



Dear Member,

As has probably been the case for most of you, we have been overwhelmed by work since the last congress in Paris (May 2006). The difficulty of combining the passionate realization of our own curatorial projects with the speedy proliferation of art events and art fairs – accompanied by increasingly nationalistic governmental art policies – not only affects our everyday practice, but also our understanding of our curatorial role. Nowadays the international calendar is shaped by art fairs, and to a lesser extent biennials, while the often less spectacular activity of museums and art institutions tends to suffer from a lack of media coverage and professional attention. The year 2007 will probably prove to be a climax in this event-culture. Art fairs all over the world, as well as documenta XII in Kassel, Skulpturenprojekte in Münster, and the traditional Venice-, the promising Istanbul- and the newly founded Athens biennials, to name but a few, will catch most of our attention and a great deal of our energy, once again raising questions about what we are doing and how.

The current situation makes it increasingly difficult for established curators to adopt alternative or experimental ways forward, and for young curators to express new attitudes towards the mainstream. In fact, we know that every period of dramatic change and relative insecurity – like the so-called neo-liberal economic Darwinism where the winner takes all – results in the weakening of structural and human solidarities and increasingly rigid ideological positions.

In today's world, where artistic and intellectual activity is being increasingly instrumentalized,

IKT can offer a platform for questioning the curator's role. Is the somehow romantic position of the curator as a long-term mediator between artist and public still sustainable (if it ever was) at a time when the dominant logic is based on short-term strategies to attract media attention, and profit making? How much free space is there left in curatorial practice considering the narrowing legal (security, contracts, copyrights, etc) and ideological (respect of all kinds of 'minorities', all kinds of religious, ethnic and sexual sensibilities, etc) frames? Will curating become just one of the cogs in the cultural machine? The congress we are preparing and that will take place in Vaduz on 26-29 April 2007 will be an opportunity to approach some of these aspects which, according to our possibilities, could then be deepened in public debates, as mentioned in the three-year plan draft found in this newsletter.

The coming months will also be dedicated to finding ways of promoting our association and its aims in order to make it more visible to the outside world. The IKT membership-card, which some of us already have (those who paid their annual fee and sent their photograph), is just one of the elements which should contribute to this promotional action.

We are also restructuring our website ([www.iktsite.org](http://www.iktsite.org)). At the moment we are updating all the members-pages, and enriching it with succinct contributions on contemporary issues by various authors.

In the meanwhile, we wish you success in all your projects and all the best for the upcoming year 2007!

The IKT board





## What is the Three-Year Plan? / Zoran Eric

When we were elected as members of the IKT Board in May 2005 in Krakow, we committed ourselves to work on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the whole professional association and its members. At the preliminary meeting of the Board during the Venice Biennial in June 2005, we sketched a possible strategy for the future development of our association, and outlined our role as a Board. As the ideas were still crystallizing, I suggested that we should try to make a three-year plan to show clearly what we wanted to or could do within the mandate of the Board. I used this model in reference to the practice in former socialist countries of using five-year plans to build and develop socialist societies.

During subsequent Board meetings we set certain goals, which could be summed up as follows:

- Geographical expansion
- Increase the visibility of our profession
- Professional solidarity
- Democratic process of decision making
- Dissemination of information

Bearing in mind the current infrastructure of IKT (the moving office, the voluntary nature of the work, etc.) and the amount of time that we as Board members are realistically able to spare from our professional engagements, we concluded that these tasks are more than enough to occupy our attention. We believe that if we manage to make progress in this direction over a three-year period, we will have amply fulfilled our remit as Board members.

We can already say that our work in each area is bearing fruit. The number of “non-Western European” members is growing. In 2008 we will have our first Congress outside Europe, in Montreal, Canada. We have produced the IKT card and are lobbying for its recognition by museums and cultural institutions worldwide. We have established the Harald Szeemann grant to support colleagues who cannot afford to come to the annual Congress. We are producing the IKT newsletter. And these are just the most “visible” results.

However, one question still lingers on, and for me it is decisive for the future profile and image of IKT: do we view IKT as simply a professional association with one annual Congress and side activities exclusively dedicated to its members? There are a number of interrelated questions regarding our future growth, expansion and plans, which are all dependant on this question. One suggestion was that we should compile a questionnaire and invite all our members to express their vision of the future of IKT, in other words to contribute their ideas and suggestions.

Bearing in mind the limited resources and infrastructure of IKT at present, I would like to suggest a possible move towards the development of more activities like meetings, conferences, workshops or even projects under the patronage of IKT. Each year, topics of interest could be determined at the IKT Congress by the panel discussions and elaborated at other meetings, talks or conferences, working with all interested members, and the institutions with which they are affiliated. These activities would continue throughout the year until the next Congress. In short, IKT would try to provide a platform for the discussion of issues related to curatorial practice that would go beyond our association and raise many public debates. These issues would have to be elaborated not only by Board members, but by a team of colleagues interested in participating in their profiling. IKT would thus begin to take a more active part in the art world, and create an opportunity for its members to forge stronger professional and institutional links through a series of events each year.

