

Trans Artists Around Guest Studios 2005

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Introduction

An international culture of guest studios and artist-in-residence programmes

It is no longer possible to consider the international cultural landscape without thinking of guest studios and artist-in-residence programmes. Artists benefit from the opportunity of staying in a different environment and to be inspired by it, to make work, or to devote themselves to a project. In the last few years in particular, the artist-in-residence phenomenon has taken flight spectacularly. From Brazil to Taiwan, from Estonia to South Africa, guest studios are shooting up as mushrooms out of the ground. Due to the current popularity – an overview of the new Trans Artists website counts more than seven hundred professional centres for which artists can sign up – it seems as though we are having to deal with something that is new and trendy. However, artist-in-residence programmes have not suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

Historical development

For a long time, artists have travelled to other countries and cultures in search of inspiration. Other artists and art-lovers have also long been willing to offer hospitality. At the end of the nineteenth century, this hospitality took on a more and more organised form. Artists in Europe established international artists' colonies, mostly in farming hamlets and fishing villages. Around the same time, rich industrial and noble families made their castles and outhouses available to young talent. In the 1960's and 1970's, the phenomenon received a new impulse. New artist-in-residence programmes were established not only in the countryside, but also in the big cities, full of idealism and societal engagement. Since the beginning of the 1990's a new wave has come into being, with the most notable characteristics being: their spread across the whole world, and the enormous diversity in what is offered.

Less visible, but no less important, is the recent shift in attitude among many providers of guest studios. More than previously, they are become more active and take on the role of acting as intermediary between their international guests and local networks of artists' initiatives, academies, galleries, curators, funds, institutions and authorities. Also, connections are made with international manifestations such as biennials and festivals. Some centres ask their guests to work together with artists of other disciplines, while some go further and give their guests assignments which they must complete during the period of their stay.

A new alternative

It is beginning to appear as if the artist-in-residence phenomenon is developing into an alternative to the established channels of production, presentation, and distribution of the arts. Providers and guests operate independently of established networks of gallery owners, museum directors, curators, publishers, and distributors. This is not in order to avoid these; artist-in-residence programmes have more often than not intensive contacts with the

art world within which they are embedded. However, artists make full use of the opportunity to go their own way, and to broaden their contacts and networks in their own manner; a culture of hospitality.

Guest studios in the Netherlands

The phenomenon of the artist-in-residence has developed differently in the Netherlands than in the surrounding countries. Here too their came into being important "artists' colonies" in the first half of the twentieth century, such as in Bergen and in Domburg, but these functioned informally. There was very little talk of artist-in-residence programmes until the 1980's. The three Dutch institutions which are today known worldwide as well-established artist-in-residence centres (de Ateliers, the Rijksacademie and the Jan van Eyck Academie) did not begin as artist in residence centres. De Ateliers in Amsterdam was established in by artists in 1963 in Haarlem as a place for independent art education, by and for artists. The Jan van Eyck in Maastricht and the Rijksacademie in Amsterdam were established state institutions for artists and theoreticians.

In the 1980's a new development began to take place in the Netherlands. Artists' initiatives were established, which offered space for artists on an ad hoc basis outside of the local network. Gradually, the desire developed to be able to offer hospitality and permanent facilities for accommodation and the production of work. From this there developed the guest studios that we now know, which came to fill the same role in the Dutch cultural landscape as artist-in-residence programmes abroad.

A few initiatives have grown into larger institutions with a connected artist-in-residence programme, such as Montevideo in Amsterdam, the EKWC in Den Bosch, and V2_ in Rotterdam. In addition to this, municipal authorities have begun to support artist-in-residence projects which have been established by artists and curators, such as Project Beyond in Utrecht and

CBK Zuidoost in Amsterdam. The greater part of the guest studios in the Netherlands remains connected to artists' initiatives, and are run according to their own stipulations. Meanwhile, more than thirty guest studios have been established by and for artists. The variations between them are enormous. There are large differences in the way in which they have come into being, large differences in profile, programming, finance, organisation, and the use of networks. Meanwhile, the guest studios fill an important role for these artists' initiatives: they make it possible to connect the local with the international, they broaden the networks of the artists and they give dynamism to the artists' initiative, to name just a few positive effects.

In recent years yet more guest studios have come into being. A series of established guest studios work on the continuation and sustainable advancement of their organisation and what they offer. It is time to take seriously the role these guest studios play in the cultural landscape seriously, and to research this role and place it into the spotlight.

Trans Artists and the guest studios

Trans Artists has a special bond with the guest studios in the Netherlands. Trans Artists originally functioned as a platform for name recognition, but since 2000 has taken on other functions. New and existing initiatives approached Trans Artists with the desire to have up-to-date details on the website of Trans Artists, for extra publicity, to invite artists, for contact with other providers of guest studios within the Netherlands and elsewhere, for information about membership of Res Artis and for advice about practical questions such as finance, organisation, and setting up new guest studios.

What the providers of guest studios were asking from Trans Artists came down to a desire for practical guidance. A well-attended meeting organised by Trans Artists for providers of guest studios at the end of 2002 led to Trans Artists being asked to develop into a national information point. Since then, Trans Artists has maintained an up-to-date list of guest studios in the Netherlands (and since September 2004 guest studios in Flanders). Trans Artists gives information and advice to guest studios being set up, catalogues the wishes and concerns of providers of guest studios, and organises annual themed meetings for guest studio providers and interested parties.

The Pool guest studios NL

In 2003, together with guest studios in the Netherlands, Trans Artists established the Pool. The Pool is the platform for the exchange of information about guest studios in the Netherlands. Via the Pool website, access is available to all addresses, programmes, projects, and contacts which are of importance in bringing together artists and guest studios. The 'availability calendar' is unique: it is a

calendar on the website, on which it can be seen when a guest studio is available.

The Pool is in the first instance intended for organisations who may benefit from the facilities offered by guest studios: museums, art spaces, art education programmes and workshops, and provincial and municipal authorities. It is thus made possible to make use on a temporary basis of independent project spaces, studios, overnight facilities, and technical workshops. Artists can also make use of the information on the Pool website. The pool can thus also act a stimulus for the development of contacts, for the exchange of information and experiences, for collaboration, and for the development of expertise. Via the Pool news, a bimonthly digital newsletter, and via de Pool announcements on the website, all those involved can remain up to date about the latest developments.

The guest studios offered in the Netherlands are so diverse, the history of their establishment and their profiles so different, and their organisation and programming in such stark contrast to each other, that it sometimes seems as though there are few common characteristics to unite them. Also, the observation is often made that each place must find its feet on its own; this is perhaps indeed so. Despite this, it has proved to be the case over the last few years that many initiators of new guest studios come knocking at the door of Trans Artists with comparable questions. Meetings which Trans Artists have organised for guest studios have also shown that many providers of existing guest studios regularly have to deal with the same questions and run up against comparable problems. Thus, the idea has arisen to produce a more thorough inventory and to investigate guest studios in the Netherlands, which Trans Artists began in 2005.

Central to this investigation is the question as to whether a common pattern exists, and if so what. What accounts for the differences in the history of their establishment of guest studios, in the requirements and conditions they impose, in their running, in their organisation, and in their profile? What makes a guest studio what it is? Do models indeed exist? And if so, would it be possible on the basis of these models to compile a "guest studios' handbook"? Or, can we better think in terms of a "toolkit": a collection of factors which in greater or lesser measure account for the development of each guest studio?

