



ERATO

News from the
International Lesbian &
Gay Cultural Network



Stockholm

September, 2006

...from the **ILGCN Information Secretariat**
www.ilgcn.tupilak.se

2007 Sites: Mauritius, Vilnius, "Iran & Algeria in Exile"

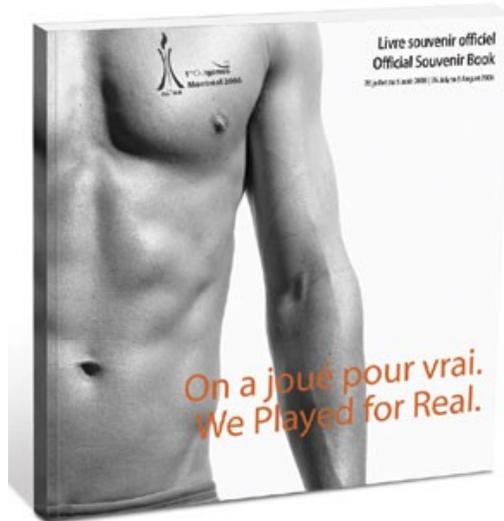
ILGCN WORLD CONFERENCE STAGES 2006 in MINSK, POSNAN

Stockholm – The Belarus capital will be the site of the 2nd stage of the International Lesbian & Gay Cultural Network's world rainbow culture conference November 3-5, 2006 and the Polish city of Posnan will be the 3rd stage November 18 (replacing Jerusalem -- postponed because of the war).

“Negative statements about homosexuals by President Lukashenko, MPs and religious leaders demonstrate that negative attitudes towards homosexuals exist at the highest levels of government, “says ILGCN co-ordinator for Belarus, Slava Bortnik (www.pride.by). (Continued on page 3)

Next Stop after Canada – Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009

RAINBOW CULTURE, HUMAN RIGHTS, SPORTS in 1st OUT GAMES



Montreal – The largest rainbow human rights event ever with 1,500 participants proceeded a series of mega and minor cultural events and a giant global sporting competition characterizing this unique blend in the 1st Out Games held in this Canadian city in July, 2006.

The unique event also won the first ILGCN “Rainbow Iceberg” award for outstanding international achievements an ILGCN Norwegian initiative – to be handed out at some future international event.

ILGCN co-ordinators and ambassadors hosted and participated in several of the rainbow human rights seminars – focusing on the importance of rainbow culture to the human rights struggle, and the worsening situation in such Eastern European countries as Russia, Latvia, Estonia, Poland. (Continued on page 3)

With “International Square” Solidarity Groups

1st NORDIC RAINBOWS at GIANT

GOTHENBERG BOOK FAIR

Stockholm/Gothenberg – The first rainbow flags will be raised September 21-23, 2006 at the “International Square” – the largest section of the giant Gothenberg Book Fair – the biggest annual cultural event in the Nordic region.

“Nordic cultural and other co-operation, solidarity with colleagues in Eastern Europe under the title of ‘Rainbows in Chains and under Siege’ -- and sharing rainbows with immigrants and refugees are the themes of our Nordic Rainbow Stand and presentations on stage,” says Bill Schiller, international secretary of the Nordic Homo Council. (Continued on Page 2)

NORDIC RAINBOWS at GOTHENBERG BOOK FAIR..

(from page 1) ... The rainbow event in the Swedish west coast city of Gothenberg will be co-hosted by Tupilak, (*Nordic organization of rainbow cultural workers*), Nordic Rainbow Humanists and the Stockholm Information Secretariat of the ILGCN (*International Lesbian & Gay Cultural Network*) – in co-operation with the Latvian rainbow organization, Mozaika -- to be represented by lawyer Evita Gosa -- and Homan, (Persian-speaking and other rainbow immigrants).

