



Our Solstice event is being offered as part of our Cultural Bridge Partnership with Kunstverein Leipzig (KVL) and Bistro 21 Leipzig for which we have received funding to cover their week long stay at BOARC, our hosting and administration for this. This money is coming from the British Council, UK Art Councils (inc ACE), Goethe-Institut London, and Fonds Soziokulture.

More info here: <https://www.cultural-bridge.info/>

Outside of COVID-19 recovery grants this is the first time BOARC has received support affiliating us directly with a government funding body. This has raised questions about how a small not-for-profit like BOARC should position itself in relation to the soft power of state-based cultural funding, particularly in light of the genocide taking place in Gaza and the calls of STRIKE Germany.

We understand that Cultural Bridge results from great efforts by people within these funding bodies to keep necessary European connections open post-Brexit, and entered into this agreement due to our commitment to cross-cultural dialogue. However, we have been increasingly alarmed at developments in Germany and see the violent state silencing, and censorship of those in opposition to Israel's war as a direct violation of freedom of speech and attack on civil liberty.

We believe it is vital to create a space for conversations that might be inhibited elsewhere and in institutional and regularly publicly funded spaces in the UK and Germany. For us this means maintaining relations with our grass roots partnership organisations (KVL and Bistro 21), whose work is becoming increasingly precarious. However as an active part of civic society, we are also questioning how we can respond to the UN's call for cultural organisations to do all they can to urge state parties to oblige by their obligation to prevent genocide and also provide our solidarity and support to others when they do so.

Link to Strike Germany: <https://strikegermany.org/>

BOARC strongly denounces the UK and German governments' continued support of Israel's war on Gaza and failure to recognise the state of Palestine.

We openly invite those wishing to think and organise against the brutality of the occupation to use the space and offer further subsidies for group stay or day use so that this work can happen. Please get in touch if the building and its resources might be of support.

We have signed the Strike Germany letter. This is a call to withhold labour and presence from German cultural institutions. We intend to use our participation in Cultural Bridge to address how our cross cultural affiliation might be used to support freedom of expression and freedom for Palestinians. We will do this by emphasising the importance of STRIKE Germany's demands to 1) protect artistic freedom, 2) remove ambiguity in definitions of Anti-Semitism so it can be structurally addressed 3) and combat anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia and look to consider interventions at grass roots level whilst hoping to engage state funders in these discussions.

BOARC aligns itself with the Boycott Divest and Sanctions Movement and strongly opposes any potential legislation by the UK government looking to silence its efforts. <https://bdsmovement.net/>

We draw you attention to Sarah's recent essay '[Taking a Stand](#)' for Art Monthly for a wider overview of the situation in Germany and can provide a pdf. for those requiring access.

