

VDMFK-INFORMATION

ASSOCIATION OF MOUTH AND FOOT PAINTING ARTISTS
WORLDWIDE

December 2019/199



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Dear artists,
Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Winter is just around the corner and we are delighted to greet you with a new edition of the VDMFK Information.

The 14th Delegates' Convention was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, last September. We met the Brazilian delegation of artists who wish for an exchange of views and conviviality, and who share a passion for painting. They are wonderful ambassadors for the Association.

At the Delegates' Convention we paid tribute to Mr Hans Massberger. Only one thing was close to his heart: the promotion of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists. He is sorely missed, but the mark he left behind will remain forever in our memories.

We also honoured the memory of Prof Dr Dr Herbert Batliner. He was at Mr Erich Stegmann's side when the Association was first founded. For over fifty years he offered great support to the Association in his capacity as Legal Consultant.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms Ruth Christensen, for whom I have the greatest respect, from the bottom of my heart. She had served on the Board for 27 years. Ruth was often able to steer us towards the path of diplomacy at our meetings. She has a great deal of empathy for artists. Ruth is a highly skilled painter and her works are truly a feast for the eyes. Once again, I wish to thank her for her availability and expertise!

In the wake of Ruth Christensen's departure we are delighted to welcome Ms Ann Lund Wahlberg, an artist from Denmark, to the Board. Our warmest congratulations go to Ms Wahlberg and to Messrs Kahlau, Hsieh, Yendell and Dr Gasser on their re-election!

The December 2018 edition of the VDMFK Information mentioned my meeting with the 'Grande Dame' Deni-



VDMFK President Serge Maudet from France.

se Legrix, a French painter, writer and 'Officier de la Légion d'Honneur', who has died at the age of 100. I wish to share with you how very proud I felt in June last year as a representative of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists at the inauguration of the 'Place Denise-Legrix' in Saint Maurice. The town honoured her when it established the National Rehabilitation Institute of the hospitals of Saint Maurice.

Finally, I had the pleasure of taking part in an international exhibition of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists, which was held at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg last October and which gave our works the place they deserved.

With all this in mind, I kindly ask you to continue painting with the same passion and conviction and to send us your new works over the coming months.

I hope for all of you that the coming year will be marked by moments of joy, by colourful flower petals, and by rainbows on which you will ride freely to your creations!

Serge Maudet
President of the VDMFK

Miscellaneous

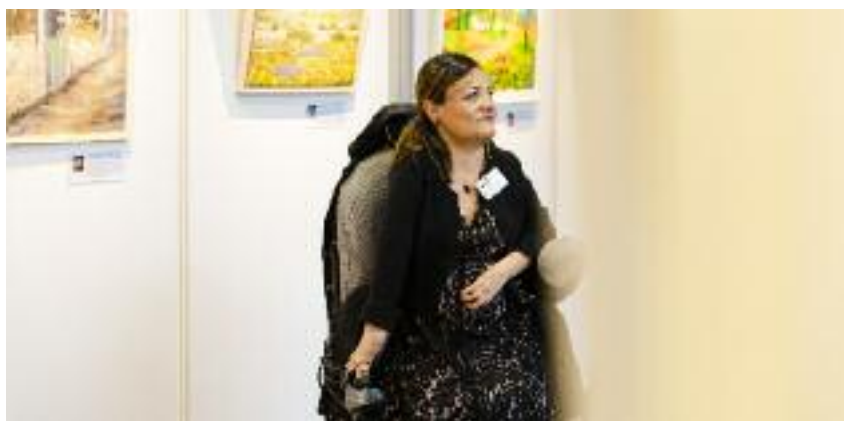
Publishers' activities

FRANCE

- The French publishing house held an exhibition at the Council of Europe building in Strasbourg from 22 to 25 October 2019. The exhibition delighted visitors from all over the world, including groups of visitors who were visiting the Council of Europe building, as well as 60 presidents and around 200 delegates who attended the parliamentary assembly. As a result, the exhibition attracted many international visitors, consisting of some 700 people. Around 100 works were on display. Painting demonstrations were given by VDMFK President Mr Serge Maudet, Full Members Ms Fanny Bourgeois-Le Boulaire and Mr Henri-Claire Hembert, Associate Member Mr Arnaud Dubarre and Scholarship Holder Mr Marcel Rossé. The opening took place in the presence of Ms Thérèse Bruntz, Welfare Officer of the Council of Europe, Mr Florian Stegmann, manager of the French publishing house, Mr Serge Maudet, President of the VDMFK, VDMFK Board Member Mr Thomas Kahlau, Mr Mario Famlonga, Director of the VDMFK and the artists Mr Messaoud Belabbas, Mr Daniel Lapeyre, Mr Michael Marseille, Mr Joseph Martins, Ms Christine Minet, Mr Marcel Rossé, Mr Arnaud Dubarre and Ms Fanny Bourgeois-Le Boulaire among many other guests. To thank the



The mouth and foot painters who took part in the opening of the exhibition in the Council of Europe building (from left to right): VDMFK Board Member Thomas Kahlau, VDMFK President Serge Maudet, Arnaud Dubarre, Fanny Bourgeois-Le Boulaire, Marcel Rossé, Joseph Martins and Henri-Claire Hembert.



Full Member Fanny Bourgeois-Le Boulaire visiting the exhibition.

Council of Europe for hosting this exhibition, Mr Arnaud Dubarre presented one of his works as a gift to the organization during the opening ceremony.



Christine Minet couldn't resist looking at the over 100 works on display.



Arnaud Dubarre presenting one of his works as a gift to the Council of Europe.



Brom Wikstrom (Full Member/United States), 'Christmas Peace', watercolour, 52x41 cm.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro

From 23 to 27 September 2019, mouth and foot painters from across the world gathered in Rio de Janeiro to hold the 14th Delegates' Convention of the Association. Important decisions for the VDMFK were also taken at this event.

The Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro began with the traditional opening night. Managing Director Mr Mario Famlonga took this opportunity to welcome the artists and their carers with a welcoming address. He said: "On behalf of the VDMFK Board, I warmly welcome you to this Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro or to the Cidade Maravilhosa, as it is referred to all over Brazil. Together with the members of the Board, you will hold the 14th Delegates' Convention of the Association this week."



For many artists from across the world, a Delegates' Convention also offers a superb opportunity to meet with long-standing friends.

Absence of Ms Ruth Christensen

In his further remarks, Managing Director Famlonga also announced the absence of Board Member Ms Ruth Christensen. Passing on her greetings, he remarked: "Although she is the oldest member of the Association and is stepping down from her seat on the Board, she continues to paint excellent, creative motifs for publishing houses across the world. She is both a wonderful person and an example of how a

wealth of knowledge can be transferred from experienced people to a younger generation. By doing so, she has ensured the continuity of the Association."

Comings and goings

Director Famlonga also addressed the topic of recent events that have been influential for the continued existence of the VDMFK. "While groundbreaking and formative pillars of the Association, such as the long-standing Legal

Consultant Prof. Dr. Dr. Herbert Batliner or the long-serving jury member Mr Hans Massberger, have left us forever, young and deeply talented artists are joining the Association each year. The Association must continue to ensure that the perception and promotion of the interests of mouth and foot-painting artists around the world are taken seriously. That is what the founders wanted, and that is what is enshrined in the Articles of Association. And that is why we meet here in Brazil this week, so I am very much looking forward to your ideas and contributions."

Brazil and Rio de Janeiro

Managing Director Famlonga was keen to speak about Brazil and the city of Rio de Janeiro in his words of welcome. "The country of Brazil has almost perfect climatic conditions and has the most important rainforest area on earth. It is a country full of contrasts which continues to captivate visitors thanks to its incredible joie de vivre and carefreeness of the mixed population. Rio de Janeiro, the former capital of Brazil, embodies the Brazilian way of life at its best. Where the rainforest once surrounded beautiful bays and picturesque hills, today about eight million people live together in different ways. The



VDMFK President Serge Maudet extending a cordial welcome to participants at the start of the week in Rio de Janeiro.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro

fascinating corners of this city are now known all over the world. Yet just as notorious are the social tensions between rich and poor which have gripped the metropolis for decades, he says. Following Managing Director Famlonga's remarks, VDMFK President Maudet also addressed a few greetings to the mouth and foot painters who had arrived together with their carers. Among the words that were spoken that evening were the thanks expressed to the publishers of Brazil, Ms Paola Manograsso and Mr Julio Anguita, who organised the Delegates' Convention together with the VDMFK office. Mr Anguita greeted the artists in Rio de Janeiro in a brief speech.



