

supertaus



Family Trail

The Biography of Super Taus

Super Taus is Taus Makhacheva's superhero alter-ego and appeared after the artist met Super Sohrab, a superhero from Iran. Super Taus and Taus Makhacheva live in the same reality, but in different geographies, leading different lives. One was born with great strength and another with ordinary muscle mass.

Super Taus lives and works in the Tsada Mountain village in Dagestan, and uses her superhuman strength in acts of everyday heroism, Super Taus considers her actions as "life affirming practices". She graduated from the Department of Philology at the Dagestan Pedagogical State University and works as a kindergarten teacher.

Format

This Family Trail is shaped like a graphic novel: a story with emphasis on illustrations. At the end of the graphic novel, the visitor finds a dress-up doll of Super Taus. Depending on the answers to the questions, the visitor provides the doll with various garments and accessories (in the form of stickers) which will ultimately create the identity of Super Taus.



But who was Super Taus before she became a superhero?

Have a close look at these postcards that date back to the 19th Century. The photos reveal their professions, culture, customs, tribes and nationality.

Although Super Taus was born super strong, she only became a superhero later in life. Before that, she was an ordinary citizen. She's even featured in some of these old photos. But what kind of person was Super Taus before she became a superhero? Do you think she was a musician? A warrior? A wealthy lady in beautiful clothes? Or perhaps a baker, baking delicious bread?



1. Musician



2. Warrior



3. Wealthy woman



4. Baker

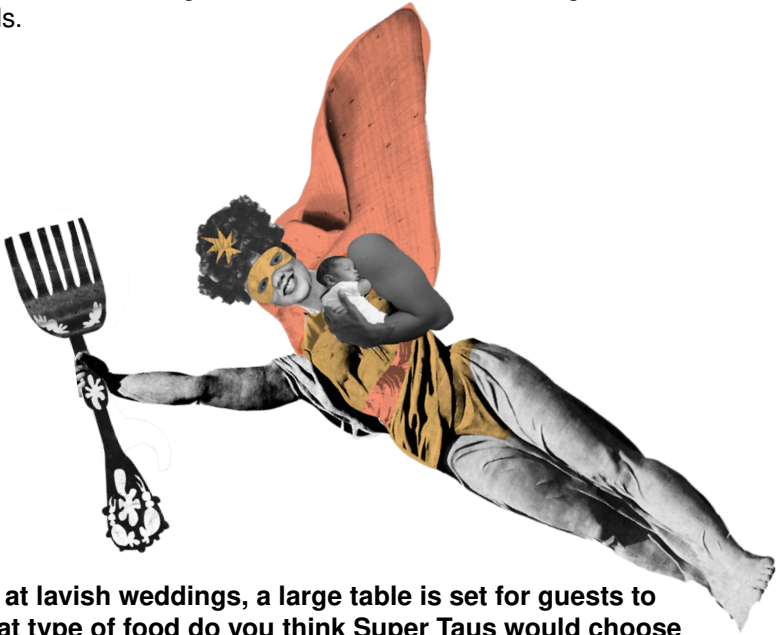
At the back of this booklet you will find a dress-up doll of Super Taus along with many stickers. Place the sticker with the number you believe represents who Super Taus was before her superpowers kicked in.

Celebrations

Let's step into the exhibition. The first room is a "Space of Celebration". What are we celebrating? Well, a wedding, of course.

Summer is the season of weddings. In Makhachkala, the capital of Dagestan, there are over 60 venues built to accommodate 200, 300, 500 and as many as 1000 guests! In this room, you will find a silent film showing the lavish wedding culture of Dagestan.

One night on the 14th of September in 2014, Taus Makhacheva decided to crash as many weddings as possible. She attended a total of 19 weddings undercover as an invited guest. Taus danced, ate and congratulated the newlyweds.



Typically at lavish weddings, a large table is set for guests to dine. What type of food do you think Super Taus would choose if she came to a celebration like this?

5. Spaghetti
6. Chudu
7. Spinach
8. Shashlik
9. Candy

Turn to the back of this booklet and place the sticker referencing the number above on or near Super Taus.





