



## **BRIEF FOR VISUAL ARTS COMMISSION – ART IN THE PARK 2017**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture Organisation (MKIAC) is looking for an artist(s) to create an ambitious, site specific installation for its annual outdoor festival *Art in the Park*. In 2017 the Festival is part of the MK50 programme, an inclusive programme of events and activities celebrating 50 years of Milton Keynes. To commemorate this important milestone the Festival will have an overarching theme of 'leaving old lands, and visions for the future' exploring migration through the prism of 50 years of MK.

The brief is open to individual artists and/or artists working in collaboration.

### **ABOUT ART IN THE PARK**

MK IAC ([www.mkiac.org](http://www.mkiac.org)) has a seven year track record of developing and delivering its pioneering *Art in the Park Festival* (drawing many different communities to a celebration timed for the Eid festivities at the conclusion of Ramadan). The key aim of MKIAC is to build and support community cohesion and integration across Milton Keynes and with particular emphasis on Muslim communities through shared cultural activity and high quality arts delivery. Its primary activity is the Festival which presents live music, storytelling, processional/carnival activity, spoken word and visual arts, with a hugely successful programme of participation, and attracts circa 12,000 attendees each year.

In 2016 MKIAC initiated support from an experienced Artistic Advisory Group and appointed curatorial support from Shubbak Festival, London's largest festival of Contemporary Arab Culture. In 2017 Shubbak Artistic Director Eckhard Thiemann and executive director Daniel Gorman will work closely with *Art in the Park* Director Anouar Kassim to develop its artistic programme including some joint music and spoken word programming.

*Art in the Park* 2017 takes place on Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd July 12 – 7pm in Events Plateau, Campbell Park, Milton Keynes, MK9 4AD

### **THE BRIEF**

In previous years *Art in the Park* has installed a large marquee hosting art exhibitions and workshops. In 2016 the marquee hosted a specially commissioned installation for the first time. We wish to continue and develop this use of the marquee and/or other relevant spaces on the festival site in 2017 by inviting proposals from artists to respond to the MK 50 theme.

Milton Keynes is the UK's most iconic planned city with a ground-breaking utopian grid design. Its design was deliberately internationalist and future looking. Less known is that one of the key planners was a refugee from Nazi repression in Austria, Walter Bor. Geometric and grid patterns also play an important element in many historic Islamic city and garden designs.

As a new city, Milton Keynes' identity and existence is also defined by migration. Compared to other UK cities, virtually every inhabitant is a 'recent arriver' with the city's population only stretching into its third generation.

We invite artists to respond to this rich context and history by proposing ideas for an exciting, ambitious site specific artwork that responds to Milton Keynes as a utopian, idealistic planned city and presents new ideas about what design for future living together may require.

The installation could respond to questions like:

- What cities of the future do we imagine?
- How valid and possible are ideas of Utopia, Idealism and Internationalism today?
- How do migration and new communities shape ideas of future living together?
- What and for whom will cities have to provide refuge in the future?
- Could there be new utopian idealistic designs to a future city - what would it look like?
- How can the current structure of MK be re-imagined in the light of migration and new communities?

The Artist can work in whichever medium they prefer and can include technology and interactive elements

Other issues for consideration

- The work is to be displayed in a large Art Marquee (18m x 9m) but the Artist is free to go beyond the boundaries of the Marquee and explore a multi-sited installation
- The work should be engaging and suitable for family audiences, generating curiosity, discussion and a sense of discovery
- The work has to create a real sense of identity in the busy visual environment of an outdoor festival with funfair and fairground attractions
- Opportunities for developing workshops or participatory activities based on the installation, to be delivered at the Festival.

While not an essential requirement, we will investigate if the selected installation could be toured to other locations beyond Art in the Park. This will depend, of course, on suitable content, materials and construction methods.

## BUDGET

The fee for this commission is £6,900 (+VAT where applicable) to include design costs, artist fees, travel, accommodation, materials and fabrication, delivery, installation and de-installation costs. Any workshop costs will be taken out of a separate budget.

## TIMESCALES

- Application deadline: 17<sup>th</sup> Feb
- Artist Interviews: 27 or 28 Feb
- Delivery of installation: 30<sup>th</sup> June
- Evaluation: July 2017

## ARTIST SPECIFICATION

- A proven track record of producing high-quality artwork for at least 3 years. Please note that this commission is not open to students or recent graduates without a proven track record of previous commissions and publicly sited works.
- Commitment to good environmental practice in minimising impact and pollution.
- Ability to work to tight deadlines to deliver solutions within a fast moving design programme.
- Excellence in artistic vision and critical rigour

## ARTIST OUTPUTS

- Develop and deliver final installation in dialogue with the Artistic Advisory Group and stakeholders
- Attend briefing meetings and the Festival
- Keep the Artistic Advisory Group updated on progress
- Work with the Artistic Advisory Group to ensure the designs will work within the setting
- Produce final report detailing delivery and analysis of the project

## HOW TO APPLY

Artists are requested to submit:

- A short proposal of no more than 500 words detailing your artistic idea and how it responds to the themes and context of Art in the Park and MK50.
- Description of how you would deliver this project including proposed materials, other collaborators, timetable for delivery, installation method
- An initial sketch or visual indication of the work, if possible
- An outline budget
- Images or links to previous work of no more than 10 images (Max 4MB)
- A brief CV to include
  - Public Liability insurance details if applicable
  - References for similar work undertaken

Any queries relating to this brief can be directed to Eckhard Thiemann  
[eckhard@eckhardthiemann.com](mailto:eckhard@eckhardthiemann.com) or 07984 468204 before 15 February.

Please submit your proposals via email by midnight on 17th February to Helen Chamberlain at ArtReach - [helen@artreach.biz](mailto:helen@artreach.biz)