

BHUTAN+PARTNERS  
ACTIVITIES REPORT 2008



*Wyneke Jordans & Leo van Doeselaar - playing the grand piano at the Royal Banquet Hall  
Thimphu – Bhutan, 22 November 2008*

*The year 2008 has been a very special year for Bhutan. The first multiparty democratic election for the National Assembly was held on 24 March. Bhutan became the world's youngest democracy. The constitution was endorsed by the National Assembly and signed by His Majesty the King on 18 July. His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, was crowned the fifth Druk Gyalpo during a ceremony at Tashichho Dzong on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month of the Earth Male Rat year, November 6<sup>th</sup> - 2008. Ceremonies in Thimphu took place between 5 – 8 November. The Coronation and the Centenary celebrations lasted till the end of December 2008. Mr Henk de Jong, Coordinator Bhutan+Partners was privileged to attend the coronation ceremonies and receptions/banquet in Thimphu.*



*A group of Bhutanese took the initiative to mark the Coronation and Centenary Celebrations. They organised 52 days of cultural and musical events at the CCCCC ground. All the events were broadcasted live. National and international artists joined the programme, thus celebrating with the Bhutanese.*

*Bhutan + Partners contributed to the celebrations, by shipping a beautiful grand piano to Bhutan, which was donated to the Royal Government of Bhutan. The famous Dutch piano duo Wyneke Jordans and Leo van Doeselaar performed a classical fourhanded piano concert in the Royal Banquet Hall Thimphu for a selected audience on 22 November. The next day Leo and Wyneke performed a public piano concert at the coronation grounds (CCCCC) in Thimphu.*

*About 100 Dutch travelled over land from the Netherlands to Bhutan in land rovers and old-timers. Their arrival in Thimphu coincided with the arrival of the grand piano and the classical concerts. Two musicians, Linde Nijland and Bert Ridderbos, were among the travellers and performed at the CCCCC ground, fusing their music with the Bhutanese Trio Druk Yul.*

## BHUTAN + CORONATION 2008

### *Royal Classical Concert Bhutan*

Bhutan + Partners together with Chenzig Entertainment started preparing for the first ever Royal Classical Piano Concert in Bhutan in 2007. Advised by officials of the RGOB and by the Recommending Committee members - Paul Brouwer († 2009), Boudewijn van Ittersum, Simon Reinink and members of the Dutch rock group Bløf - a grand piano was shipped to Bhutan. Wyneke Jordans and Leo van Doeselaar performed concerts on 22 and 23 November. De piano technician and tuner Mr. Simon Jorritsma prepared the grand piano that arrived just in time at the Royal Banquet Hall in Thimphu.

On 22 November Mr Bart Paans, first secretary to the Royal Netherlands Embassy in New Delhi, handed over the key of the grand piano to Lyonpo Ugyen Tshering, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan. A wonderful concert by Wyneke Jordans and Leo van Doeselaar was given for an enthusiastic audience on the grand piano which “*is one of the best instruments in Asia at the most beautiful location*” according to Wyneke Jordans.

*Mr Paul Brouwer, member of the recommending committee, sadly passed away in February 2009. We will remember him as a strong, dedicated and enthusiastic personality and we are grateful for his advice with which he has helped us to prepare and execute the grand piano project. What once started as an idea came to its grand final in November 2008 when Wyneke Jordans and Leo van Doeselaar played the grand piano at the Royal Banquet Hall in Thimphu. Pauls kind words of appreciation, his suggestions and experience contributed to that grand final in Thimphu. We feel privileged for having known Paul Brouwer.*

### *Himalaya Challenge 2008*

The Himalaya Challenge 2008, a classical car rally organised by Classique BV, set off on a journey from the Netherlands to Bhutan on 15 October. RGOB officials welcomed the participants at Gelephu - the boarder of Bhutan - on 20 November. Over 2000 Bhutanese witnessed the Grand Finale. They all saw extraordinary and priceless cars that never entered Bhutan before. The arrival of the challenge was widely covered by all media in Bhutan. Bhutan + Partners in close collaboration with the Royal Government of Bhutan prepared logistics for the journey through Bhutan and it's *grande finale* in Thimphu on 22/23 November.



### *Road to Bhutan 2008*

19 participants of the Road to Bhutan tour left the Netherlands on 26 September for their musical journey to Bhutan. The Dutch musicians Linde Nijland and Bert Ridderbos were among the participants. Linde and Bert met with the Trio Druk Yul in Bhutan and performed during a concert at the CICC Ground on 23 November. Their concert was broadcasted live on BBS. Bhutan+ Partners brought the musicians into contact with the Trio Druk Yul, prepared logistical arrangements for the road to Bhutan participants in Bhutan and assisted the preparations for concerts at the Kilu Music School and the CICC ground.

## BHUTAN + CULTURE

### *The Circle of Karma by Kunzang Choden*

Bhutan + Partners effort to promote Bhutanese literature in the Netherlands finally brings a rich Bhutanese story to the Dutch readers. Publisher De Geus and Oxfam/Novib will publish *The Circle of Karma*, by Kunzang Choden. Bhutan + Partners, supported Manon Smits, the translator, with the context specific situations throughout the translation. The book will be published in May 2009 and is one of the Novels that will find it's way to the subscribers of Oxfam/Novib series of *world authors*.

### *Kilu Music School Thimphu*

A Rippen piano was shipped for the Kilu Music School in Thimphu together with the grand piano. Mr Simon Jorritsma selected a talented music student form the Kilu Music School. Bhutan+Partners will look for a scholarship for a technical piano training. We will also select a qualified young pianist in the Netherlands with management skills and an interest to teach in Thimphu and at the same time support the board of the school.