## Congress in Vaduz (Liechtenstein) / 26-29 April 2007



### Curatorial practice and its legal implications / Chus Martinez

The polymorphous work of curating is broadening into areas that exceed art historical expertise. Producing an exhibition activates an array of different juridical relationships vis-à-vis the commercial market, sponsors, labour organisations, etc. This conference aims to open a discussion about the legal implications of curating, covering issues such as producing and commissioning work, publishing, the use of copyrighted material, hiring workers and service providers, drafting contracts, etc.

Traditionally, working with art is shot through with informal economies and attitudes towards bureaucracy – paperwork never figured strongly on the academic-aesthetic horizon. One result of this is that networks are often based on professional trust. However, this informality often makes labour an abstraction in the service of art. For example, exhibition making is typically dependent on hiring some form of temporary labour under conditions that often do not specify rights and terms of remuneration. So when is a “gentleman’s deal” a necessary manoeuvring space for getting the job done, and when is it at odds with legislation or professional ethics?

In the age of the restructuring or phasing out of public funding, further aspects of this discussion relate to the ‘management-ification’ of curating. How does the idea of management relate to curatorial autonomy? In other words, how do we integrate legal and economic skills into our work, without losing our art-related competence and freedom? Is the alternative the ‘American model’ that exists in some larger museums in the US, whereby curatorial and managerial roles have been separated? This particular problem is an extension of the discussions at our previous congress about the need for a more developed political awareness. At a time of integration between state apparatus and the corporate world, cultural mediation is not just about professional skill, but resonates in a wider political and ethical context.

We hope that the conference will provide an opportunity to exchange experiences and working methods in relation to these ‘hard facts’ of our praxis. It will not be a discussion about authorship, but an exchange of knowledge about important day-to-day legal concerns of our profession, and the wider critical perspectives of these concerns. Participants will include researchers, artists, attorneys and curators.



## www.iktsite.org

The IKT website is being restructured at this moment and the new site will soon be online. In the meanwhile, the current website is still available for information about our association. In order to keep our members directory effective, please check if your contacts are still up to date and send us your changes if necessary.

## Membership card

If you haven't sent your ID-photo yet, please do so as soon as possible ([mail@iktsite.org](mailto:mail@iktsite.org)) in order to receive your IKT membership-card. We will send it to you by post as soon as we have received the payment of your annual membership fee (50€).

IKT bank details:

IBAN LU89 1111 2412 8041 0000

BIC: CCPLLULL

## Harald Szeeman Grant

IKT offers eight grants of 500€ to attend the 2007 Congress in Vaduz (Liechtenstein). Please fax us your application (see attached form) before the 15 February 2007 to the following number: +352 22 95 95.

This grant is issued since 2006 in order to help IKT-members and IKT-candidates having financial difficulties to attend the IKT Congress. In 2007 the Harald Szeeman Grant is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research, Luxembourg and by the IKT association.



## Colophon

From 2005 to 2008 the IKT association will be based in Luxembourg. The statutes of the Luxembourgish branch of the association were registered on the 25 August 2005.

The IKT association is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research, Luxembourg.

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## Harald Szeeman Grant

application form

I herewith apply for a grant of 500 € to attend the next congress Vaduz (Liechtenstein) on 26-29 April 2007. I honestly declare that without that grant it will be impossible for me to join the meeting and that I have no other source of financing.

If my application is accepted, I consider it as an obligation to participate in the activities of the next congress and to be present at the General Assembly.

First name: .....  
Surname: .....  
Organisation / freelance: .....  
Address: .....  
City: .....  
Country: .....

I have been a member of IKT since: ..... I am a new member

Date .....

Signature .....

### General rules

The IKT Harald Szeeman Grant provides 500 € to IKT members or curators who want to join IKT or attend the upcoming congress.

It is possible to apply for the Harald Szeeman Grant as often as the financial situation of the candidate does not allow him/her to attend the congress. However, the Harald Szeeman Grant should not be granted more than two times to the same person.

The 500 € comprises the membership fee of 50 € for one year.

The remaining 450 € will be given in cash to the laureates at the beginning of the congress.

The laureates have to pay the travel and accommodation costs in advance. All other expenses will be taken care of by the laureate him/herself.

The attribution of the grants will be decided by the IKT board. The decision of the board is irrevocable.

By signing this application form the candidate accepts these general rules.

In 2007 the Harald Szeeman Grant is supported by:

- > The Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research, Luxembourg
- > The IKT association

Please fax this form before the 15 February 2007 to Kevin Muhlen at +352 22 95 95.