Around Guest Studios in the Netherlands

The investigation began with the inventory-building *Around Guest Studios in the Netherlands*, the results of which can be read in this report. In total, eleven studios were visited. Together, these places give a fairly good overview of the diversity in what is offered. Five of the places visited are in Rotterdam. Artists' initiatives were already receiving more attention there at the beginning of the 1990's, due to the favourable cultural policy of the municipal authorities at that time. Due to this, many initiatives have been able to develop and

test out various forms of guest studios. As a consequence of this, guest studios remain today a definite and visible part of the cultural life of the city. There we visited V2_ , Kaus Australis , Duende , Stichting B.a.d., and Het Wilde Weten, and in Amsterdam Steim and Agentur. In Hoorn we visited Hotel Mariakapel, and in The Hague '1646': a young initiative with plans for a guest studio. Outside of the Randstad (the major urban conurbation in the west of the Netherlands), we visited the workshop and guest studio Beeldenstorm / Daglicht in Eindhoven, and two guest studios outside the urban context: Kunsthuis SYB in Beetsterzwaag and Stichting Kik in Kolderveen.

These visits in person made it possible to ask questions of the people who are directly responsible for the organisation and programming of the guest studios. As a result of these visits, the guest studios offered could be inventoried in a more thorough and adventurous manner than had previously been possible.

Research methodology

Trans Artists did not begin from scratch with *Around Guest Studios in the Netherlands*. On the basis of the knowledge and experience which Trans Artists has built up as the national information point and as coordinator of the Pool, research was able to be undertaken from three 'starting points' or 'classifications' of guest studios:

- The guest studio exists to facilitate the practice of a specific discipline or the realisation of a project or new work.
- The guest studio fulfils a conceptual role within the artists' initiative, and takes part in the development of content for the artists' initiative.
- The guest studio has a strongly personality-based profile, and takes form through the methods and objectives of one or more initiative-takers.

This trio is laid out as a first, rough orientation. More factors contribute towards making a guest studio what it is.

Location and space

What is the meaning of the space at the disposal of the guest studio? What character does the studio have? What place does the guest studio take within the building, the physical environment of the initiative? In what measure does the layout of a space determine the collaboration with the guest artist, the 'feeling of community'? Which spaces are shared, which are private, and what consequences does this have? What effect do town and countryside have upon the profile of a guest studio?

Local, national, and/or internationally orientated

Orientation at a local, national, or international level determines the basis of networking, collaboration, and exchange which from these come into being.

What is the local situation in which the guest studio finds itself? Does the guest studio fulfil an existing desire or does it create its own audience, and how does the local/provincial/national art policy react to and support it?

Position within the art scene

A guest studio is a place for production, research, exchange, and/or study. How it takes a position in relation to the professional art scene is very much embedded within the character of an initiative or organisation. How does this correlation find place between what takes place within and elsewhere and which position does the guest studio take in this?

Organisation

The organisation around a guest studio affects its development, growth, and capacity. Which place does the guest studio take within the organisation of the initiative? Next to this, there are various possible forms in both a practical and strategic sense. Consider an institution with internal or external committees, various commissions for task division, or the bringing in of an external curator or critics, etc.

History and development

A distinction is thus to be made in the situation and the background preceding the development of the guest studio. Is there talk of a given or self-created situation?

What was the original setup? What were the conditions at the time? Who took the initiative and what contribution did they make? What shifts have taken place meanwhile in the profile, the organisation, and in programming? Much consideration has been given to the history of the establishment of the guest studios involved in this research, in the expectation that the factors which make a guest studio what it is may thereby come to light.

Objective

This research has been undertaken with an eye open for the diversity of what is offered, and for diversity in the application of those involved. The objective is to put the richness which is offered under the spotlight, and from this to take on a structure rather than to impose a structure. It is the intention to give an impression of the duties and pressures and of the pleasure and satisfaction of the work which artists and others involved more often than not do on a voluntary basis.

The preliminary research has been carried out by Hanna Sohler and Heidi Vogels. Hanna Sohler completed her masters in General Cultural Science at the UVA in Amsterdam. This research project was intended as an internship and as research for her graduation thesis with as subject 'Guest studios in the Netherlands and their effects'. Heidi Vogels is an employee of Trans Artists.

1646

1646 is an artists' initiative established in an old aristocratic home from 1646 in the centre of The Hague. The initiative has lately been taken over by four recently-graduated, enthusiastic artists. 1646 has received support from the municipal government in The Hague in order to realise new plans. One of these plans is a guest studio. At present, the building is in fact being renovated so that initiative-takers can have an influence upon the layout of the building and let this fit with their wishes and ideas.



Current organisation

Although 1646 has only existed for 10 years, it already has a long list of organisers. This 'changing of the guard' is a conscious choice: 1646 wishes to be a platform for artists in The Hague. Each new generation of artists must therefore have the space to form their own, new ideas. 1646 provides the framework for this, within which operations can be flexible. At present a young community of artists from Sweden, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands have their turn. They wish to use their varying backgrounds and networks to establish a new *modus operandi* for the initiative. They intend to be able to hand over the building to others after 3-4 years, and so to keep 1646 dynamic.

Renovation

1646 is being renovated with support from the municipal government in The Hague and from the European Union. The municipal government of The Hague provides active guidance in the support of cultural breeding-places, and initiates the renovation of buildings, gives subsidies, and offers help in applying for subsidies from third parties. In this manner the subsidy was obtained

from the EU, intended for among other things the establishment of a guest studio. After the renovation of 1646, expected at the end of 2005, 1646 will possess an exhibition space on the ground floor, four studios for permanent tenants, and a guest studio. There is (not yet) any accommodation associated with the guest studio. To address this, collaboration is taken into consideration with other initiatives in The Hague.

Development phase

Johan, one of the current caretakers of 1646, proposes that the lively cultural climate of The Hague works in the favour of 1646.

"In a relatively small city such as The Hague, you can really make a mark as an artists' initiative and have influence."

agentur:

***agentur:* is an artists' platform for research and experiment in the district of De Baarsjes in Amsterdam-West. The initiative wishes to offer the possibility of developing and presenting new projects for young international artists at work in diverging disciplines as well as curators. For this, *agentur:* maintains a guest studio in a former shop building. The shop itself is used as a work and presentation space, and two small rooms and a kitchen serve as accommodation. In the presentation space, lectures and other the activities of *agentur:* regularly take place. The guest studio has an important function for *agentur:*, making it possible to receive artists from various backgrounds. This fits with the meaning of the work *Agentur*, German for travel bureau or arbitration bureau.**

The institution is run by Karin Christof (Germany) and Delphine Bedel (France). Karin is a writer, curator, and production leader of art projects in the Netherlands and elsewhere. Delphine is an artist and formerly artistic director of the art space 'Etablissement d'en Face' in Brussels.



Gaining recognition

The *agentur:* foundation was established in 2004 after the municipal district of De Baarsjes had

bestowed a space. *agentur:* was able to be taken into the art project 'De Witte Ruijter' (The White Horseman), which had been established by the district. It was expected that *agentur:* would offer a cultural programme to the district, and through this *agentur:* came against the desire for culture in the district. *agentur:* took advantage of the opportunity to establish their activities.

