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**Here as the Centre of the World  
a conference for  
Artists & Mediators**

A conference on all things peripheral taking place on May 23 and May 24, 2006, organised by the Dutch Art Institute and hosted by the Rijksmuseum Twenthe in Enschede.

As part of the transnational collaborative project 'Here as the centre of the world' the DAI, with the help of Projectburo Roombeek and the Rijksmuseum Twenthe, organises a two day conference with lectures and presentations by and for art producers and mediators who operate from inside what is traditionally opposed to the centre : the periphery ( as determined by geographical, cultural or by socio-political conditions).

Some, like Charles Esche, claim that the ideological container 'periphery' is completely outdated. Others still immediately recognize their own difficult position when Erwin Jans in his recently released book 'Interculturele Intoxicaties' remarks that "developments resulting from globalization lead to an emphasis on inequality, as regions emerge between North and South and even within occidental societies that are irrelevant from the perspective of the system".

Is it only possible for a small group of cultural operators, a 'Happy Few 'to see their activities relocated from the periphery right into the heart of the centre? Or can every artist or art institute depart from equal conditions for recognition?

And what if it is no longer relevant to present art within the traditional hierarchy of art spaces on more or less successful locations since the World Wide Web is blurring our notions of the 'local versus the global' or the 'dominant versus the subaltern 'in such a way that today ALL involved in art have to rescue their specific audiences from drowning in an ocean of information?

The conference will not emphasize on complaints on the obvious disadvantages of artistic practice in the geographically determined periphery but will instead try to

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list and interconnect stimulating strategies and visions on the challenges as well as on the hidden opportunities in any peripheral location in the arts landscape .

The conference is aimed specifically at all those working inside art institutes, museums and local governments or in their individual practices, from the Netherlands and the Euregion but is open to a general audience with an interest in art as well.

Ideas expressed by keynote-speakers from all over the world will be publicly reviewed and discussed by panels consisting of artists and mediators from the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium and the public.

**Working language: English**

The **Dutch Art Institute** (DAI) is a Master programme of the ArteEZ Institute of the Arts based in Enschede. DAI offers two postgraduate courses in fine art under one roof: DAI private and DAI public. The project Here as the centre of the world brings together young artists from Beirut, Damascus, Diyarbakir, Enschede, Khartoum and Taipei and is managed by Alite Thijsen and curated by Alite Thijsen, Lucy Cotter and Gabriëlle Schleijsen. More information on [www.dutchartinstitute.nl](http://www.dutchartinstitute.nl)

On the 13th of May 2000 the Roombeek district in Enschede was almost entirely destroyed by an explosion in a fireworks depot. In the blast, most houses became derelict and a great number of people died. After the disaster Roombeek had to be completely rebuilt. **Projektburo Roombeek** is not only in charge of the actual rebuilding process but also of the re-animation of the 'soul' of the once so culturally diverse neighbourhood.

The **Rijksmuseum Twenthe** is located on the edge of the Roombeek district in Enschede and was fortunately only partially damaged during the blast. The museum's collection comprises fine art and applied art from the 13th to the 19th century, as well as modern and contemporary art. The Rijksmuseum Twenthe has decided to organize the so-called 'Balén festival' that will take place from May 20 - May 28 2006.

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The occasion is the presentation of parts of the collection depot VB / VR (Van Beijeren / Van Ravesteijn) in the Balen building, one of the few industrial monuments to have survived the fireworks disaster. Geert van Beijeren and Adriaan van Ravesteijn, former gallery-owners of Art & Project, began putting together this collection of modern and contemporary art in 1965. The history of the collection mostly coincides with that of Art & Project. During the more than thirty years of its existence the gallery has made a substantial contribution to the Dutch art climate. The largest part of the collection, approximately 1500 works, has been gradually handed over to the Rijksmuseum Twenthe between 1999 and 2005.

During the Balen festival on May 23 and May 24, the museum will host the conference Here as the centre of the world in its stylish Tapestry room.

Visitors to the conference will have ample opportunity to view the VB / VR collection in the Balen building.

Programme

Tuesday May 23

- 10.30 Welcome & Coffee at the Rijksmuseum
- 11.00 Opening by Gabriëlle Schleijsen
- 11.15 Lecture by Key Note speaker
- 11.30 - 12.30 Panel discussion
- 12.30-13.30 Lunch with regional products in the LOS HOES, a traditional 'Twentse schuur' (barn, outside the Rijksmuseum).
- 13.30 Lecture by Key Note speaker
- 13.45 - 14.45 Panel discussion
- 14.45 - 15.30 Artist presentation & tea break
- 15.30 Lecture by Key Note speaker
- 15.45- 16.45 Panel discussion

Drinks in the restaurant and the garden of the Rijksmuseum.

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Banquet with products from organic farmers in the region.  
Location: a building development area in Roombeek. Concept  
and art direction Debra Solomon.  
Presentation of earlier Nomadic Banquet projects by Debra  
Solomon and students of the DAI in China and in India.  
<http://nomadicbanquet.dutchartinstitute.nl>

After the dinner the guests will be taken by bus to hotels  
in Enschede and on the campus of the University of Twente.

Programme  
Wednesday May 24

8.30 The guests will be taken by bus from hotels in  
Enschede and on the campus of the University of Twente to  
the Los Hoes.  
9.00 - 10 .00 Breakfast with regional products.

10-11 A guided tour by Pi de Bruin around the Roombeek Area  
(TBC).

11. Welcome & Summary of yesterday's discussions at the  
Rijksmuseum Twenthe

11.15 Lecture by Key Note speaker

11.15 - 12.15 Panel discussion

12.15- 13.15

Lunch with regional products in the Los Hoes.

13.15 Lecture by Key Note speaker

13.15- 14.15 Panel discussion

14.15 -15.00 Speakers corner

(time available up to maximum 5 minutes for  
each individual. Upon reservation on forehand!)

15.00 transfer by foot to the Balengebouw for a guided  
tour around the collection VB / VR .

Drinks offered by Planet Art in their nomadic bar, during  
the Balenfestival temporarily situated in the Balengebouw.  
(Planetart foundation is an energetic artists initiative in  
Enschede founded at the brink of the internet era, in 1995)

End of Conference

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