

CALL FOR ARTISTS

2024 Guandu International Nature Art Festival (Taipei, TAIWAN)

Ecology, as a perception

Guandu Nature Park calls for three artists with a focus on the human-nature relationship to participate in the 2024 Guandu International Nature Art Festival entitled “**Ecology, as a perception**” Submission deadline is May 31th, 2024. Selected artists will spend around four weeks as artists-in-residence in Guandu Nature Park and use natural or environmentally friendly materials to create artworks onsite that can convey environmental messages and raise awareness.

- Residency Date | Aug. 23- 25, 2024 (Field Study); Aug. 27-Sep.21, 2024 (Resident create artworks); Sep.22 (Public Presentation & Opening Workshops)
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About The Festival

Guandu International Outdoor Sculpture Festival, dating back to 2006, was Taiwan’s first large-scale natural art festival held in a conservation park. Each year, multiple international artists are invited to use natural materials to create site-specific outdoor installations that can show beautiful aesthetics and communicate environmental messages. The creative process values public engagement and incorporates local culture through dialogue and cooperation. The event is rooted in Guandu Wetland with deep ecological conservation value and rich estuary culture. It creates a space for dialogue between man, art and nature and discusses the important topic of “human-nature relationship” in the hope of finding a balance point for the imbalance between modern society

and nature.

For the past ten years, the Festival has painted a blueprint for Guandu Nature Park on the coexistence of estuary culture, wetland conservation and environmental art. Resetting its title into “Guandu International Nature Art Festival” in 2016, the Festival, with over ten years of experience and inspiration, further puts into action to deepen the understanding and care of the place in the hope that everyone participating in the Festival will be more active in rebuilding the relationship between themselves and the environment and more inspired by nature to jointly find the direction for the sustainable future of life.

- Website <http://www.guandu-natureart.tw/>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/GuanduNatureArtFest/>
- Youtube <https://goo.gl/K5S3uE>
- Online Catalog <https://goo.gl/H4yqcj>

Theme

Ecology, as a perception

- Events, Attitudes, and More

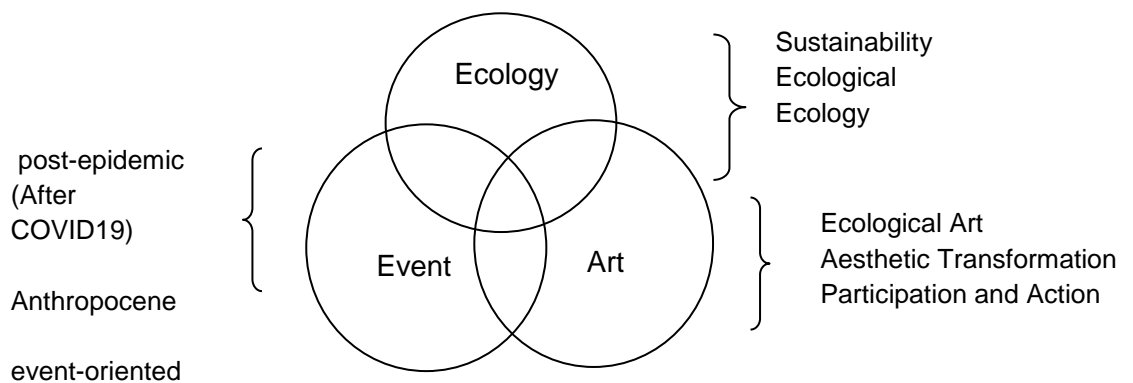
We've forgotten the shape of the waterfowl's footprints on the mudflats.

Forget the neem flowers in the spring meadow.

We burnt rubbish in the remote wilderness.

----- wetlands remember¹

I Curatorial Structure



II Preface - Ecological

"An 'event'² is always something new that occurs in an unexpected way, and its emergence can disrupt any existing stable structure. Continuing the two exhibitions "Healing, A Methodology" and "Nature, A Gift" curated in the previous two years of the Guandu International Nature Art Festival, Guandu Nature Park tries to respond to the "post epidemic" era (after COVID-19), where "nature" has been used as an alternative solution for the restoration of "social order" (we try to go back to and create

¹ Excerpted from 《The Lost River》 by Han-Yau Huang, published by Spring Hill Publishing Ltd, 2023, reprinted in Dec.

