



Why and how Read My World?

Online we are more interconnected than ever before, while *offline* it seems we understand each other less and less. That is why a public offline meeting crossing borders remains of the utmost importance if we intend to approach each other on a human scale. RMW started from the notion that telling stories as broad as possible is the most important tool in bridging cultural and social differences. Each year RMW chooses a region in the world where huge shifts in society are taking place. Sometimes these shifts are visible in Europe through the headlines in the media, but when do we learn about the stories laying underneath these headlines?

For the first edition of RMW we chose to look into the Arabic region. Of course we were inspired by the Arabic Spring, but the sensational and superficial language of our media dominates the information that reaches us. The reportages on television all seem the same. During our festival we intend to look for the stories behind the fast news headlines, stories that we don't hear, but are very important for understanding the shifts in society.

Taking into account that from our own small country we only get the superficial information of a complex region as the Arabic region is, we decided to invite insiders from the region to decide what is new, important and interesting. This means that the foreign curator is leading in suggesting themes, issues for the Dutch festival. The curator will do this together with a Dutch group of curators, who will search for Dutch writers, poets that share a similar fascination for the themes and issues raised by the foreign

curator. The frame in which they work will be clear from the start: they will look for urgent *documentary literature*.

First Phase

The first phase of the festival consists out of three public meetings in the public library of Amsterdam. On three Sunday afternoons in March, April and May, each curator introduces and motivates 8 talents from their own country. For this presentation we envisage two hours, in which some of the introduced writers will be on Skype. Also the Dutch curators will introduce some writers live on stage that share similar issues with the writers from the region. The exact form of this event will be constructed and decided on between the curator and the Dutch group of curators.

The foreign curator is a month in Amsterdam. During this month there is space for the first live working meetings with the Dutch curators. Also, there is an intense visitors program for the foreign curator. Meetings with fellow writers, translators, media, companies, foundations and of course the curator will take part in a wide range of activities varying from workshops to live performances on suitable stages. This visitors program will be constructed according to the wishes of the curator together with a member of the board of RMW. [that is me...] The presence of the foreign curator works two ways: for the curator it is an opportunity to get to know Amsterdam, to expand her international network and of course to develop her own work. For RMW it is an opportunity to work on developing the festival and to inform a new audience and a broad community for the festival in September.

Second Phase

The second phase is the festival itself in September. This event will take three days and all the three curators will be again in Amsterdam, together with three authors from their own country. Also the curator will be involved in creating this festival together with the Dutch curators.

Profile of the curators

For the first edition of RMW we managed to find two foreign curators that are willing to become our eyes and ears in three different cities: Cairo and Ramallah. (we are still looking for a third curator from Maroc). What these people have in common is the following: they are independent, they have a critical mind, and they have organisational talent, a broad and diverse network in their own country. Besides that, they are writers, poets, journalists, essayists, bloggers and storytellers. In short: they are people who make things possible for others and they are creators themselves.