The opening evening would not have been complete without a Brazilian samba performance.



Managing Director Mario Famlonga delivering his address.



Artists among themselves (from left to right): José Gerardo Uribe Aguayo (Mexico), Triantafillos Iliadis (Greece) and Brom Wikstrom (US).



Tan Kok Leong from Singapore, clearly enjoying the samba performance.

Participants at the Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro

Yitzhak Adir, Israel
 Alberto Alvarez, Argentina
 Simona Atzori, Italy
 Luca Bucchi, Luca, Italy
 Steven Paul Chambers, UK
 Shih-Feng Chen, Taiwan
 Benjamin Tan Boon Chuan, Singapore
 Vojko Gašperut, Slovenia
 Heinz Halwachs, Austria

Anja Hämäläinen-Numminen, Finland
 Kun-Shan Hsieh, Taiwan
 Triantafillos Iliadis, Greece
 Christopher Keith Jansz, UK
 Thomas Kahlau, Germany
 Stanisław Kmiecik, Poland
 Antje Kratz, Germany
 Ho Sik Lee, South Korea
 Tan Kok Leong, Singapore
 Jingsheng Liu, China
 Lissu Lundström, Finland
 Theresa Helen Matthias, Canada

Serge Maudet, France
 Machiko Morita, Japan
 Ah Kwai Ng, Malaysia
 Soonyi Oh, South Korea
 Chris Opperman, South Africa,
 Jeong Park, South Korea
 Grant William Sharman, New Zealand
 José Gerardo Uribe Aguayo, Mexico
 Ann Lund Wahlberg, Denmark
 Pei-Fei Wen, Taiwan
 Brom Wikstrom, US
 Tom Yendell, UK

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro



Crucially, the conference focused on the election of Full Member Ann Lund Wahlberg from Denmark to the Board of the VDMFK. She replaces Christensen, who did not stand for re-election and thus retires from the Board.

The Delegates' Convention also led to elections to the Board. Ms Ann Lund Wahlberg from Denmark was elected to the VDMFK Board.

The conference focused on elections to the Board. The seat of Ms Ruth Christensen, who for reasons of age did not wish to stand for a further term of office, had become vacant and needed

to be filled. In Ms Ann Lund Wahlberg from Denmark, the delegates elected a compatriot of Ms Christensen to the board of the VDMFK. In addition, the three Board Members Mr Thomas Kahlau from Germany, Mr Tom Yendell from the UK and Mr Kun-Shan Hsieh from Taiwan needed to be confirmed in their positions, which is what the delegates did. Thus, the current Board is

composed as follows: President Mr Serge Maudet, France; Mr Kun-Shan Hsieh, Taiwan; Mr Tom Yendell, UK; Mr Thomas Kahlau, Germany; Ms Soon-Yi Oh, South Korea; Mr Grant Sharman, New Zealand; Ms Ann Lund Wahlberg, Denmark and Legal Consultant Dr Johannes Gasser.



Ann Lund Wahlberg was presented with a bouquet of flowers after her election to the VDMFK Board.



Thomas Kahlau from Germany was confirmed for a further term of office on the Board.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro



(from left to right): President Serge Maudet, Legal Consultant Dr Johannes Gasser and Managing Director Mario Famlonga at the conference.



Delegates such as Christopher Keith Jansz from the UK also had the opportunity to ask questions.



Shih-Feng Chen from Taiwan perusing various documents.



Steven Paul Chambers from the UK at the conference.



Anja Hämäläinen-Numminen from Finland studying conference documents.



Heinz Halwachs from Austria attentive to remarks during the conference proceedings.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro



Mouth and foot painters from all over the world as well as many guests attended the opening of the exhibition held at the Cidade das Artes centre.

One of the highlights of the week in Rio de Janeiro was the opening of the exhibition. Over one hundred works by mouth and foot painters from all over the world were on display at the Cidade das Artes centre.

A highlight of the Delegates' Convention was the opening of the international exhibition at the Cidade das Artes centre, where over one hundred paintings by mouth and foot-painting artists from all five continents were on display to the public. During the opening, the deputy mayor of Rio de Janeiro, Mr Geraldo Nogueira, also expressed words of welcome to the numerous guests and artists present. The opening ceremony was rounded off with a musical performance by the Brazilian Marine Corps.

Among the speakers at this exhibition opening was VDMFK President Maudet. In the following we publish the text of his speech: "On behalf of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists,

I would like to thank you very much for staging our exhibition of paintings here in the Cidade das Artes, this wonderful building with modern architecture. Please discover one work after another, and let yourself be carried away by the colours, landscapes, shapes and emotions that our artists share with you. This exhibition shows works by artists from all over the world who create art by holding a paintbrush in their mouths or between their toes. Above all, they are one thing: artists who are just as good as any so-called non-disabled artist. On the initiative of a remarkable artist, Mr Arnulf Erich Stegmann, who was born in Germany in 1912, who was stricken with polio at the age of two and who lost the use of his arms and hands, we joined forces and became an Association. Stegmann's determination and perseverance in overcoming his disability were so indomitable that after having learned to paint with a brush in his mouth, he became a professional artist and painter and created the Association of mouth and foot painting artists. Today, the Association is repres-



Stanisław Kmieciak gave a painting demonstration during the opening of the exhibition. His foot painting skills were greatly admired.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro

ented across all five continents and works in the interests of some eight hundred artists worldwide. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the Brazilian artists and congratulate them on their enthusiasm for supporting our Association. Well done, everyone! Finally, I hope that by visiting this exhibition you will be able to get to know our Association more closely and that all the artists who belong to it will appear to you as a picture of their work, with a view that is directed towards a life filled with colour and optimism."



The atmosphere among the mouth and foot painters and their carers during the opening of the exhibition was buzzing.



Machiko Morita from Japan pondering her works which were shown at the exhibition.



Two Brazilian artists, Gonçalo Aparecido Pinto Borges (Associate Member) and Maria Gorete Chagas (Scholarship Holder), demonstrating their skills at the opening event.



The opening of the exhibition was formally accompanied by sounds from the Brazilian Marine Corps.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro

It's tradition: To finish off a Delegates' Convention week, mouth and foot painters go off on celebratory outing – and a farewell dinner takes place on the final evening.

It's part of the tradition behind a VDMFK Delegates' Convention that the end of the week is dedicated to conviviality and friendship. Mouth and foot painters go off on an excursion – an event-related outing – and there's always a convivial dinner on the final evening during which the artists can say goodbye to each other. This was no different in Rio de Janeiro. The excursion took the artists to Sugarloaf Mountain, which usually offers magnificent views of the city. But despite all the careful planning, the weather refused to play along. The final dinner took place on Sugarloaf Mountain. Even so, the rainy day did not detract from the upbeat mood. Everyone enjoyed the breathtaking setting and the opportunity to experience it in good company. During this final evening, VDMFK President Serge Maudet bid farewell to the artists and thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the week in a few warmly addressed closing words: "Yet again, another assembly is now at an end. I'd like to thank all those present in Rio during these few days for coming and contributing to the smooth running of our Delegates' Convention. I'd also like to thank Mr Famlonga and his team for organising this event. They include Mr Ruetz and Mr Marxer, as well as the publishers, the Maltese medical staff, the interpreters and, last but not least, the hotel staff. I thank you all for your commitment. I wish you all a good return to your families. Please take good care of yourself!" With these words, the President concluded the extremely busy week and proceedings of the Association's Fourteenth Delegates' Convention.



Board Member Mr Kun-Shan Hsieh from Taiwan (second from the right) among Asian mouth and foot painters.



Artists and their carers enjoying the mood and atmosphere of the closing evening.



VDMFK President Serge Maudet (2nd from left) and board member Thomas Kahlau (right) was in the best of moods.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro



The cable car is the way to go up to Sugarloaf Mountain. Theresa Helen Matthias from Canada and her companion enjoyed the views despite the gloomy rain and fog.



Cheers to a successful week: Vojko Gašperut (right) with VDMFK staff member Ms Ingrid Strobl.



Chris Oppermann from South Africa with his carer.



Genuine Italian warmth radiated by Luca Bucchi (left) and Simona Atzori on Sugarloaf Mountain.



The artists were definitely up for a good time. Here, Christopher Keith Jansz from the UK (on the left) and Yitzhak Adir from Israel.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro

The week in Rio de Janeiro left the mouth and foot painters with many beautiful memories. In the following, we present a pictorial selection of personal moments from the Delegates' Convention in Rio.



Board Member Tom Yendell was a devil on the dance floor.



