

# SafeMUSE - SAFE MUSIC HAVENS INITIATIVE

## Safe Music Residencies

WORK POSSIBILITIES FOR PERSECUTED MUSICAL ARTISTS

Information for host cities, organizations, potential members



"Iranian Woman", Riksscenen/Oslo, Norway, 11.9.2013, produced by Fuuse in cooperation with SafeMUSE (Photo: Julie Tørrissen)

***Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.***

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19  
(Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly 10 December 1948)

***Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.***

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19.2  
(Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly 16 December 1966)

**SafeMUSE - Safe Music Havens Initiative** is an independent non-partisan and non-profit membership association with the main purpose of offering persecuted musical artists a safe place to stay and work - in places with freedom of artistic expression. This includes close cooperation with hosting organizations (cities, regional authorities, organisations and others), with local and regional musicians and bands/groups, and the development of network between partners and co-workers for mutual learning, exchange and development.



### **SafeMUSE - Safe Music Havens Initiative**

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**SafeMUSE - Safe Music Havens Initiative**, established by musicians' and composers in Norway, work in close cooperation with Freemuse (the World Forum on Music and Censorship) and musicians' and composers' associations, and is based on and supports the universal principles of human rights as they apply to the rights of musical artists, composers, tradition bearers and their music.

**A core SafeMUSE mission** is advocating for Safe Music Residencies (short term, from two months and more) and Safe Music Havens (2 years) for artists at risk.

Since the introduction of the idea of safe havens or cities of refuge for persecuted writers in the 1990s, this has become a wide spread scheme of more than 40 cities organized through the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) – and growing. The ICORN Administration Centre in Stavanger, Norway, serves as the communication hub for the independently managed ICORN cities. There is however no principal difference between the need for protection of writers and professionals within the music area (- or for that matter artists of other artistic genres). Musicians, composers and musical tradition bearers also need to work in a safe environment with freedom of expression.

In May 2014 ICORN decided to allow member cities to invite persecuted visual artists and musicians for a trial period. And for the time being ICORN is preparing to facilitate for the first guest artist in a Safe Music Haven, the City of Harstad, Norway. (Hosting prepared by SafeMUSE in cooperation with Harstad, Troms County and Freemuse.)

SafeMUSE is prepared to cooperate with ICORN and its member cities to establish a good long term placement scheme for persecuted musical artists, on professional music relevant application assessments, qualification procedures and placement procedures.

**Freemuse**, the World Forum on Music and Censorship is an independent international organization advocating freedom of expression for musicians and composers worldwide, and Freemuse is a close partner to the work of SafeMUSE. In 2013 Freemuse registered a total number of 109 cases of attacks on musicians and violations of their rights. The cases include 19 musicians being killed, 18 newly imprisoned, 4 imprisoned in previous years but still serving time, 7 abducted, 1 attacked, 7 threatened or persecuted, 4 prosecuted, 16 detained, as well as 33 cases of censorship. The registrations include cases in 33 countries.

[\[http://freemuse.org/archives/7262\]](http://freemuse.org/archives/7262)

*“Music and culture are essential pillars of society. In many respects, it is also the conscience of society. The right to express your voice and opinion is vital and therefore the work of Freemuse is crucial.”*

Freemuse receiving the SKAP Special Prize, (2011)

*“This year the Womex Award goes not to just one artist but to all those suffering from censorship, an ill against which the award winner Freemuse has been fighting valiantly for the past few years from their base in Copenhagen.”*

Freemuse receiving the WOMEX Award, (2003)

**A growing focus** and awareness on this situation has drawn the world's attention to these issues, and the international music community is slowly waking up to act. There is a need for increasing awareness of these issues, promoting initiatives that strengthen the freedom of artistic expression and democracy building, and organizing support for endangered musicians worldwide. This is also well documented in the first UN Report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, *The right to freedom of artistic expression and creativity* (2013).

[\[http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A%2FHRC%2F23%2F34\]](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A%2FHRC%2F23%2F34)



**The first steps** towards developing schemes for Safe Music Havens and Safe Music Residencies was taken by the Norwegian Musicians' Union (MFO) in 2011. In December 2013 *SafeMUSE - Safe Music Havens Initiative* was established as an independent association (by MFO and NOPA, the Norwegian Society of Composers and Lyricists). SafeMUSE builds on and supports the universal principles of human rights as they apply to the rights of musicians, composers and tradition bearers and their music, advancing freedom of expression, defending democratic values and promoting international solidarity in the field of music.

**The persecution of artists** in the field of music is not only due to lyrics with a political content. Also musical expressions, often related to specific traditions or ethnic groups, is regarded an offence – or even a terrorism-related activity. Specific musical genres, language used in lyrics, or female musical activity may also spark reactions by governments or others in power.

**Safe Music Residency:** The core SafeMUSE mission is to develop work possibilities for persecuted musical artists through a scheme of Safe Music Residencies. Musical artists who are censored, threatened and severely persecuted or at high risk and have requested short term re-location or arts residencies that do not require them to apply for refugee status, are welcomed. Despite harsh censorship, threats, imprisonment and other kinds of persecution, these musicians wish to stay connected to their home countries. They indicate applying for refugee status in a foreign country is a life-changing decision with potentially irreversible negative consequences that most probably will block any attempts to return at a later stage. In addition, it may further endanger their families and even fans and supporters.



