For 60 years the Goethe-Institut has been engaging with arts and culture developments in Pakistan, and has innovated many contributions to these developments via increased cultural exchange between Pakistan and Germany. On the weekend of December 16th and 17th 2017, Goethe-Institute celebrated its 60th anniversary in Pakistan with a lineup of artists who represented the most exciting contemporary modes of art making.

The lineup also included projects that have been conceived as a result of critical engagement between Pakistani and German artists facilitated by unique opportunities in both countries, geared towards linking the two art scenes across continents. These opportunities and collaborations have culminated in truly global sensibilities and narratives, as manifested not only in the format of the works created, but also through the interaction of distinct cultural contexts and histories. Two such projects represented include participants from Karachi Files (2016), and the Border Movement Residency.

The works featured over this special weekend explore a range of themes, all relevant in different ways to contemporary life. Some of the themes included personal lived experiences, odes to untold and/or forgotten histories, questioning of higher orders, explorations of the self in literary dystopias, and innovative, perhaps even quirky, sound making possibilities. The works took shape in a variety of installations and experiences; including light and sound installations, immersive performances, screenings, music, visual exhibits, and more.
“BEING FAUST, ENTER MEPHISTO”

As a centerpiece we presented “Being Faust - Enter Mephisto”, an interactive physical game enriched with online and social media elements developed by South Korean gaming outfit 놀공방천소 NOLGONG and Goethe-Institut Korea. The game is based on Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s best known drama “Faust” and asks the eternal questions: What do I value in life? What are my personal values based on? Which price am I willing to pay for success? It was impressive that Knowledge was the first value people desired.

about the various forces which govern and direct our lives; their limits, as well as their possibilities.

David Olbrich studied product design at UdK in Berlin (2012) and lives and works as a freelance designer and visual artist in Berlin. Previous shows include with the Nationalgalerie at Scharf-Gerstenberg Collection, Berlin; and the Kommunale Galerie Berlin, Berlin.

CONCERT FEATURING DJ İPEK

DJ İpek is a producer and curator who lives between Berlin and Istanbul. She has performed her music the internationally, including at Glastonbury, Fusion, Berlin Festival, and many more electronic and world music festivals. Her unique style of music defies genre boundaries or any clear labels. She combines various world music traditions and electronic mixes to create her own special blend of sounds and beats which are unpredictable, except that they are always stimulating.
“MEMORIAL TO LOST WORDS” - SOUND INSTALLATION BY BANI ABIDI

In “Memorial to Lost Words”, Bani Abidi invokes forgotten and untold histories in the familiar tradition of folk songs, both old and newly composed. The work draws from archives of letters written by Indian soldiers fighting in World War I to their families back at home - an often overlooked narrative of one of history’s major wars. The sound installation consisted of multiple tracks, which collectively interweave folksongs of women pleading with the men not to go to war, along with renditions of the men's letters from the war front. The installation featured a song composed by London based poet Amarjit Chandan.

Bani Abidi is a multimedia artist based in Berlin and Karachi. She has shown locally as well as internationally at exhibitions including at 8th Berlin Biennial, Berlin; Documenta 13 Kassel; The Guggenheim Museum, NY; and more.

“NOCTILUSCENT” - LED INSTALLATION BY WOLFGANG SPAHN

“Noctiluscent” is a unique LED installation by Berlin based artist Wolfgang Spahn. The brilliant lights and colours of his LED-faced panels adorned the facade of Goethe-Institut's building over the anniversary weekend, evoking festive lights often seen on the streets, trees, and buildings of Karachi.

Wolfgang Spahn is an Austrian-German visual artist based in Berlin. He teaches at the Professional Association of Visual Artists in Berlin (BBK-Berlin) and is Associated Lecturer at the University of Paderborn, Department of Media Studies as well as at the University of Oldenburg, Department of Art and Visual Culture. Spahn has presented his work at numerous exhibitions, biennials and festivals of media art throughout the world, including at Karachi Biennale 2017.

Pablo Lauf lives and works in Berlin. He has shown internationally, including at Karachi Biennale 2017. He was also a participant of Karachi Files; a Goethe-Institut facilitated project in 2015 which brought musicians from Pakistan, Germany, and the Maldives together to produce a collaborative music album. He was a participating artist at KB17, the Karachi Biennale.
Ahmed was one of the assistant curators for the Inaugural Karachi Biennale 2017. She is also part of the TBP artist collective, which travels between Karachi, Berlin and New York - its members include Abi Tariq and Danial Hyatt.