In the beginning, the establishment of *agentur:* was not easy. Subsidy applications for the guest artists and for activities were initially rejected. It also proved to be more difficult than expected for guest artists to obtain subsidies in their own countries for a residency at *agentur:*. Eventually it came to be realised that guests must themselves finance their project costs and presentations. *agentur:* does indeed support the guests as much as possible in the development of concepts and the organisation of their projects. Meanwhile, *agentur:* has been able to realise several projects in collaboration with other institutions: Maison Descartes, Cargo, and ZiM (an artists' project in Rotterdam).

Eastern Europe

In the future, *agentur:* will among other things begin seeking collaboration with other institutions and guest curators, in particular those in Eastern Europe. There is much development taking place here, and it would be a fine thing to give artists from these countries a chance to realise a project in Western Europe, in Amsterdam.

Selection

Artists apply for the guest studio programme via the website of Trans Artists, and via the networks and contacts which *agentur:* itself has. A work period consists of 6 months. The selection is made on the basis of the quality of the work and how the artist wants to make use of the space. Preference goes to work with a conceptual objective, and further to this, consideration is given to whether the work fits in with programming and objectives of *agentur:*.

Beeldenstorm/Daglicht

On the campus of the Technische Universiteit Eindhoven is the bronze foundry Beeldenstorm, which together with Grafisch Atelier Daglicht and the Meulen Art Centrum forms a platform for two- and three-dimensional art. Beeldenstorm is established in the workshop of a traditional bronze foundry. In the adjacent building of Meulenstein Art House resides Grafisch Atelier Daglicht. Artists are given stimulation to experiment in the workshop with both disciplines. Since 2002, Beeldenstorm and Daglicht have begun a collaboration with the project 'Guest studios'.

Multidisciplinary

In 1992, the artists' workshop Beeldenstorm was established following a donation of bronze casting supplies by the visual artist Harry Storms. In 1994 the workshop for foundry techniques started. The emphasis at Beeldenstorm lies on the content development of art. Experimentation with various disciplines is of great importance. Work is not taken out of the hands of artists, rather they are assisted by the workshop in carrying out their projects. Artist and assistants move together through all facets of the project.



Guest studios project

In 2002, Beeldenstorm began, together with Daglicht and Meulenstein Art House, the 'Guest studios' project. This project has been partially financed by Meulenstein. In three adjacent, bright studio spaces, three artists can work for a period of 8 weeks. After the work period, a presentation of 1 day takes place in the studio. Next to the guest studio, all available facilities are put at the disposal of the artists. The guests can also make use of the knowledge and experience of the staff, in order to delve more deeply into techniques with which they have little or no experience.

The guest artists and the organisers see the pressure of time and the combination of two disciplines as the biggest plus points of a residency with Beeldenstorm/Daglicht. Experimentation with other disciplines and the combination of these compels artists to work more decisively. This furthers productivity. However, Beeldenstorm puts the emphasis on the experiment rather than the end product. This can make a contribution towards the development of technical and visual quality. The organisers propose that everything revolves around this development, and the development of individual artists naturally forms a part of this. Beeldenstorm and Daglicht do not possess guest accommodation for artists, however it is possible to stay overnight in the workshop. The larger part of the guest artists come from the Netherlands and often go home at the weekend.

Differences

There are a number of differences between Beeldenstorm and Daglicht. Beeldenstorm

maintains all staff in paid service, whereas Daglicht can offer a small remuneration for work carried out. Further to this, Daglicht makes no distinction between an external committee and an executive committee such as is the case with Beeldenstorm, but instead has one organisation responsible for both tasks. A logical consequence of this is that Beeldenstorm has more manpower and time available for the running and organisation of the guest studios.

The future

More and more art academies are losing their own workshops. Places such as Beeldenstorm and Daglicht can fill in this shortage, dependant on demand from the academies. Consideration is being given to a collaboration with the Design Academy in Eindhoven, and talks are taking place with the Jan van Eyck Academie in Maastricht. Running a workshop such as Beeldenstorm and Daglicht requires much from the organisers, but for organiser of Beeldenstorm Patrick Meis attracting people from outside is not an option: "You must take account that you are letting a lot of work out of your hands. In the difficulty that there is in keeping the organisation running there is also a certain charm. It is a challenge to give an input to the content of the profession and to create new possibilities. We will keep doing this: we are aiming more and more towards collaboration, between the various disciplines and mutually between artists."

Duende

Duende is an artists' initiative (est. 1984) which runs a studio complex in an old school building with space for 43 studios. It is quite a building, with old-fashioned heavy stairs, long corridors, and with lovely spacious, bright studios. Three of these have been in use since 1995 as guest studios.



Running

Duende is an association within which a foundation has been established for the organisation and the running of guest studios. This foundation has as its goal the offering of work and residential space in Rotterdam for

national and international artists. Through this, Duende wishes to stimulate diversity and flexibility.

Guests for two guest studios are nominated by Hangar in Barcelona and an art centre in Hessen. Guests for the third studio are nominated by Duende itself. The guests or the organisations involved pay the rent and project costs themselves.

"Sometimes it clicks, sometimes not"

We spoke to Maarten Janssen and Marleen van Wijngaarden, both artists with a studio space in the building. Marleen and Maarten experience Duende as a pleasant environment in which to work as artists. Everyone can go their own way. Nevertheless, one is connected with others within the building. At first, a number of studios were made available to artists from outside Rotterdam, although the idea very quickly developed for a guest studio programme. Marleen and Maarten have been involved with this from the beginning. Maarten: "Artists come and go here on a regular basis, with three guest studios. There is no structured programme as far as guidance, filling in projects, or collaborations are concerned. There is however a meal organised to bring people into contact with each other, as well as with other artists from B.a.d. and Kaus Australis. Sometimes it clicks, and there is a lot of contact, sometimes not. It can also be the case that artists use the guest studio as a base, for travelling or visiting other places. That is a shame, since we would rather not see the studio as a hotel. You can't always tell how it is going to turn out beforehand, though."

Organisation – change and reflections

In the coming together of Duende and the initiative Casco, Duende grew in a very short space of time from 12 into 42 studios. To protect the input and voice of all artists, it was decided to establish an association and a committee for day-to-day running: Duende Aktiviteiten. Since the day-to-day committee consists of only five members, decisions can be taken quickly and that gives impetus for the organisation of projects.

"You must not underestimate the running of a guest studio programme", says Marleen. "It can be at the cost of your own work, and eventually at cost to the organisation of all activities around it, such as the organisation of a project, exhibition, or collaboration. That is a shame, since these are actually the things which make it nice for everyone. Duende enjoys name recognition within and outside of the Netherlands through a 20-year history of activities and projects. We can allow ourselves a bit less time and consideration for external presentations. This will give once again some space to attend to organisational and content aspects, to the possibilities and developments within the organisation."

Het Wilde Weten

After an extensive renovation, artists' initiative Het Wilde Weten ("The Wild Knowledge") opened its doors again on 27th August 2004. Since its establishment 15 years ago, the initiative has built up a reputation as a lively platform for contemporary art, in a former convent in the centre of Rotterdam. Het Wilde Weten is a studio complex where 20 artists and designers are accommodated. In addition to this, there is a project space for exhibitions, lectures, and events, such as the Rotterdam VHS festival, a festival for short art films and videos. There is also a guest studio.