Matthias from Canada enjoys the presence of the Maltese medical order which paid special attention to the health of mouth and foot painters.



Friendship across continents: Adir from Israel (left) and Alvarez from Argentina.



The Cidade das Artes centre displayed over one hundred paintings by hand and foot painters from all five continents for the general public.



Jansz enjoying the samba performance on the opening night.



Three Europeans having a chinwag (from left to right): Lissu Lundström, Stanislaw Kmiecik and Anja Hämäläinen-Numminen.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro



The opening of the exhibition was well attended. Numerous guests were present in Rio de Janeiro in addition to the mouth and foot painters as well as their carers.



A great honour for the Brazilian Scholarship Holders: Works by Ms Danielle Dias de Souza (pictured on the left) and Mr Luciano Alves dos Nascimento (pictured on the right) were exhibited and the artists were invited to the opening event.



The opening of the exhibition was accompanied by the sounds of a harp.



Four artists – four continents (from left to right): Grant William Sharman, New Zealand; Brom Wikstrom, USA; Chris Opperman, South Africa and Vojko Gašperut, Slovenia.

Delegates' Convention in Rio de Janeiro



Artist Antje Kratz (left), seen here together with her husband.



The mouth and foot painters as well as their carers were resolutely undismayed by the damp weather.



The final evening had a Brazilian feel to it.



Jingsheng Liu from China (seen here on the left) together with his carer during the closing evening.



Asian delegates also enjoying the mood at the end-of-week dinner.



Patricia Jane Saerang (Associate Member/Indonesia), 'Princess Shiang-Shiang', watercolour, 65x42 cm.

New Associate Members

BRAZIL

Chagas, Maria Goret

Date of birth: 26 July 1951

Place of birth: Delfinópolis

Mouth and foot painter

Scholarship Holder since: 2006

Maria Goret Chagas was born on July 26, 1951 in Delfinópolis, Minas Gerais. Maria was born with stunted arms and legs. She has a congenital functional disability of the upper extremities. Maria completed her regular primary and secondary school education and went to university. She studied literature in 1974 and graduated in art and languages with a teaching qualification in 1978. Maria taught Portuguese literature at the University of Franca for 14 years.

The mouth and foot painter particularly enjoys painting flowers in acrylic, watercolours and oils. She was the painting teacher of our Scholarship Holder Mr José Henrique Taveira Breda, through whom she became aware of the Association.

Maria likes to paint and write. She



Maria Goret Chagas from Brazil shall become an Associate Member of the VDMFK starting 1 March 2020.

would also like to learn to drive and write a book with pictures. Maria has

been supported by the Association as a Scholarship Holder since 2006.

FRANCE

Planchenault, Lionel

Date of birth: 18 February 1955

Place of birth: Paris

Painting method: Mouth painter

Scholarship Holder since: 2017

Lionel Planchenault was born in Paris on 18 February 1955. After not doing so well at school, he left school in Year Five and attended a Lycée d'enseignement professionnel – a technical secondary school. Three years later, in 1972, he obtained the Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle (certificate of professional competence) as a plumber. He began working for a craftsman in Paris on 1 July 1972. On 27 July 1972, Lionel was hit by a car while riding his motorcycle home. The accident left him a tetraple-

gic. He was 17 years old and his life as a 'free man' ended here. A long and painful period of rehabilitation ensued. Lionel had lived and expressed himself

through his hands but now he had to go without them. In 1976, on the advice of his physiotherapist, he started teaching himself to paint.



Lionel Planchenault shall become a VDMFK Associate Member on 1 March 2020.

Associate Members/Scholarship Holders

TAIWAN

Chang, Chia-Syun

Date of birth: 1 February 1981

Place of birth: Taichung City

Painting method: Mouth painter

Scholarship holder since: 2014

Chia-Syun Chang was born in Taichung City on 1 February 1981. He graduated from Senior High School and worked as a paint mixer and salesman. In January 2004, Chia-Syun suffered an accident at work in which he slipped and hit the ground from a great height. He suffered a fracture from the 3rd to the 5th cervical vertebrae which left his arms and legs completely paralyzed. His attention was drawn to a mouth and foot painter on a TV show and he noticed how the artist managed to create his paintings. Visibly impressed by this, Chia-Syun summoned up the courage to try mouth painting.

Hence in 2006 he began to learn how to paint in oils with a brush in his mouth. He first taught himself this skill but for some time now he has been taking private painting and art lessons



Chia-Syun Chang had been a Scholarship Holder since 2014. He has now been granted Associate Member status.

with Lin Shwu-Chyn, a renowned painting teacher in his area. Chia-Syun thus managed to make considerable artistic progress. He even exhibited a number of his original works on several occasions, for example at the University of

Hungkuang in 2012. The VDMFK has supported him as a Scholarship Holder since 2014.

New Scholarship Holders

The following mouth and foot painters shall be supported by the Association as Scholarship Holders from 1 March 2020.

ARGENTINA

Semaan, Agostina Antonella

Date of birth: 28 September 1990

Painting method: Foot painter

Due to a congenital deformity, Agostina Antonella Semaan was born without arms on 28 September 1990. She received a form of stimulation therapy at an early age to help her use her feet in the future. Step by step, she began to per-

form everyday activities with her feet, including painting and drawing. Under the guidance of Full Member Ms Maria del Pilar Benitez Velozo, Agostina managed to improve and perfect her painting skills. Agostina holds a degree in visual arts from IUNA – the National University Institute of Art. She has taken part in many national exhibitions, given numerous painting demonstrations and has held presentations in public institutions, including schools, during which she talks about her art as a foot painter and also defends the rights of people with disabilities.

AUSTRIA

Peer, Victoria

Date of birth: 14 February 2001

Painting method: Mouth painter

Victoria Peer was born in Innsbruck on 14 February 2001. Victoria has suffered from bilateral, spastic cerebral palsy since birth. At the age of three she attended an integrative kindergarten, which is where her fascination with painting began. Initially, Victoria painted with her feet before she received a helmet with a painting rod attached to it. She learned to draw with her mouth when she began attending a school for children with learning difficulties at the

Continued on page 20

New Scholarship Holders

age of six. Victoria attended the school until the summer of 2019. Drawing is a great pleasure for Victoria because she can express her feelings in her pictures and relax.

BRAZIL

[dos Santos Dias, Gilverson](#)

Date of birth: 20 August 1982

Painting method: Mouth painter

Gilverson dos Santos Dias was born in Anápolis, Goiás, Brasil, on 20 August 1982. He has always lived with his parents and younger brother. His mother is a housewife and his father suffered from alcoholism. As a result, the family lost everything they had and were forced to live in a house of their other relatives until his father died. Gilverson supported himself and his family by selling sweets at bus stops. On 17 October 2004, his life changed radically when he visited his uncle's farm in the district of Interlândia in Goiás. After jumping from a cliff into a lake, he hit his head against the rocks and broke two cervical vertebrae. As a result, he lost movement of his legs and arms. He became a tetraplegic and has been in a wheelchair ever since. Gilverson became interested in art during his time of therapy at Sarah Hospital. He began painting with a brush in his mouth. After a while he attended the Osvaldo Verano art school and has developed his skills since then. Gilverson has already participated in several exhibitions at the Espaço Dulce de Faria, the house of the former mayor of the city of Anápolis.

[Ferreira dos Santos, Debora](#)

Date of birth: 10 March 1965

Painting method: Mouth painter

Debora Ferreira dos Santos was born in União da Vitória in the state of Paraná on 10 March 1965. She lives in Rio de Janeiro with her husband and two children. In 2007, while doing the laundry at her mother's house, she felt a pain in her right arm that spread throughout

her body. Debora's son rushed to her aid and drove her to the hospital. Although she was able to get into the car on her own, within 30 minutes she had lost control of her body and was unable to move her limbs. It took them a considerable time until they were finally able to find a hospital that had the capacity to admit Debora. A male nurse present at the time recognised the risk of respiratory arrest and admitted her. After some initial examinations, she was found to have suffered a cervical myelopathy while doing her housework. After this diagnosis, Debora lost her will to live until her cousin made her aware of the artist Marcelo da Cunha (Associate Member of the VDMFK) in 2012. He explained to her the important role which painting played in his life and encouraged her to paint with her mouth. Thanks to his support, Debora began painting in July 2016. Today, painting feels like a form of liberation for Debora. It came into her life when she no longer believed she was capable of doing anything.

