

## **TreeEast**

### **By Wooden Bicycle on a Tree Trail Planting a Chain of Tree Circles**

**Dr. Anke Scharrahs and Shahin Tivay Sadatolhosseini**

We – a duo comprising Shahin, a well-travelled artist, photographer and filmmaker, and Anke, a wood conservator/restorer and researcher into forgotten historical painting techniques whose clients include some of the world's leading museums – have been preparing our multifaceted art and film project, TreeEast, for the past two years. Our project focuses on the themes of trees, wood and sustainability, whilst also aiming to build bridges between people and regions.



TreeEast consists of three artistic sub-projects, which are being carried out in parallel and will be incorporated into an artistic documentary film of feature-length duration and in 4K resolution. In spring 2027, we will launch our project with the first series of art activities.

One of our three sub-projects is a journey on our self-built wooden bicycles from Germany through Europe and then along the Silk Roads, planting a chain of tree circles along the way. The aim of this project is to plant as many groups of trees as possible, with each group comprising between 1 and 1001 trees.

Before and during our project we are looking for people to donate the cost of tree seedlings for our project, and we are looking for individuals or organisations willing to allow the donated trees to be planted on their public or private land. We also aim to find tree guardians who will look after the saplings during their first few years of life, to support them through this initial phase. Throughout our project, a growing network of tree donors, tree owners and tree guardians will emerge, all of whom will be visible and connected via our website [TreeEast](#).



The trees will be selected and planted to suit the specific soil conditions, climate zone and the expected changes in conditions over the coming decades. It is important to us not just to plant trees, but also to plant ideas and develop proactive networks that are both local and global. A key element of our project will be our daily social media activities, as we will be constantly raising awareness of our project to generate tree donations and to blog about people and trees, linking them together. Our website [TreeEast](#) is already up and running and will be updated regularly over the coming weeks and months.

The second sub-project centres on the gym wheel, which travels with us on a wooden trailer and has been Shahin's iconic companion for decades, as well as the focal point of his artistic practice. In keeping with our theme of 'wood', his gym wheel is made of wood this time and is inspired by a drawing by Leonardo da Vinci. The gym wheel frames the motifs of Shahin's photographs and as a circle symbolizes repeating cycles; not only night and day, or the cycle of seasons, both of which take on significant meaning in Shahin's travels, but also the meditative effect of recurring movements, and the concept of closing circles, bringing disparate points together.



The gym wheel is also an ideal icebreaker for striking up conversations with people we meet along the way. The large wheel inevitably arouses curiosity and draws people in like a magnet, giving us the chance to tell them about our project and our ideals. Shahin brings this experience from his previous projects to the fore and regards the unusually large wooden wheel as an essential element for the success of our project. The design of the wooden gym wheel, based on a geometric star shape, also corresponds to the oriental star shapes of the cartouches from the Aleppo Room, which we will be using during our project.

For our third sub-project Anke will produce high-quality macro photographs of motifs from the Aleppo Room in Berlin, one of the masterpieces of the Berlin Museum Island (Museum of Islamic Art, Pergamon Museum), which will be printed onto thin Japanese paper and applied to wooden surfaces along the travel route.



These artistically rendered macro photographs will be applied to a wide variety of wooden surfaces – from the bark of various trees and tree stumps to wooden objects such as doors, shutters, or benches. These artistically created surfaces will in turn be photographed with the high-end camera Fuji GFX100 II and the Fujinon GF 120 Macro lens to produce new, large-format, standalone photographs for future exhibitions. This creates a journey in which a museum object returns to its roots, whilst simultaneously generating new artistic output. The transfer technique is, of course, chosen in such a way that the trees and the environment are not harmed and that the images dissolve again after a certain time, in the style of street art. In this way, the mythical creatures Simurgh and Qilins – alongside other extraordinary details painted on the unique wall panelling from the Wakil House in Aleppo in 1600, which have been on display on Berlin's Museum Island since 1920 – will journey eastwards through Europe and along the Silk Roads back to their roots. Through this art project, the fabulously painted details of this masterpiece can be made visible to everyone along the route.

The paintings of the Aleppo Room can thus be experienced at close quarters, in a way that is not possible when viewing the room as it is exhibited in the museum. The new photographs produced in the process offer an intimate insight and, at the same time, a fresh and exciting perspective on these works of art.

The first leg of the journey will take us from Aachen (Germany) to Varna (Bulgaria) in 2027, with a further leg to follow in 2028 and continuing in the years thereafter. We plan to produce a cinema-quality artistic documentary film for each of these legs, thereby creating a film series.

On our journey from Germany south-eastwards through Europe, we will be also visiting various craftspeople and artists who have a special commitment to working with wood. We will be imaging and filming these visits and conversations professionally, just as Shahin has done in his latest film, [“The Roll – Building Bridges to Connect”](#).

**Website:**

[TreeEast](#)

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**Links:**

[The Roll – Building Bridges to Connect Teaser](#)

[The New Yorker](#)

[RollEast Teaser](#)

password: radtour

[YavashYavash](#)

[RollEast](#)

[RollWest Teaser](#)

password: RollWest2021