBT group and Swedish lesbian and gay activists.

60 years after the liberation of Auschwitz:

'Nazi/neo Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals' Goes Nordic

..... for 2005: Oslo (*on the sidelines of Europride*) June 21, Tampere (*Finland's Pride*) July 9, Stockholm (*Moonbow/ Pride House Festivals*) August 1, Malmö & Helsingborg (*Anti-Racist Film Festival*) October 27, 28. Supported by ILGCN, Tupilak, Nordic Homo Council, Nordic Rainbow Humanists.



Moonbow Festival Pre-Stockholm Pride Week Activities:

NORDIC ART & FILMS, IDAHO RECEIVED GOLDEN TUPILAK

Stockholm – The annual **Tupilak** Nordic art and photo exhibition, the **3rd Nordic Short Queer Film Festival** and an Nordic award to **Louis-Georges Tin**, the founder of **IDAHO – the International Day Against Homophobia**, launched the first week of the **5th Moonbow International Human Rights & Homo Culture Festival** in the Swedish capital. As is the tradition of **Tupilak**, the art exhibition included work from all over the Nordic region.

The **3rd Nordic Queer Short Film Festival** showed a selection of Nordic films and was again supported by **Norden i Fokus**, the **Nordic Council’s** information office in Stockholm. Attending the festival was also **Marjo Pipinen**, Finnish documentary film director who screened her film **“My Helsinki”** and commented on her work as co-organizer of the annual Finnish lesbian and gay film festival, **Vinokino**.

Receiving the **2005 Golden Tupilak**, **IDAHO’s** founder was honoured for **“... his visionary determination to make the dream of a global annual sign of rainbow solidarity a May 17th reality -- in the world-wide battle against hatred and intolerance, and for being a true rainbow internationalist – a black Viking of Caribbean birth and Parisian residency – a strong supporter of the use of culture as a powerful weapon against homophobia and silence....., and for his research and writing -- creating the outstanding dictionary on homophobia.”**

“Some thought our idea would never get much support,” **Louis-Georges** said in his presentation at the festival, where he displayed a large number of photos from **IDAHO** events all over the world. “It was amazing to see city after city join our global effort. In some places in **Eastern Europe**, in **China** and elsewhere, this was the first time the rainbow community dared to come out in public with demonstrations, concerts, and even flying a giant balloon over **Kiev!**”



ILGCN Information Secretariat c/o Tupilak Stockholm www.ilgcn.tupilak.se

Erato journal

Berlin ilgcn.culturenet@pride.de

ILGCN Women’s Secretariat

Tallinn krissu.@meaculpa.ee

ILGCN Literature Secretariat

London: istewart@alumni.stu.ca