

## Beroepsvereniging van Beeldende Kunstenaars

### BBK – Visual Artists Union of the Netherlands

Report for the IAA Europe General Assembly, 14 September 2017, Dublin

The BBK is a visual artists' association, created in 1945 and funded exclusively by the yearly contribution fees of its members. It acts as a union for visual artists and does so by offering professionally related services to its members, by laying contacts with the politics, and by reacting and intervening at situations occurring by political decisions in the sector of visual arts.

#### Activities in this period

- Artists' fees.  
The artists' fees guidelines, designed by BKNL<sup>1</sup> where BBK is one of the collaborating organisations, were implemented for the first time in 2017. The guidelines are in experimental phase, and seem to be embraced by hundreds of institutions. The Ministry of Culture, through the Mondrian Funds, has supported the plan by subsidising the involved institutions. However, big museums of visual art like the [Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam](#) and [De Fundatie](#) do not follow the guidelines.  
<http://kunstenaarshonorarium.nl/guideline-artists-fees/>
- Home copying royalty distributed also to BBK members.  
The 'thuiskopie' (home copying) royalty is a compensation meant for makers whose work is copied by consumers on digital carriers like smartphones and tablets; this refers to musicians, authors, film directors, and visual artists. To compensate the creators of music, books, movies, and images for lost revenues due to private copies (In the Netherlands one is allowed to make a copy of copyright protected work for personal use or study).  
In 2017, the 'thuiskopie' was directly paid to the makers, via the associations; BBK is one of the associations that received and distributed the compensation to its members.

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<sup>1</sup> The BKNL was created in 2013, as reaction to the cut-downs on the visual arts sector and the sector of national patrimony. In 2016, BKNL launched its website <http://bknl.nl/>.

How it works: The selling price of every blank CD, DVD, PC, HDD-Drive, smartphone, MP3 player or settopbox includes a royalty for the makers of the programmes, texts and images which the consumer copies onto those media at home. Stichting de Thuis kopie (Home Copying Foundation) passes on to Pictoright (the authors' rights organisation for visual artists in the Netherlands) the share intended for visual creators, and Pictoright distributes it to those makers who are registered; since 2017 it also distributes it to the professional associations for visual artists.

<http://www.thuiskopie.nl/nl/about-thuiskopie>

<http://www.pictoright.nl/>

- The IAA museum card was produced for the second year (the BBK issued the card for its members for the first time in 2016). The second step of the project which is to make it valid in museums in the Netherlands has taken a major setback: Our appeal to the museum directors had as response an annoyed letter from the museums association which sees the card as a competitor to the museum card that this association issues and sells each year. Their card, valid only in the Netherlands, addressed to all consumers, and with a yearly price of 65 Euro, is a project meant to support the NL museums, which NB operate as enterprises. According to them, artists have enough income to afford this card, either Dutch artists either visitors. However, the ICOM card is widely accepted in museums in the Netherlands. The effort continues; this is an on-going project.

- Collective Selfie – bringing to light the numbers about art and culture in the Netherlands.

This is a study done by BKNL and published in 2016. Some important points: About 80% of the professional artists earns up to 20.000 euro bruto/year. For around 20% the income is less than 2.000 euro bruto/year, and another 20% earns 2.000 to 10.000 euro bruto/year. The largest group, 30% earns between 10.000 and 20.000 per year. For artists working in other artistic jobs, is the 40% with an income under 20.000 euro per year. Finally, 64% of the total artists in the Netherlands cannot live of its artistic practice.

<http://www.dezaaknu.nl/downloads/BKNL-EenCollectieveSelfie.pdf> (in Dutch, with graphs)

- Participation in several meetings with other national organisations, with most important the BKNL meetings where representatives from national visual art organisations discuss issues like the artists' payments, the artists' studios

management, and the need for sufficient available information about the sector of visual arts.

- Renewal of the website: after the initial renewal that took place in 2016, we are working on improvements, including its (partial) translation into English. Our aim is to be able to facilitate all artists living in the Netherlands, as well as our contacts from abroad.
- Strong presence on Facebook, where our audience significantly outnumbers our members. The feed is almost daily and exclusively directed to visual arts issues, nationally and internationally.  
<https://www.facebook.com/BBKnetwerk/>
- Publication and distribution of four issues of the BBK Magazine (quarterly magazine), with themes: 'Victory Al go rithm' (4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2016), 'Land walker' (1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2017), 'Artists, Unite!' (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2017), theme: Art Events (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2017). The BBK Magazine is distributed to the BBK members, or else through a yearly subscription.
- The regular services of BBK to its members have been performed also this year: legal advice offered case by case (for ex. copyright issues, contracts, social security issues, etc.), tax declaration by specialised personnel, other arrangements that facilitate the professional life of visual artists.

### **Office and governing of BBK**

The BBK office employs three part-time employees, an administrative officer, a legal officer, and an office manager, plus two part-time employees working exclusively on the financial matters of its members.

The BBK is governed by a governing board which is elected every two years by the general assembly. The BBK has at this moment an interim board which will lead the association to new elections in October 2017. Theodor Schokker, Lea Pagner and Loek Schönbeck are the current board members. Sofia Kapnissi has been assigned to continue as BBK contact person and representative at IAA.

In January-February 2017, the BBK office moved to South-East Amsterdam. This is an area at the same time under-developed and a popular area for cultural organisations and artists' working spaces. The new office is in a building assigned by the Amsterdam Municipality as 'breeding space' (broedplaats), which means that several cultural organisations are co-existing. The inaugural meeting in the new space is the upcoming meeting of October, where also the possibilities of the place itself will be

discussed. The new visit and post address is: Heesterveld 58, 1102 SB, Amsterdam  
Zuidoost.

Sofia Kapnissi

On behalf of the BBK - Visual Artists Union of the Netherlands

[www.bbknet.nl](http://www.bbknet.nl)