[Franco Antunes, Letruska Marilena](#)

Date of birth: 20 April 1979

Painting method: Mouth painter

Letruska Marilena Franco Antunes was born in Novo Horizonte, in the federal state of São Paulo, on 20 April 1979. At the age of 10, Letruska had a serious accident in which her cousin died, and she and another cousin were seriously injured. On 4 March 1990 she was admitted to a SARAH rehabilitation hospital where she was found to be paralyzed from the neck down. Due to the consequences of her C2 spinal cord injury she requires mechanical ventilation. Letruska has been living in the SARAH hospital since she was ten years old. Thanks to her family, friends and an electric wheelchair, she has regained a little bit of freedom. She completed her education and wishes to study psychology. Letruska relies on others for her to perform everyday activities. She can now use her computer with the aid of a support device. When she began pain-

ting, she felt motivated to look for new ways, realities and perceptions.

[Paulo Silva Machado, Marcos](#)

Date of birth: 15 May 1985

Painting method: Mouth painter

Marcos Paulo Silva Machado was born in Salvador on 15 May 1985. At the age of six months, his mother moved to São Paulo with him and his two sisters. After completing high school, Marcos worked in many places as a sales promoter, supermarket manager and private chauffeur, among other occupations. Later he became self-employed as a hairdresser and tattooist. On 4 November 2016, he broke his 4th and 5th cervical vertebrae while dancing with his friends during a capoeira dance event. His life has changed completely since that day. He was hospitalised for six months. He was forced to start a new life from scratch. Marcos began using his mobile phone with the help of a touch pen in his mouth. Two years later, he bought a table easel and some paints. He mixed paints and attempted to paint pictures.

COLOMBIA

[Hernandez Osorio, Juan Carlos](#)

Date of birth: 11 May 1994

Painting method: Mouth painter

Juan Carlos Hernandez Osorio was born in Cúcuta on 11 May 1994. At the age of 18, he injured his 4th and 5th cervical vertebrae in a swimming accident and has been a quadriplegic ever since. This forced him to radically change his life, but with some luck and thanks to his state of mind and many activities, he managed to adapt. Juan became aware of the Association through a calendar. He came across the VDMFK website on the Internet and was amazed by the many artists and by the quality of their pictures. He then wondered if he would be able to paint with his mouth. Juan

New Scholarship Holders

has dedicated himself to painting since the start of 2018.

Vasquez Casilimas, Cristian Humberto

Date of birth: 5 July 1990

Painting method: Mouth painter

Cristian Humberto Vasquéz Casilimas was born in the city of Ibagué on 5 July 1990. Cristian lives with his mother, two of four sisters and two nephews; all of whom are without a doubt the driving force and main source of support in his life. On 23 April 2006, Cristian was involved in a traffic accident. At the time of the incident, he was a stowaway on the loading bed of a truck. The accident caused spinal trauma and resulted in spinal paraplegia. Cristian is studying Business Administration and has also been taking painting lessons under Prof Carlos Parra for almost two years. He teaches several people who, like him, have mobility problems in their upper limbs. Cristian became aware of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists through the media, social networks and a friend. Painting enables him to take his mind off the problems and difficult situations he sometimes encounters.

ECUADOR

Guillermo Llivisaca, Santiago Andrés

Date of birth: 22 November 1984

Painting method: Mouth painter

Santiago Andrés Guillermo Llivisaca was born on 22 November 1984. He was born with a rare disease known as arthrogryposis, which affects one in three thousand children. He managed to walk at the age of five while undergoing a number of operations on his feet. At the age of five he came top in his first painting competition, which was organised by the Fundación Centro San Juan de Jerusalén, where he received his rehabilitative physiotherapy. Due to his disability, he completed his secondary

education at a correspondence school and did not receive a higher education due to a lack of money.

INDIA

Biju, Joyal

Date of birth: 16 April 2004

Painting method: Mouth painter

Joyal Biju was born in the rural Wayanad district of Kerala on 16 April 2004. Joyal grew up just like any other child in his first two years of life. Around the age of three to four, however, he began to fall down while walking, and at the age of five he could no longer climb or get up the stairs. He began to support his knee with his hand as he climbed the stairs. At the age of six, he was no longer able to climb any stairs. His parents took him to the Medical College in Calicut. After several examinations, the doctors diagnosed muscular dystrophy. After that, his parents tried many types of treatments, but eventually they learned that there were no medications for the disease. When the number of his falls and injuries piled up, he dropped out of school at the urging of his parents. At the age of nine, he was completely dependent on a wheelchair, as his body was paralyzed from the neck downwards with the exception of slight movements of his right hand. Joyal has been taught at home since he was 14 years old. His teacher discovered his talent for painting and encourages him to work in this field. Joyal Biju held his first art exhibition on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 3 December 2018.

Bisoyi, Sudam

Date of birth: 20 March 1990

Painting method: Mouth painter

Sudam Bisoyi was born in Kuku-dakhandi in the Indian State of Odisha, on 20 March 1990. He served as a seaman in the Indian Navy from 2009 to 2013. In 2011, he injured his spinal cord when jumping into a swimming pool.

Since this injury, he has been paralyzed from the neck down and needs a wheelchair. He currently lives in the Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre in Pune. Even during his childhood he felt a passion for painting but was unable to act on this feeling because he faced too many obstacles. With his disability, however, he tries to follow his passion, to give colour to his dreams and to see life from a new perspective.

Kamble, Prasant Vasant

Date of birth: 5 July 1990

Painting method: Mouth painter

Prasant Vasant Kamble was born in Madabhavi, India, on 5 July 1990. He completed his high school education in 2008. On 28 May 2014, he suffered a spinal cord injury while serving in the Indian Army. In fact, it became a life-long spinal cord injury. Prasant lives at the Paraplegic Rehabilitation Center of Khadki in Pune. He has been painting with his mouth since February 2018. He enjoys doing so and forgets all his losses and worries during this time. Through painting, he has found a reason to get up in the morning.

Karki, Bhim Kumar

Date of birth: 8 July 1992

Painting method: Mouth painter

Bhim Kumar Karki was born in the village of Bunglung on 8 July 1992. On 28 June 2012, he suffered a spinal cord injury while serving in the Indian Army. In fact, it became a life-long spinal cord injury. Bhim lives at the Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre of Khadki in Pune. He has been painting with his mouth since November 2016. Mouth painting has given his life a purpose. He enjoys life filled with art, his new passion.

Continued on page 22

New Scholarship Holders

Sathavilkar, Dhiraj Rajendra

Date of birth: 17 December 1993

Painting method: Foot painter

Dhiraj Rajendra Sathavilkar was born in Ratnagiri, a port town in western India, on 17 December 1993. Dhiraj was born without arms and with a shortened leg. He lives with his parents and younger brother. Initially, he was unable to perform routine tasks by himself because of his disability. Although he wanted to study, the schools did not allow him to do so because he was dependent on others for help. Slowly, Dhiraj began to write by holding a pencil between the toes of his left foot. After making great efforts, he was admitted to a school for the blind and deaf, where he completed his schooling in 2012/13. He passed his final school examinations and began studying law but had to drop out because his family was facing financial problems. Dhiraj's love of art began to flourish when he started painting with his foot at school. In his spare time he paints, sings and acts, and he is also interested in sport.

Singh, Jagwinder

Date of birth: 3 April 1991

Painting method: Foot painter

Jagwinder Singh was born without arms in Khanauri, India, on 3 April 1991. As a result of his disability, he was refused admission to school at the age of four. It was only when he learned to write with his feet that he was granted access to a school. His interest in painting also began at this time. He first came top in a painting competition when he was in Year Four. In subsequent years he also achieved some victories and good rankings in various painting competitions. He enjoys drawing and can make use of a number of painting techniques. He works as a teacher of drawing.

POLAND

Gruca, Martyna

Date of birth: 13 December 2010

Painting method: Foot painter

Martyna Gruca was born with congenital hypoplasia of the upper limbs in Nowy Sacz on 13 December 2010. She lives in a small town in Kaclowa and is in Year Two at a local primary school. Despite her disability, she is open to the world and people in it. A breakthrough for the young Martyna was her meeting with a man without hands – Full Member Mr Stanisław Kmiecik. Martyna, then 4 years old, was very enthusiastic about the way he created his works. Since then, she has been interested in painting and surprises everyone each day with her skills. Thanks to the exceptional talent of a girl of her age, her own unlimited determination, her zeal and the support of her family, she actively participates in various competitions at home and abroad. Many of her actions are influenced by Stanisław, who invites Martyna to participate in his exhibitions and painting demonstrations as a gesture of support and mutual sympathy. The most important event in Martyna's life was when she presented a rosary made of bread dough to Pope Francis on World Youth Day 2016 in Poland. Martyna looks forward to the future with great joy and enthusiasm.