² From 《The Event》, Slavoj Zizek, Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, 2018, P6

a solution for emotional connection with nature), it seems that we need to go back and think about the reality that we are facing after the **event (COVID-19)**:

That is to say, in the face of such an "event" (which has a significant impact on the human ecology), apart from the gradual restoration of the established social order and the resulting response to "**sustainability**"³ in the international community, we also try to think about how we can respond to the various impacts and changes generated by the **post-event** environmental changes through art and curation. Here we need to think in a more '**ecological**'⁴ way, such as the concept of sustainability in the environment.

"Sustainability" refers to the competition for resources generated by various organisms to maintain their survival, and makes most of the materials can be recycled internally to achieve a balance, so pondering from an ecological point of view or attitude means that we must consider the interrelationships between various factors and conditions of the environment and the behaviours or actions of various organisms in the environment, and it is a more holistic and dynamic process of thinking. It is also worthwhile to explore what role and function art can play in this aspect.

III Artistic

If "**event**" is a gesture that breaks through the framework and destroys the balance of the environment, then art, as a non-routine and unconventional way of expression and interpretation, seems to be closer to the impact of the event. Art itself has the nature of an event, as renowned theorist Slavoj Žižek has said when discussing the nature of the "event":

"An eventual outcome determines its own cause or reason in a retrospective manner."

Such retrospective postulates and self-generated causes often transcend the rational logic of cause and effect, but are presented in a cyclical manner. Then art, as a creative, diverse and personal interpretation, is no more than an alternative version of events,

³ A sustainable response can be derived from the capital market's emphasis on ESG and the scale of the market economy, ESG represents environmental protection (E, environment), social responsibility (S, social), and corporate governance (G, governance) as indicators of a company's operations, which can be found in the Wikipedia at: <https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/%E7%8E%AF%E5%A2%83%E3%80%81%E7%A4%BE%E4%BC%9A%E5%92%8C%E5%85%AC%E5%8F%B8%E6%B2%BB%E7%90%86>

⁴ Ecology (German: Ökologie), a concept defined by the German biologist Ernst Haeckel in 1866: ecology is the science of the interrelationships between living things and their surroundings, both abiotic and biotic <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E7%94%9F%E6%80%81%E5%AD%A6>

though not comparable in terms of norms, and compared to the rational and purposive technological manipulation of real society, art has the potential to break out of the established framework and the possibility of a more flexible and leaping interpretation.

It can be said that art has a certain "eventfulness" or appearance and phenomenon in its nature. Take for example the famous eco-art work "7000 Eichen - Stadtverwaltung statt⁵" (7000 Oaks - Replacing Urban Management with Urban Forestry) by Joseph Beuys in the 7th Kassel Documenta as an example, Beuys declared when asked about the motivation and goal of the creation:

"I see the tree as a form of sculpture that expresses eternity, especially the slow-growing, solid wood of the oak tree. Prehistoric Druids believed that the oak tree was the foundation of all things, so they used it as a symbol of sanctuary and called themselves 'Oak Knowers'; and I envision the same future. With these 7,000 oaks, I offer the world a simple but radical possibility."

"The 7000 Oaks is the symbolic beginning and the basalt monument is the symbolic marker. The future goals of this project include: 1. to promote urban greening to the world with the aim of environmental and ecological education; 2. to raise the awareness of city residents about the importance of the ecological environment; and 3. to revitalise the community through sustainable, creative and inclusive artistic action."

In this regard, Beuys, an artist famous for his "social sculpture", regarded "sculpture" as a kind of shaping the meaning of construction and action, and the object dealt with is the environment, society or the phenomenon itself. Such a shift from the traditional concern for the material to the interest in the phenomenon has influenced the original appearance of art's intervention in the nature and the exemplary role of the modern era. If we look back at the history of art's involvement in nature - from the early stage of art's development when it attempted to detach itself from the spatiality of the intermediary mechanism and the value of the breakthrough of the traditional media to the "eco-art" that adopted a more caring attitude towards the ecology, the level of art's involvement in nature has not only become more in-depth, but also shifted from the pure artistic to the social and political in terms of its aesthetic value. Perhaps it is also

⁵ In 1982, through the response of volunteers, Beuys expected to plant 7,000 oaks in five years in Kassel, Germany, with a black basalt inscription next to each tree, from Wikipedia: <https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/%E7%B5%A6%E5%8D%A1%E5%A1%9E%E7%88%BE%E7%9A%847000%E6%A3%B5%E6%A9%A1%E6%A8%B9>

because nature as an object is no longer limited by space and material, but also has multiple social relations and values.

