



ROMA-EMBER AGAINST RACISM, 20/21 June 2014 in Zurich, Switzerland, will be the first International Roma festival with tens of Roma musicians, painters, actors, scholars, journalists and fundraisers. The first International Festival where Roma are both guests and hosts, and where artists, scholars and activists join forces in a fascinating way. Initiator is Christian Mehr, Roma musician from Switzerland.

Politically as well as through Gypsy music and other art, the organizers want to draw Europe's attention on the awful and inhuman situation of Roma and Sinti, and turn this event into a signal for solidarity.

During the two-days event no less than 15 bands from various countries in Europe and 1 from the States, will perform benefit concerts in the "Alte Kaserne" in Zurich. Beneficiary is the Hungarian village of Bódvalenke. In the past Bódvalenke used to be one of those uncountable places where Roma live in dire poverty. However, since the residents invited well-known Roma Painters to come over and decorate their houses with colorful frescoes, tourists have started to appear. Now Bódvalenke is on its way to become a model of Roma's own power and vitality. Still lacking is a good infrastructure (running water, sewer system), but available funds don't reach the village! That is why artists decided to help. Proceeds from the concerts will be handed over personally by Christian Mehr, the organizer, to the people of Bódvalenke. The Festival will host a huge photo-exhibition of frescoes and village life.

The Festival also aims to be a platform where Roma and non-Roma experts confer on the situation in Europe, to end persecution of Roma and open up new perspectives. This stage discussion, in which the audience can actively take part, will be introduced by an international mixed media art performance.

The overall goal of "Roma-Ember Against Racism" is sending a political wake-up call to Europe. The role of participating artists is an important one. With their creativity and original working approaches as well as with their readiness to perform benefit concerts, they show politicians how to turn Europe into a house for all people.

For detailed information:

<http://artists-for-roma-net.ning.com/profiles/blogs/romafestival-roma-ember-against-racism-20-21-june-2014-zurich-ch>

[www.skullhead.ch](http://www.skullhead.ch); [www.soundmanoever.com](http://www.soundmanoever.com)

<http://www.altekaserne.com/>

