

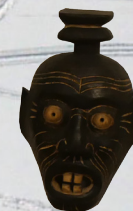
Summer School in Art, Culture and Creativity

Moving Cultures and Resilient Communities

Sisimiut 2017

Project description

The project is supported by the Nordic Culture Point,
an organization under the Nordic Council of Ministers.



What?

The Summer School is a cultural exchange project based on the assumption that by improving our understanding of and ability to learn from each other, we may be able to create changes that will benefit all.

Who?

The participants are professionals and students from artistic and creative professions* in Greenland, the other Nordic countries and the rest of the world.

Where?

The Summer School is taking place in Sisimiut, Greenland's second largest town with a population of about 5,000 and situated on the coast about 75 km north of the Arctic Circle.

When?

The Summer School is taking place in the period 1 – 31 August 2017.

*Artistic and creative subjects include architecture, art, design, film, music, poetry, performance, theater, etc.



Background

With more and more people on the move - traveling, migrating or fleeing – creating ever more competition and conflict, we see a need to experiment with new forms of collaboration and new forms of co-evolution – learning from the cultures of each other and from the cultures of those who came before us.

Greenland has been chosen as the site of the Summer School because it offers tangible experiences of the collision between man and nature (the frightening strength and fragility of both), traditional and modern culture, the local and the global, past, present and future. Here, one becomes acutely aware of the devastating environmental effects of consumerism, the local ecological and global geopolitical effects of climate change but also of the social creativity and resourceful adaptability that emerge in situations of scarcity and constraints.



The intercultural society (Greenland). Photo by Julie Edel Hardenberg.

It is assumed that artistic questions and answers to common challenges will become more pointed by a deeper understanding of a specific local context and its traditional culture but also more imaginative by input – ideas, knowledge and experiences – from other cultures and disciplines.

It is thus believed that practical on-site studies combined with cross-cultural and interdisciplinary exchange will stimulate artistic development.



The consumer society (Sisimiut). Photo by Henrik Valeur.

Purpose

The purpose of the Summer School is to study the traditional Inuit culture - like other nomadic cultures the Inuit existed on nature's terms, adapted to an extreme environment with a changing climate and access to only very limited resources* - in order to find ways in which to confront contemporary challenges like: How do we adapt to a more volatile climate? How do we reduce our consumption of resources? How do we take better care of our environment? And, to find out what we can learn from each other, including local people and experts as well as visiting students and teachers from other disciplines and other parts of the world.



Model of peat hut from Sisimiut Museum. During the winter several families often lived together in the same peat hut situated next to the sea where they would hunt and fish. The roof, which consisted of driftwood and skins, was removed during spring in order to clean the hut and then used to erect tents for individual families further inland, where they would hunt caribou and musk oxen. Photo by Henrik Valeur.

The Summer School should expose participants to site-specific ecologies and historical forms of co-existence and thus provide the basis for collaborative explorations of alternative future life forms and opportunities to transform these explorations into new artistic and creative expressions that may become part of and contribute to the local culture.

**The Inuit were deeply dependent on nature and thus had great respect for it: "A corollary of Inuit animation of the phenomenon and the material world, is their respect for all things in nature. The basic idea here is that everything is alive because it contains inua power and must therefore be treated with respect. Respect for nature is a fundamental aspect of the Inuit culture as the opposite would constitute a violation of the inua-forces that are everywhere in the physical world."* Quoted from: Inuitisk religion and mythology; Klaus Engelbrechtsen and Jorgen Thomsen; 2013.



Still image from Knud Rasmussen's film "Palos Brudefærd" (1933) showing how a summer tent of driftwood and skins is taken down (only to be used as the roof of a peat hut). Participants will try to translate some of the principles of the traditional Inuit housing (i.e. the recycling of materials, different ways of living together etc.) into a provisional, contemporary dwelling.

Organization

The Summer School is organized by Malmö University. Henrik Valeur is the director, Maria Hellström Reimer is the academic coordinator and Julie Edel Hardenberg is the artistic coordinator. They work closely with local partners, including Knud Rasmussen's Folk High School and culture center *Taseralik* in Sisimiut, and in close consultation with a steering committee representing the other institutional partners.