However, this does not mean that we do not rely on science and technology for practical management, but rather that they have different levels of treatment and influence. We attempt to address the impact and implications of events from an ecological perspective (not only in terms of nature, but also as a concept of nature, meaning a broader consideration of the totality of factors within the environment), combined with the potential of art to break out of the framework of rational tools.

IV Of Guandu

If 《The Lost River⁶》, which won the 2023 Taiwan Literature Awards, is a milestone in nature writing, then the motivation for this book was the environmental protection movement triggered by one of the most well-known environmental movements of the last few years, the Chihpen Photovoltaic Development Project. When reading the multi-layered story of the wetlands, which the author Hwang Han Yao tried to weave together with prose strokes, documentary journalism, and the integration of local and ethnic diaries, observations of local species, landscape changes, tribal stories, and the long-lasting interactions between people and the land, as well as the record of the social movement against the Chihpen photovoltaic project at that time, one can't help but overlap with the history of the Guandu Plain's environmental changes and the nature park. Coincidentally, they share similar environmental patterns and challenges:

The Guandu Plain⁷ is also located at the "end" of the Danshui River, where the Keelung River meets the Danshui River, and is also a wetland, and the designation of the reserve area also comes from the participation of the environmental movement, and even the recent environmental changes have a similar history.

As described in the book, the wetland is the meeting place of various ecological (including human) interactions in time and space, and it is the boundary and space between the land and the water, the city and the wilderness, and the human and the nature. As such a space, the Guandu Nature Park and Reserve actually have the symbolic significance of the society to the environmental conservation, and they are

⁶ <https://award.nmtl.gov.tw/information?uid=3&pid=2115>

⁷ For the history of Guandu Nature Park, please refer to: <https://gd-park.org.tw/about/23>

also responsible for the function of the environmental conservation and education, and the Art Festival is one of the projects that performs this function. As early as the first festival in 2006, art has been a way of debating the relationship between the natural environment and its surroundings, as declared in 2016:

After ten years, this art action has drawn a blueprint for the Guandu Nature Park for the symbiosis of estuarine culture, wetland conservation and environmental art. Starting from 2016, under the name of "Guandu International Nature Art Festival", we took advantage of the past ten years of accumulated experiences and emotions to further implement and deepen our understanding and care for the local area, and we hope that everyone participating in this art festival will be able to actively rebuild their own relationship with the environment, and to be inspired by the nature, and to find a direction for the future sustainability together. Together, we will find a direction for a sustainable future.

If the change⁸ of name from outdoor installation to nature art is a more ecological observation and practice, then it is also a response to the shift in contemporary aesthetics to a more educational and discursive art. Perhaps it is also a way of responding to **the Anthropocene⁹ and its events**.

V Perceptions and Opportunities

Bernard Stiegler, the famous philosopher of the techno-social correlation, once said:

"The Anthropocene is an "entropocene", that is, a period of mass production of entropy, which is equivalent to an increase in disorder or a weakening of order, in which case the entropy is negative, or "negentropy".

When global warming, extreme weather, air pollution, ecological and biodiversity decline, etc., when all kinds of "exceptions" and events become the norm, more and more artists begin to pay attention to this reality. If the hippie movement in the 60s and

⁸ Starting from 2016, the name of the exhibition has been changed from "Outdoor Sculpture Festival" to "Natural Art Festival".

⁹ Anthropocene was coined in 2000 by the Dutch atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen, winner of the 1995 Nobel Prize. He argued that the impact of human activity on the planet was enough to establish a new geological era, which is a catch-all term for the environmental dilemmas we are experiencing today: global warming, extreme weather, air pollution, declining ecology and biodiversity, and so on

70s called for a return to nature, then in the 21st century we need to reflect and pay attention to all kinds of problems of environmental change.

