



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Organizational Committee of the
International Art Festival "Mažeikiai 2011"

Attn. to Mrs Regina Lukošienė

**Embassy of the Kingdom of
the Netherlands**

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Re Opening speech

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***Dear Mayor, Artists, Coordinators, dear Mažeikiečiai and
Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,***

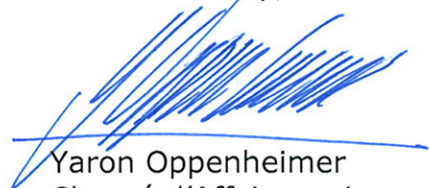
Thank you for the opportunity to address you today at the opening of the 5th International Art Festival "Mažeikiai 2011". I regret I cannot attend this opening in person but I nevertheless appreciate very much your kind invitation to this event which highlights an important occasion in your town's cultural life.

Art can be a powerful tool that has the ability to connect people of very different cultures. Multiculturalism and tolerance for the unknown are concepts that in recent years have come under pressure in the Western world as people tend to focus on their negative consequences. Without brushing these aside, it is also good to focus on the positive sides. Combining different cultures helps us tolerate, understand and respect one another.

Therefore it is a great honor that today's festival starts with the introduction of the work of the painter and poet Mr. Torcqué. Born in the Netherlands, Mr. Torcqué is of Dutch origin. However, as an adult he moved to Spain and in recent years Mr. Torqué has found new inspiration in Lithuania and continued his creative endeavors here with great enthusiasm. The work of Mr Torqué has inspired other artists from different countries and Lithuanian colleagues are amongst them. This is not only an example of how we can learn from different cultures but also a beautiful illustration of warm friendship between Lithuania and the Netherlands. A friendship that was redefined exactly 20 years ago when diplomatic relations between Lithuania and the Netherlands were restored.

I would like to thank Mr Torqué for, at least partly, representing the Netherlands here in Žemaitija and the organizers for making this festival happen in the first place. I wish you all good luck and enjoyment during this event and a lot of success and further inspiration for the future.

Yours sincerely,



Yaron Oppenheimer
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Vilnius, 9 September, 2011