Nordic
Rainbow
Humanists



Violent Attacks on Banned Rainbow Prides

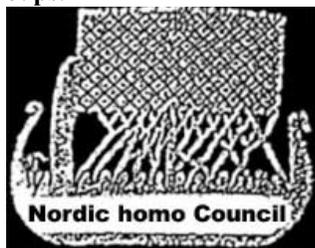
“With the city of Riga banning the Pride Parade again this year and even worse violent homophobic attacks on Pride events there, the visible presence of Latvia is especially important to illustrate the Gothenberg fair’s theme this year: “Freedom of Expression,” adds Schiller. “It’s also important to focus on how rainbow immigrants and refugees are often left on the sidelines of the Nordic rainbows – even in this Sweden’s “multi-cultural year.”

At the International Square, over 60 exhibitors work with international issues and development co-operation: NGO’s, publishers, businesses and agencies with a program including Swedish and foreign guests, performances, debates and images.

The Square also hosts a number of stands and exhibits where the participating organizations offer information and activities; present pedagogical tools and travelling tips; sell books and arrange meetings and book signings with authors and other guests. The middle of the Square features a big bookstand with books from all over the world. The International Square has been a part of the International Book Fair in Gothenburg since 2000.

NORDIC HOMO COUNCIL 2006 SESSION in GOTHENBERG

Stockholm/Gothenberg -- The 2006 session of the Nordic Homo Council will take place as earlier announced in the Swedish west coast city on September 23 – on the sidelines of the Gothenberg Book Fair where the NHC and other Nordic rainbow groups will raise the first rainbow flags at the ‘International Square’ – a special zone with many other solidarity groups.



Discussions will cover proposals to change the name to Nordic Rainbow Council to make the organization’s name more inclusive and Nordic co-operation at coming ILGCN (International Lesbian & Gay Cultural Network) cultural stages in Posnan (to be visited by a Swedish-Finnish-Norwegian delegation) and Minsk in November.

Other proposals will deal with the newly-established Nordic Cultural Fund, a report on the Nordic delegation to Moscow pride (supported by the Nordic Culture Fund and the Norwegian Embassy), more cultural co-operation over Nordic borders and beyond and at the next ILGA (International Lesbian & Gay Association) European conference in Vilnius in 2007.

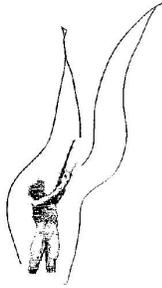
Continued Membership in ILGCN, ILGA, “Loke’s Sisters Award”

Another proposal calls for maintaining the continued “informal” structure of the council, no membership fee and continued membership in the ILGCN and the ILGA.

“Nordic Homo Council fees to the ILGA are paid through voluntary contributions – and we really appreciate the largest annual contributions coming from Tupilak (the organization of rainbow cultural workers in the Nordic region),” says NHC international secretary, Bill Schiller. “And we’re proud to have received this year’s Tupilak “Loke’s Sisters Award” to help pay costs for the rent for the Gothenberg fair’s Nordic Rainbow Stand.”

Earlier Nordic Homo Council sessions have taken place in Stockholm, Wasa, Tallinn, Riga, Oslo and Tampere. Membership is open to organizations and individuals in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

ILGCN World Conference Stages 2006: Mink, Posnan



(from page 1) “Earlier international LGBT events in Belarus have been banned by government and attacked by police, and two years ago cancelled – after the dictatorial regime threatened to expel any visiting queer foreigners and Belarusian neo-Nazis promised to wipe out homosexuality itself. To prevent the isolation of Belarusian LGBT movement, please come to Minsk and make a difference!” Bortnik adds.

The ILGCN’s Warsaw-based cultural ambassador, Lukasz Palucki (luke.santi@eranet.pl) describes the event in Posnan as of crucial importance – following last year’s violent, homophobic attack on the first Posnan Pride parade – with several participants injured and some 70 arrested by the police.

The first stage of this year’s ILGCN cultural conference took place in Moscow – with the help of the Nordic Culture Fund and the Norwegian Embassy. The conference days ended with the bloody and violent attack at the Red Square ceremony where local and foreign lesbians and gays tried to place flowers at the eternal flame monument.