New intake

We sidle up with the artist Bas Zoontjes in the kitchenette at the edge of the guest studio. Zoontjes has already been involved for some time with Het Wilde Weten. The guest studio came into being out of offering space to artists who needed to be in Rotterdam for short periods. This hospitality grew into a structured guest studio programme, which began in 1999. After a short period of renovation of the building by the municipal government, the reopening in 2004 went hand-in-hand with the exchange of a large part of the old guard for younger replacement, tells Zoontjes. The new intake is very ambitious, he explains. Many of them come from the Rijksacademie in Amsterdam, and bring a whole new network with them. The initiators have laid a solid, organisational base for Het Wilde Weten, from which the new generation can continue building.

Professionalisation

The new artists work at a speedy tempo towards the professionalisation of the organisation. All 20 artists from Het Wilde Weten take part in the organisation. This is divided into 4 commissions which each takes on a set of tasks. The committee consists of 4 people. This division is to the good of the decision making process, and further to this, the conviction prevails that Het Wilde Weten is a community where everyone must make their contribution. A group of graphic designers work in the roof of the former chapel. As a contribution to the organisation, they

design publications for Het Wilde Weten, with as the result a clear style with which the initiative can present itself in a recognisable way. In completing the programming, the initiative works in collaboration with the Piet Zwart Instituut and the Rijksacademie.

Structural funds

The changes which have taken place in the running of the building have been advantageous: since recently, this has been in the hands of the OBR (Ontwikkelings Bedrijf Rotterdam ("Rotterdam Development Company") – a municipal service). This gives certainty and comfort to what was once a squat initiative.

Gradually, the point has been reached where consideration is being given to structural funds. Due to its programming, Het Wilde Weten already receives a structural subsidy from the Rotterdamse Kunststichting. One of the possibilities for the future is to apply for a structural subsidy from the Mondriaan Stichting.

Locally aimed

Het Wilde Weten has consciously chosen to have only one guest studio. This gives the permanent artists enough time and space to let the guest artist take part in the community and to introduce them to their networks and into the Rotterdam art world.

Het Wilde Weten is an organisation which wishes to be a platform for the Rotterdam art world. Next to this, work is being done on collaboration with other cultural organisations abroad in order to make exchanges possible. It is important for Het Wilde Weten to preserve their independence. Collaborations must come about in natural, self-explanatory ways, via their own networks and with consideration for what they have to offer.

Hotel Mariakapel

During our visit, Hoorn is blanketed in a thick layer of snow, which gives the garden and the chapel of Hotel Mariakapel a strange, idyllic hue. Hotel Mariakapel (HMK) was established by artists Daniëlle van Zuijlen and Bart Lodewijks in order to create a place where artists would have the opportunity, within a specified period of time, to create new work and in collaboration and dialogue with other artists work towards a group exhibition. The work process stands foremost. The presentation or installation is the result of this process and the official conclusion to the journey.

Why a guest studio?

To set off, to seek out other situations and other frameworks within which one can function as an artist: this brings dialogue into being, from which work processes come forth, and this in turn creates dynamism. Lodewijks and Van

Zuijlen know this from their own experience. For them, it became a challenge to bring a place into being where these processes would come together; an independent place which would be set up in such a way that these dynamic processes can come forward.



Realisation

The initiative-takers took over the Mariakapel from the Sandberg Instituut. The institute had maintained it for a number of years as a presentation space. The chapel had become known in Hoorn and in Amsterdam as a place for art projects with a young image and a conceptual character.

A location had though to be sought for guest accommodation, since the intended building next to the Mariakapel could not initially be used for this purpose. A hundred metres away, in a historic former warehouse, there was indeed space available on a temporary basis. After a year and a half, local politicians began to become enthusiastic about the initiative. The orphanage next to the Mariakapel became free, and the commissioner of culture made the building available to HMK in the summer of 2004 'for next to nothing' for a period of two years.

Location

HMK consists of a presentation space, the old chapel, a communal eating and working space, and various residential spaces. The building and the chapel are part of 16th century orphanage complex with a total area of around 500m². Recently, the municipal government has sold the orphanage complex to a housing association, who have plans for a comprehensive renovation. After the renovation, a third of the complex is intended for the new residential provision of

HMK. In the meantime, temporary replacement space is available. The Mariakapel does not need renovation and remains in use as project and exhibition space.

Finances

After a long political journey within the Hoorn municipal government (a 'project' in itself), the chapel (presentation space) was taken on board within the structural enlargement of that authority. More recently, initiatives have been able to apply for subsidy from the provincial government of Noord-Holland for a programme of one year. In addition to the structural subsidy from the municipal government, there has been a programme subsidy since 2005 from the Mondriaan Stichting.

Organisational form and development

The committee of the HMK consists (until November 2005) of Daniëlle van Zuijlen and Bart Lodewijks. They decide the ground rules with respect to content, and take care of practical matters: coordination, administration, programming, and publicity. It was a conscious choice to start small, with the content guidelines as the basis for growth into possibilities within local, national, and international frameworks. Now that HMK has functioned successfully for a number of years, the process of introducing more executive members has begun. In December 2005 two new members joined: an architect (with an eye on the renovation of the building), and an artist (with experience in spatial organisation). A directorial member who is familiar with political and cultural circles in Hoorn is currently being sought.

In short, the committee will in the future consist of a varied group of people who can contribute from their specialism towards the continuation of the initiative.

Programme

Experience teaches that most applications come into being through personal contacts and through a personal network which is at the same time connected with that of multiple artists' initiatives in Europe. There are also many applications from the website of Trans Artists.

Artists can sign up for a work period of between three and six weeks. Each project is looked at to see that contribution HMK can make towards the project costs. The selection of the artists is made by Lodewijks and Van Zuijlen. Important criteria include the quality of the work and the manner in which the intended collaboration in the project involved will be expressed. How well the proposal connects with the possibilities and aims of HMK is also taken in to consideration.

Locality

The local context of Hoorn can play a role in the projects of the artists, although this is not a precondition. However, the inhabitants of Hoorn are kept informed about the activities of HMK

and about the presentations in the chapel, which due to the relatively short work periods are a regular occurrence. Sometimes residents of Hoorn become involved in projects and presentations. In this way, HMK has become a dynamic addition to cultural climate of Hoorn.

Kaus Australis

Kaus Australis is an artists' initiative, established in 1985. The general aim in the development and practice of visual art in an international context, and the stimulation of public interest therein. Kaus Australis concentrates on exchange, by means of the guest studios and the presentation space. These are at the disposal of artists and exhibition-makers from the Netherlands and abroad who wish to work in Rotterdam for a period of time. The organisation has an agreement with the municipal government of Rotterdam: Kaus Australis is the owner of the ground upon which the studio complex is built. The building stands on an industrial estate on the edge of Rotterdam. According to the rules, artists themselves pay the costs for the rent of the studio, the project, and residential costs.