*Participating students will be awarded ECTS points.

**In order to ensure that about 10 of the participating students are Greenlanders, individual invitations are sent to Greenlandic students at relevant, higher educational institutions abroad.

***Presenters may include people from the National Museum and the Theatre School in Nuuk.



Mountain and mist (Sisimiut). Photo by Henrik Valeur.

Participants

The participants are made up of about 60 students* and 10 tutors. Half of the participants come from the Nordic countries, including Greenland,** and the other half from the rest of the world.

The tutors are professional practitioners of artistic and creative disciplines with experience in intercultural and interdisciplinary cooperation. The students mainly come from artistic and creative disciplines in higher education, but there will also be students from the Department of Culture, Language and History at the University of Greenland in Nuuk and Tech College Greenland (KTI) in Sisimiut.

In addition, there will be presentations by researchers, storytellers and others*** who will introduce the participants to the Inuit culture.



Mountains of snow and soot (Sisimiut). Photo by Henrik Valeur.

Localities

Knud Rasmussen's Folk High School will serve as a base for the Summer School. At different times all of the participants will be accommodated here while at other times only some of the participants will be here while the rest will be in other places, including the abandoned settlement Assaqlaq, the settlements of Itilleq and Sarfannguaq, in the countryside west of the city or on a week long hike from Sisimiut to Kangerlussuaq.



Peat hut outside Knud Rasmussen's Folk High School. Photo by Henrik Valeur.

The culture center *Taseralik* will be used for many of the Summer School's outreach activities. Here, the teachers will introduce themselves through live presentations to the other participants and to the people of Sisimiut at the beginning of the Summer School and at the end the participants will show the results of their work, in the format of exhibitions and performances, to each other and to the people of Sisimiut.



The culture center *Taseralik*. Photo from the internet.

Activities

The participants are divided into 5 groups with 12 students and 2 tutors, representing different countries and different disciplines, in each. For instance, the tutors in one group could be a Swedish film director and an Indian musician, while the students would be from Greenland, the other Nordic countries and the rest of the world.

During the spring and early summer of 2017, the organizers and the tutors will discuss the intentions, possible programs, assignments and practical issues.

Tutors will arrive in Sisimiut a week before the students to get acquainted with each other and with the location. Along with the organizers they will further develop and decide on the individual assignments for each group.

Possible assignments may include:

- Design of movable meeting places in public spaces in collaboration with the municipality and local actors.
- The construction of temporary housing in the settlements with the use of recycled materials and to be used by the participants themselves.
- Activities with users of the elderly club, for instance the collection and sharing of stories and songs.
- Execution of various forms of performance involving music and drama students from the Tech College Greenland.
- Hunting, fishing, gathering and preparation of food in the countryside around Sisimiut, in cooperation with the locals.
- Written, drawn, filmed, sung or danced “diary entries” from hiking in the area.



51°W 70°N, April, 2004 (Greenland). Photo by Julie Edel Hardenberg.



Assaqtuq, the abandoned settlement, where one of the groups will be staying. Photo by Henrik Valeur.



Time schedule

1 August: Organizers and tutors arrive in Sisimiut.

7 August: Students arrive in Sisimiut.

8-9 August: Reception and presentations at *Taseralik*.

10-23 August: Workshops in Sisimiut, settlements and countryside.

24-27 August: Planning and preparation of presentations.

28-30 August: Presentations of the work and party at *Taseralik*.

31 August: Participants leave Sisimiut.

Local adaptation (Greenland). Photo by Julie Edel Hardenberg.

Results

Participants will engage and interact with the people of Sisimiut through various activities in the town itself, the surrounding settlements and countryside (see possible assignments) and through presentations, exhibitions and performances in the culture center *Taseralik*.

