

Mela 2006: A New Success

Mela 2006 is behind us, but co-operating projects among the artists go on. According to the police, 300 000 people visited Rådhusplassen in Oslo during the three days of the festival. Mela is a different festival, because it initiates new forms of co-operation between Norwegian and non-Norwegian artists.

Mela started out five years ago as a common Pakistani-Norwegian project. Today, the festival has grown to include artists from 22 countries. At Mela 2006 300 artists participated. The main aim is cultural exchange between Norway and the countries from which most immigrants come, but Mela is not a "world music festival". Artistic collaboration is the leading idea.

An example could be the celebrated Palestinian singer Rim Banna. Her house in Nasaret has been attacked by bombs and grenades, but at Mela she performed with Norwegian musicians and sang about peace and understanding. The Norwegian blues guitarist Knut Reiersrud could, also at Mela, give a concert together with musicians from East Africa.

Mela is organized by Horisont Foundation. The foundation is small and to a large extent dependent on voluntary work.