We spoke to Dineke van Huizen and Erik Wijntjes. The space, the light, and the dimensions of the studios are an eye-opener. We could imagine that the space would have a considerable influence upon the work of artists during their stay. The building of Kaus Australis was purpose-built in 1997. The bright construction of the complex can be found in the building, the setting up of the initiative, in the organisation, and in the people. The building consists of 10 studios, which can also be joined together through the use of flexible walls. The available spaces can just as easily be used for an individual work period as for an open and flexible work process. Three of the studios are used as guest studios. The four people of the day-to-day committee have their own studio space. In this way, the guest studios are ever-present.

Guidance

With four permanent artists at Kaus Australis, things are always busy and could not be otherwise lest the guidance of the guest artists fall by the wayside. This varies per person and per project. As a rule, the artists of Kaus

Australis introduce their guest artists into the Rotterdam art world. They take care of contacts with organisations and institutes in the Netherlands. Kaus also organises meals with guest artists from other guest studios in Rotterdam. Dineke: "Kaus Australis sometimes seems to function almost as a postgraduate institution."

Collaborations

Kaus Australis maintains a number of permanent international collaborations. Among these is a private initiative which annually compensates the costs of Japanese artists coming to stay at Kaus Australis. There is a summer exchange with artists from Los Angeles, which has existed for three years. Through these contacts, Kaus Australis has become internationally recognised.

Changes in the organisation

Although Kaus Australis now concentrates primarily on continuity, there have been a number of large changes since its establishment. Originally the intention was to create a whole 'own world' as an artists' initiative. Thought was not given to contacts for guest artists, nor were there concrete plans for the organisation. It was assumed that the organisation would find its own form without too much interference and setting of rules. In the course of the years, this position has altered. Standard contacts have been established for the guest artists, and the composition of the committee has been changed; for the last two years there has been a day-to-day committee as well as an independent, separate committee at a distance.

Link

To offer space and guidance stand foremost at Kaus Australis. Although this requires much time, it remains worth the effort. Wijntjes and Van Huizen regret that there is a shortage of financial means for making the many projects and exhibitions which take place within the building more widely known elsewhere. Kaus Australis is important for the guest artists and for the cultural climate of Rotterdam, but due to a shortage of publicity, Wijntjes and Van Huizen have the feeling of not receiving enough recognition. Kaus Australis functions as a link in the contacts and networks of the artist, an important moment in his or her career. Erik: "We function in the art scene as a (sometimes invisible) crossing point with spin-offs in various directions".

Stichting KiK

Stichting KiK, established in 2003, is a place for art and cultural exchange in Kolderveen, near Meppel in Drente. KiK occupies an old dairy and presides over a attractive yet raw and monumental project space, the cheese hall of the old factory. KiK offers space in six permanent living/working spaces for artists and in one

guest studio with workshop. All this is surrounded by a lush garden and outstretched grasslands.



Establishment

The starting point for this initiative was the empty state of an old dairy with cheese hall in Kolderveen; a place with potential. Together with architect and artist friends, Loes Heebink took the initiative in giving the old factory a new direction. Firstly, the initiative took form within the cooperative 'De Venen' ("The Moors"), itself established in 1998.

Stichting KiK was later established in order to provide strong direction and give a content-rich and financially stable basis upon which to build. The foundation consists of an external committee and an executive committee. The 'Noordelijk Covenant' and the province of Drenthe cover a share of the annual budget. This is not enough to also finance the annual programming of the guest studio. One year ago, the Fonds voor Beeldende Kunst, Vormgeving en Bouwkunst ("Fund for Visual Art, Design, and Architecture") stepped in to help. The BKVB is financing, on a trial basis, two work periods per year, each of three months. The fund can decide on the artists for these periods. KiK is the only Dutch guest studio to be financially supported by the BKVB.

Setup and environment

Stichting KiK has three pillars. Firstly, KiK has been established to offer affordable living and working accommodation for self-supporting, working artists. Though this, the foundation has sold six living and working spaces to artists. Secondly, KiK offers *one* guest studio, established in an outbuilding on the site. The conditions for a residency in the studio are a presentation, and an interaction with the surrounding area in one way or another. The foundation gives the guest artist a budget, and helps with the coordination and development of activities. Work periods last three months. The artists are selected on the basis of the quality of their work. An important criteria is also potential to make a visual gesture in interaction with the surrounding area. Thirdly, KiK makes the old cheese hall available for presentations. The space is very suitable for exhibitions, as well as

theatre, performances, and lectures. Visual art remains the most important element for KiK. The application is multi-disciplinary, and that makes many things possible.

Region

KiK wishes to add an impulse to the cultural climate in Drenthe. The local population is involved in more or less everything which takes place there. When it appeared that the huge chimney which towers above the site would have to disappear, local primary school children organised a sponsored walk to raise money for the upkeep of the chimney. The municipal government and various funds also came to aid the upkeep. Loek Heebink: "KiK wants to allow people to become acquainted with what they do not yet know. We receive little cultural stimulus from our surroundings, thus is it more important to create for oneself an inspiring living and working environment. We are thankfully not the only cultural institution to stand up for this in the North. That is stimulating."

Organisation and personal bonds

The five-person committee of KiK takes care of the running of the foundation and coordinates the programming. This personal input gives charm to the initiative. The passion of the initiative-takers is infectious. However, it is not easy to delegate tasks. Despite this, the committee is slowly striving towards this. The committee members always have a lot to deal with in their own professional practice as artist, art historian, or exhibition-maker. Moreover, the committee must ensure quality and professionalism for the future. That will require a better balance between the personal input of the committee, and that of other involved parties. Loes Heebink is trying to make the organisation as businesslike as possible, by means of rigid division of tasks. KiK will slowly break loose from the link to just one person. A sturdy structure must guarantee continuity. It is a process through which the initiative can learn to 'stand on its own two feet', and can develop its own identity. KiK has already begun this process. The aims are clear, the lines are drawn.

Kunsthuis Syb



Guest studio Kunsthuis Syb began in 2000 in a building on the main street of the little village of Beetsterzwaag. In between the Blokker (a store found on every Dutch high street) and the local baker seems like a strange place for an artists' initiative. Also, the monumental building is anything but conventional, although with its old-fashioned façade it at first glance seems perfectly normal. Inside, however, a surprise awaits: a remarkable combination between the walls of the old building and the large glass frontage to the rear of the house. Corners, alcoves, and closed-off walls abound, and the only flat wall to be found was placed there by the organisation themselves. The building functions as an opposite to the traditional art space, and as a blatant challenge for artists.

Setup

We speak with Anja Swint, herself an artist as well as one of the organisers of the guest studio. Kunsthuis studio came about as a bequest of Sybren Hellinga, who wanted to allow artists to work in the house for short periods of time and to stimulate the combination of various disciplines. On the ground floor is a large exhibition space and a garden. The kitchen and a working space are to be found on the first floor, and on the top floor are two bedrooms and a bathroom for guest artists. The building in its entirety serves as a living and working place for the artists, and is from the ground up arranged for this purpose. Artists are invited to live in the house for a period of 5 weeks. They are themselves responsible for filling in this time, however there is a project coordinator who keeps in contact with the artists on a weekly basis.

Syb makes an allowance available for the guest artist, on the basis of a project proposal and the budget. Syb never pays more than 80% of the expenses. It is the intention of Syb that artists consciously choose for a project and residence in the building. The house is open every weekend for visitors, partly in order to allow the local community to see what goes on there, and partly to ensure that the kunsthuis does not exclude itself from Beetsterzwaag. Every work period finishes with a presentation. These presentations are by and large well attended by the inhabitants of Beetsterzwaag, and also by critics, artists, and art lovers from the wider surroundings.

