



STIFTUNG
PREUSSISCHE SCHLÖSSER UND GÄRTEN
BERLIN-BRANDENBURG

Open Call (2 Phase process) (updated on 09.09.2022)

Public Entity

Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (SPSG)

Einrichtung des öffentlichen Rechts. Freizeit, Kultur und Religion

**Contemporary Art Intervention: Part of the Exhibition Project “Colonial Contexts”
(Working Title), Charlottenburg Palace, Berlin
1. July 2023 to 31. October 2023**

Bid Submissions (Phase 1) Deadline: 30.09.2022, 3 pm CET

Bid Submission (Phase 2) Deadline: 24.11.2022, 3 pm CET

Please send your submission **digitally** or by post (A4-sized paper) to:

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Contact Person for Award Procedure:

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Contact Person: Project „Colonial Contexts“

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Freelance Remuneration

Award money for selected artists after Phase One: 5,000 Euro incl. VAT.

Award money for selected artist after Phase Two: 25,000 Euro incl. VAT.

Please note the selected artist will be awarded an honorarium for the implementation of the idea with a total of 30,000 Euro incl. VAT. This amount is constituted in part by the award money from Phase One (5,000 Euro incl. VAT) in addition to the award money from Phase Two (25,000 Euro incl. VAT).

The bid interview and competition presentation is planned for 29th/30th November in Potsdam. For international bids, we can offer the possibility of presenting via Zoom. Please note that travel costs to Potsdam for the presentation cannot be reimbursed by the foundation.

The subject of the open call is the conceptualization and implementation of a contemporary artistic intervention at the Equestrian Statue that stands in front of the Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin.

Introduction:

The Charlottenburg Palace is Berlin's largest preserved palace and is the only one of the Hohenzollern family's residences that can be experienced as an *ensemble* of gardens, detailed architecture and immaculate interiors.

The SPSG's palaces are an ideal site to revisit the power structures of Germany's colonial past, as they make history and culture more tangible for the wider public. Inspecting the palace's courtly culture, particularly as a manifestation of said power structures, thus provides a productive space to discuss inequality, freedom and courtly collecting. The colonial pasts of Prussia, as well as that of Germany thereafter, is narrated through relevant structures and processes: The palace as a colonial site, the royal court, collecting, and the trade of slaves and colonial objects. By exploring the aforementioned, we aim to convey to a broader public the connections between the colonial past of the Prussian court and that of the German Empire. In this regard, we look to historical monuments from within contemporary discourses. Here, a tension arises between the task of preservation of historical monuments and the necessity of challenging historical structures that have strengthened over time.

Special Exhibition (general information)

The exhibition, whose departure point remains the objects that make up the SPSG's collection, is planned to be shown in the New Wing and the Old Palace of the Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin. The objects will be framed in the exhibition by different themes that are considered herein as "colonial continuities". These "continuities" refer to the colonial processes, practices and structures that are framed as a precursor to and a continuation of "formal colonialism" in later centuries. Aspects of these continuities stretch back from the 17th century into the present-day. The exhibition connects general themes of colonialism with those that are more context-specific by zooming in on the biographies of enslaved individuals and the objects from the colonial past of the Prussian court.

The contemporary artistic intervention at the Equestrian Statue is situated at both the start and end of the exhibition's walkthrough. Beginning with the Elector Frederick William, founder of the Brandenburg-African Company (BAC), he is personified in the Equestrian Statue itself and occupies a prominent position in front of the palace. At the end of the walkthrough at the Old Palace, and as seen from that vantage point, one finds themselves once again in front of the monument. This circular movement serves to frame the monument's colonial history within the contemporary moment and the artistic intervention.

Contemporary Intervention

In the middle of the so-called ‘court of honour’ stands the Equestrian Statue (Informationen_Abb.3). To complement the exhibition, a contemporary artistic intervention will be carried out in relation to the statue, which stands in front of the oldest part of the Charlottenburg Palace.

Different formats for the contemporary artistic intervention are permissible for submission, including but not limited to: an installation built around the Equestrian Statue, a sculpture or an installation set up in relation to the Equestrian Statue, using the space in its vicinity, performances, video installations or similar formats. The intervention will be exhibited outside, meaning it is required to be weather-resistant, and can be displayed for a part of or the entire duration of the exhibition.