### *Travel program 3opreis, Floortje Delsing*

Floortje Delsing started a journey from Amsterdam to Bhutan over land in 2007. Her journey was part of the *3opreis* travel program by LLiNK and KRO and was broadcasted weekly from 25 November 2007 till the end of April 2008. The final programs, three in total, covered the journey of Floortje Delsing in Bhutan. Bhutan+Partners assisted in planning the *3opreis* journey to Bhutan, in advising the producer about the program and in arranging logistical support in Bhutan for the crewmembers.



### *Nazhoen Chharo*

International acclaimed documentary maker, Dorji Wangchuk, made this feature film that *will change the perception of the youth in Bhutan: Nazhoen Chharo* – a story about despair, a story about nobody, a story about hope. Bhutan+Partners together with professional film directors will assist in editing and promoting the film in Europe in 2009.

### *Opera to Bhutan*

Bhutan+Partners investigates the possibility of creating an opera in Bhutan, based on Handel's opera *Acis and Galatea*. The opera will be a blend of classical Music and traditional Bhutanese Music. The project will be a collaboration with Bhutanese, US and Italian consortium partners and may premiere in Bhutan spring 2011.

## BHUTAN + SPORTS

### *Sports Programme NOC/NSF*

Early 2008 the ministers for Development Cooperation and Welfare/Sports started the Sports Coalition in Action Program 2008-2011 promoting sports as a means to support development processes in 10 countries. Bhutan is one of the selected countries, due to the historic sports and development relations between the two countries and Bhutan's new development challenges, such as rural/urban migration and limited youth employment opportunities. Besides, substance abuse and petty crime affect the image of urban youth in Bhutan. The objective of the Sports coalitions in action program in Bhutan is to create opportunities for youngsters, girls and women in terms of inclusion, employment and empowerment. This program aims to support young urban out of school youth in developing a meaningful life, increased self-esteem and job opportunities by means of sports and social activities.

Bhutan and Partners Coordinator Henk de Jong completed a preliminary research for the programme in November 2008. Bhutan+Partners will be involved in the upcoming program that will last from 2009 – 2011.



## BHUTAN + ENVIRONMENT

### *Umoja Climate Fund*

Bhutan+ Partners conducted a survey for the Umoja Climate fund, established by BLOF in 2007, assessing possibilities for environmental friendly projects in Bhutan. The fund is now open for projects from Bhutan compensating carbon emission.

### *Glof*

Glacier Lake Outburst Flooding is a real threat to Bhutan with hundreds of glacier lakes out of which more than 25 are in danger of bursting out due to global warming. The pressure on the walls of the glacier lakes is being reduced manually by draining water from the lakes. Bhutan+Partners is, together with the government and the people of Bhutan concerned about the effects of a possible outburst that may flood and wash away thousands of houses, fertile soil and may ask the lives of Bhutanese citizens. Bhutan+Partners explores possibilities of a documentary or feature film on this issue to be made on location in Bhutan.

## BHUTAN + PARTNERS OTHER ACTIVITIES

*Bhutan + Partners assisted the following persons and organisations in 2008:*

- Bhutanese visiting the Netherlands for conferences, studies and tailor-made programs. Among them Lyonpo Dorji Wangdi, Minister for Labour and Human Resources.
- Friends of Bhutan Association in the Netherlands: celebration of Bhutan National Day, at RNTC in Hilversum on 13 December 2008.
- Menno van der Geugten; development of United Music programme
- Primary school students: provided information for school papers

Besides, Bhutan + Partners provided information to several individuals from Bhutan and from the Netherlands whom contacted us with specific questions.

Bhutan + Partners communicated and discussed its activities with the relevant ministries in Bhutan, the Bhutan Mission in Geneva, the Royal Netherlands Embassy in New Delhi and the Dutch Consulate in Thimphu. We maintained contact with the Friends of Bhutan Associations in the Netherlands and other countries in Europe and with private persons involved in activities related to Bhutan. Bhutan+Partners received the ANBI status in 2008.

Board Members of Bhutan+Partners met and discussed the internal organisational structure, reports and activities on 29 February, 15 April, 8 July and 24 October 2008. Henk de Jong coordinator Bhutan + Partners travelled to Bhutan in April and November to prepare the grand piano concerts and to assist in the logistical arrangements for the Himalaya Challenge and the Road to Bhutan participants. He met with officials and friends and discussed programmes and future activities. Pieter Lammers – chairman - Tineke Alons - office assistant - and Erica Sluyters - office manager – supported all activities and logistical arrangements needed throughout the year. They prepared the concerts on 22 and 23 November in Thimphu and logistics for the Himalayan Challenge, Road to Bhutan and the Kilu music school in November 2008

### BHUTAN + PARTNERS 2009

Bhutan + Partners board members, Pieter Lammers, Henk de Jong and Tineke Alons will withdraw by December 2008. Frank van der Meijden, former manager Bløf, has joined the board. Two new members will be invited to join Bhutan+Partners in the beginning of 2009.

Bhutan and Partners will continue to assist and encourage people in Bhutan and Europe to meet and exchange ideas and programmes in the fields of culture, sports and business. Bhutan+Partners will focus its activities on involving youth. We will continue to share all the information available with other persons and institutions interested in Bhutan; it's culture and people.

#### 2009 activities:

- NOC/NSF Sports in Coalition Programme
- Nazhoen Chharo edition for the European Market
- Glacier lakes documentary
- Opera in Bhutan
- Information paper/booklet about Bhutan for Dutch primary school children
- Information services on Bhutan related issues



HENK DE JONG, ERICA SLUYTERS, TINEKE ALONS AND PIETER LAMMERS  
Lungchotse, November 2008