



Pressrelease

A Decolonial Memorial Is Coming to Berlin

The jury has chosen the winning concept in an international art competition

Berlin, 01.02.2024. An international jury of experts has chosen a concept, turned in for realization as the Decolonial Memorial at the Berlin Global Village, as winner. The winners, The Lockward collective consisting of Jeannette Ehlers and patricia kaersenhout in collaboration with advisor Rolando Vázquez, will realize the Decolonial Memorial with architect Max Bentler as technical advisor. "We are happy with the jury's decision. This is an excellent concept, anchoring the discussion of decolonialization of global north-south relations in Berlin permanently. We are especially pleased about the concepts ability to engage with various communities," states Akinola Famson, shareholders representative of the Berlin Global Village.

The winning concept carries the name "Earth Nest" and is a conical bronze sculpture, which will be located between to two main buildings of the Berlin Global Village. It is, according to the artists "a work of decolonial healing, a communal temple that believes in bringing communities together, gathering memories and recollecting what has been dismembered by colonial erasures. Its underground section will host ancestral soils of the former colonies, while its weaved aerial cone will be illuminated in violet tones to invoke the power of healing the colonial wound." (See concept paper) Ehlers and kaersenhout have both engaged with decolonial topics in their work extensively.

It was a global, open, anonymous and two-phase art competition. The names of the winners were revealed only after the jury had made its decision. The organizers took extra steps to invite artists from formerly colonized countries to partake in the competition – a first in Germany. As a result, artists submitted a total of 244 designs from all continents. The competition and the creation of the artwork will be accompanied by an extensive educational programme on the topic of decolonization. The Decolonial Memorial will be presented to the public in fall 2024. The 20 finalists designs will be exhibited at the Museum Neukölln from April 26th to March 12th 2024.

The decision was carried by a high-profile, seven members strong jury lead by the chairmen Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu (Princeton University). For the realization of the artwork the federal state of berlin (SenKultGZ) is providing 750.000 euro. For the art contest, public relations as well as educational and supporting program a further 750.000 Euros are provided by the German Federation (BKM). Claudia Roth, Federal government commissioner for culture and media, is lending her patronage as well as Joe Chialo, the Senator of the Department for Culture and Social Cohesion. The project sponsor Berlin Global Village gGmbH is in cooperation with the Office for Art in Public Spaces of the Kulturwerk GmbH of the bbk berlin e.V. as well as civil society supporters consisting of eight associations.

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