

Curatorial Grants – Practice and Networking

In July 2009, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia will inaugurate a new model for promoting postgraduate curatorial work by offering a programme-based grant.

The grant provides €1,250/month in support for each participant for a period of 12 months. The curatorial grant is practice-oriented and tied in with the German-Dutch European project **smax**. The programme is located at Schloss Ringenberg, in Hamminkeln on the Lower Rhine.

Schloss Ringenberg has been in operation as a studio and exhibition centre for 30 years. With eight German and Dutch artist fellows per year, dialogue-focused exhibitions and cross-border knowledge exchange, along with a wealth of activities for the public, the Schloss unites under one roof in an exemplary fashion the whole spectrum of contemporary cultural endeavour.

Since 2001 the work of Schloss Ringenberg has centred on European projects involving German-Dutch cooperation. In conjunction with changing project partners on both sides of the border – including the Akademieverbund ArtEZ in Arnhem, the Museum voor Moderne Kunst Arnhem, the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, the Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach and Kurhaus Kleve – the Schloss has since 2005 been providing cultural producers and mediators with the means to try out unusual contemporary art concepts and formats.

The new European project **smax** (2009-2012) is now carrying these promotional efforts forward with a practice-oriented model consisting of new residential grants.

For the invited curators in the cross-border region **smax** offers a versatile selection of concrete fields of work as opportunity to independently put their ideas into practice. In a special match situation, the participants are integrated into a cultural network that provides them with a model for the real conditions under which they will embark on their careers.

Curatorial fellows from the State of North Rhine-Westphalia will be chosen by an expert jury. Required is a completed course of studies in art history or art studies at a university in North Rhine-Westphalia, as well as demonstrated professional qualifications. The two NRW fellows will live and work for the most part at the Schloss during the 12-month grant period, together with a third curatorial fellow from the Netherlands, from the De Appel Arts Centre (Amsterdam). Residence at the Schloss and participation in **smax** are mandatory for grant-holders.

During the grant period, **smax** offers the curators:

- The opportunity to conceive and implement three art projects in the Lower Rhine region, financed through **smax**
- Expert curatorial guidance and moderation of the projects by the **smax** team at Schloss Ringenberg
- Exchanges between mediators and producers of contemporary art via artist and curatorial fellowships taking place under one roof
- German-Dutch networking and sharing of experiences through cooperation with the De Appel Curator School in Amsterdam
- Network expansion through the German-Dutch platform Schloss Ringenberg
- Programmatic drafting of mediation offers for the public, in particular for school children through coordination with German-Dutch school projects
- Publication of the projects in magazines and as a DVD collection

The grant serves to equip curators with professional credentials, including

- Developing their own criteria for the quality and relevance of artistic approaches
- Creating their own curatorial profile/ aesthetic approach
- Experience with institutional structures and practice-related processes such as mounting an exhibition, public relations, organisation and budgeting
- The ability to discriminate between artistic product and curatorial approach, leading to better comprehension of creative practice
- Potential addressees, integration of local viewer profiles

Further information / application materials:

<http://www.schloss-ringenberg.de/smax/>