

Late evening buffet reception at the Swiss residence in New Delhi on the occasion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Indian Art Fair, 3 February 2017  
Greeting address by Ambassador Dr. Andreas Baum

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Good evening to all of you and a warm welcome to the Swiss residence. You walked through fire to join us. But I can reassure you: these are not the gates of Hell.

I am very pleased to have you at our India Art Fair late evening party, which in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition has now become a tradition. It brings together the whole contemporary art fraternity present in Delhi during these days.

We are thrilled to organize this event with our partner **Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council**. I would also like to thank **International Trade and Exhibitions India as well as the MCH Group** for their enthusiastic and generous support and cooperation.

We are privileged to have renowned Swiss architect **Roger Diener** among us tonight. He gave the opening lecture at the India Arch Dialogue a few hours ago and will participate in the India Art Fair Speakers' Corner tomorrow at 11.30am. Roger Diener's style tends towards the Spartan, there is often a certain toughness and sobriety about his works, a restraint with all ornaments. He must therefore feel right at home in our gloomy Embassy parking lot. I am also pleased to feature explosive videos by iconic Swiss artist **Roman Signer**, which put the Embassy on fire for this special night.

While one never needs a compelling reason to throw a party, you might wonder why Switzerland is hosting this India Art Fair party. The reason is simple: Switzerland is an art paradise! Not least because we host the pivotal art fair "Art Basel", which in turn organizes art fairs in Miami and Hong Kong. Last September, its mother company, **Messe Schweiz Group, took co-ownership in the India Art Fair, as the first step towards their new regional art fair initiative**. A wonderful development for both countries and exciting perspectives for Swiss-Indian cooperation in the coming years! It is an honor to have **Marco Fazzone, MCH's Managing Director of Design and Regional Art Fairs**, among us.

Before giving him the floor, let me thank our partners and friends – as well as my staff - for their commitment, creativity and good spirits in making this memorable event possible. Thank you and enjoy the party. May it be more fiery than hellish!