Kowal, Agata Katarzyna

Date of birth: 30 April 1978

Painting method: Mouth painter

Agata Katarzyna Kowal was born in Zakopane on 30 April 1978. She had a happy childhood in her local neighbourhood in Białka Tatrzańska with her grandmother and friends. Agata attended kindergarten, primary school and grammar school in Zakopane. After a medical investigation in 1994, she was found to have spastic paraplegia, a genetic progressive paresis of the upper and lower extremities. This disease was accompanied by cataracts in both her

eyes. At the age of 15, she underwent surgery on both eyes to remove her opaque intraocular lenses. She can only see with her left eye. After her time at school, she discovered the world of books and read a lot. She decided to have a go at painting. She gained knowledge about the recognition and creation of colours.

SLOVENIA

Avbersek, Franc

Date of birth: 3 April 1947

Painting method: Mouth painter

Franc Avberšek was born in Velenje, Slovenia, on 3 April 1947. After completing his Master's degree in Mining Engineering, Franc held several management positions in the energy sector, the most recent of which was Managing Director of a mining company. Franc was a member of the Slovenian Parliament. In addition to his active professional and political life, he is the father of three children and grandfather to six grandchildren. He has always been intensively involved in art, especially painting. Franc began painting at a young age. Later on, he turned his attention to clay and wood sculptures. Just three weeks before his accident in June 2015, he created his last sculpture in wood. In June 2015, Franc fell from a cherry tree. Following eight months of hospital treatment, he still remained a tetraplegic. It took a lot of willpower and the best possible home care from his family for him to recover to the point where he could return to art. In 2016, encouraged by Full Member Vojko Gašperut, he began painting with a brush in his mouth. He has a badly damaged spine which only allows him to move his neck and shoulders. His wife supports him in mixing the paints and holding the canvas. Franc is lucky enough to live with his family and is thus able to live a socially and creatively fulfilled life as far as his condition allows him to do so. Although his motives for woodcarving before the accident were mostly linked to the world of mining,

New Scholarship Holders

his motifs are now often trees. They live stationary in a place, just like he does, but they continue to grow. In his own words: "Despite my arms being shorter, I can still fight against the rain and the storms and celebrate life by having my family with me. Life can still take sunny pictures." From December 2017 to April 2018, he held his first exhibition with carvings and sculptures before the accident and his mouth paintings after the accident. In May 2018, he took part in a joint exhibition of eight mouth painters.

SPAIN

Hamed Berkan, Mohamed

Date of birth: 10 February 1975

Painting method: Mouth painter

Mohamed Hamed Berkan was born in Melilla, Spain, on 10 February 1975. At the age of 17 he suffered a road accident on a motorcycle and incurred a spinal injury at level C4 - C5. The first years after the accident were very hard, especially the year he was admitted to the National Paraplegic Hospital of Toledo. After that year, he returned to his family in Melilla, where he spent several years isolated from society, fearful of going out on the streets and meeting his old friends. When his father fell ill with bowel cancer, his family was no longer able to take care of him, so he moved to the centre of Pozoblanco (Córdoba). There he was made aware of the Association by José Antonio Navarro (a VDMFK Scholarship Holder). Setting out to become a painter was quite an odyssey for him. He had a tough time because he had never painted with a brush before, let alone with a brush in his mouth. He started by watching tutorials on YouTube to overcome his fears and try to improve his technique as much as he could.

SOUTH AFRICA

Stander, Sagaria

Date of birth: 1 July 1963

Painting method: Mouth painter

Sagaria Stander was born in George, South Africa, on 1 July 1963. In April 1984, he became a tetraplegic as a result of a car accident. The injury affected the motor and sensory functions of his fourth cervical vertebra. Sagaria spent seven months in hospital where he received requisite medical care and rehabilitation. Life as a tetraplegic presented a completely different set of problems. Sagaria had to face many different challenges and overcome obstacles. He lives in a home for tetraplegics in Parow, Cape Town. A very good friend, the art teacher Martie Vos-Westraad, encouraged him to paint with his mouth. This happened at the end of 2014 and he has been a student in her class ever since. In his free time he enjoys nature, art and music. When he paints, he feels he can express his creativity.

USA

Marecka, Anna

Date of birth: 30 January 1988

Painting method: Foot painter

Anna Marecka was born without arms and a short leg in Konin, Poland, on 30 January 1988. She learned to use her feet the way any other baby would use his or her hands. When Anna was about seven years old, her parents decided it was time to seek comprehensive medical treatment. At the age of eight, she came to the United States with her mother to undergo leg extension surgery. The process was long and painful, but the results were worth it. In 2001, they won the Green Card Lottery. Further operations followed. At the age of 20, Anna unexpectedly became a mother. The first year was difficult, but as her son grew up, they learned how to work

as a team and help each other. Her art began when she would paint her toenails as a child and create designs on them. Later, she began to paint stones. When she realized how much she enjoyed art, she began experimenting with watercolors. As a self-taught artist, she says there is still so much she would like to learn. Anna hopes to inspire her son and others and find joy in the little things in life.

The significance of painting

The significance of painting as seen by mouth painter Jin-Hyun Song, Associate Member from South Korea.

What painting means to me

Ever since my car accident, I have been forced to live a life full of obstacles. In my experience, social isolation was a harder test for me than my physical limitations. Due to the long time I spent in a hospital bed, I lost contact with my acquaintances and had to resign from my job as an officer in the army, which caused me to run into financial difficulties. All this led to lead a passive, reclusive life.

In my secluded world, however, painting became my second life. Painting was more than a simple hobby, because it gave me a feeling of success, self-confidence and also the hope of regaining my lost pride.

Instead of being discouraged or frustrated by the difficulties of learning to paint and by the views of others that my pictures weren't "really that good" because they were painted by mouth, I instead developed my resolution to succeed and built up an awareness of what it means to face challenges. After ten years of constant progress, I suddenly had a business card

that identified me as a painter; I was able to communicate with many people through my active participation at exhibitions, private demonstrations, invitations to events and rehearsals and regain my self-confidence to become part of the world again.

In 2008, I became a member of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists around the world, which finally enabled me to get in touch with colleagues who were in the same situation. In addition, I had the opportunity to participate in exhibitions at home and abroad and thereby present my works in a much broader context. With the financial support of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists of the World, I was able to concentrate fully on my work.

By painting pictures, I finally broke away from my secluded world. My dark, negative and introverted thoughts turned into an artistic sensibility that seeks and expresses beauty. This is now the object of "what is conveyed through my images", which communicate with the world through the medium of the canvas.

For me personally, painting is a gateway for communicating with the



Jin-Hyun Song has been an Associate Member of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists since 2011.



Jin-Hyun Song (Associate Member / South Korea), 'Reminiscence', oils, 39x70 cm.

The significance of painting

world. I present my life story to my visitors, listen to their stories and respond by creating a new piece of work.

In the meantime, painting has become the meaning of my life. It has become a friend who gives meaning to my existence and who makes my life worth living. Side by side with this friend, I want to step out into the world and live a life that moves people across the world.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists of the World for their attention. I wish my colleagues all the best for their health and encourage everyone to live a wonderful life as a painter.

*Jin-Hyun Song
Associate Member / South Korea*



Jin-Hyun Song (Associate Member / South Korea), 'Autumn atmosphere', oils, 42x53 cm.



Jin-Hyun Song (Associate Member / South Korea), 'The story of lotus', oils, 53x45 cm.

Song, Jin Hyun (South Korea)

Date of birth: 4 November 1968

Place of birth: Daegu

Associate Member since: 2011

Painting method: Mouth painter

Jin-Hyun Song was born in Daegu on 4 November 1968. After completing his primary and secondary education he enrolled to study a degree course in chemistry at the University of Daegu, which he successfully concluded. In

February 1996, he was seriously injured in a car accident which paralysed all four of his limbs. The accident occurred while he was serving in the South Korean military forces in the rank of captain. In search of a new meaning to life, Jin-Hyun met a VDMFK mouth painter who encouraged him to paint with a brush in his mouth. At the beginning, he taught himself the basic principles. A short time later, in March 1998, he found an influential painting teacher in Mr Byun-du Bae. The mouth painter

regularly participated in private art lessons from that time onwards. Jin-Hyun has been supported by the Association as a Scholarship Holder since 2008. Since 2011, he has been an Associate Member of the VDMFK family. Jin-Hyun creates watercolours and oil paintings. His favourite motifs include flowers and landscapes of his homeland. In the meantime, the artist has participated in a number of exhibitions and presented his works to a wider public.