The Equestrian Statue of Elector Frederick William (1620-1688) is both a striking feat and the backdrop of photos taken by visitors to the Charlottenburg Palace. However, there is currently no information on the Equestrian Statue on site. Accordingly, the contemporary artistic intervention will, for the first time, allow for commentary on the monument and its history. From where it stands, the monument connects Schlossstraße with the palace itself (Übersicht_Schloss). Across from the Equestrian Statue stands another statue of Prince Albrecht of Prussia (1809-1872), whose biography details the colonial practices he engaged in. Through his biography, we know that Albrecht traveled to Egypt in the 19th century. Upon his return, he brought back with him a young enslaved boy, later granted the name “August Albrecht Sabac el Cher”, who was given to Prince Albrecht as a ‘gift’.

Situating the Contemporary Intervention

As part of the special exhibition set for 2023 (1st July–31st October) in the New Wing and the Old Palace of Charlottenburg Palace on colonial continuities of the palaces and gardens, the significance and historical interpretations of the monument to Elector Frederick William are being reassessed. Historical and iconographical details regarding the monument, colonialism and the history of the slave trade can be found under “Additional information”.

What do the statue’s historical and iconographic references allude to? Which history is commemorated at this site? How can this site also point to potential future interpretations of history? How can colonial references be made visible?

The Equestrian Monument has stood in front of the Charlottenburg Palace since 1951. It was installed during a time when the SPSG was divided into two separate institutions—an eastern and a western—when Germany itself was divided. As the palace became severely damaged during the war, the Charlottenburg Palace was rebuilt thereafter, and grew to become the most important palace for the SPSG-West. In relation to the reconstruction efforts, the interior was also rebuilt and the Equestrian Monument took its place in the so-called ‘court of honor’ in front of the Charlottenburg Palace. The monument speaks to a number of historical moments, and can be traced back to and beyond a colonial history.

The preservation of historical objects is a primary task of the SPSG. The mission statement reads: "We are committed to caring for the architectural and garden monuments and collections entrusted to us in an exemplary manner for present and future generations and, as far as possible, to preserving them in their traditional substance." On this note, one poses the question: How can an on-site intervention take place as part of the planned exhibition, where both the significance and colonial histories of the monument are critically engaged with and, simultaneously, assigned new meanings?

Primary Task

The contemporary artistic intervention with the Equestrian Monument should attempt to address the different iconographical and historical facets as well as meanings of the site and work with the underlined question mentioned above. The artistic intervention serves as a discussion point to explore how current narratives of the past can be connected to potential reinterpretations of the same history in the near future.

Conservatory Guidelines

- From the point of view of conservation and preservation of monuments, the design must be non-invasive and non-intrusive, completely reversible and without any impact on the monument's substance.
- For the use of the pavement in the vicinity of the statue as a set-up area, the garden department and palace area management must be involved.
- The stability of superstructures must be ensured and, if necessary, proven by structural analysis.
- Attachments to the equestrian statue, the surrounding sculptures and the pedestal are not possible.
- Stand scaffolds with ballasting are to be used for installations in the vicinity of the sculptures and the pedestal.
- All installations must be secured against weather events, climbing and direct access.
- No adhesions of paint, tape or mechanical means shall be made to the entire equestrian statue.
- The development of an intervention should be done in consultation with the SPSG to ensure that all possibilities are identified and hazards are avoided.

Technical notes

- One half of the yard in front of the palace must remain free for the operation of the summer cinema.
- The space across the palace can also be used. However, safety within this area cannot be guaranteed to the same extent as within the bounds of the palace itself.
- The courtyard and the space across the palace can not be accessed with vehicles that are heavier than 7 tons (updated 26.08.22).

Desired submission materials:

The selection of the winning tender will take place following the meeting of a jury panel. This process will be divided into two phases:

Phase 1: Applicants have two months to submit the following documents:

- Preliminary Idea Sketch
- Estimated Time and Finance Plan (incl. acquisition of copyright to photographs of the contemporary artistic intervention)
- Portfolio
- Brief Cover Letter (200 words max.)

During this phase, the SPSG will perform a brief overview of the applications, with particular regard to applicants' observation of the conservatory regulations provided and finance and time plans. The SPSG will then forward the applications to the five-part jury panel (consisting of four external members and the SPSG's General Director), who will anonymously choose three finalists based on criteria chosen unanimously by the jury beforehand. The jury board consists of the following individuals who have expertise in curation, contemporary art and academia: Dr. Ibou C. Diop, Julia Hagenberg, Dr. Natasha A. Kelly, Lerato Shadi und Prof. Dr. Christoph Martin Vogtherr.

