

## **RESIDENCY OF ARTISTIC CREATION** **AT DOMAINE DE BELVAL** **COAL ART AND ENVIRONMENT PRIZE**

**The François Sommer's Foundation, in partnership with the COAL association to provide the laureate of COAL's Art and Environment Prize with an artists' residency at Domaine de Belval (Ardennes, France) which includes financial support for artistic production.**

### **THE RESIDENCY**

The François Sommer Foundation was founded in 1966 by François and Jacqueline Sommer, pioneers of the implementation of a humanist ecology. Faithful to the commitments of its founders, it works for the respectful use of the resources of nature, for the practice of rational hunting, the sharing of wealth of the natural, artistic and cultural heritage for the protection of a biodiversity in which mankind find its proper place.

The Foundation also owns the Museum of Hunting and Nature in Paris, opened in 1967 and built on the Foundation's remarkable collection of ancient, modern and contemporary artwork, weapons and hunting accessories, trophies. The museum strives to study the evolution of the relationship between human and his natural environment through its annual cultural program, composed of temporary exhibitions, guided visits and public workshops, conferences, seminars, performances, screenings, readings, etc.

In the Ardennes, at Belval-Bois-des-Dames, lies François and Jacqueline Sommer's former hunting territory, an estate which has since been bequeathed to their Foundation. With an enclosed area of 600 hectares, it is essentially a forested area covered in meadows and 40 hectares of ponds. It hosts an exceptional variety of animal species, particularly during the migration seasons. This is in part due to the repopulation and preservation efforts carried out on the estate, as intended by François and Jacqueline Sommer.

Now, the domain is also home to the School of Belval, a training center for hunters, providing them with the knowledge and respect for wildlife and ecological balance. It also implements research programs about behavioral-ecology and regularly hosts school groups as well as the general public for specific events.

For several years, the Foundation has focused on enhancing the relationship between the Museum of Hunting and Nature and the Belval estate. Some of the spaces in the Paris museum, designed as urban

lookouts on the Ardennes forest estate, bear witness to this dynamic. The Foundation has also initiated a program to assist artistic production articulated around a creative residence within the Belval estate. The creation program is jointly piloted by the scientific team of the Museum of Hunting and Nature and the Domaine de Belval.

It offers short stays at Domaine de Belval (between 7 and 14 days), with a financial assistance for production. The program covers all disciplines of professional contemporary creation: architecture / landscape design, digital arts, visual arts, comics, cinema / video, dance / performance, design / graphics, literature, theater, fashion, music, photography ....

## **OBJECTIVES**

The artist residency at Belval is linked to François Sommer's Foundation's cultural program.

The residency encourages the creation of work that questions Man's relationship to its natural environment, and will contribute to the dissemination of these works to a wide audience.

The combined knowledge of the scientific and educational teams of the Museum of Hunting and Nature and those of the Belval estate will also be available as a resource for the artists.

Locally, the residency is part of a mission of animation and development of the territory which helps to create a cultural dynamic in an area far from places of artistic creation.

It allows the Belval estate to diversify its exchanges with the outside world, to share and nourish its cultural, scientific and technical expertise, through contact with the actors of contemporary creation.

The cultural program is part of the relationship maintained by the Foundation with the public and private actors of support for creation as well as the local authorities of the native department of its founder, Ardennes. It initiates a partnership with the city of Charleville-Mézières, the capital of Ardennes department in France, associating with its literary residency program and temporary exhibitions program, driven by the local Museums of Arthur Rimbaud's hometown. Since 2013, it has been working in partnership with the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris (with the support of the Neuflyze Vie Foundation) to host the students of Eric Poitevin's atelier for a creative seminar. The foundation has supported the COAL Art and Environment Prize since 2014 and participates in its endowment, offering the laureate a residency at Domaine de Belval with financial assistance for production.

## **RESIDENCY**

### **Accommodation**

Independent accommodation is available for duration of resident's trip. Located in the heart of the estate, on the edge of one of the ponds in the grounds the dwelling contains a living-room, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom and is energy independent (heating, hot water, electricity).

The resident is free to roam the grounds, with the exception of certain areas to which access may at times be prohibited, for example due to forest regeneration or if when doing so would disturb the animals. The resident is also free to work outside of the estate, within the region. The resident may choose to work at the accommodation, however there is no workshop space nor any tools for production. Because of this lack of equipment for production and its remote location, the residency is intended to be for a short duration, a few days to a few weeks at most, depending on the project.

### **Partnership with the town of Charleville-Mézières**

Through partnership with the city of Charleville-Mézières, the residency of Belval is twinned with the literary residency of Museum Arthur Rimbaud, which offers the possibility of exchanges between residents.

### **Financial Conditions**

The residency is subject to a contract involving the foundation and the resident. This contract can be coupled with another, involving the city of Charleville-Mézières. The resident may be an individual or part of a collective. The Foundation offers €3500 (including taxes) to the resident as production aid. The Foundation also offers transport support of up to €1,000 (travel to and from Belval, transport on site), and offers food support of up to €50 per day.

### **Selection Procedure**

The laureate of Coal Art and Environment Prize is offered a residency at Belval. He/she will be chosen among ten finalists, selected through an international open call, by a jury of representatives from the fields of contemporary art, research, ecology and sustainable development.

### **Conditions of Production**

The resident retains all ownership of the physical and mental work produced within the residency of Belval.

The resident has the responsibility to complete the production of the work conceived, with the support of the Foundation, within a year after the end of the residency.

The resident is required to give priority to the Foundation for the purchase of the work produced. Meanwhile the Foundation has an obligation to notify the resident if an organisation or individual expresses an interest in purchasing the residents work.

## Promotion of work

The Foundation has a variety of means by which to promote contemporary art including exhibition spaces, cultural influence over the Museum of Hunting and Nature, material and immaterial editions (publishing, *Billebaude* Magazine, websites...).

The city of Charleville-Mézières, in partnership with the foundation, can also promote work completed by the resident, in their municipal museums.

The decision to purchase or/and expose the work of the resident remains with the Foundation and, if applicable, the city of Charleville-Mézières.

## Specific Constraints

The laureate must read the specific terms and conditions of the residence before accepting.

The laureate can visit the area for one day before accepting these terms and conditions.

He/she is requested to prepare a project file to submit to François Sommer's Foundation and the COAL Association.

The resident is autonomous and can work according to his/her own schedule.

The residence is located in agricultural land and local services are located several kilometers from the area.

The people who work in the domaine of Belval (manager, secretariat, and maintenance personnel of buildings and exteriors) are not art creation professionals.

It is strongly recommended that a non-French resident speaks some basic conversational French.

The resident will also be self reliant in regards to transport so it is strongly advised that the resident has a valid driving license before accepting the residency. It must be stressed that the housing offered is autonomous in regards to its energy provision and therefore, has limited resources for each day (hot water, electricity and heating).

If the laureate cannot accept the residence of Belval, a compensation will be established in consultation with François Sommer's Foundation, the COAL Association and the laureate.