

Appointment of Alexandra McIntosh as Director of the International Centre for Art and Landscape on Vassivière Island, France



© Alex Ferko

With the approval of Roselyne Bachelot, French Minister of Culture, Alain Rousset, President of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region, and Sandrine Derville, President of the *Syndicat Mixte Le lac de Vassivière*,

Vincent Speller, President of the International Centre for Art and Landscape Association, and the Board of Directors, are pleased to announce the appointment of Alexandra McIntosh as Director of the Art Centre on Vassivière Island.

Alexandra McIntosh will take up the position on June 21, 2021.

Alexandra McIntosh's project for the International Centre for Art and Landscape, entitled *Situating Landscape*, proposes to explore relationships between humans and the environment through a wide range of artistic and scientific practices and research. Elaborated through residencies, exhibitions, commissions, public programs and partnership development, *Situating Landscape* will follow a working process that starts from the local and regional and extends to the national and international.

The project's research thematics will question issues of contemporary critical concern, such as the multivalent relationships between nature and society; altered landscapes; resource extraction and climate change; food security and sustainable agriculture; contamination as an instigator of diversity; local intelligences of humans and non-humans; community practices of self-governance; and the capacity of art and architecture to enact social change.

Situating Landscape will be deeply rooted in the culture and landscape of Vassivière Island and its region, while forging links and collaborations across national and international borders, both through its programming and network development, as well as through its questioning of issues of global importance. The project aims to stimulate productive collisions between art and community, scientific expertise, and indigenous forms of knowledge, while making them accessible to all.

Alexandra McIntosh is since 2015 Director/ Curator of Fogo Island Arts (FIA), an international contemporary art organization based on Fogo Island, Newfoundland, Canada. In collaboration with Nicolaus Schafhausen, she oversees FIA's artist residencies, exhibitions, publications and events, as well as the development of strategic programs and partnerships. Her projects with FIA include establishing an annual series of socially and politically engaged film and a residency dedicated to arts writing, as well as commissions and solo exhibitions with artists such as Abbas Akhavan, Wilfrid Almendra, Marlene Creates, Shezad Dawood, Ieva Epnere, Edgar Leciejewski, Jumana Manna, Isa Melsheimer, and Augustas Serapinas. She is co-editor of Fogo Island Arts' publication series (FIA/Sternberg Press) and had contributed writings on art and architecture to numerous publications.

Prior to joining FIA, Alexandra McIntosh was a curator at the Illingworth Kerr Gallery, Calgary, and Program Manager, Visual Arts, at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. Originally from Montreal, she was Coordinator of Special Projects and Cultural Affairs at Concordia University, and Editor of CCA Online at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA).

She holds a BFA in Studio Arts and Art History from Concordia University and a Masters in the History and Theory of Architecture from McGill University. She is also a member of the artist collective Centre de recherche urbaine de Montréal (CRUM).

Alexandra McIntosh succeeds Marianne Lanavère, Director of the Centre from March 2012 to April 30, 2021, who oversaw the designation of the Centre as an Art Centre of National Interest (CACIN).

Artistic and cultural project

The Art Centre on Vassivière Island © Eric Balaz



Exhibitions and Commissions

As an Art Centre of National Interest (CACIN), the International Centre for Art and Landscape is uniquely positioned to support contemporary artistic production in close collaboration with artists, offering flexibility and freedom to experiment. Fueled by the residency program and research thematics, exhibitions and commissions will seek to stimulate contemporary artistic innovation, providing artists with ample opportunities for experimentation while supporting their creative development at a significant moment in their careers.

Vassivière Island and the Sculpture Wood

New commissions for the Sculpture Wood will include major permanent works that engage with the nature and context of the site, as well as temporary installations around Vassivière Island and neighbouring communities. The 'Nouveaux Commanditaires' program also offers a powerful tool to create new works both on the island and *extra muros* in collaboration with stakeholders across the region.

A key landscape initiative will be an exchange around community gardens that privilege native plant species and organic gardening processes. Collaborations with artists, landscape architects, local practitioners and scientific experts will provide opportunities for dialogue between members of the surrounding communities and the Centre, as well as ways to engage practically with questions of food security and sustainability.

Artist Residencies

– Experimentation at the Forefront

A privileged site for artistic experimentation and exploration, research and exchange, residencies will form a generative anchor for the Centre's activities. Through stays of one to three months, artists will be offered an immersion in the landscape, history and the culture of Vassivière Island and its surrounding region.

A transdisciplinary approach that emphasizes the freedom to experiment and the intersection of diverse forms of knowledge is necessary in order to address the complexity of the present. Residencies will thus be open to a broad spectrum of practices and research areas (visual arts, architecture, design, landscape, agriculture, ecology, ethnobotany, social economy...), and will be organized through invitation as well as thematic calls. Both emerging and established practitioners from diverse cultural backgrounds will be welcomed to the program.

Public Programs

The Centre will continue to provide a comprehensive range of public and educational programs for diverse audiences, such as artist talks, film screenings, performances, open studios, workshops, symposia and special events. Programs for children and families, underserved or marginalized groups, and educational workshops developed in partnership with schools and universities will offer multiple points of access and engagement.

All programs will be developed as an extension of the Centre's research thematics but may extend to the larger concerns of the region, including tourism and leisure activities, agriculture and natural resources. Programs will promote and mediate contemporary artistic creation while also celebrating local forms of knowledge, skill-sharing, and the expertise of non-artists.

Network Development

Situating Landscape will seek to establish a robust program of creative and financial partnerships with a broad range of art and educational organizations, charitable foundations, and corporate entities, in order to foster exchange, increase capacity, and bolster regional, national and international networks.

The International Centre for Art and Landscape

Vassivière Island only appears to be a natural site. In 1952 the creation of a hydroelectric dam turned what was originally a hill into an island. With its distinctive history, it is now a site that offers a remarkable imaginative and creative stimulus. To complement the collection of sculptures that have been on the island since the 1980s, architects Aldo Rossi and Xavier Fabre designed an art centre there in 1991. Since then, many nationally and internationally known artists have shown their work at the Centre, the scope of which was further extended in 2012 with the opening of an annexe to the Castle that now welcomes artists-in-residence (Berger & Berger and Building/Building architects). Since 2017 the Centre has been an active partner in the Fondation de France's 'Nouveaux Commanditaires' sponsorship program.

EXHIBITION AND BOOKSHOP

All year
Tuesday - Friday: 2-6 pm
Week-end and bank holidays
(except December 25 and January 1): 11 am-1 pm
and 2-6 pm
July-August
Every day: 11am-1pm and 2-6pm
5€ – Full fee
3€ – Reduced fee

SCULPTURE WOOD

60 outdoor permanent works to discover on Vassivière Island (70 hectares).
Explanatory description placed near each work. Map available (2€) at the bookstore and in the local tourism offices.

VASSIVIÈRE UTOPIA

An off-track architectural and landscape trail open year-round.
More details in the booklet *Vassivière Utopia*, available for free online (www.ciapiledévassivière.com), at the Centre's reception, and at the local shops and tourist information offices.

Centre international d'art et du paysage

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The International Centre for Art and Landscape receives the support of the Ministry of Culture/ Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region Cultural Affairs Office and the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region.

The Centre is an accredited mediator of the 'Nouveaux Commanditaire' program for the Fondation de France. The Centre is a member of national networks d.c.a and Arts en résidence, as well as the regional network Astre.



The Art Centre was built in 1991 by architects Aldo Rossi and Xavier Fabre. The building is designated as a landmark of Remarkable Contemporary Architecture.