Phase 2: Following the jury's announcement, three finalists will be selected and given the opportunity to further develop their idea sketch over a period of four weeks. The final submission should include the following:

- Explanatory Report
- Model or Sketch (or other detailed descriptions for performances and similar formats)
- Detailed Finance Plan (incl. acquisition of copyright to photographs of the intervention)
- Detailed Implementation Plan

Following an in-person presentation of the project idea, the jury panel will select a proposal based on the same criteria used in Phase One.

The budget for the entire implementation (if applicable, construction-, installation-, transport- and dismantling) should include other services or necessities, such as soil preparation, lighting and video surveillance (for security purposes) and must not exceed 30,000 Euro (gross incl. VAT.)

This budget is available additionally to the award money for the implementation of the project. (updated 09.09.2022)

Within the framework of the exhibition, the selected artist will also be asked to give an interview with the curatorial team about the artistic process in 2023.

In the event of a work-related incident, the artist shall provide evidence of property liability insurance with coverage amounts of 2,000,000 Euro for personal injury and 5,000,000 Euro for property damage and financial loss, each of which must be available once per year, and shall maintain said insurance for the entire duration of the contract. Please note that applicants do not need to procure liability insurance in advance of selection. Should any questions arise around procurement of liability insurance, please contact the curatorial team.

If you are interested in reading more materials regarding this project, please find them below:

- Groundplan to scale (pdf)

Additional Information**Contemporary Intervention at the Equestrian Statue of Elector Frederick William in front of the Charlottenburg Palace**

Berlin, Charlottenburg Palace, Duration: 4 Months (2023)

The Exhibition

The central focus of the upcoming special exhibition at the Charlottenburg Palace is the contributions of the courtly society and monarchy to German colonialism and its prehistory. Emanating from the SPSG's objects and biographies of historical individuals, the exhibition will engage the changes and continuities in thought patterns and power structures in the royal court. Inspecting the palace's courtly culture—as a manifestation of said power structures—thus provides a productive space to discuss inequality, freedom, courtly taste and diplomacy; particularly because it differs so starkly from today's understanding of democracy. Concerning the historical monuments on site, we look at these monuments within the context of contemporary national and international discourses on colonialism and historical preservation. In this light, a tension arises between the task of preserving history and changing historical structures that have strengthened over time.

The Equestrian Monument by Andreas Schlüter***Sites***

In front of Charlottenburg Palace, the Equestrian Statue of Elector Frederick William remains the most captivating element of the palace's outer façade. Depicted in the statue, Elector Frederick William was one of the pioneers of Brandenburg's colonial expansion throughout the 17th century (Fig. 1, Fig. 3).¹ The statue was installed only in 1951 in the so-called 'court of honour' of the Charlottenburg Palace. However, the monument originally stood at the Berlin Palace on the "Lange Brücke" in the center of Berlin. Prior to the bombing of Berlin in World War II, the statue was taken to Ketzin in Brandenburg by ship. The sculpture *ensemble* also survived the return to Berlin unscathed, although it sank in Lake Tegel on its way to the city.

Frederick William and the early colonial history of Brandenburg

The statue of Frederick William was commissioned by his son and successor, Elector Frederick III, who later became King Frederick I of Prussia (1657-1713). The grandiose project, the Brandenburg African Company (BAC), was founded during the elector's reign in 1682. Through the BAC, the elector yearned to match the colonial endeavors of other European powers. Within just a few years, the BAC built several forts on the West African coast, including

¹ For further information on the Equestrian Statue see u.a. Nicolai, Bernd: Das Denkmal des Großen Kurfürsten von Andreas Schlüter (Der Kunstbrief). Berlin: 2002. Gebr. Mann; Seidel, Paul: Das Standbild des Großen Kurfürsten von Andreas Schlüter. In: Zeitschrift für Bauwesen. 43. Berlin: 1893. S. 57-62; Kessler, Hans-Ulrich (Hg.): Andreas Schlüter und das barocke Berlin. Katalog zur Ausstellung Schloss-Bau-Meister. Andreas Schlüter und das barocke Berlin, Bode-Museum, Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst. München: 2014. Hirmer. S. 222-235; Hinterkeuser, Guido: Die Bronzedenkmäler von Andreas Schlüter und Johann Jacobi zwischen Kostümfuge, internationalem Prestige und Künstlerruhm. In: Marth, Regine (Hg.): Barocke Kunststücke. Festschrift für Christian Theuerkauff, München: 2011. Hirmer. S. 94-101.

