



The Sylt Foundation South African Visual Artist's Residency

Artist Jacki McInnes wins the 2012 South African Visual Artist's Residency (SAVAR)

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Jacki McInnes named as the 2012 winner of Sylt

Johannesburg-based contemporary artist Jacki McInnes has been selected as the 2012 winner of the Sylt Foundation South African Visual Artist's Residency.

She will take it up at the Sylt Foundation's headquarters on the island of Sylt, Germany within the next few months.

This new residency opportunity to be awarded annually to a mid-career South African visual artist is a significant benefit to the contemporary arts sector. It is offered as part of the Sylt Foundation's Residency Programme.

From the applications received, the four shortlisted finalists were all extremely strong contenders for this award, making the judging panel's task a difficult one. The experienced judges were drawn from local industry experts who have a thorough knowledge of the contemporary art sector. Acting as co-ordinating judge was Gordon Froud of the University of Johannesburg, with Avitha Sooful, acting Head of Department at the Vaal University of Technology Fine Art Department and Stefanus Rademeyer, artist and lecturer at the Wits School of the Arts serving on the panel with him. Indra Wussow, Director of the Sylt Foundation, was also involved in the judging.

The Foundation is located on the island of Sylt, off the coast of Hamburg, Germany. The Foundation's residency programme has been running for several years providing opportunities to South African and international visual artists, writers and photographers. The Foundation's Residency Programme seeks to offer artists with opportunities to consolidate their practice or develop new works and ideas. It is managed under the directorship of literary scholar and curator Indra Wussow. With strong links to South Africa, the Sylt Foundation established this residency specifically for South African visual artists. Luminaries such as Strijdom van der Merwe, Mbongeni Buthelezi, Paul Emmanuel, Bernie Searle, Santu Mofokeng and Mary Sibanda have all previously benefited from this programme. Later this year, the Foundation will be launching the African Writers Residency Programme.

"In my many years working with artists, I have seen how crucial it is for artists to spend time reflecting on their own practice and careers," said Wussow. "Opportunities such as this residency

provide professional 'reflection' space, free from the many career and exhibition demands. This creative, reflective time allows an artist to re-evaluate and consider their career trajectory, or possibly plan a major project they wish to launch".

The residency provides the artist with the free time needed for creative thinking and research. In addition it enables the artist to engage in inter-cultural dialogue with other fellow international artists in residence. This exciting experience can expand the artist's artistic worldview, extend their professional network as well as open future career opportunities. The experience also broadens and enriches the artist's practice.

Jacki McInnes's award includes a return airfare to Germany, a subsidized apartment with a generous stipend to cover her two month stay. The apartment is fully furnished and situated on the Foundation's grounds and comes equipped with a computer, internet access and free WIFI.

"Our aim is to provide artists with an opportunity to develop ideas, research or even reflect on projects," says Wussouw, "So much emphasis is placed on the production and exhibiting of work, as well as managing projects and opportunities, that artists find very little time for the vital process of conceptualization, reflection and research. So many awards, competitions and residencies challenge artists through defined goals, outputs and production imperatives. Artists need to have the time to focus on developing their practice by engaging meaningfully with the ideas and work that interests and drives them. This is critical for the conceptualizing of work that sustains their careers. This process is often lost when balancing the pressures of industry, commissions and career imperatives. Therefore, unlike many other residency opportunities, this one is not solely output focused, but designed so that the artist may use this time as it suits their creative needs. It's similar to research sabbaticals available to academics".

"This is such wonderful news," enthused an excited Jacki McInnes on being informed of being chosen as the 2012 residency winner. "it's come at the perfect point in my career and staying on Sylt will give me the uninterrupted space and time to concentrate on the conceptual development for my new body of work."

For additional information: www.artsourcesouthafrica.co.za or Art Source South Africa's Facebook page.

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