Sina, first SafeMUSE resident artist, hosted by Norwegian film production company Gammaglimt AS.

***“When you are persecuted, you can’t produce your music. My life is totally damaged, and you can’t create music in this atmosphere of fear. I could be killed (if I go back to Sudan). And now I am not far away from the fundamentalist Muslims that surround us.”***

SafeMUSE applicant (Freemuse Clearing Report 2013)

***“I strongly recommend not doing the programme under rules of the refugee-status. For me personally it could end my life in Belarus completely as our government could keep me out of the country. Moreover it could use the refugee-status as a mean of propaganda discrediting my person and my work. This also has consequences on the circle of more like-minded people who could blame me of leaving them behind and turning my back to the situation in Belarus.”***

SafeMUSE applicant (Freemuse Clearing Report 2013)

Safe Music Residency is a scheme of 2 – 6 months hosting periods, or more. This gives the artist a possibility to get out of a difficult situation and have time for re-charging and re-activating networks and creative processes for a period in safe surroundings. The hosting period could also include cooperating with local musicians, other type of artists, promoters and venues, record companies etc. in the hosting area/region – before returning home, where they like to and feel obliged to continue their activities.



**Safe Music Havens:** The standard Safe Music Haven or city of refuge hosting period is two years, with the aim of permanent relocation for persecuted music artists in a safe environment. Following ICORN and the ICORN cities decision to open up also for persecuted visual and musical artists – in addition to writers – SafeMUSE will not focus on establishing a parallel scheme of Safe Music Havens. But – if desired – SafeMUSE will cooperate with ICORN and the ICORN cities for the best possible adaptation of the ICORN City of Refuge scheme for the music area, and also include these cities and guest musicians within the SafeMUSE network. SafeMUSE emphasizes the need for a relevant music related clearing and assessment process of the applicants, and a good professional integration of each Safe Music Haven artist with local and regional music environments.

**Clearing of artists:** SafeMUSE has concluded an agreement with Freemuse, the World Forum on Music and Censorship, for the clearing of artists for the SafeMUSE residence scheme. This ensures the highest available music-related competence in all parts of this process.

Freemuse finalised the first round of clearing of persecuted music artists for SafeMUSE in April 2013. The report identifies almost 30 musicians in need of protection, documents and verifies their cases and assesses their requirements and expectations. In this work Freemuse benefits from its extensive music related network and local, independent experts when additional verification and interviews is required. The first report gives an extensive and detailed insight to the deep problems of music colleagues in Europe (central/east), Latin America, Africa, Middle East and Far East, and serves as a well-documented justification of the need for Safe Music Residencies and Safe Music Havens.

**Musical environment and partners:** SafeMUSE, in cooperation with the host cities/institutions, plus the SafeMUSE partners, will ensure good relations with relevant local, regional and national music communities, and will establish favorable opportunities for cooperation and work for the hosted artist. SafeMUSE is focused on anchoring the project in the professional music environment and towards other relevant actors and organisations. The project is developing a wide network of partners and co-operators in the Nordic countries and in Europe. And both the European Music Council and FIM, the International Federation Musicians, has expressed support for the project. Further development of the professional network is a priority.

## The role and obligations of the host

**Safe Residencies:** Hosts offering persecuted musical artists a safe place to stay and work for a period of 2 - 6 months (or more) through signing the *Safe Residence Host City Agreement* with SafeMUSE. Hosts – alone or in cooperation with partners – agrees to:

- Sign a Host Membership Agreement with SafeMUSE.
- Arrange for the relocation and reception of the guest artist (invitation, visa, residence permit, travel expenses etc.), and arrange for the return of the artist after the hosting period.
- Provide the artist (and eventually his/her family) with appropriate housing, and commit to the hosting for a standard an agreed period from 2 – 6 months. The actual period will be determined in collaboration with the current host city.
- Provide the artist with an appropriate scholarship/grant/financial support for living expenses for his/her period of stay.
- Prepare in cooperation with the artist a hosting programme and help the artist to integrate with the relevant local and regional artistic community.
- Appoint a Music Residence coordinator to support the artist practical and other matters during the hosting period.

**Safe Havens:** Hosts offering persecuted musical artists a safe place to stay and work for a period of 2 years agrees to. Responsibilities and roles are described on ICORN's website.

[<http://www.icorn.org>]



During this first phase the SafeMUSE secretariat together with the pilot host cities and organizations will become familiar with and gain experience in the operation of Safe Music Residencies, and develop the program based on these experiences.