Großfriedrichsburg, which was named after the elector himself. The extent to which the Brandenburg Trading Company participated in the slave trade has not been conclusively determined. However, research on the numbers of those enslaved by the BAC varies, claiming between 17,000 to 30,000 people were abducted by the BAC.²

Iconography

Upon seeing the Equestrian Statue, one also encounters figures depicting subjugated peoples who are symbolic figures of conquest and captivity, reminiscent of the abduction of prisoners of war from the Ottoman Empire. The arms and legs of these people appear in the statue to be chained. Two of the four individuals seem to look upwards towards the elector. This type of stately representation directly referred to predecessors to the elector; for example, the Equestrian Statue of the French King Henry IV (1553-1610) in the center of Paris, which no longer exists today. At the statue's base, representations of previously enslaved and captured people, including those from continental Africa, are made obvious.

This kind of iconography also characterized the statue of Ferdinando I de' Medici (1549-1609). The Grand Duke of Tuscany commissioned a sculptural *ensemble* of himself depicting four enslaved people from the Ottoman Empire while he was still reigning. In 1617, an effigy of himself was erected at the port of Livorno and was later supplemented at the base with sculptures of enslaved people (Fig. 2). The sculptures at the base of the statue were created after studies of enslaved persons on site. This monument is said to have symbolized the maritime power of Tuscany after the victories over the Ottoman Empire. The *ensemble* vividly demonstrated the power of the ruling family over the local population and enslaved persons from different regions as they were brought to the port. The Livorno monument was reproduced as a sculpture, drawing, fresco, painting and even a sugar statue, becoming a popular form of representation of Europe's domination during the slave trade.

An Interpretation of the Equestrian Statue

In classic tradition—but symbolized via iconography—sculptures of Frederick William's defeated enemies sit his feet, as depicted in the Equestrian Statue. Those depicted represented Sweden, France, the Ottoman Empire and Poland.³ This portrayal testifies to both the symbolic and actual abduction of the elector's enemies.

² See. van der Heyden, Ulrich: Rote Adler an Afrikas Küste. Die brandenburgisch-preußische Kolonie Großfriedrichsburg in Westafrika, Berlin: 2001. Salignow-Verlag; Klosa, Sven: Die Brandenburgische-Africanische Compagnie in Emden. Eine Handelscompagnie des ausgehenden 17. Jahrhunderts zwischen Protektionismus und unternehmerischer Freiheit, Frankfurt am Main [u.a]: 2011. Peter Lang; Konadu, Kwasi: The Akan Diaspora in the Americas. Oxford: 2010. Oxford University Press.

³ Zur Ikonographie der Figuren vgl. Frank, Christoph: Zwischen Frankreich und Preußen. Das Denkmal des Großen Kurfürsten von Andreas Schlüter im Spiegel seiner öffentlichen Rezeption. In: Windt, Franziska: Preußen 1701: Eine europäische Geschichte. Berlin: 2001. Deutschen Historischen Museum und der Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, S. 341-352. Ziegler, Hendrik: Der Sonnenkönig und seine Feinde. Die Bildpropaganda Ludwigs XIV. in der Kritik. Petersberg: 2010. Michael Imhof Verlag.

The Equestrian Monument has hitherto been analyzed primarily according to standards set by Art History. Two central points often made should be mentioned here: The sculptor, Andreas Schlüter (1659/60-1714), and bronze caster, Johann Jacobi (1661-1726), created the first equestrian monument of the Holy Roman Empire in the German Nation. Secondly, both the rider and the horse were made from a single casting, which was a technical achievement at the time.

What is the significance of the equestrian monument today? As a historical object, the statue has a material history that can be thoroughly researched. However, the social significance of the statue has changed over time, and, thus, the perspective from which we view it. In coming to terms with German colonial history, as well as with Brandenburg's involvement in colonialism, our view of the "Great Elector" and his representations is also changing. Against this backdrop, Frederick William's monument, and its specific iconographic tradition today, also stands for Brandenburg's early participation in the colonial and slave trade.

Abb. 1 The Equestrian Statue in front of the Charlottenburg Palace with prisoners of war at the base of the statue, Berlin, 1696-1709, bronze, cast, Andreas Schlüter (Sculptor), Johann Jacobi (Bronze Castor). © SPSG / P. - M. Bauers



Abb. 2 Vues du port de Livourne, Italy, 1655, Etching, Stefano della Bella, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1968



Abb. 3 So-called „Court of Honor“ with the Equestrian Statue in front of the Old Palace, Charlottenburg Palace © SPSG / P. - M. Bauers





Old Palace, part 2 of the exhibition

New Wing, part 1 of the exhibition

Equestrian Statue

"Court of Honour"

Space across the Palace

Prince Albrecht of Prussia

Schlossstraße

Schlossstraße