

Late evening buffet reception at the Swiss residence in New Dehli on the occasion of the 7th Indian Art Fair, 29 January 2016
Greeting address by Ambassador Linus von Castelmur

Good evening to all of you and a warm welcome to the Swiss residence, on this cool Delhi winter night!

Françoise and I are very pleased to have you at our traditional late evening reception during the India Art Fair – artists, art critics, art lovers, gallerists and art collectors, the whole contemporary art fraternity present in Delhi these days!

We are very much thrilled to organize this event with *Pro Helvetia – Swiss Arts Council*. I should also like to thank all our partners

- Basel Culture Unlimited, Basel
- Andaz Hotel, New Delhi
- Sabrina Amrani Gallery, Madrid
- La Revue Noire, Paris
- and the Perfume Library, New Delhi

for their enthusiastic and generous support and cooperation.

I am particularly pleased that for this year's edition we could find Joël Andrianomearisoa, a contemporary artist with roots in Madagascar. At our request, Joël curated and conceptualized the event as a "Gesamtkunstwerk". He has chosen the rather enigmatic, slightly disturbing and vaguely auspicious theme of "*Sentimental Party. A rendez-vous with the night to conjure up the unforgettable and the inconsolable that the day has left behind.*" As you see, the stage is all in black and white; the party itself becomes an art performance. For four and a half hours, we all become actors in an interactive art work. I wish you enchantment, stimulating exchanges and sentimental encounters!

While one never needs a compelling reason to throw a party, you might wonder why Switzerland is hosting this India Art Fair party. The reasons are simple and obvious:

- Switzerland is an art Eldorado! Switzerland is a haven for fabulous artists, doing well in contemporary fora all over the world. Switzerland hosts the internationally most important art fair, Art Basel, which in turn organizes art fairs in Miami and Hong Kong.
- Switzerland showcases many contemporary art museums, Kunsthallen and art galleries.
- Switzerland boasts of brilliant art critics as well as a wealth of art magazines and art edition houses.
- Switzerland is home to enlightened *art aficionados* who cherish this particular form of exploring our societies and expressing views of our world.
- And finally, let me reveal a well-kept secret: It is as simple as that - Switzerland is fun!

Let me thank all my embassy staff involved in organizing this mega-event and our partners, vendors and friends for their commitment, creativity and good spirits in making this party possible!

But you are not here tonight to listen to long speeches, you want to talk to old friends, to make new ones, to enjoy the Swiss winter buffet, to dance and above all make merry! So please: have fun and be sentimental!

Let me raise my glass to all of you: cheers and enjoy! The buffet is open!