“I WOULD ALWAYS DREAM OF MY HOUSE”: AN AUDIO WALK ON DISPLACEMENT BY SHAHANA RAJANI AND SONYA SCHÖNBERGER

‘I would always dream of my house’ was an audio walk that broaches issues of loss and leaving home. It narrated stories of displacement from the Partition of India and the Second World War in Europe. It interwove dramatic retellings based on memories of survivors to create a counter-geography that traces the erasures and disappearances inherent in the violence of displacement, drawing connections around the conditions, experiences and making of refugees across borders.

The audio walk took place in Karachi and Berlin simultaneously in May 2016, and was supported by Goethe Institut-Pakistan and HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin.

Shahana Rajani is an artist and curator working and living in Karachi. Her practice is research based and invested in experimenting with new forms of art making and knowledge production in public spaces. She also co-founded Karachi LaJamia as an attempt to politicise art education in Pakistan and collectively explore new radical pedagogies.

Sonya Schönberger lives and works as an artist and theatre maker in Berlin, Germany. Her educational background lies in Social Anthropology and Visual Art. Her work takes the form of performance, audio, installation and photographs based on interviews and conversations.

PRESENTATION OF VIDEOCLIPS ON 60 YEARS OF GOETHE-INSTITUT IN PAKISTAN

As part of the festivities, we presented a look back Goethe-Institut’s work over the years via a compilation of videoclips of events, testimonials from
collaborators, and more!

“CALLIGRAFFITI” BY SCHRIFT ZUG AND HAMZA ABU AYYASH

“Calligraffiti” is a special new hybrid of live art making which merges calligraphy, graffiti, and state of the art technology. With the use of the ‘Infl3ctor’, projection equipment designed especially for this purpose, artists Hamza Abu Ayyash and Schrift Zug did live calligraphy with light onto Goethe-Institut's building. This spectacular light show took over the premises after sunset, as we watched visuals come together before our very eyes simultaneously as they are being drawn by the artists' hands on the equipment. They also painted a wall at the Goethe-Institut in collaboration with the local artist Sanki King.

Hamza Abu Ayyash is a Palestinian activist artist born in Lebanon. His artworks mostly include calligraphy as the main form of expression, and he works with a range of media including painting, sculpturing, video, photography, projections and graffiti. In 2016 he collaborated with Public Art Lab to develop the Infl3ctor, the main tool used for Calligraffiti.

Schrift Zug is a Berlin based Calligraffiti artist. He graduated in 2008 from an apprenticeship as a digital media designer. He has been creating graffiti art since 1998, and Calligraffiti since 2008. He is currently on the team of Calligraffiti Ambassadors.

“SHORT EXPORT” AND “EMERGING ARTISTS” - SHORT FILM SCREENINGS

We presented two exciting programs of short film collections:

“Short Export – Made in Germany” was a selection of 7 awarded German short films, an annual compilation by AG Kurzfilm (Working group short film), the Goethe-Institut Lyon, the International Short Film Festival Clermont-Ferrand, German Films and Kurzfilmagentur Hamburg. The films in this selection ranged from bizarre and exciting to warm-hearted and hilarious stories, told as fiction, documentary or animation films. Similarly to a kaleidoscope the short films show different facets of the German reality and offer thereby a multi-dimensional picture of Germany, giving an insight into the current film-artistical scene, discourses and social topics.

“Emerging Artists – Contemporary Experimental Films and Video Art from Germany” is a selection of 8 short films. AG Kurzfilm and German Films present the third edition of short experimental works by young upcoming artists. This selection promotes highly artistic films and video art works, some of which can be quite unconventional.

“SOUNDLounge” WITH PAKISTAN” FEATURING ALIEN PANDA JURY, STUPID HAPPINESS THEORY, TOLLCRANE, SLOWPIN, RUDOH, PABLO LAUF, AND DJ IPEK

“Soundlounge with Pakistan” brought together musicians from Pakistan and Germany on the same stage, some of whom have already collaborated with each other in the past.

Karachi-based Alien Panda Jury (Daniel Arthur Panjwaneey), Stupid Happiness Theory (Natasha Humera Ejaz), Tolcrane (Talha Asim Wynne), and Rudoh (Bilal Nasir Khan) and Berlin-based Pablo Lauf were all participants on Karachi Files - a collaborative music project produced with the help of Goethe-Institut in 2015. Alien Panda Jury was also a resident of the Border Movement Residency in 2017 - another project facilitated by Goethe-Institut to foster cultural exchange
between Pakistani and German musicians. DJ Ipek, flying in from Germany, and Karachi-based Slowspin (Zeerak Ahmed) performed at this concert.

Sheema Kermani is a Pakistani social activist, theater director and an exponent of Bharatnatyam dance. She has mastered several Indian classical dance forms, including Kathak, Bharatnatyam, and Odissi. She also founded Tehrik-i-Niswan in 1979, an organisation which focuses on women’s development through theatre and television.