

THE HOLY TRIANGLE

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The Biennale Art Exhibition in the Holy Triangle (Kunst in de Heilige Driehoek) is an international art exhibition for The Holy Triangle and its surroundings, located in the three most important monasteries of Oosterhout. It is a platform for contemporary art for artists and curators. Through the Biennale, they bring art and artists together in an inspiring and meditative environment for public. At the same time, the Biennale ensures the preservation, recognition and renewal of important parts of the Holy Triangle. In addition to the education program, the event also includes daily guided tours and an activity program with lectures, concerts, film screenings and performances.

What is it

“Hello, I am Monique. And since 2019, the director of the foundation who organizes the biennial. Because it is a foundation, we have a board working for that foundation to organize everything around the biennial, the art event. And I started there more or less as a production manager because they needed someone to organize the exhibition itself.”

In 2017 the first biennale was organized and it was rather successful, however, some time after, problems came around and the project had to be stopped. This meant that everyone that was involved in the project, left, contracts were closed and the only thing that remained was the board.

They wanted to organize a second edition but did not know where to start. Monique mentioned: “after some consideration we expanded the board with new volunteers, discussed everything that went wrong the last time and thought that we must do better this time and learn from the mistakes that were made. We started to improve ourselves and instead of starting over every edition we could make progress.”

Each Biennale focuses on a universal theme and works closely with three monasteries in the region. The ever-changing themes have been carefully selected to respect the contemplative and religious context of the area. The first theme that was chosen in 2017 was Love, it is one of the divine virtues. The second theme was Hope and now for the third edition the theme will be Faith.

The Biennale contributes to the awareness of this unique region, so this event also contributes to the preservation of the Holy Triangle in Oosterhout, North Brabant. Through public events in the art and culture sector, we pay special attention to the cultural history, landscape architecture and architectural qualities of the area. But also trying to protect the area and make people aware of the area and how to value such a specific place.

Artist Selection

The way that the holy triangle picks out their artists is that each year two or more curators are assigned with searching for artists that fit the topic of the biennale. As it is an arduous task to find fitting artist it is especially important to choose good curators who have good connections with artists from in and outside the Netherlands. The past few years artists

from Provence, artists from the Netherlands and from abroad attended the Biennale. It was a diversity between young beginning artists and well known, international artists.

Brabant C

Without the support of Brabant C it was uncertain that the second and third edition could have taken place, according to Monique. "Well, I think that the support of Brabant C made it very comfortable, it makes us very sure that we can go on for the two editions." If they did not work together with Brabant C it was harder to make the second edition happen, and they would have to close everything and started all over again.

They have a base to work with, with the funding it could all continue. A difficult part that they were facing was applying for funding because no one wants to be the first one, but Brabant C did. By working together with Brabant C doors have been opened, and the Biennale got recognition from the province.

Educational program

For the next edition, there are already plans of working with the Center for the Arts and make a time schedule on when to inform the schools, the small region around it and how the program of the theme "faith" is going to look like. What is expected from the school and the students is that they are going to do projects, make their own art and they can have the opportunity to visit the exhibition. Last year, because of covid-19 it was very hard to find schools that had the time to participate in the educational program.

The main benefit of having the educational program is to allow younger students to broaden their knowledge about arts and culture, especially within the monasteries, to give them the opportunity to experience a part of culture that typically is not offered nowadays. Additionally, it is also an opportunity to learn more about art, and to meet various artists both local and international, to broaden their network.

Future of the Holy triangle

In the interview, Monique stated that she hopes the Biennale could go on after the third edition has taken place and hopefully even for three more editions. She doesn't believe in expanding the event, one reason is because the area is restricted in the opportunities that they have but also that "you lose the fineness of what you have when you began."

Last summer more or less 22.000 visitors visited the biennale and that is really the limit because she mentions that sometimes it was too busy for people to walk around easily and enjoy the artworks. They have learned what the limit was and how they could chance that for the upcoming events. Because they are a foundation that is a guest in the area it is also harder to expand. They do not have the opportunity to build new rooms, but that is also not what they want.

What she hopes to see in the future is that the biennial stays authentic and well done. They put a lot of effort in choosing the artwork that can go in each area and matches the theme of the exhibition. According to Monique by doing it this way, and finetuning everything, "you can really see the event fall into place." According to reviews from visitors you could

see, feel and enjoy the way that they had put everything together, and that it had a very specific and enjoyable atmosphere.