

European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC) selected as the host of RomArchive - Digital Archive of the Roma

Press Release

Berlin, April 4, 2018

On the occasion of the World Roma Day on April 8, RomArchive - Digital Archive of the Roma and the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC) are pleased to announce their future cooperation. On its last board meeting, the advisory board of RomArchive selected Berlin-based ERAC as its future host. ERAC's Pakiv Board welcomed this opportunity and agreed to begin the discussion of the roadmap for the handover. RomArchive will launch its internationally accessible archive website in January 2019. Subsequently, the online project will be institutionalized: The two project initiators, Isabel Raabe and Franziska Sauerbrey, will then hand over the responsibility of the archive to ERAC who will continue the archive and further develop it.

RomArchive - funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation - is currently the largest cultural project of, for and with Roma in which the principle of "Romani Leadership" is consistently implemented. The participants in the project—within the various working groups there are around 150 actors from 15 countries across Europe and beyond—form a worldwide network of artists, scientists and activists, most of whom come from a Roma community. Roma shape the archive in all key positions: as curators of the ten archive sections and as the international advisory board, which supports the curators and determines the strategic guidelines of the project. From the beginning, the project initiators have planned to transfer RomArchive to a European Romani led organization after its five-year set-up phase. Germany's Federal Agency for Civic Education will support the editorial management of RomArchive for a further five years beyond the 2019 handover to ERAC.

About RomArchive

Starting in January 2019, RomArchive, the Digital Archive of the Roma, will make the arts and cultures of Romani peoples visible and illustrate their contribution to European cultural history. Through counter-narratives told by Roma themselves, RomArchive will create a reliable source of knowledge that will be accessible internationally on the internet to counteract stereotypes and prejudices with facts.

In terms of content, 14 curators define, select, and present examples of artistic contributions for the archive sections on dance, film, literature, music, theatre and drama, visual arts, and the interdisciplinary field of flamenco, as well as material on politics of photography, personal testimonies related to the persecution of Roma under National Socialism and scientific material on the civil rights movement. The archive's ever-expanding collection exemplifies the enormous range and diversity of cultural identities and national idiosyncrasies as an integral part of its approach, rather than conveying an unrealistic image of a homogeneous "Romani culture". Here, the wealth of an artistic and cultural production—centuries old, lively and varied to this very day—will become visible and publicly accessible for the first time in such a wide scope.

Further information: blog.romarchive.eu

About ERAC

The European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture e. V. (ERAC) is a joint initiative of the Council of Europe, the Open Society Foundations, and the Alliance for the European Roma Institute - a

coalition of Romani individuals and organizations who led the efforts for creating the Roma institute. ERIAC is an association registered under German law on June 7, 2017 in Berlin, Germany.

ERIAC exists to increase the self-esteem of Romani peoples and to decrease the negative perceptions of the majority population towards Roma through arts, culture, history, and media. The institute acts as an international creative hub to support the exchange of ideas across borders, cultural domains and Romani identities, promoting activities of hundreds of Romani organizations, intellectuals and artists to form multilateral initiatives and regional alliances. It aims to be the advocate of Romani contributions to European culture as well as to document the historical experience of Romani peoples in Europe. ERIAC exists to be a communicator and public educator, to disseminate a positive image and knowledge about Romani peoples for dialogue and building mutual respect and understanding.

Further information: eriac.org

Press contacts

Denhart v. Harling, RomArchive, press@romarchive.eu, T: +49 30 69598034

Anna Mirga-Kruszelnicka, ERIAC, eriac@eriac.org, T: +49 30 40633733