*The story of
Super Taus
continues in the next
room.*

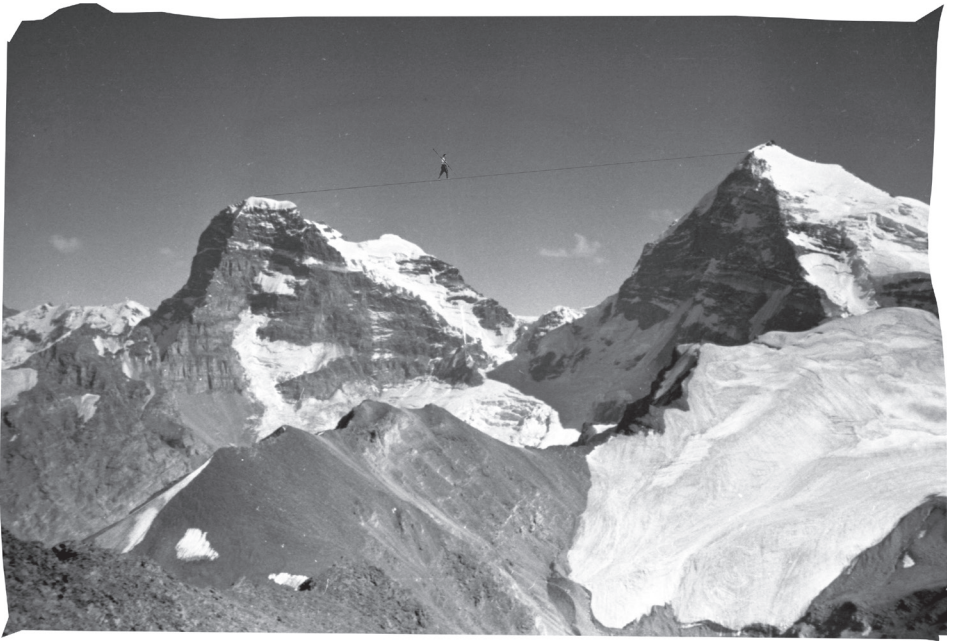
Teamwork

Welcome to the circus! Here you will find some incredibly talented people: fire eaters, acrobats, tightrope walkers, ring swingers and lion tamers. The strongest men and women in all of Dagestan! The circus is the best place to make plans and friends, because everyone is free to speak their mind: there are no police and no rules.

Super Taus is looking for a circus partner with incredible powers to collaborate with. Who would you choose for her? And why?

10. A talking horse
11. A strong woman accountant
12. A fly in a silver cape

Do you see the drawings of the mountains?



Motherland

Did you know Super Taus was born in Dagestan, miles to the east in the vast land of Russia. **Dağ** means mountain and **stan** means land. A land of mountains, in other words. There are bare, crumbling cliffs and soft hills covered with green moss. The country has made Super Taus who she is. Long walks through the mountains increased her strong muscles and the thin air gave her an excellent set of lungs.

Although Super Taus did not know it at the time, this is where she became a real superhero.

In which country were you born? How is your homeland important to you as a person?

The story of Super Taus continues in the next room.

Training

The inhabitants of Dagestan are strong, have a good sense of humour and they like to bend the rules just a little. But above all they value their own customs. They love sports and competitions and they sometimes perform a special national folk dance, the lezginka (can you pronounce that?)

When Super Taus decided to become a superhero, she also had to train a lot in order to become even stronger.

Which of these sports do you think a superhero needs to train?

- 13. Wrestling
- 14. Gymnastics
- 15. Judo
- 16. Dancing
- 17. Eating contests

Turn to the back of this booklet and place the sticker referencing the number above on or near Super Taus.



Continue to the next room and step into the open waters.

Listening

One of Super Taus' superpowers is being an incredible listener. She listened to stories of the fisherman who fished in the village of Starii Terek in Dagestan. Super Taus listened to their fears and the dangers they described of being in the ocean in small boats. By being a good listener, Super Taus taps into her superpower of imagining the world through other people's eyes and through this she is able to help others.



What other qualities do you think make up a great superhero?

Circle your answer using a pen or pencil.

**Empathy
Honesty
Courage
Strength**

Superhero Sighting Society



Welcome to: Superhero Sighting Society! In this room, we can ask many questions like what kind of superheroes do we need in our society today?

What are their superpowers? Picture the landscape of the UAE. How and where might a superhero appear? What makes their superpowers different from heroes in other geographies? Can you hear the accounts of people who spotted real-life superheroes? Have you ever seen a superhero?

Let's go back to Super Taus. What do you think her call to action was? What made her become a superhero? Where might she appear in Jameel Arts Centre?

Circle your answer using a pen or pencil.

**Floating on an air bladder of a fish?
Around the sculptures in the Jaddaf Waterfront Sculpture Park?
Reading the newspaper in the Jameel Library?**

The story of Super Taus is almost over. Walk to the next room for the final chapter.

Tour De Force

Super Taus often teams up with other people with incredible skills. This is Rasul Abakarov. Rasul comes from a generation of tightrope walkers. His father was a tightrope walker and his grandfather and even his great grandfather long ago.

For decades, they practised the art of tightrope walking, which came in handy, as this collection of artworks from the Dagestan museum had to be moved from mountain top to mountain top. Very carefully, with the painting in his hands, Rasul puts one foot in front of the other to cross the mountain. One misstep and he would fall, because there is no safety net.



If it were Super Taus on this tightrope, which of these paintings would you give her to take across?

Choose two, one for each hand.

Why have you chosen these paintings?



Find the sticker of the artwork you have chosen and stick it on or near the dress-up doll of Super Taus.



Farewell

Thanks to you, Super Taus has undergone her training, become much stronger and gathered a lot of friends and wonderful objects to support her in her daily acts of small heroism. Maybe you turned her into a wrestler, or perhaps you turned her into a dancer. Maybe she will swim back into the Jaddaf waters, or skip on top of the sculptures, superheroes are always made and shaped by us. Now it is time for Super Taus to travel and carry on with her missions: people to save, friends in need, good deeds.

Where in the world do you think Super Taus or any other superhero is needed most?



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Special thanks to Anne Knipping for developing the booklet on the occasion of the exhibition "It's possible to raise the ceiling a bit*", March 27, 2021 - March 06, 2022, curated by Hanne Hagenaaars at the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden.

*Describing museum technical team possibilities, coordinator of exhibition construction Daniël Hoogterp during work zoom July 28, 2020.

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