

DE BASIS Festival: a unique combination of art, culture and nature at Soesterberg Air Base

10 and 11 September 2011

The DE BASIS Festival provides a unique opportunity to enjoy art, culture and the natural surroundings at Soesterberg Air Base. For this special occasion, this formerly secure location will open its doors to the public on 10 and 11 September 2011. The festival includes works by Erik Odijk, Roosje Klap & Kaleb de Groot, Ali Kazma, Laurence Aëgerter, and others.

The festival is organised by the Vrede van Utrecht Foundation, CBKU, SKOR and Het Utrechts Landschap. The festival will become a ten-day event in 2013, as part of the jubilee celebrations of Soesterberg Air Base. Entrance to the Air Base is free. Tickets for the theatre can be purchased from 22 August via Uitburo.nl.

Soesterberg Air Base is a nature reserve and recreation area in the heart of the Utrechtse Heuvelrug. This area has a rich history: it is the oldest air base in Europe, and the second oldest in the world. The traces of the Cold War and the presence of American troops who were based here are still very much in evidence. The air base will be permanently opened to the public in 2013. The first site-specific artworks realised for this location will be exhibited during the DE BASIS Festival on 10 and 11 September. They have been selected from a collection that will continue to expand in the coming years. There will be additional guided tours past the artworks during the weekend of 17 and 18 September.

Artistic programme

The first artworks created by Erik Odijk, Roosje Klap & Kaleb de Groot, Ali Kazma and Laurence Aëgerter will be exhibited at the DE BASIS Festival. The artistic programme of the DE BASIS Festival recounts stories about the military history of the landscape. The function of Soesterberg Air Base is linked to the celebrations commemorating the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) and 100-year anniversary of military aviation in 2013. The Centrum Beeldende Kunst Utrecht (CBKU) and SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain are important partners in the development of the artistic programme. The programme is appealing at a local level, but will also have an international allure because of its subject matter and the artists' contributions.

Art projects

Roosje Klap & Kaleb de Groot will present the first edition of the newspaper *The Receptor* as a prelude to realising the information centre that will be camouflaged as an officer's mess and is scheduled for completion in 2013. Visual artist Erik Odijk worked with seven other artists to realise the drawing in situ *Crown of Creation*. This work takes viewers back to the time of the protest movements during the Cold War, while simultaneously showcasing the rich flora that keen eyes will observe on the terrain. Laurence Aëgerter's work subtly shows two sides of the American soldiers' stay at Soesterberg. The film by Turkish artist Ali Kazma reserves a special role for the residual military matériel. The entire artistic programme will be announced in August.

Young talent

One of the programme items of DE BASIS is Woesterberg. Four recently graduated theatre students from the Utrecht School of the Arts (HKU) and the Toneelacademie Maastricht have made use of this opportunity to create a work for the air base. They are supported in this by professional 'masters',

including Theu Boermans, Aernout Mik and Erik de Vroedt. The terrain can also be explored by foot or bicycle, and a shelter will be furnished as a living room, with music, talk shows and presentations.

Treaty of Utrecht

The Treaty of Utrecht, a global peace treaty, was ratified almost 300 years ago. It was the first time that peace was declared around a negotiating table rather than on the field of battle. Utrecht Municipality and the Province of Utrecht celebrate this event with a programme of cultural events in the city, neighbourhood and region. Presenting art and culture at cultural heritage sites, such as Soesterberg Air Base, is one of the core objectives of the Vrede van Utrecht Foundation. Celebrating the Treaty of Utrecht in 2013 is not an isolated affair, however: Utrecht hopes to become the 2018 European Capital of Culture. Vrede van Utrecht 2013 and Utrecht 2018 are initiatives of the municipality and the province.

Partners

Vrede van Utrecht works together with the residents and city councils of Zeist and Soest, Hart van de Heuvelrug, Utrecht Province, the Utrechts Landschap Foundation, CBKU, SKOR, the Amsterdamse Club voor Zweefvliegen en Defensie, Soesterberg Air Base and the KF Hein Fonds.

