



The Sylt Foundation South African Visual Artist's Residency

Artist Kai Lossgott wins the 2013 South African Visual Artist's Residency (SAVAR)

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Kai Lossgott: 2013 Sylt Residency winner

Kai Lossgott has been awarded the 2013 Sylt Residency Award. He will take it up at the Sylt Foundation's headquarters on the island of Sylt, Germany in early 2014.

This new residency opportunity, 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. "Thank you for enabling me to do this work. In the current economy, free time is a rare and beautiful gift, most especially for an artist. I look forward to making a meaningful contribution to the fluid exchange that is possible between environmental science, informal communities and artists", said an excited Lossgott on being informed of his selection as the 2013 residency winner.

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 three judges are all experienced people with a thorough knowledge and understanding of the contemporary art sector.

The Co-ordinating Judge was Avitha Sooful, Head of Dept of Visual Arts and Design, Vaal University of Technology. She is an experienced artist, arts administrator and academic, who has served on many advisory panels in her career, most recently to the Department of Arts and Culture for the Venice Biennale.

Annali Cabano-Dempsey is the Curator of the University of Johannesburg's prestigious Art Gallery. She is an experienced arts curator and administrator and a practicing artist. Hailing from a journalistic background, she is in the process of completing at PhD in Communications.

Paul Emmanuel is a mid-career contemporary artist forging an international career. A graduate of the University of the Witwatersrand he was the first recipient of the New York based Ampersand Fellowship. He has been a previous residency artist at the Sylt Foundation.

The Foundation is located on the island of Sylt, off the coast of Hamburg, Germany. The Foundation's multi-disciplinary residency programme has been running for several years providing opportunities to South African and international visual artists, writers and photographers. The

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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, Mary Sibanda and the 2012 residency winner Jacki McInnes have all previously benefited from this programme.

"This year again we received many applications and we are happy that the South African Visual Artist Residency Award has found its place within the landscape of the South African contemporary arts. I am really excited that this year's winner Kai Lossgott, is working on a project that engages the delicate nature of the island and also offers new ideas and insights about global ecological issues through the medium of his art work. We are sure that the realization of his CARBON project will be important within the international art scene and with its interdisciplinary approach it will also be of interest for scientists and activists", says Wussow.

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.

Lossgott's Award includes a return airfare to Germany, a subsidized apartment with a generous stipend to cover his 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 Foundation Director Wussow, "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".

Sylt Foundation:

www.jozi-artlab.co.za

www.kunstraum-syltquelle.de

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