*“So, I find myself in a kind of dilemma. I know under these conditions I can’t work as a musician anymore – and this puts me really down (...) After the first wave of repressions I had a real depression – I couldn’t work and write anymore for almost 2 years. I don’t want to return into this mental state anymore.”*

SafeMUSE applicant (Freemuse Clearing Report 2013)

*“The persecution has made me leaving my professional career as a singer. Music is my life and soul and I cannot live without music. I am psychologically disturbed. My family members are also disturbed as I have no source of income. I am unable to create or market my productions. I and my family are desperate”*

SafeMUSE applicant (Freemuse Clearing Report 2013)

**The selection of the artist** will take place in close consultation between the actual hosting institution/hosting city and the SafeMUSE secretariat based on a list of artists in need of protection, documented and verified by Freemuse. This will ensure that the city and the relevant professional music community find the selection of artist appropriate, and that the host period will be as fruitful as possible for all parties.

***This selection process has to take place in the greatest confidence in the interests of the safety for all applicants.***

## Budget and funding

**SafeMUSE’s administrative costs** are covered by SafeMUSE. Hosts are however obliged to sign a Host Membership Agreement with SafeMUSE and pay the Host Membership fee.

SafeMUSE is in addition to the membership fees funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MFO (Norwegian Musicians’ Union), NOPA (Norwegian Society of Composers and Lyricists) and the Norwegian Society of Composers. In addition SafeMUSE has obtained funding different projects in 2014/2015 from Nordic Culture Point (Nordic Council of Ministers, support commitment) and Music Norway.

***Direct costs for each hosting and the operation of the Safe Music Residencies are not included in the SafeMUSE budget.*** SafeMUSE will however consider cooperating on the fundraising together with hosts for securing the budget connected to the residence period and artistic program.

**Host’s costs:** The host’s responsibility and financial obligations for the Safe Music Residence program will be:

- Hosting of the artist for the agreed hosting period. This includes the provision of satisfactory living quarter for the guest artist (and eventual family, if applicable) and appropriate financial support for living expenses.
- Provided invitation, visa/residence permit and travel expenses – including the return tickets.
- An appointed Safe Music Residence coordinator to support the artist throughout the hosting period.
- SafeMUSE membership fee, covering a small part of the SafeMUSE expenses connected to the associations services, plus giving the host its democratic rights within the SafeMUSE association and network.
- Project related costs during the stay, like rehearsal/work premises, studio, concert and eventual touring production costs etc.



## About SafeMUSE – the association

SafeMUSE - Safe Music Havens Initiative was founded as an independent non-partisan and non-profit membership association December 19<sup>th</sup> 2013 with the main purpose of offering persecuted musical artists a safe place to stay and work. SafeMUSE work in close cooperation with Freemuse and professional music environments, and is based on and supports the universal principles of human rights as they apply to the rights of musical artists and their music.

*“Persecuted musical artists are defined as anyone in any country active in the performance and/or composition of music and/or music lyrics and/or tradition bearers active in the preservation and transmission of traditional music, in any form over any media and/or in public performance.”*

SafeMUSE Charter (2013)

**The SafeMUSE board** is comprised of:

- Tine Tangestuen**, Chair (Executive manager of NOPA, Norwegian Society of Composers and Lyricists)
- Anders Hovind**, Vice Chair (Vice President of the Norwegian Musicians' Union)
- Erik Nadheim**, Board member (Director of the Norwegian National Crime Prevention Council - KRÅD)
- in addition **Hans Ole Rian**, Alternate member (President of the Norwegian Musicians' Union)

The board is elected for an interim period – until the SafeMUSE membership base is consisting of representatives from several membership categories. Then a broader Board will be elected in the first ordinary general assembly.

The association is registered as a Norwegian Association (“forening”), and SafeMUSE is now welcoming applications for membership.

**The SafeMUSE member categories** are:

- **HOSTING MEMBERS:** Cities, municipalities, counties, organizations and other legal bodies/entities responsible for offering persecuted musical artists a safe place to stay and work for an agreed period of time through an agreement with SafeMUSE.  
*Annual membership fee: NOK 15.000*
- **GUEST ARTIST MEMBERS:** Musical artists taking part as guest artists in Hosting Members' programs.  
*Annual membership fee: NOK 250*  
After the termination of the hosting period the Guest Artist Members are offered an Honorary Artist Membership.
- **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS:** Organizations and other legal bodies/entities cooperating directly, assisting or indirectly supporting Hosting Members and Guest Musical Artists.  
*Annual membership fee: NOK 10.000*

## Attention notes

It is of utmost importance that hosting institutions, organisations or cities has the necessary facilities, professional institutions and networks that will match the personal and professional needs and expectations.

Several immigrant communities carry with them political and religious conflicts from their home countries. In some cases authoritarian states have an intelligence apparatus that is active in exile and in some instances members of exile communities may have personal grudges against a known artist deriving from a particular religious, cultural or ethnic grouping. There could be conflicting interest - political and religious grudges or social norms - that could add pressure to an already persecuted applicant. It is therefore crucial that the hosts analyze if a potential applicant will be safe with the



existing exile/refugee community in the particular hosting city/region and whether hosting a controversial artist could even fuse internal conflicts.

**During the build-up of the SafeMUSE programmes we will try out and gain experience from the operation of the very first Safe Music Residencies, in close cooperation with the involved hosts and relevant professional environments. And in this period of build-up and development of the program all partakers will have to be flexible and open for adjustments and changes – all in an on-going and open dialog between the actors.**



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