**PRESS RELEASE**

**AIAP/IAA INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ART**

**-Official Partner of UNESCO**

**APRIL 15**

**WORLD ART DAY**

**NOW, ONE OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNESCO DAYS**

**[World Art Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Art_Day%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)** is an international celebration of the fine arts, which was declared by the **[International Association of Art (AIAP/IAA)](http://www.aiap-iaa.org" \t "_blank)**, an official partner of **[UNESCO](http://en.unesco.org" \t "_blank)**,

to promote awareness of creative activity worldwide.

In 2011, during the 17th General Assembly in Guadalajara/Mexico, Bedri Baykam as the President of the Turkish Artists Association (UPSD), brought a proposal in the name of Turkey

to celebrate the 15th of April, the birthday of Leonardo da Vinci, as "World Art Day".

It was accepted unanimously.

The proposal was co-signed by world delegates on the day of presentation, April 4, 2011:

Rosa Maria Burillo Velasco (Mexico), Anne Pourny (France), Liu Dawei (China-Ex President),

Christos Symeonides (Cyprus), Anders Liden (Sweden), Kan Irie (Japan), Pavol Kral (Slovakia),

Dev Chooramun (Mauritius), Hilde Rognskog (Norway).

The first World Art Day celebrations were held on **April 15, 2012**.

As a symbol of world peace, freedom of expression, tolerance and brotherhood,

da Vinci is also a testament to the influence of the fine arts on other fields.

After 8 years of intense celebrations all over the world from very different art communities and countries, Baykam who had been elected then World President of AIAP/IAA (2015) applied to the General Director of UNESCO Mrs. Azoulay for turning World Art Day to one of the International UNESCO Days. After Mexico and Turkey brought the proposal to the Agenda of the Executive Board, which accepted it unanimously in April of 2019, the UNESCO General Conference has ratified unanimously on November 2019, the decision taken in the Board Meeting in spring. Since then, April 15 has become World Art Day officially, as one of the International UNESCO Days, for the whole world!

This success belongs before all to all the AIAP/IAA Members around the world that have contributed so generously to the project of World Art Day since that first day in Guadalajara, nine years ago...

In this important and unfortunate year when we were supposed to celebrate for the first time World Art Day officially all over the world, had this coronavirus not intervened, we need to celebrate World Art Day online via social media. With the universal World Art Day spirit of artists solidarity, we must add strength, confidence and belief to the world, from our perspective.

**WORLD ART DAY ‘WALLACE HARTLEY & BAND’ AWARDS FROM UPSD**

UPSD, the Turkish Artists Association has been giving “**World Art Day Awards”** since 2012, the very beginning of the celebrations, in different categories of the arts. “Artist of the Year, Emerging Artist of the Year, Art Professional of the Year, Art Media Professional of the Year, Art institution of the Year”. UPSD has taken the decision that from this year on, the awards will be called **“World Art Day-Wallace Hartley & Band Awards**”, to tie forever this determined spirit of performing the arts till the very last second of life, that we have seen in the historical last couple hours of the Wallace Hartley Band.

Everybody knows that the unfortunate Titanic transatlantic liner has sunk in 1912 in the Atlantic Ocean on its way to New York, on one cold spring night. Also, almost everybody knows that the orchestra of this huge transatlantic line kept playing music during the two-hours and 40 minutes after Titanic hit the iceberg until it sank. This was the ever most striking art performance and decisiveness shown by any group of art performers in the history of art. They knew they were about to die; panic was all around them with people screaming, crying, stepping over each other, yet all the Band did was perform their creative profession until the very last moment, keep playing their last song being most likely *“Nearer my God to Thee”.* There was a total of eight musicians in the Wallace Hartley Band, and their behavior was an exemplary courage and devotion to art and to their profession shown in the most desperate moment one can ever encounter in life. In other words, they were the most exemplary “come to life version” of the most famous artistic line in the world, “the show must go on”. This band of 8 musicians that went through one of the most bizarre endings of a legendary last mission, are now peacefully resting in the heaven of the arts: Besides Wallace Hartley, John Frederick Preston Clarke, Georges Alexandre Krins, John “Jock” Law Hume, Roger Marie Bricoux, Percy Cornelius Taylor, W. Theodore Ronald Brailey and John Wesley Woodward are the other names of the band. We have to accept that nobody can match the performance of the Wallace Hartley Band, no matter what field, no other artist or performer can claim to be a rival to that level of determination. Wallace Hartley’s body was found dead in the ocean by the boats and his music case was still strapped to his body. More than 40,000 people attended his funeral in his hometown Colne Lancashire in England and his bust was erected for his memory.

Besides this unforgettable example of carrying beautifully in history, this magic line ***“the show must go on”*** (no matter which war, no matter what kind of bad situation, no matter the level of the economic crisis, no matter your health or personal life crisis’), there is a second reason regarding why linking the story of the Wallace Hartley Band to World Art Day: **This disastrous sinking of the Titanic as well as this unforgettable final music performance was also lived on April 15, on the birthday of Leonardo da Vinci and on the future date of World Art Day. You can see it as a coincidence, as fate or you have the right to remain silent…**

So, Wallace Hartley and his Band is giving to all of us such a big inspiration to get over these dark times we are going through nowadays, through the passion and the energy they bring to art. This unique story, will serve as a robust example to the future generation of artists…

The World Art Day, "Wallace Hartley" Awards will be live on Instagram from Bedri Baykam’s account @bedribaykam

8 PM Turkish time which is GMT+2 on Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Happy World Art Day!

For more information:

Dr Martine Pasquet
Executive Secretary AIAP-IAA
Unesco Official Partner
Maison de l'Unesco
1 rue Miollis. 75015 Paris-France

t. 33   1 45 68 44 54
Email: iaa.aiap@gmail.com
Web: [www.aiap-iaa.org](http://www.aiap-iaa.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

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Elif Baş

Assistant UPSD Baykam’s Office

m. +90 542 554 7182

piramidsanat@gmail.com