Art curator and collaborations

Kunsthuis Syb usually invites guest artists. The organisation keeps its eyes and ears open, and often attends exhibitions, most of all the end exams of art academies, in order to select artists for a residency. People must consciously choose to work at Syb, and it must be shown in the project proposal that they can do something with the unconventional space. Syb also always invites an 'artist-curator'. In preparation for the work period at Syb, this person stimulates the artist to embark upon a collaboration with

another artist, who comes from a different starting point or who is at home in another discipline. The most important point of a work period at Kunsthuis Syb is not so much the outcome of the project as the work process itself, the mutual collaboration between artists, and the use of the location.

Virtual organisation

15 people work for Kunsthuis Syb, among whom are committee members, designers, and a project coordinator. Except for the project coordinator, they all work on a voluntary basis. Further to this, there are two volunteers from the village who help artists to find their bearings. Since the start of 2000 the organisation has been professionalised, most of all through involving people with experience, both in filling the vacancy for a project coordinator as well as those of the other, voluntary positions. Through this, the organisation functions well. Syb receives a structural subsidy and now, after 5 years, the moment has come to set things in balance and look forward. Plans are being developed for the future programming of content, the expansion of networks, and where necessary the search for partners for collaboration. Within the foundation, contact between members of the organisation mostly takes place via email. In this respect, Kunsthuis Syb is something of a virtual organisation, excepting the house itself of course, where everything comes together. In this, the artists who work in the house form part of the initiative. Anja Swint notes that more and more people wish to spend time in Syb. She is of the opinion that, certainly for artists from the west of the country, it can be interesting to work for a while in a small village, in the middle of the Frisian grasslands.

Steim

Steim possesses a technical workshop, 5 studios for composers, a recording studio, an audio-editing space, a small project space, and 5 guest residences. All this can be found under the roof of a richly-decorated Art-Nouveau building on a canal in the centre of Amsterdam. Steim is in fact a relatively small initiative, but has gained fame internationally as a place for the development of electronic music. Musicians, composers, performers, researchers and artists from varying disciplines are welcome here.

Guest studio

Musicians and composers very often endure a nomadic existence, from performance to performance, from the one project to the next, staying in impersonal hotel rooms without facilities for making music or concentrating on a composition. On top of this, the electronic music scene has a distant and somewhat cold image. This was reason enough for Michel Waisvisz, director of Steim, to offer an alternative in the

form of a music centre with comprehensive facilities, *and* guest studios.



In short

Steim was established in 1968 in order to make electronic musical instruments available to artists and musicians. In 1982 the foundation obtained the use of a building on the Achtergracht canal in Amsterdam. Since then, it has grown to include ten part-time employees: technicians, researchers, performers, project assistants and a secretary. Including guests, around twenty people work every day in the building. Steim develops electronic musical instruments and software (LiSa, Image/ine), holds workshops (including for children), offers research positions, programmes festivals, concerts, and lectures, and gives technical support and feedback on content to organisations and orchestras. In addition to the subsidy that Steim receives from the four-year subsidy plan of the Dutch authorities, these services are an important source of income for Steim.

Staying small

Despite a large range of activities, projects, international networks and recognition, Steim chooses consciously to stay small. "In this way you keep things close to you", says Waisvisz. "At the same time you stay flexible, and you can react directly to new situations and conditions."

Networks and collaborations

Steim is embedded in international networks, and not only those of electronic music but also those of disciplines which connect with electronic music. The personal contacts of staff members play a large role. Every two years, a new artistic director is brought in, so as to freshen up contacts and ideas. Through the contribution that Steim makes to the development of electronic music, the organisation attracts the interest of researchers, technicians, music centres, and courses in musical education, and there is also interest from organisations in other disciplines. There have been collaborations with: HKU Utrecht, Conservatorium Den Haag, the Piet Zwart Academie, the Amsterdams Conservatorium, the TU Delft, and the Rietveld Academie. Education programmes and institutions from other countries have also

shown an interest in Steim. In order to reach a new audience, Steim also appears at festivals and meetings. There is also an important plan to make the knowledge and products of Steim more widely known in Eastern Europe.

The largest part of the media technology there drifts in the direction of PC related software. This delays the exchange of knowledge and expertise and any collaboration enormously. One of the possibilities is to train technicians there.

The guests

Musicians, researchers, artists and performers can apply for a stay of at most a month at Steim. Guests are selected on the basis of a project or work proposal that fits with the technical possibilities and expertise of Steim. Steim is open to experimentation and stimulates a multidisciplinary approach. Many things are possible. Associated organisations such as Montevideo, V2_, de Waag, Paradiso, de IJsbreijer, the Holland Festival and numerous musical communities make use of the guest studios. For them, Steim fulfils the function of a hotel with appropriate facilities, at a cost of 30 Euro per night. In this way, Steim has created a place where artists and musicians from differing backgrounds and disciplines can bump into one another around the kitchen table.

Stichting B.a.d.

Stichting B.a.d. is an artists' initiative, established in 1987. The foundation has been located since 1991 in a squatted school building on the edge of Rotterdam. Classrooms were magically transformed into light and spacious studio spaces, and made partially inhabitable. The building contains five guest studios and two apartments. Guests are mostly selected from personal networks, and contacts are selected on the basis of the motivation for staying and working for a period in Rotterdam. Within this, being prepared to take part in the activities and works of B.a.d. is a requirement. For B.a.d., independence stands foremost, as well as an open structure and involved correlation between the permanent artists and the guest artists.



Guest studio as component of the complex

We spoke with the artists Bibo and Aletta de Jong, who are responsible for the guest studio programme. The idea for guest studios occurred out of the need for vitality, for the recurring presence of new people in the building. Hospitality is also an important motive. Bibo and De Jong describe Stichting B.a.d. as a 'location', a temporary place for travelling artists to carry out projects. Artists who are waiting for a studio elsewhere can also work at B.a.d. It is expected of the guest artists that they will become involved in the initiative and that they will help in carrying out various tasks. All artists in the building are part of the initiative, and take responsibility for organisational tasks, and this includes the guests. This is taken into account in the selection process. The motivation for staying and working in Rotterdam and in particular with Stichting B.a.d. is in a large measure important. Discipline, nationality, and age play no role in the selection.

"Consciously independent!"

Stichting B.a.d. does not receive any structural subsidies in the Netherlands. The artists of the initiative all work on a voluntary basis. "That is not always easy, but it makes us independent, and that gives freedom", say Bibo and De Jong. "Every artist here has only to make themselves accountable to the other artists of the initiative, and to no-one else."

This choice means that the guest artists must pay themselves for their stay, however the costs are relatively low due to the location in a squatted building. The foundation would gladly like to obtain the building legally. In order to realise this, the foundation is on the lookout for partners who can contribute to the large investment that would need to be made in the building. The guest studios within Stichting B.a.d. will remain an important part of the initiative in the future. They form part of the aim of being an initiative which can offer work and residential space to artists from Rotterdam and elsewhere; an organisation which stems from offering hospitality and which takes part in the creation of possibilities for artists.