The results of the Summer School are expected to be communicated through a book and a documentary film. The book will be published in English and distributed internationally, while the documentary may be shown on national TV channels in the Nordic countries.* Furthermore, the results of the Summer School may be shown at selected venues in the Nordic countries** and at various international venues.***

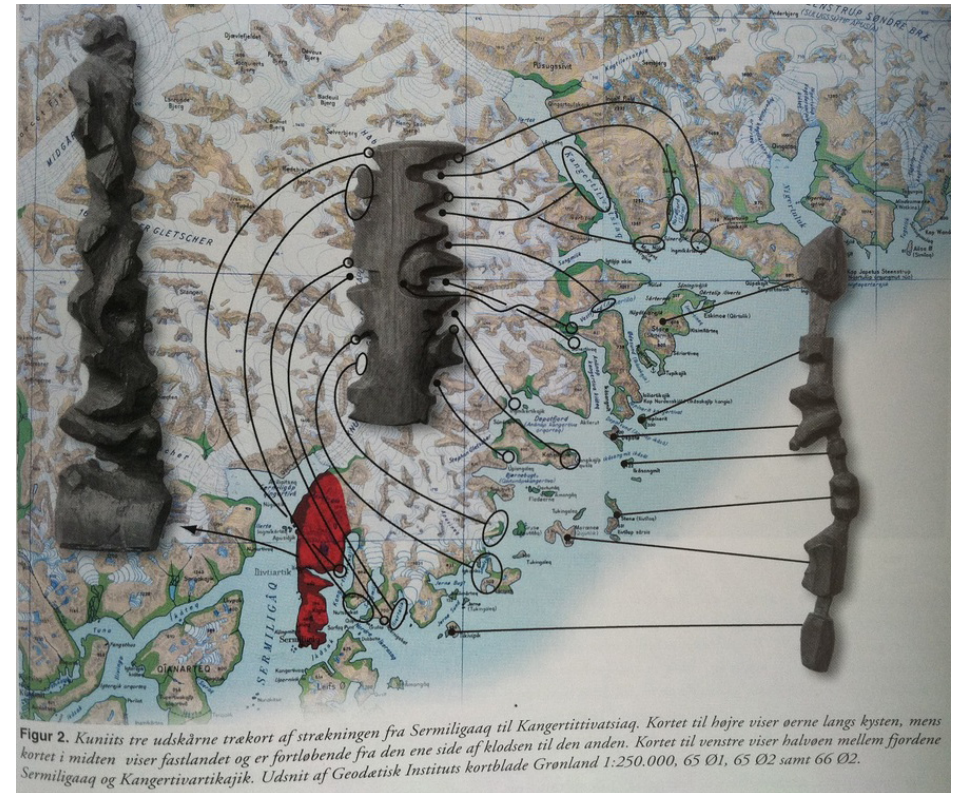


Ball game with stuffed seal by Aron of Kangeq (1822-69). Greenland National Museum.

*Book and documentary film will be financed separately.

**Possible exhibition venues in the Nordic countries include the Museum of Contemporary Art in Roskilde (Denmark), Sørlandets Art Museum in Kristiansand (Norway), Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art (Finland) and Arena for Sustainable Development, Kommendanthuset, Museums of Malmö (Sweden).

***Exhibitions outside Greenland will be financed separately.



Figur 2. Kuniits tre udskårne trækort af strækningen fra Sermiligaaq til Kangertittivatsiaq. Kortet til højre viser øerne langs kysten, mens kortet i midten viser fastlandet og er fortløbende fra den ene side af klodsen til den anden. Kortet til venstre viser halvøen mellem fjordene Sermiligaaq og Kangertivartikajik. Udsnit af Geodætisk Instituts kortblade Grønland 1:250.000, 65 Ø1, 65 Ø2 samt 66 Ø2.

Detail of the Geodetic Institute map sheets with three carved wooden maps superimposed on a graphical map. A wooden map is a tactile map that you feel on as opposed to a map you look at. By using the sense of touch to read the landscape a bodily connection to the landscape is established, which may create a different understanding of the landscape. Something the participants may ponder and perhaps give a contemporary interpretation. From the Internet.

