

“Sharing Water” Exhibition At The House Of Switzerland In Multilateral Vienna

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By iGlobenews

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Swiss water diplomacy in action in Vienna. The Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE, UN and IO in Vienna is hosting an exhibition on water diplomacy, “Sharing Water”. The travelling exhibition is curated by Swiss artist Regina Hügli and highlights the European continental watershed.

By Wolfgang Amadeus Bruehlhart, 13.07.2021.

Constant access to potable water and sufficient clean water for agriculture and industry is taken for granted in Switzerland and Austria, while leading to conflicts in many parts of the world. This is not surprising considering that 263 catchment areas of rivers and lakes worldwide are located in two or more states and two billion people worldwide rely on about 300 cross border groundwater reserves for their livelihood. The use of water across borders thus harbors the potential for conflict.

Switzerland is using water diplomacy (“Blue Peace”) to proactively defuse possible conflicts surrounding access to and use of water. In this spirit, I invited the Swiss artist Regina Hügli and other artists to present their art at an exhibition titled “Sharing Water”. This exhibition is currently taking place at the Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE, UN and IO in Vienna, Austria. To be more precise the artists are exhibiting their works of art in the garage, in the garden, in the tent, in the vestibule and throughout the cellar windows of my residence in Vienna. The exhibition opened virtually on 9 July 2021 and can be visited in person on 22 and 23 July 2021, between the hours of 3 and 7pm.

The SHARING WATER exhibition addresses the main European watershed in its hydrological and cultural significance with contributions from seven artists, curated by Swiss artist Regina Hügli. Other artists whose works can be seen in this unique exhibition are Stefan Fraunberger (Austria), Anne Glassner (Austria), Klara Hobza (Czech Republic), Regina Hügli (Switzerland), Barbara Anna Husar (Austria), Elisabeth Schmirli (Austria), Nives Widauer (Switzerland).

SHARING WATER is the third major water project by Swiss photographer and artist Regina Hügli, who has been working with the element of water for years. The focus of this exhibition is the main continental watershed – a topographical boundary line between the catchment areas of European river systems that flow into different seas. It is both a hydrological and a cultural boundary, as cultural areas have historically developed along the river courses. Regina Hügli: “What fascinated me about the watershed phenomenon was the correspondence between hydrological and cultural spaces, which underlines how much we are also culturally connected to water and certain river courses.” She has also conducted regional research on water management along the watershed.

The current presentation at the House of Switzerland in Multilateral Vienna kicks off a two-year journey through Europe that the SHARING WATER exhibition will embark on starting in September 2021. The exhibition will be shown in regional houses near branching points of the continental watershed, thus emphasizing the connection between these locations. The invisible boundary line of the watershed will be traced through the exhibition’s journey. SHARING WATER will first be on display at the Kraliky City Museum in the Czech Republic, then at the end of the year it will move on to the Urseren Valley Museum in Andermatt, Switzerland.

The views expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of iGlobenews.

Picture: Regina Hügli Pass Lunghin – Lichtzeichnung 2015 © Regina Hügli

Keywords

Switzerland | Water Diplomacy | Blue Peace | Sharing Water | Exhibition | Regina Hügli