We mourn for

BRAZIL

Reis dos, Fernando Fernandes

Date of birth: 29 October 1944

Passed away on: 3 November 2019

Painting method: Foot painter

Professor Fernando Fernandes dos Reis was born with dysfunctional arms due to complications at birth. From the age of 12 until he was 17 he worked as street vendor. He then sought medical help for the problems with his arms as an in-patient at a hospital. It was there that he first had the opportunity to learn how to paint with his feet. During this time, Fernando also became aware of the Association, which granted him a scholarship a short time later. It enabled him to begin his study of painting and further his education in this field. After studying art, he started painting with his foot. He was very successful right from the outset and received a number



Full Member Fernando Fernandes dos Reis passed away on 3 November 2019.

of prizes and awards. In 1992 he became an Associate Member of the VDMFK. Fernando became a Full Member of the VDMFK in 2000. His favourite motifs included flowers, still lifes and landscapes which he mainly painted in oils. He participated in joint exhibitions as soon as he learned to paint by foot. Subsequently, both national and international media covered the foot painter's work. Fernando taught at the revered Casimiro de Abreu museum, which is located in Barra de São João, part of the federal state of Rio de Janeiro. Fernando Fernandes dos Reis passed away on 3 November 2019.

CHINA

Yang, Jie

Date of birth: 9 June 1971

Passed away on: 5 August 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

Jie Yang was born in Shanghai on 9 June 1971. In 1977, he had a high-voltage accident as a result of which he lost his right arm up to the shoulder and his left arm up to the elbow. In 1980, Jie Yang began drawing and painting with his mouth. Just one year later, his work 'The Great Rooster' won him a silver prize in Japan. He started his school education in 1978 when he attended the Shanghai Children's Welfare Institute. From 1983 to 1986 he attended junior school where he was also taught how to sketch. Subsequently, he taught himself how to paint with his mouth. The Association granted Jie a scholarship in 1992. He became an Associate Member of the VDMFK in

2011 and was promoted to Full Member in March 2019. Jie liked to paint watercolours, preferably of animals and flowers. He participated in numerous exhibitions in his country and won prizes across the world in recognition of the impressive way in which he completed his artworks. Jie Yang passed away on 5 August 2019.



Jie Yang became a Full Member of the Association in March 2019. He left us forever only a few months later.

SOUTH AFRICA

Marzinger, Dieter

Date of birth: 18 October 1971

Passed away on: 27 June 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

Dieter Marzinger was born on 18 October 1971 in Piet Retief (South Africa). Prior to his serious accident in May 2002, Dieter Marzinger was a karate instructor and teacher. As a result of diving headfirst into a river he was left tetraplegic because he had fractured his vertebrae at C5/C6. About six months later, in November 2002, he began making his initial attempts at painting by mouth. Right from the very start he taught himself to paint his idiosyncratic pictures and was quickly able to make significant artistic progress. For this reason, the VDMFK granted him a scholarship in 2005. He became an associate member of the Association in 2017. Dieter preferred painting in oils. His favourite subjects were landscapes and the animals of his native South Africa. Dieter Marzinger passed away on 27 June 2019.



Full Member Dieter Marzinger passed away on 27 June 2019.

USA

Michalski, Johannes

Date of birth: 10 December 1936

Passed away on: 4 November 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

At the age of ten Johannes Michalski climbed an electricity pylon with some of his friends and sustained such severe burn injuries that both his arms had to be amputated. Soon afterwards he learned to write and paint holding a pen between his teeth. By perfecting his skills, he was awarded a scholarship from the Association in 1956. This enabled him to begin studying at the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts – École supérieure des Arts de la Ville de Bruxelles / Koninklijke Academie voor

Schone Kunsten van Brussel. He became a Full Member of the VDMFK in 1960. Johannes painted in a highly realistic, expressive style with great emphasis on brushwork. His preferred motifs were land and seascapes as well as flowers. His work was recognised in nume-

rous awards and honours which drew repeated attention in various media. Jean's artworks have also been exhibited in many cities around the world. Johannes Michalski passed away on 4 November 2019.



Full Member Johannes Michalski had been a Full Member of the Association since 1960.

We mourn for

Deceased Scholarship Holders

ITALY

Pettenuzzo, Aurelio

Date of birth: 26 July 1959

Passed away on: 16 July 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

Aurelio Pettenuzzo was born in San Pietro in Gu on 26 July 1959. In January 2000 he suffered a fracture of the 4th and 5th spinal vertebrae in an accident that left him tetraplegic. In January 2004 he began to teach himself how to paint with his mouth. Later on, he took private lessons from a well-known artist who lived in his region. He became a VDMFK Scholarship Holder in 2005. Aurelio Pettenuzzo passed away on 16 July 2019.

MEXICO

Soto Álvarez, Luís Gilberto

Date of birth: 3 January 1978

Passed away on: 1 August 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

Luis Gilberto Soto Alvarez was born in Los Mochis, Sinaloa, on 3 January 1978. The first symptoms of juvenile ankylosing spondylitis appeared when he was 15 years old. His hips and knees became completely stiff as the disease progressed. Eventually, his hands and feet became so deformed that he could no longer use them. In January 2007 he set out to become a mouth painter and took painting lessons from Lidia Cháidez (mouth painter / VDMFK Scholarship Holder) from that time onwards. He had been supported as Scholarship Holder by the VDMFK since 2008. With his boundless enthusiasm for painting, Luís Gilberto was determined to develop his artistic talent. Luís Gilberto Soto Álvarez passed away on 1 August 2019.

SPAIN

Miñarro, Sebastian Roldán

Date of birth: 23 March 1945

Passed away on: 17 July 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

Sebastian Roldán Miñarro was born in Liétor (Province of Albacete) on 23 March 1945. He had suffered from a degenerative spine disease since 1968 and eventually lost the use of his arms and legs. In 1992 he started to become interested in art and decided to paint with his mouth. He began by teaching himself to paint but later took painting lessons from a Spanish artist. Sebastian had been supported by the Association as a Scholarship Holder since 1998.

SOUTH AFRICA

Salzmann, Hendrik

Date of birth: 15 January 1955

Passed away on: 31 October 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

Hendrik Salzmann was born in Vereeniging on 15 January 1955. He had been left tetraplegic since a traffic accident which occurred in 1973. Consequently, he was unable to use his upper or lower limbs. In November 2002 he made his first attempts to paint with his mouth and quickly began to enjoy the experience. He also took private art lessons. Hendrik became part of the VDMFK family as a Scholarship Holder in 2005. Hendrik Salzmann passed away on 31 October 2019.

THAILAND

Kotchomphoo, Tanong

Date of birth: 1 April 1966

Passed away on: 7 September 2019

Painting method: Mouth painter

Tanong Kotchomphoo was born on 1 April 1966. He attended primary school.

Tanong's disease began when he was ten years old. Although attempts were made to cure the disease with medication, his medical condition actually worsened. Tanong could no longer walk. He was then taken to hospital and found to be suffering from a type of muscular dystrophy. Tanong could not move without the aid of a wheelchair and with little to no prospect of recovery. The Association had granted him a scholarship since 1994. Tanong Kotchomphoo passed away on 7 September 2019.

VENEZUELA

Pérez Velásquez, José Gregorio

Date of birth: 7 November 1967

Passed away on: 9 October 2019

Mouth and foot painter

José Gregorio Pérez Velásquez was born without arms and with clubbed feet in El Tejero, Monagas, on 7 November 1967. He completed primary and secondary school. From a very early age, he learned to use his mouth and feet not only for speaking and getting around but also for everyday activities. Through sheer commitment and perseverance he also taught himself to write and acquire a wide variety of artistic and craft skills. His preferred motifs included landscapes of his surroundings, the sea as well as the old houses and streets of his village. He was also a poet, composer and occasional presenter at a local broadcasting station. The VDMFK had supported him with a scholarship since 2015. José Gregorio Pérez Velásquez passed away on 9 October 2019.

In this section we are honoured to introduce you to mouth and foot painters who have rendered outstanding services to the VDMFK in the course of its over 60-year history. This time we present former Board Member Ms Ruth Christensen from Denmark.