ILGCN, Russian Debts after the Battle of Moscow

“Both the Russian organizers and the ILGCN are still facing crushing debts because of the tripling of the conference rent with extra security guards and the cancellation of the fund-raising event out of fear or more homophobic attacks. Any contributions are very welcome,” says Bill Schiller, secretary general at the ILGCN Information Secretariat in Stockholm. (info@tupilak.se)



Next year’s conference stages are to be in Mauritius in May – the first ILGCN event in Africa (ILGCN co-ordinator Thierry de Ravel for Mauritius (tderavel@intnet.mu) – and in Vilnius in the same month (ILGCN co-ordinator Arvydas Vogulis for Lithuania (avo@takas.lt).

The stage in “Iran in Exile” will be in Toronto in June (ILGCN cultural ambassador/co-ordinator for Iran, Arsham Parsi arsham@pglo.net) – and the “Algeria in Exile” stage in Paris-Marseille in October (ILGCN cultural ambassador/co-ordinator for Algeria, Mohamed Hadj- Kouider amineh.kouider@btintenet.com).

“We’ve had “exile” events for Belarus in the past and hope that these stages “in exile” can help put a focus on the severe and sometimes fatal conditions for rainbow people in Iran and Algeria,” Schiller concludes. “Any assistance for all conference stages are very welcome!”

RAINBOW CULTURE, HUMAN RIGHTS, SPORTS: 1st OUT GAMES...



(from page 1) Nordic ILGCN co-ordinators have also pledged to give assistance and support to the Danish organizers of the 2nd Out Games in 2009 – both within the Nordic region and in co-operation with colleagues in Eastern Europe.

The human rights conference adopted a historic “Declaration of Montreal” as a powerful weapon for the rainbow rights battles in all areas and at all levels – from local barricades to the United Nations

The Montreal event was an alternative to the Gay Games – after American-dominated organizers wanted economic controls and demanded a “sports only” police – ignoring rainbow rights and culture.

Proposals to ILGCN Annual Awards Welcomed at all Secretariats:



Rainbow Iceberg -- (outstanding international work) Sappho in Paradise (libraries and publishing)

Orfeo Iris (research in Nazi/ neo nazi persecution of homosexuals) Arco Nordica (Nordic co-operation)

Grizzly Bear (facing ferocious homophobia) Orfeo Imago (international graphic art)

Clio’s Silver Cup (LGBT history) Orfeo Musica (international musical co-operation)

2006 ILGCN Fund BUCHAREST Report:



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Bucharest -- A large crowd of people gathered on the streets of the Romanian capital to celebrate this year's Gayfest -- a festival celebrating the diversity in Romania's LGBTQ community. This year's festival had more to offer than ever before -- and the staff of the organization, ACCEPT, kept themselves busy throughout the festival to make sure everything went according to plans. The main theme was marriage and same-sex unions -- a top that was debated and reported on throughout the festival. At present, same-sex marriages are not recognized in Romania.

Earlier in the week, a brave bunch of drag queens had already started the manifestations by taking over a streetcar -- cheerfully singing their way to and from work that day. This was successful without any incidents or need of protection and seemed to be very much appreciated.

Angry Homophobic Mobs Fighting with Police

Noua dreatpa, a Romanian Christian organization working against LGBTQ right in Romania for years, held a protest march only a few hours before the festival's big event -- the rainbow parade held on Saturday in central Bucharest. Organizers were happy to see the large amount of people who had the guts to show up and march through the sunny streets shouting slogans such as "Va iubim (we love you)" and "Fara violenta (without violence)" protected by the police and gendarme trying to stop violence from huge mobs which gathered in large numbers to display their displeasure and hate.

Sources say that 51 people were arrested for attempting to provoke violence. Pretty much the whole center of Bucharest was on hold at the time of the parade -- carried out without any major injuries or accidents. The event ended by a park at a metro station without any speeches. Instead, people fled from the hooligans in taxis and via the metro, where some were beaten.

"The police did a good job and so did Accept," says Mihai Dumitrescu, a young queer from Timisoara who was in the capital for the festival. "But they should have made sure there'd be a way of getting away from the finish safely -- or arrange some kind of transportation."

Bigger than ever before, this year's Gayfest was a success and people came from all over Romania and other countries -- and plans are underway for next year's festivities.

-- Thomas Näslund, Swedish artist, Tupilak



ILGCN World Homo Cultural Conference

Stages 2006

Minsk -- November 3-5 **Posnan** -- November 18



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