

## Pro Helvetia press release

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## Philippe Bischof chosen as new Director of Pro Helvetia

**One hundred and four candidates, one new Director. The Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia will in future be led by Philippe Bischof. He is currently head of cultural affairs in the canton of Basel-Stadt.**

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The Board of Trustees of Pro Helvetia last night unanimously elected Philippe Bischof as the Swiss Arts Council's future Director. He will assume his position on 1 November 2017. The selection procedure began in November 2016 and was conducted by an executive headhunting firm under the management of a selection committee. The President of the Board, Mr Charles Beer, commented the appointment as follows: «Philippe Bischof has all the key qualifications we defined for the position. He has a clear vision of what he wants to achieve, is inclusive, and is experienced in the management of a diverse organisation. This makes him the ideal person to fill this demanding post – particularly with regard to the drafting of the government's next cultural policy statement.»

### About Philippe Bischof

Philippe Bischof (born 1967 in Basel) has been working in the world of culture for 25 years. He began his career as an assistant stage director at Theater Basel under the tutelage of Frank Baumbauer. Subsequent stations include the position of art director at Theater Göttingen and assignments as independent director and dramaturge in French-speaking Switzerland, France, Germany, Sweden and Iceland. In parallel he obtained a Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) degree in cultural management from the University of Basel.

From 2008 to 2011 he built up the cultural centre «Südpol» in Lucerne, working both as manager and art director, and established the centre as a nationally and internationally successful platform for interdisciplinary artistic production. In the past ten years he also regularly took on consultancy mandates for cultural institutions in Switzerland and abroad, besides working as a lecturer on cultural policy and art promotion and as a jury member in the disciplines of theatre and dance.

Since 2011 Philippe Bischof has been head of cultural affairs in the canton of Basel-Stadt and thus responsible for the canton's entire cultural promotion activities as well as for institutions and functions including the cantonal museums, archives and on-site archaeological research. He has been chairman of the cantonal culture ministers' conference since January 2017.

Philippe Bischof is due to take on his duties as Director of the Swiss Arts Council on 1 November 2017. Until then Ms Sabina Schwarzenbach will continue as Interim Director.

## **The Swiss Arts Council**

Pro Helvetia supports Swiss arts and culture on behalf of the Swiss Confederation. It fosters cultural exchange between the different regions in Switzerland and disseminates Swiss arts abroad. It also stimulates artistic production through initiatives of its own. The Swiss Arts Council runs the Centre culturel suisse in Paris and supports the cultural programmes of the Swiss Institutes in Rome, Venice, Milan and New York, as well as swissnex in San Francisco. In Cairo, Johannesburg, New Delhi, Shanghai and Moscow it maintains its own liaison offices, which function as cultural agencies operated by local staff.

At the end of 2016, Pro Helvetia employed 90 people in Switzerland and abroad. The global budget for the current year amounts to CHF 40.1 million.

**Further information:** [www.prohelvetia.ch](http://www.prohelvetia.ch)

**High-resolution press photos and downloads:** [www.prohelvetia.ch/medien/downloads](http://www.prohelvetia.ch/medien/downloads)

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