



Artist in Residence at Parc le Breos Cwm Neolithic tomb & deer park

One 6-month residency to start from October 2015

Bursary/Fee: £12,000

Deadline for applications – 5.00pm on the 25 August 2015

Interviews – 7/11/2015 to be held in Cardiff

Information for artists

Background

Cadw, the historic environment service for the Welsh Government, supported by the Arts Council of Wales, invites applications from artists to respond to one of Wales's more intriguing prehistoric sites: Parc le Breos Cwm on the Gower.

Parc le Breos Cwm in the Gower is a partly restored Neolithic chambered tomb, identified in 1937 as a Severn-Cotswold type of chambered long barrow. The cromlech, a megalithic burial chamber, was built around 6,000 years ago, during the early Neolithic. It is about seven miles west south-west of Swansea, in what is now known as Coed y Parc Cwm on the Gower Peninsula.

The shape of the tomb is trapezoidal – with the upper part of the cromlech and its earth covering now removed – surrounded a low dry-stone wall. A bell-shaped, south-facing forecourt, formed by the wall, leads to a central passageway lined with limestone slabs set on end. Human remains had been placed in the two pairs of stone chambers that lead from the passageway. Corpses may have been placed in nearby caves until they decomposed, when the bones were moved to the tomb.

The cromlech was discovered in 1869 by workmen digging for road stone. An excavation later that year revealed human bones (now known to have belonged to at least 40 people),

animal remains, and Neolithic pottery. Samples from the site show the tomb to have been in use for between 300 and 800 years. North-West European lifestyles changed around 6000 years ago, from the nomadic lives of the hunter-gatherer, to a settled life of agricultural farming.

The chambered tomb lies in a former medieval deer park, established in the 1220s by the Marcher Lord of Gower as Parc le Breos – an enclosed area of about 2,000 acres, now mainly farmland. The monument is on the floor of a dry narrow limestone gorge containing about 500 acres of woodland.

The Artist in Residence Programme

The Arts Council of Wales and Cadw have agreed to partner and implement a programme of residencies over a period of three years; 2015/16 marks the third year of this programme. The programme aims to develop artists' practice and engage audiences and communities in the creative process. The programme promotes excellence and innovation within art in the public realm, and places quality at the core of its delivery and outcomes, as well as to embody sustainability.

Residency, October 2015 onwards: Invitation to Apply

Cadw, the historic environment for the Welsh Government, supported by the Arts Council of Wales, invite applications for residency at Parc le Breos Cwm, in the Gower to be undertaken from October 2015 onwards.

The residency is open to visual and fine art artists working in the UK. We are looking for practitioners who wish to work with Community First groups and areas in the Swansea and south Wales area more generally, and the Neolithic period in Wales. We would like the artists to respond to the Neolithic period as a whole — the physical sites of Parc le Breos Cwm, but also the landscape in which the site sits.

The successful artist could work across different themes at the site and use different media to present this prehistoric monument to the public. A strong Communities First focus will be essential for this residency, working within community centres and raising awareness of the Neolithic period with groups in south Wales. Thematic approaches could involve:

- an exploration of the Neolithic period in Wales and the phenomenon of chambered tombs
- the archaeological record, including artefacts and objects excavated
- an exploration of worldviews in the Neolithic, including themes of ritual or shamanism
- an exploration of the use of rock art in prehistory, its meaning and aesthetics, especially in relation to Cat Hole cave
- an exploration of the of the medieval deer park in which Parc le Breos Cwm sits, and human: animal relationships
- a philosophical examination of how antiquarians viewed the past or how we view the past in the twenty-first century
- an exploration of the theme of 'time, people and place'.

Please email CadwPublicProgrammes@wales.gsi.gov.uk with any questions you may have about the residency. The artist will be asked to spend a large proportion of their time with community groups of their choice. This group must be located within a Community First area.

The programme aims to develop an artist's own practice. This might include: different and new ways of working, innovative ideas, creative responses to the site and engagement with staff. We would encourage and support the artists to share their practice and process of working both with their peers and with the public through an online presence.

Studio

A shared studio space will be available at Cardiff University's Bioarchaeology labs. No accommodation is provided.

Payment

Artists will be paid £12,000 for (or equivalent over a six month period) supported by the Arts Council of Wales. There is separate funding available for materials, supported by Cadw.

How to Apply

Please email the following to CadwPublicProgrammes@wales.gsi.gov.uk

A proposal (no more than 800 words) detailing what aspects of the Neolithic period and Parc le Breos Cwm relate to your artistic practice, and why you would like to focus on as part of the residency and how it will be informed by your current practice.

- An artist CV
- Examples of your work which should include no more than eight images (no larger than 1600 x 1200 pixels) or four video links. When sending large files, please provide hyperlinks to online files or a Dropbox containing the files. Information submitted in other formats will not be accepted.
- The proposal should include an example of working with disadvantaged groups / Community First groups and centres.

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