Partners

Agreements of cooperation have been made with the following partner institutions:*

Greenland

- Knud Rasmussen's Folk High School, Sisimiut.
- Culture center *Taseralik*, Sisimiut.
- Tech College Greenland (KTI), Sisimiut.
- Qeqqata Municipality, Sisimiut.
- University of Greenland, Nuuk.
- National Museum, Nuuk.
- Theatre School, Nuuk.
- KNR TV, Nuuk.

Other Nordic countries

- Malmö University, School of Arts and Communication, Sweden
- Academy of Contemporary Art and Creative Writing, Norway
- Iceland Academy of the Arts, Department of Performing Arts, Iceland
- Royal Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture, Denmark

The rest of the world

Agreements will be made with institutions from the rest of the world when we are sure that Summer School will be realized. Close contacts have, however, already been established with Rochester Institute of Technology (US), Srishti School of Arts, Design and Technology (India), and Cape Peninsula Institute of Technology (South Africa).

*Academic partner institutions are expected to contribute students, provide advice, and suggest possible tutors and presenters.



The legendary Greenlandic rock band Sume. From *Sume - the Sound of a Revolution*, Inuk Silis Høegh, 2014.



Traditional drum dance in Greenland. From *Glimt af Grønlands kultur*, Ole G. Jensen, 2007.

Organizers

Henrik Valeur (DK), director, is an architect, founder and creative director of UiD (Denmark) and UiD Shanghai Ltd., Co (China). As the curator of the Danish Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2006 he conceived and orchestrated the project *CO-EVOLUTION: Danish/Chinese collaboration on sustainable urban development in China*, awarded the main prize, the Golden Lion, for its “creativity, intelligence and generosity”. He recently published the book *India: the Urban Transition*, which is based on teaching, research and practice in India since 2010. Valeur has extensive experience in managing interdisciplinary and intercultural collaborations, he frequently participates in public debates and has served as a speaker at international conferences, on the jury of international competitions and as a guest critic and lecturer at international universities. For more information, see: www.henrikvaleur.dk

Maria Hellström Reimer (SE), academic coordinator, is Professor in design in theory and practice at School of Arts and Communication, Faculty of Culture and Society, Malmö University, and since 2014 Director of the Swedish Faculty for Design Research and Research Education. Trained as an artist and with a PhD and Readership in landscape architecture, her research is interdisciplinary concerning the aesthetics and politics of design, including questions of criticality and methodological experimentation. Hellström Reimer has been affiliated with several research environments in Europe and the US, during 2014 as visiting professor at Université de Paris 8 Vincennes/Saint-Denis and at Parsons The New School for Design in New York.

Julie Edel Hardenberg (GL), artistic coordinator, is educated from The Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Denmark (Art -Theory and Communication), the Art Academy of Trondheim, Norway (Visual Art) and Den Nordiska Konstskolan, Finland. Her work has been recognized and exhibited internationally. She has also taken on public tasks and produced books, which have been nominated for the Nordic Council Literature Prize, the Danish Association of Book Craft, the Vest Nordic Childrens Literature Prize, the White Raven-International Youth Library, the Liviafond prize, the Carnegie Art Award, the Anna Norlander prize. Recently, Hardenberg has worked with the Nordic Culture Fund and with Team Culture, the Danish Ministry of Culture.

Malmö University, organizer, was founded in 1998 and has today 24.400 students. The university offers undergraduate as well as postgraduate education. The mission of the university is to be an active hub for research, education and innovation that benefit a global society, open to the world and with a clear focus on the major challenges in our society today. Characterized by broad recruitment, an international environment, advanced study forms and multidisciplinary approaches, the university prioritizes the crossbreeding of different disciplines within science and technology, social sciences, arts and the humanities in thematic fields and in close collaboration with the society outside of academia. The Faculty of Culture and Society is the largest faculty of the university with a focus on sustainable development, international relations and human rights, global political studies, architecture, design and the arts.

The concept of the Summer School was originally developed by Henrik Valeur in collaboration with visual artist Dorte Dahlin.



Photo by Julie Edel Hardenberg.