So what does it mean to be an ecological art or artist, according to Paul Ardenne in his book 《 Ecological Art - The Human World and the Creation of Form 》 ?

- *Working in Natural Spaces with the Development of Landscape Art*
- *Documenting ecosystems in a state of crisis*
- *Situational (contextual) artists, utilising their own talents and denouncing the abnormal relationship between human activity and the space in which they live.*
- Care-driven artists, caring for others and their relationship with the environment¹⁰.

In short, the attitude¹¹ towards caring for the ecology in their creations is a basic criterion. When the ecology becomes the artist's attitude, it manifests itself as a perception on ecological observation. It is a gesture that inspires future generations to actively intervene in society, to change the environment and people through art for the benefit of the public. Lucy Lippard, a famous American art critic, once said:

"The word 'ecology' in Greek means 'home'. It's hard to find a place that feels like home these days because so many people in the world don't feel at home. Can we use interactive, process-based art to bring people back home?" (Lucy Lippard: Look Around, 《Measuring the Shape》 p. 140)

The call for content

In 2024, we want to make a clearer statement and emphasise the reconstruction of the relationship between people and the environment, and seek the concept of sustainability. What attitudes and actions shall we take towards the ecology, and what values shall we convey to the people involved? When the ecology becomes the artist's attitude, the presentation is a perception on ecological observation, a gesture that

¹⁰ Extracted from P.14 of the book

¹¹ When it comes to "Attitudes", one cannot help but think of the curatorial approach to "Attitudes" in Harald Szeemann's 1969 exhibition 《When Attitudes Become Forms. Unlike the media-categorised exhibition format, Szeemann emphasises the attitudinal issues embedded in the artworks: the so-called "Attitudes" refer to the manifestation of the artist's mental space, i.e. a process of artistic expression through actions and gestures. This exhibition forms a visual spectacle of attitude as a form of artistic expression through the external expression of the artist's inner attitude. Excerpted from <https://aofa.tw/?p=2812>

inspires future generations to actively intervene in the society and change the environment and human beings through art for the benefit of the public. Therefore, the curatorial theme of 2024: "Ecology, a perception " is an invitation to artists and the public to think about the real environment together, and to take an ecological care as the starting point of the road back home.