Community

At Stichting B.a.d., much consideration is given to the organisation of the complex. This is an important detail, given that the artists there believe in collaboration and a feeling of community. Which spaces are communal, which are private? How must we divide up the spaces and what are the consequences of this for contact between the artists present and between the guests and permanent artists? Can the organisation of the space stimulate collaboration? Bibo and De Jong: "These questions keep us busy, since we wish to bold onto flexibility. That is a condition for us for the further development of the organisation."

V2_

V2_ has developed over 24 years from a small artists' initiative in Den Bosch into a well-known centre for art and 'instable' media in Rotterdam. The current V2_Lab is an international workplace for artists, scientists, and technicians. The workshop gives technical and production support to artists from across the whole world. The emphasis lies on exchange between various disciplines. What is now being talked about is ambition and professionalisation.



We spoke with Anne Nigten, manager of V2_Lab, and Marloes de Valk, project manager and co-ordinator of the guest studio programme. The initiative-takers had from the start the ambition to make V2_ into an international laboratory for art and media technology, which would lead the field in 'instable media'. To make this possible, strategic work has been done on the creation of requirements, such as the professionalisation of the organisation (since the establishment of the foundation, there has been a separate committee), and the maintenance of networks. In 1994 V2_ received a subsidy from the Dutch OC&W (Education, Culture, and Science) Ministry, which made it possible to offer paid employment. V2_ could then relocate from Den Bosch to Rotterdam. V2_ now has at least 26 people in service, for on average 4 days per week. The background of employees differs starkly: multidisciplinary artists, technicians, technicians, scientists, designers, and project managers. The centre has bloomed into being able to offer a range of activities next to the ongoing research: workshops, exhibitions, and festivals. The shop, which has operated since 2005, offers products and knowledge under the name SIM Central. V2_ also publishes its own works as V2_ Publishing. The digital archive also brings a wealth of knowledge and project details within reach of the target groups.

National an international networks

V2_ is a place where knowledge of the instable media can come together from various disciplines. Therefore, the centre stays in close contact with many international networks. Universities, art education programmes, art organisations, and research centres want to work in collaboration with V2_, and submit project proposals. For each proposal, the contribution which V2_ can deliver is considered,

along with whether it is possible to fit it in with the programme, and whether staff are available. V2_ is known most of all abroad for its forward-looking approach, although it is also well-known in the Netherlands.

"All the same, we have noticed that the barrier for Dutch artists knocking at our door is quite high", says Anne Nigten. "And because of this, we wish to give more consideration to the presentation of our work in the Netherlands."

The guest studio

Anne Nigten: "The running of the guest studio is concerned most of all with practical questions, this we come to realise time and again. The apartment is now undergoing a minor renovation so that we can in the future offer accommodation to two artists at the same time. Experience teaches that a feeling of community makes a residency more pleasant and interesting, and that you can get to know other people and their work. Who knows, professional collaboration and friendship can be the result." Artists are selected on the basis of discipline. The 'instable' media must play a role in the project proposal, which must in turn also possess a technological component, within which the possibilities of the V2_ Lab can be integrated. The project must of course also have an interesting and challenging content. Nigten: "The artist must give evidence of critical thinking, and he or she must know how to bring this over to the public." V2_ connects the artist-in-residence programme with projects and festivals, such as the EMARE programme, the European Pépinières programme for young artists, and the DEAF Festival. Therefore, the V2_ guest programme takes on a different form, scale, and theme each year.

Results

Visiting the guest studios, tasting the atmosphere, and meeting the initiative-takers and those responsible for their organisation was a remarkable experience. We had expected that a varied image would emerge from this tour, but that the diversity was so great was indeed something of a surprise.

No readymade models

The visits confirmed our assumption that there are no readymade models for the establishment and running of guest studios. Even our initial division into three groups (facilitation and production – conceptual and content development – personal approach) proved to be difficult to hold on to. Against this, the motivations of the initiative-takers, the history of their establishment, the concrete conditions, the financial possibilities and the local cultural climate, to name just a few, diverge starkly. A combination of multiple factors decides the profile of a guest studio.

Profiles

As the guest studio of Kunsthuis Syb came about through a legacy, it was able to be up and running within a short period of time. The organisers chose for a project-based form of art production, whereby the unusual characteristics of the building, a 16th century building on the main street of the Frisian village of Beetsterzwaag, could be involved. The Kunsthuis also has a public meaning for the inhabitants of the village. These factors together determine the profile of this guest studio, which more or less fall together with Kunsthuis Syb. In contrast, the guest studio of V2_ in Rotterdam is 'only' one of the important components of this organisation. V2_ exists within the realm of interdisciplinary research into 'unstable media'. From a small artists' initiative, it has grown into a internationally-recognised platform in this area, complete with publishing house, archive, and laboratory. All this plus a guest studio, which also does service in filling in multiple varying facilities of V2_ for the further development of research into 'unstable media'.

Kaus Australis has a completely different profile: you can take it as an example of a 'Do It Yourself' initiative, one where doing and working stand central. The creation of space for artists, with its own studios, guest studios, production, and presentation stand foremost: on a piece of land acquired on an industrial estate in Rotterdam, Kaus Australis realised a self-designed building, the core of the initiative with seven studios and three guest studios. The mentality of independence stands central. Stichting KIK in the Kolderveen in Drenthe is once again another story completely: an example of a guest studio which is supported by the enthusiasm of one person. Naturally, this is not without the support and work of others, but is all the same foremost the result of personal commitment. This is a subjective form of approach to the guest studio, with all the charm that this can bring.

Combination of factors

However, whoever looks deeper into the workings of the guest studios will notice quickly that the above factors also play a role with other guest studios. No guest placement can exist without a determined person to take the weight upon his or her shoulders, and with every guest studio there exists a "Do It Yourself" mentality. In many cases, the guest studio also fills in other facilities and activities of the initiative. And each place knows periods of forward-looking development next to periods of calm or reorientation.

And last but not least, the guest artists themselves determine in considerable measure the profile of the guest studio. They determine what actually takes place there, what is made, what can be seen, and which interests are followed.

Observations

In place of attempting to present all these varying factors in a systematic overview, it appeared to us to make more sense to extract a few salient points: matters which play a part in the running of every guest studio, and which time and again pose questions. Although these choices are well-considered and indeed sometimes made strategically, they are again made in the context of circumstances and by coincidence.

The subjects which are laid out below are in one sense arbitrary: they are the questions which occurred to us and which were brought forward by the organisers of the guest studios during our conversations.

The creation of new space

Those who have plans to start a guest studio often do this out of a personal need or ideal. The creation of a new space and of a new structure: this is the basis upon which it begins. Existing frameworks are a stimulus, but also an obstacle. More often than not there is no talk of a well thought through long-term strategic plan. "First building it up, growth, guidance, and then further development", propose Daniëlle van Zuijlen and Bart Lodewijks from HOTEL MARIAKAPEL. "And on the way, strengthen the continuity so that the guest studio can begin to function in a way that speaks more for itself, with a professional committee and with an allowance for the people who do structural work there."

Many organisers of guest studios will echo the sentiments of Van Zuijlen and Lodewijks. Many will recognise themselves in the mentality of "getting on with it", and in the making use of available possibilities. Now, the initiative-takers can take pleasure in what they have done. Once again, they must fight to make true their vision. HOTEL MARIAKAPEL could make use of already-existing facilities and structures (the space served earlier as a production place for students of the Sandberg Instituut). But to realise the initiative and to give financial certainty, a long road had to be gone down along the channels of the local political process.