Ruth Christensen was born on 12 February 1929. At the age of 11, she lost both arms up to her elbows in an accident. In her youth, she attended the Kunsthåndværkerskolen (School of Arts and Crafts) in Copenhagen. Afterwards, she worked for many years as a graphic designer in an advertising office. During this period she found her idiosyncratic form of expression in various floral and Nordic Christmas motifs. Among other things, she designed the Christmas welfare stamp of the Royal Danish Post Office and, in 1992, the Christmas card for the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. In addition to her profession as a graphic designer, Ruth began to create a highly sophisticated form of imagery. Richly coloured and expressive pictures of flowers, still lifes and landscapes are among her favourite motifs. She also likes to paint children, animals and capture Christmas moods in her works. In addition, Ruth gives expression to the refraction of water. In doing so, she



Full Member Ruth Christensen retired from the VDMFK Board at the Delegates' Convention in Rio. She had served as a Member of the Board for 27 years.

uses glasses filled with water which visually refract twigs and flowers. Although she chooses different techniques, she mainly prefers to paint in watercolours or oils. Ruth has been a Full Member of the Association since 1982. Just ten years later she was voted onto the Association's Board of Directors at the 8th Delegates' Convention in Rome in 1992. Ruth served as

a Member of the Board until 2019, when – for reasons of age – she declared herself unavailable for a further term of office. She has participated in many exhibitions all over the world with her numerous works. Ruth describes her bond and friendship with mouth and foot-painting artists across the world as her hobby.



Ruth Christensen (Full Member / Denmark), 'Grass for the little pony', oils, 31x30 cm.



Ruth Christensen (Full Member / Denmark), 'Winter by the river', oils, 30x30 cm.

Artists' activities

ARGENTINA

Barcia, César

(Scholarship Holder)

- Mr César Barcia took part in the 13th Open Arts exhibition, to which some 60 artists were invited. He offered painting demonstrations and exhibited his works from 28 to 30 July 2019. César's activities and mouth painting skills attracted particular attention.

BRAZIL

Borges, Gonçalo

(Associate Member)

- Mr Gonçalo Borges held a solo exhibition from 10 September to 10 October 2019. The show was staged in the 'Central Plaza Shopping' cultural centre in São Paulo.

EGYPT

Ahmed Attia Fadl, Reda

(Scholarship Holder)

- Scholarship Holder Mr Reda Ahmed Attia Fadl from Egypt participated in the 'Our Heritage' exhibition at the Egyptian International Exhibition Centre

Ferreira Silva, Domingos Dupé (Scholarship Holder)

- Mr Domingos Dupé Ferreira Silva had the honour of receiving a home visit by the mayor of his hometown of Aragarças. To commemorate this visit, he painted a picture of the mayor and presented it to him as a gift.

Rosa Fraga, Carlos Eduardo (Scholarship Holder)

- Mr Carlos Eduardo Rosa Fraga carried out a wide range of activities in the second half of 2018. Among other things, he took part in the War College Painting Competition. He exhibited his works and was awarded a medal. Carlos also took part in the 49th Salon of Fine Arts during which his works were seen by some 1,200 people. At the Arte & Click exhibition, which was organised by the Society for Fine Arts,

in Nasr City. The exhibition was opened by Mr Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, the President of Egypt. In the course of a personal conversation, Reda Ahmed presented the President with a picture he had painted and which Mr Abdel Fattah el-Sisi received with great gratitude.

he presented his works to around 700 people.

CHINA

Gui, Xiao Feng (Scholarship Holder)

- Mr Xiao Feng Gui gave a painting demonstration in front of pupils from different schools on 10 May 2019. The pupils were deeply impressed by his dexterity and painting skills.

CROATIA

Perkovic, Stjepan (Scholarship Holder)

- Mr Stjepan Perković exhibited his work at the Festival of Equal Opportunities, which was held for the 18th time in Zagreb from 21 to 23 May 2019 and which featured a large number of artists. Stjepan also gave painting demonstrations. He also took part in the Festival of Drawings, which took place in Zagreb from 25 to 28 April 2019 and which was organised by the Croatian Association of Visual Artists.

FRANCE

Bourgeois-Le Boulaire, Fanny (Full Member)

- The city of Villard-Bonnot organizes an exhibition every year at which amateur and professional artists gather. This year, Full Member Ms Fanny Bourgeois-Le Boulaire decided to submit her application to take part in this exhibition. Her application was successful. Hence Fanny was able to present her work, which was exhibited under the general theme 'Into the land of dreams'. She painted a seascape in three different ways, which ultimately form a triptych, and called her work 'Thoughts on Water'. The exhibition took place in the Espace Aragon cultural centre. It was opened in the presence of the mayor on 10 May 2019. This exhibition was a great suc-



Continued on page 32

Artists' activities

GREAT BRITAIN

- The UK publishing house released a new children's book called 'Danny's Dream' for 5 to 8-year olds in October 2019. The story is about a little boy who dreams of becoming an Olympic champion until a tragic accident dramatically changes his life. In 'Danny's Dream', the text by author Victor Margiotta is accompanied by British artist Ian Parker's illustrations, which consist of 34 enchanting images. These took almost two years to complete and led to a book that has attracted a lot of media attention.

The book launch took place in KidZania, the dedicated 'children's town' which aims to attract young people to commercial work and leisure activities. After a short reading of the book, the chil-



dren present at the event were invited to have a go at foot drawing themselves under the guidance of VDMFK Board



Member Mr Tom Yendell.

ITALY

Portelli, Santina (Full Member)

Ms Santina Portelli wrote a text on the passing away of long-time jury member Mr Hans Massberger. Her piece reads as follows:

It is now almost a year since Hans Massberger left us. I remember finding out the news on the Internet. I felt a sense of deep, numbing pain and was unable to react. With the distance of time, I now wish to evoke memories of Hans Massberger for myself and for all of you. I first met Prof. Massberger in the 1990s after I had been in the Association for 24 years. At the time I decided to deliver my pictures to Schaan in person so that I could get to know the Association and the Association could get to know me. I also took along with me a porcelain bowl that I had painted, and which Hans Massberger greatly appreciated. I was very excited to visit the head office of the VDMFK, an association that had given me and other painters the

opportunity to make choices in life. In addition, I was very moved to meet the person who for many years had been the right hand of our founder, with whom Hans Massberger shared ideals and plans that were groundbreaking, at least in my opinion. I should also mention the friendship that united the two. Unfortunately, the language barrier always presented a major obstacle in deepening the acquaintance between Hans Massberger and myself. I could not speak German and Hans Massberger spoke only a few words of Italian. He said he learned them during his travels with Stegmann to my homeland of Italy. Consequently, our relationship was based entirely on non-verbal communication: mutual smiles, sympathy and silence, glances of recognition and closeness, until we tried to exchange our appreciation and affection for each other with our pictures. He presented me with two books, one by Stegmann and one by himself, since he, too, was a painter. Hans Massberger showed me a picture in his book, saying that I had been its source of inspiration. I can't describe my sense of excitement, confusion, embarrassment, satisfaction and surprise! I was

left speechless and definitely very moved by this moment. It was such an unexpected gift. After some time I received a long letter from him, which touched me very deeply. Prof. Massberger was probably the kind of person who evoked uniquely personal memories among the many people who knew him since he was able to establish a relationship, a connection, with everyone. I well remember taking his book with the pictures and writing about my feelings towards almost each and every picture. Hans Massberger was delighted by this. In his work as artistic director, he was also an important point of reference for all of us. I miss his friendly smile and his elegant manner. Together with Stegmann, he will now surely be painting the sky in heaven. Goodbye, Professor, and thank you for everything.

Santina Portelli
Full Member of the VDMFK

Artists' activities

cess, since it attracted at least 400 participants at the opening and about 600 visitors during the week.

INDONESIA

- The three Indonesian foot painters **Mr Muhammad Asroel (Associate Member)**, **Mr Sabar Subadri (Associate Member)** and **Mr Muhammad Amanatullah (Scholarship Holder)** staged a group exhibition and gave painting demonstrations at the Warung Joglo Bu Rini restaurant in the city of Salatiga. The exhibition was held from 5 to 8 September 2019.

- From 22 August to 5 September 2019, the five VDMFK painters **Mr Sadikin Pard (Associate Member)**, **Mr Agus Yusuf (Associate Member)**, **Mr Muhammad Amanatullah (Scholarship Holder)**, **Mr Salim Harama (Scholarship Holder)** and **Mr Faisal Rusdi (Scholarship Holder)** held an exhibition at the Kartika Affandi gallery in Yogyakarta which was based on the theme 'Independent souls who turn deficiencies into gain'. The artists also gave painting demonstrations.

Amanatullah, Muhammad **(Scholarship Holder)**

- Mr Muhammad Amanatullah was invited to display his works at the Jatim Fair

in the province of East Java in October 2019. He met both with the Governor and his deputy and received media coverage while doing so.

