



BUMPKIN ISLAND ART ENCAMPMENT 2008 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Deadline for Submission: July 9, 2008

The 2nd Bumpkin Island Art Encampment invites proposals for a five-day art making experience in a national park space this Labor Day weekend. This project represents a partnership between The Berwick Research Institute, Studio Soto and the Island Alliance.

Starting Thursday, August 28, six artists or artist collectives will each receive one plot of prime, arable land in the middle of Boston Harbor. As island “homesteaders” during the following five days, they will:

- * Build a temporary shelter on the land
- * Live on the land for at least four nights, and
- * Improve the land via a site-specific project or performance.

GUIDELINES:

This is a unique opportunity to live and work in a temporary artist community in Boston’s largest national park area. Projects will:

- Incorporate materials from the resources/elements of Bumpkin Island. Artists will only bring materials and supplies that they can physically carry on to the island, including everything needed to sleep, eat and drink. For projects, rocks on the shore, fallen branches, shells, seaweed, and washed up debris are all fair game. Everything found and used on the island must stay on the island at the end of the project. Installations not in the tent sites that are made exclusively from found materials may remain intact on the island.
- Respond to the environment of the island, as defined in the broadest sense. Projects may reflect the island’s natural resources and human history (see background below), the cultural context of homesteading, community, home and relocation, or other themes.
- Involve two days of settling in and three days of public “works in progress” visitation. Applicants should be open to interacting with a broad public (day visitors, other campers, boaters, etc) during the process of creating the work. Participants will also be given the opportunity to meet, share meals and work with other selected artists.

ARTISTS WILL RECEIVE:

- A five day “land grant” with full campsite access and ferry transportation
- A \$100 stipend to cover basic expenses
- Support and critical feedback from project curators
- Visibility to local press contacts and hundreds of visitors
- Two communal meals provided by the Berwick and Studio Soto
- Volunteer support, to the extent possible
- Website visibility and inclusion in project documentation

TIMELINE:

Wednesday, July 9: Proposal deadline

Friday, July 18: Selected artists notified

Early August: Participant/coordinator meeting

Thursday, August 28: Early afternoon artist boat from Hingham Shipyard to Bumpkin Island

Thursday, August 28 – Friday, August 29: Set-up and island exploration

Saturday, August 30: Works-in-Progress Visitation Day

Sunday-Monday, August 31 - September 1: Public Visitation Days

Tuesday, September 2: Project take-down and boat back to Hingham Shipyard

TBA: Post-encampment “mainland” meeting and public presentation

Guidelines and timelines are current and accurate as of June 13, 2008.

As with all island life and work and play, be mindful that flexibility is key.

This is a rain or shine event.

TO APPLY:

In one page or less, please provide:

- Your name and contact information
- How you would “improve” your land, and why
- And a short description of your artistic process

Submissions must be received by 5pm Wednesday, July 9.

Email submissions preferred.

Images of past work are encouraged but will not be returned.

Email to:

jed@studiosoto.com

Or mail to:

Studio Soto

337 Summer St. 3rd floor

Boston, MA 02210

BUMPKIN BACKGROUND

About Bumpkin Island: Bumpkin was used by Native Americans as a fish camp prior to European contact. During the colonial period, the island was leased to tenant farmers. The island hosted a fish-drying operation in the early nineteenth century and a fish smelting operation in the early twentieth century. In 1900, a Boston philanthropist named Clarence Burrage founded a hospital for children with physical disabilities. During World War I the island was taken over for use as a United States Naval training camp, which was dismantled after the war. The hospital reopened briefly in about 1940 for polio patients but closed during World War II and burned in 1945. Today, the physical landscape of the island has been reclaimed by plants - about half are non-native species, including various fruits and berries, shrubs, vines, field plants and trees. Wildflowers grow along the trails that lead visitors to the ruins of the children's hospital and a stone farmhouse. The island is 35 acres with slate and shell beaches and open fields.

About Homesteading: In 1862, the United States recruited civilians to aid in its movement west. The Homestead Act offered any U.S. citizen or head of household, including people of color and women, free or low-cost 160-acre plots of land. In return, "homesteaders" promised to build a 12' x 14' house, cultivate and "improve" the land, and live on the plot for five years. The project resulted in the creation of over 372,000 farms west of the Mississippi, continuing as late as 1976-- when the Homestead Act was officially dissolved.

For documentation of the 2007 Bumpkin Island Art Encampment, please visit www.wooloo.org/BumpkinIslandLandOffice.

PROJECT PARTNERS

The project is co-curated by Megan Dickerson, Jed Speare and Carolyn Lewenberg, with:

The Berwick Research Institute is a 501c3 non-profit art organization that provides emerging artists with the opportunity for fiscal sponsorship and a laboratory where they can experiment with new forms and concepts without the pressures of a commercial environment. The Berwick brings artists and audiences together to foster a community that is based on dialogue, while encouraging play as a means of doing research. Functioning as an umbrella, the Berwick supports two established programs, the Artist-in-Research Residency Program and the Public Art Incubator, as well as many semi-permanent programs and one-time events.

www.berwickinstitute.org

Studio Soto, a space for ideas, was founded to promote and foster the creation of arts and to stimulate public interest therein through: providing a public venue to stimulate the synergy between artistic voices; supporting artists who challenge existing notions of contemporary art; encouraging collaborations across artistic disciplines and cultural borders; and fostering interactions between the artist and the community.

www.studiosoto.com

The Boston Harbor Island Alliance promotes public awareness and use of the Boston Harbor Islands national park area by creating vibrant spaces, facilities, and programming on the islands, raising and managing the public and private resources necessary to do so.

www.islandalliance.org

The Bumpkin Island Art Encampment is supported by the Berwick Research Institute's Special Projects Incubator, which is funded by the LEF Foundation.