Use and hospitality

Several organisers of guest studios, amongst whom Aletta de Jong (Stichting B.a.d.), Marleen van Wijngaarden (Duende) and Dineke van Huizen (Kaus Australis), said that they noticed how much the use of guest studios is changing. Artists set themselves up in a more and more independent way in the carrying out of their professional practice. They go their own way; they work more in a project-based manner, and look towards alternatives to established circuits for the making and renewal of and the exhibition and distribution of their work. This they do throughout their careers. Next to this, they take on an open attitude towards other disciplines and new working conditions. This does not take away from the fact that they are looking for

facilities which fit them, and set out high requirements in terms of professionalism from the establishment where they are working as a guest. They want to make optimal use of the possibilities which a residency can offer to their career.

The consequence of this is that the distinction between a purely facilitative use of a work period and a more participatory and project-based use is no longer easy to make. There has already been talk of a combination of various forms of use, all in the interest of the requirements and input of the guest.

This change adds new requirements to the hospitality: on the one hand greater flexibility, and on the other a clearer profile.

Continuity

No guest studio can guarantee continuity without organisation. House rules, contracts, maintenance. Adjustment of the activities of the guest to fit in with that of the initiative. Purely practical matters to allow a residency to go smoothly, and to allow the following guests to make use of the guest studio.

Continuity in the organisation, and in particular in the personal responsibility for the nuts and bolts, is as at least as important. Since most of the organisers are themselves artists and have their own professional practice, the search for a balance between their own work and that of the guest studio is a good point to turn and reflect. Connected with this, there comes time and again the question as to how the creation of a strong structure can preserve dynamism instead of working against it. Some guest studios consciously choose for a regularly-changing leadership, such as *agentur*: in Amsterdam or 1646 in Den Haag. This approach guarantees a breath of fresh air on a regular basis. Other guest studios in fact hold fast to continuity in the occupation of leadership positions, such as Kaus Australis or Stichting KIK, so that the leadership is well-worn and is can therefore be flexible in dealings with guests.

Support

Support from the authorities can be an important stimulus for the guest studios, with a long term, effective "spin-off".

In this way, the advantageous cultural guidance of the Rotterdam municipal authorities at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s stimulated artists' initiatives and allowed them to be in a state to be able to set up and continue guest studios. Spaces were pointed out, and advantageous arrangements made such as low rents and project subsidies.

That such advantageous conditions do not belong to the past can be seen in the example of the current stimulatory guidance in The Hague. 1646 is now being smartened up with financial support from the municipal authorities. Four young artists have recently taken over the running of this ten-year-old initiative. The artists are free here to adjust the renovation of the building to their own plans. The rent that will later need to be paid will remain relatively low.

As a rule, subsidies from the authorities are usually restricted to project subsidies. Only individual initiatives receive structural subsidies from the local, provincial, or national authorities. However, with such structural subsidies, such as became apparent in our conversation with V2_, the guest studio is not recognised as a separate, important function.

Finances and subsidies

Finances are of course important for every guest studio. No guest studios in the Netherlands can exist without this. Interestingly enough, the establishment history of the guest studios which we visited shows that subsidies are not a requirement for the initial setting up of and development of a guest studio.

The initiative-takers get on with things despite this, in most cases regardless of support from the authorities. They work with an independent mentality. That does not mean that they do not give consideration to financial management, but there are financially advantageous conditions, such as private money or a legacy, or (temporary) creative solutions to cover the costs of the guest studio. For example: if a guest studio forms part of a larger whole (a free studio in a building with several occupied studios), then the costs can be spread. Or, the costs of a residency are wholly or partly covered by the guest. Sometimes services are offered. Also, exchanges 'with closed subsidies' can offer opportunities.

No guest studios have taken off to become commercial enterprises.

In the end, not receiving subsidies does indeed have an effect on the further development of the initiative and upon the choices that can be made. Can only cheaper projects be carried out? Can only financially self-sufficient artists or artists with less access to their own sources of subsidy stay in the guest studio? How much money is there for publicity? How can a guest studio deliver good presentations in order to reach out and to make known what takes place there?

As far as subsidies are concerned, there is much variation: from initiatives which are almost fully subsidised, such as V2_, to initiatives with a very small or with no subsidy. Stichting B.a.d. has consciously chosen not to ask for any subsidy. Aletta de Jong: "This gives freedom, a special quality in the creation of a space with its own circuit, own production, own exchange, own presentation, and its own networks."

International hospitality

Guest studios are set up in order to receive guests on a temporary basis, from the Netherlands but most of all from abroad. That is often the challenge of the guest studio. As there is indeed talk of cultural differences and differences in the artistic mentality, the residency of an artist is an adventure. However, there are also hindrances. Insurance and visas are sometimes a problem, in particular for

artists from countries for which the Netherlands operates a restricted entry policy. "Getting all the documentation in order can be difficult, and then suddenly something can go wrong and a festival, project or performance must be cancelled", tell Bibo (Stichting B.a.d.) and Anne Nigten (V2_).

Recognition

Guest studios play a meaningful role in the contemporary cultural landscape of the Netherlands. As was set out in the introduction, guest studios offer an alternative to established channels for the production, presentation and distribution of art. Those offering the studios usually have intensive contacts with the art world in which they are embedded, but operate in a great measure independently from the established circuits of gallery owners, museum directors, curators, publishing houses and distributors. The guest studios put artists in the position to go their own way, and to expand their contacts and networks in their own way. You will not hear the providers of guest studios complain, but here and there you can indeed hear a little dissatisfaction at a lack of recognition. "We keep going because we attach an importance to this, because we see our place as important, for the artists, for ourselves, and for the art climate in Rotterdam", says Erik Wijntjes of Kaus Australis. Many guest studio providers bring up a lack of recognition from policy-makers and a lack of awareness of the importance of guest studios. It is difficult to break out of the circle wherein a lack of financial means leads to a lack of effective publicity, and a lack of public awareness.

Self-evident

More or less every guest studio is striving towards a self-evident situation: a situation where the wishes and expectations of the providers and of the guest mesh with each other, where all possibilities are made use of, and where the facilities, the organisation, and the presentation of the guest studio fit in together smoothly. This self-evident state of affairs is not always there. How much this applies varies from place to place, and also between different work periods and guests. However, every place does indeed enjoy shorter or longer periods of satisfaction.

Next

In this investigation, Trans Artists has touched upon a few of the issues which make guest studios what they are. In doing so, Trans Artists wishes to make guest studios more visible, and to give more insight into the history of their formation, into the ups and downs of their running, and in their differences and similarities. Furthermore, we hope to play a role in recognising the role which guest studios play in the Dutch cultural landscape, and in the strengthening of their position.

This investigation was set up as broader than the orientating visits of which reports are given in the newsletter of Trans Artists. It has also been a essential broadening of the information on the Pool website. However, it demands a follow-up investigation, with as its most important objective:

The 'toolkit' of and for guest studios

Would it be possible to compile a collection of content-focussed and practical advice and facts, a toolkit which can help in setting up a new guest studio, or with the continuation of existing guest studios? Advice, tips, and information from, for, and by the providers of guest studios themselves.