Agus, Yusuf **(Associate Member)**

- Mr Yusuf Agus took part in an exhibition and gave painting demonstrations together with other painters from the Java region in Bremsi Probolinggo on 9 and 10 March 2019. The event was held at the Paiton Resort Hotel Probolinggo, East Java, and lasted a week. On 10 and 12 November 2019, Yusuf took part in an exhibition and painting workshop at ISI Surakarta. Organised by the Director General of Indonesian Culture, this event was carried out by 28 painters across Indonesia who had been assessed by a jury and various curators.

Subadri, Sabar **(Associate Member)**

- Mr Sabar Subadri took part in a festival at the Bank Sentral Republik Indonesia to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 20 and 21 November 2018. He exhibited his works, gave painting demonstrations and was interviewed by TV stations. In addition, Sabar participated in the 4th Culinary Festival of the city of Salatiga. He organized a solo exhibition with the title 'Local Views'. This exhibition was

held at the city hall from 31 July to 4 August 2019. The opening ceremony featured the mayor of the city of Salatiga. To mark Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia on 17 August 2019, Sabar was invited to perform a painting demonstration. On 26 August he was also invited by the Resort Military Commando of the city of Salatiga to give a painting demonstration at an event.

SERBIA

Backo, Dejana **(Scholarship Holder)**

- Ms Dejana Backo had the great honour of receiving the '2019 Lady of the Year' award for prestigious women from public, economic, sporting and social life in Serbia and Europe at the Belexpo Centre in Belgrade.

SLOVENIA

Gasperut, Vojko **(Full Member)**

- Full Member Mr Vojko Gašperut achieved great success by having the opportunity to stage a solo exhibition both in New York and Washington. Called 'Slovene Land', his show opened at the St. Cyril's Church gallery in Manhattan's East Village on 12 May 2019. The exhibition was accompanied by media reports, including a report by Slovenia's national TV broadcaster. These works were also presented to the public at the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington D.C. in June 2019. The



opening took place on 25 June 2019 to mark the Slovenian national holiday. Vojko showcased 15 paintings featuring

the techniques of acrylic and oil on canvas.



Elodie Cazes (Full Member/France), 'Colourful bouquet in blue watering can', acrylic, 39x24 cm.

*A small selection of the
in major*



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inspired!

Information from the office

Submission of originals

The office of the Association kindly asks all artists to read and take note of the following information.

All consignments of originals sent in to the VDMFK are subject to inspection by the Swiss Customs Administration (Liechtenstein is Swiss Customs Territory and part of the Swiss Currency and Economic Area). Import levy is imposed on all originals, which will be paid by the VDMFK.

As artists constantly send their originals to the VDMFK we have commissioned the forwarding agency DHL Logistics AG, Switzerland, to handle this difficult matter.

We therefore request you to send all your parcels containing originals to the following address:

**DHL Logistics (Schweiz) AG
DHL Freight Division
Attn. Mr. Kurt Schöpfer (VDMFK)
Heldastrasse 66
CH-9471 Buchs
SWITZERLAND**

Please keep in mind the following points when you send in your paintings:

- no framed paintings
- no passe-partouts
- no eye bolts or other hanging devices
- no oil paintings that are not dry

Please write the following information on the reverse of your original:

- name
- country
- original title
- technique
- on sale or not on sale

With your cooperation you save us additional correspondence and considerably facilitate the work of the VDMFK.

Please send **only** originals to DHL but no correspondence, reports, photographs, catalogues, biographies, etc.

All your correspondence etc. should be addressed solely to the:

**VDMFK
Im Rietle 25
P.O. Box 818
FL-9494 Schaan
Principality of Liechtenstein
Email: vdmfk@vdmfk.li**

Return of originals

Due to lack of storage we have to return the originals to our artists from time to time. We send back those originals that have already been reproduced or motifs that are not needed for other purposes any more. The VDMFK does not need these paintings any more, so please do not submit the returned originals again. You can use your works for your exhibitions or sell them. However, please take into account that the purchaser does not acquire the right to reproduce the original.

For private sales please use the form of the VDMFK, which has to be signed by the respective purchaser.



Martin Char Sodoms (Associate Member/South Africa), 'Two bright red rosebuds', watercolour, 30x21 cm.

Publishers' activities

GERMANY

- The German publishing house showcased the work of mouth and foot painters at the central Gerber department store in Stuttgart on 9-10 October 2019. The idea was to provide visitors with an opportunity to see a selection of works by mouth and foot painters and get to know the artists in person. Foot painter Ms Antje Kratz and mouth painter Mr Lars Höllner gave painting demonstrations at the store on both days. They showed their work and the ways in which they create their paintings to the public.



Full Member Antje Kratz showcasing her foot painting skills in Stuttgart.

POLAND

- The Polish publishing house exhibited works by its artists at a joint exhibition at the Cultural Centre in Chorzów. The forty paintings on display mainly consisted of new works by Polish mouth and foot painters. Opening on 9 April 2019, the exhibition revealed a great variety of styles. All the works were on display until 15 May 2019. The vernissage was

attended by **Full Member Mr Stanisław Kmieciak**, the two **Associate Members Mr Walery Siejtbatałow and Mr Jerzy Omelczuk** as well as **Scholarship Holders Ms Teresa Frys, Mr Mikołaj Kastelik, Mr Bartosz Ostałowski, Mr Jan Sporek and Ms Katarzyna Warachim**. In addition, the vernissage featured a number of painting demonstrations.



The artists of Poland giving a painting demonstration at the opening of the exhibition.

NORWAY

- The Norwegian publishing house opened the doors to its own rooms and staged an exhibition on 9 November 2019 as a partner of the 'open house' arrangement with its neighbours. This exhibition was open for a week. 82 works by 26 artists from 19 countries were on display. Mouth painter Ms Brit Grotterud Skotland was present and gave an insight into her skills.

SLOVENIA

- The Slovenian publishing house organised a workshop and exhibition at the Ministry of Culture in Ljubljana on 20 September 2019. The workshop was very well attended by about 200 children from various kindergartens and grammar schools. Participants included **Mr Vojko Gašperut (Full Member)**, **Benjamin Žnidaršič (Full Member)** and **Scholarship Holders Ms Nevenka Gorjanc, Mr Gregor Janežič, Mr Eric Pibernik, Ms Dragica Sušanj, Mr Željko Vertelj, Ms Neja Zrimšek Žiger** from Slovenia as well as **Mr Stjepan Perkovic** from Croatia and **Ms Dejana Backo** from Serbia. The exhibition consisted of 58 paintings based on the theme of flowers. It was opened by the Secretary of State for Culture, Ms Petra Culetto.

Publishers' activities

SWITZERLAND

- The Swiss publishing house had the opportunity to look back on its 60-year history in November 2019. The Swiss cooperative was founded at the initiative of Arnulf Erich Stegmann in the municipality of Au on the banks of Lake Zurich on 2 November 1959. This anniversary was used as an opportunity to stage a week of encounter with the themes of colour, perspective and 'inclusion as a bridge for all people' from 13 to 19 May 2019. For artists from Switzerland and neighbouring countries, the organisers staged a two-day workshop for invitees together with the artist Editha Tarantino. This event concluded with a lecture and practical exercise on the subject of portrait painting. Designed to be as open as possible, the week of encounter interested artists and people who visited the workshop and felt inspired by the impressive achievements of the artists present as well as by the artworks on display. Proceeding from the "60 years of art publishing with Au GMFK / Art overcomes barriers", an exhibition featuring over one hundred original works by mouth and foot painting artists was held at St. Gallen's Tonhalle concert hall during the celebratory week. In addition to the numerous dignitaries – which included the St. Gallen City Counsellor for Social Affairs Dr Sonja Lüthi – the event was also attended by **VDMFK President Mr Serge Maudet**, VDMFK Director Mr Mario Famlonga, as well as the **artists Ms Bracha Fischel (Scholarship Holder/Israel), Mr Lars Höllerer (Full Member/Germany), Mr Antje Kratz (Full Member/Germany), Mr Antoine Leisi (Scholarship Holder/Switzerland) and Ms Lea Otter (Scholarship Holder/Austria)**. Moreover, during the opening ceremony, Mr Höllerer presented a specially commissioned original to the principals of the well-known music school in St. Gallen. The two-day anniversary event ended up attracting over seven hundred visitors.



Participants attending the special exhibition marking the 60th anniversary of the Swiss publishing house.



Scholarship Holder Bracha Fischel from Israel at the workshop.



Full Member Lars Höllerer from Germany presenting one of his oil paintings to the directors of the well-known St. Gallen Music School.