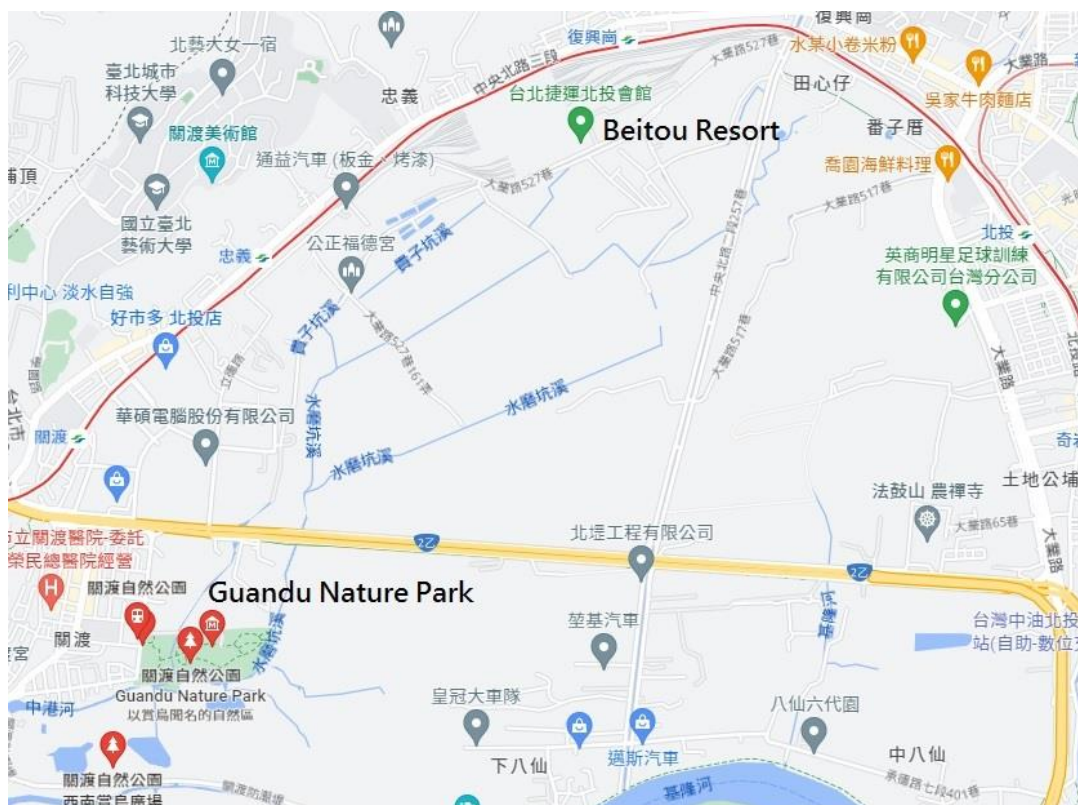
Creative Goal

The format of creation is unrestricted and may include interdisciplinary contemporary art, visual art, installation art, etc. The use of natural materials is preferred for media, and the creative process must comply with environmentally friendly principles. The works created should convey the values of habitat creation and biodiversity, the connections between the ecology, birds, and human interactions surrounding Guandu, and should trigger awareness of ecological conservation. The creative concept and presentation of the works should emphasize their artistic nature.

Venue

Guandu Nature Park

Guandu Nature Park started to hold the Guandu International Outdoor Sculpture Festival in 2006. Every year, several artworks are installed in the main facility area of the park. The diverse environment provides artists with creativity and imagination. The artworks are created in different types of landscapes, including forest, wetland, grassland, pond and mudflat and so on.



Guandu Nature Park : <https://gd-park.org.tw/> (4 Artworks)



Located at the junction of Tamsui River and Jilong River, Guandu Nature Park is a nature park of wetland preservation with landscape consisting of an integrated wetland environment of swamp and pond. It is an important pass-by stop for migratory birds in their annual migration route. Hence, it has been recognized by Birdlife International as an “Important Bird Area” (IBA). The Park, authorized by Taipei City Government, is currently administered under the Wild Bird Society of Taipei (WBST) and devotes care to wetland and wild birds’ conservation.

We will select **4 artists** to create his/her artwork in the Main Area of Guandu Nature Park. Main Area is the region of the Park which opens for the public with admission hours and fees. It includes the Nature Center, bird watching cabins, ponds, trails, and other educational facilities.

Other areas of the Park are preserved for birds and other wildlife which are restricted to public access. Visitors can observe wildlife via telescope or attend the guided tour arranged by the Park in order to visit the restricted areas. In addition, the Park has designed many environmental education programs that give opportunities to people to interact with nature and acknowledge the importance of environmental preservation.



Possible locations for artwork:





Timetable

Field Study Period	Aug. 22	Artists arrive in Taipei; Hotel check-in
	Aug. 23	Venue Tour ∙ Field study
	Aug. 24	Field study ∙ Selecting Artwork Venue & Environmental Q&A
	Aug. 25	Artists selves field study
Residence Period	Aug. 27 - Sep. 21	Period of installation
	Sep. 22	Opening Art Festival
	Sep. 23	Artists depart
Exhibition Period	Sep. 22-Dec. 31	The artwork exhibition

★ Off days: Aug.26 ∙ Sep. 02 ∙ Sep. 09 ∙ Sep. 16

★ Any change to the current timetable will be made in accordance with notifications from the organizer, and will be announced on the official website of Guandu Nature Park and Guandu International Nature Art Festival.

Qualifications

1. Artists should be interested in the relationship between nature, human, and environment and committed not to harm the environment during artwork creation.
2. Artists should have experiences in working with volunteers, local residents, or students. While working on their artworks, they should be able to spark interest of general public to participate in the process of such artistic creation. Artists are also required to participate throughout the residency period, leading volunteers to complete their artworks as well as preparing for the artists' workshop on the opening day in advance.

3. For the foreign applicants, it is required to have basic English conversation skills to communicate with the staff of Guandu Nature Park and the ability to mingle with other artists, local residents, and students.
4. Group application is allowed. However, the organizer will offer only one funding (see below) for the group. Artists should agree to share all the funding & support without disputes.

How To Apply

We sincerely welcome artists to take part in this annual event. Deadline for proposal submission is May 31, 2024. The proposals can be written in either English or Chinese. Please make sure that you have the following documents ready, and submit via email at this address: festival@gd-park.org.tw

Required Documents :

We will only be accepting DOC or PDF files for document files and JPG and JPEG files for your image files. The size of each image file should be between 500KB-1MB.

A. Details of Proposal should include:

1. **Your motivations.** Explain why you want to apply for our event and the specific environment issues that you care about. (max. 1 page).
2. **An artwork proposal.** Include a brief description and a simple sketch or computer graphics. Drafts of your work including estimated size of the creation and materials and quantity needed.
3. **Public interactivity.** Artists should design a public interactivity (workshop, performance, or any type of activity) to be implemented during the opening weekend.

B. Self-Introduction should include:

1. **Personal CV.** Include your background and experience, awards, and past exhibitions. Be sure to include your full name, current mailing address, phone number, and nationality.

2. **A portfolio of your previous artworks.** Please introduce 6 of your previous related works with details of title, date of completion, the material used, and venue where they were exhibited.

* Proposal completeness will be taken into serious consideration during the judging process.

* Submission will not be returned.

* The design should be new or original, not previously published or used in any country before the date of application for registration. Artists that enter with work that is not their original creation will be disqualified.

Funding

1. **Artist' s fee NTD\$ 80,000.** According to the income tax law in Taiwan, the organizer will deduct tax from the payment based on the applicable rate (e.g. 20% for non-resident) stipulated in the law. Therefore the actual amount the artists receive will be less than NTD\$ 80,000. The organizer will pay this fee in New Taiwan Dollars in cash.
2. **A round-trip airfare (economy class).** From artist' s residency country to Taiwan. The reimbursement does not include the costs associated with passport & visa expenses, and the traffic arrangement of personal itinerary. Artist will have to book the ticket and pay the fee in advance by him/herself. The organizer will pay the reimbursement by New Taiwan Dollars in cash after artist' s arrival in Taiwan. We will support multi-destination flight only for work purpose. Artists need to provide official documents (an invitation letter, poster etc.) as proof.
3. **Pick-up/drop-off service** will be provided. However, artists who plan to have personal trips in Taiwan after the residency will have to take care of the transportation by themselves.
4. **Accommodation.** From Aug 22, 2024 (check-in) to September 23, 2024 (check-out). Each artist will receive accommodation in a single room with

individual bathroom. For anyone accompany the artist, an additional bed will be charged by the hotel accordingly.

5. **Materials support.** The organizer will assist to collect on-site natural materials (e.g. reed, wood, stone, bamboo, leaf etc.) or recycled objects. The organizer has a shared budget for all artists for purchasing materials like hemp ropes, eco-paints, bamboo etc. Artists who need to purchase materials must consult with the curator first.
6. **Meals.** Breakfast will be provided by Metro Inn every day. Lunch will be provided by Guandu Nature Park every working day. dinners will not be provided. The average cost for a meal in Taiwan is around NTD 80-300.
7. **Local transport.** Artists can use the public transport system such as metro, bus, or public bike to shuttle between the hotel and the Park to travel around Taipei. The organizer will provide artists EasyCard with pre-stored value.

Guidelines & Requirements

1. Use only environmentally friendly materials.
2. Use local materials first.
3. **Stability and safety:** Safety is our first priority. The artwork should be made to last at least 3 months or longer. It should also be designed to weather gracefully over time and reveal the different stages as it decays. For safety concerns, the Park reserves the right to dispose or dismantle the artwork.
4. **Community involvement:** Artists will work with volunteers and local residents to create their artworks. Public participation is one of the key elements of this event.
5. Artist should prepare a public presentation to share their experiences and previous artworks with local residents during the residency.

6. Artists should be involved in any related events such as press conferences and opening ceremony.

Contact

1. Email festival@gd-park.org.tw
2. Phone +886-2-28587417 ext. 230 (Ms. Evonne Yeh)