

BELGIANARTPRIZE

Press release

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BelgianArtPrize 2020 shortlist announced



Friday, June 28, 2019

The Jury have announced the five artists shortlisted for the BelgianArtPrize 2020:

Agency, Sammy Baloji, Saddy Choua, Jacqueline Mesmaeker and Joëlle Tuerlinckx

Each of the five shortlisted artists will present a new artistic project to be shown at the Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR) from March 19 to May 24, 2020. The winner will be announced in May 2020 at an award ceremony at BOZAR.

The Nominators

The shortlisted artists were chosen from an extensive list of 184 nominated artists compiled by 79 art professionals and collectors. The organizers called upon an advisory committee to carefully set up this renewed panel of nominators who represent the diversity of the ecosystems that make up and contribute to the richness of the Belgian art scene.

The list of the nominators is made public at the announcement of the five finalists and can be consulted on www.belgianartprize.be/contest/regulations.

The nominators were invited to nominate up to 5 artists taking into account the BelgianArtPrize's aim to focus on a specific moment in an artist's career and to support artists whose work has developed substantially over the years but who have not yet benefited from the acknowledgement they rightfully deserve. The artists' oeuvre does not only testify to its own maturity, but also engages in a true dialogue with contemporary reality.

The Jury

The organizers made a conscious effort to diversify the panel of jury members and brought together personalities truly engaged in the current contemporary art scene, from different backgrounds, and with a variety of activities in both institutional and private spheres. The BelgianArtPrize 2020 jury members are: **Olga Dreesmann Ramos-Esteban** (collector, supporter of several art institutions and philanthropic causes, board member of several institutions); **Wilfried Cooreman** (collector, board member of several cultural institutions); **Dries Douibi** (co-director of Kunstenfestivaldesarts, dramaturge); **Otobong Nkanga** (artist, BelgianArtPrize winner 2017); **Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez** (independent curator, editor and writer) and **Nicolaus Schafhausen** (curator, author and editor).

The jury was presided by **Sophie Lauwers** (Exhibitions director BOZAR).

The finalists were chosen by the BelgianArtPrize 2020 Jury from the 38 nominated artists who obtained 3 or more votes.

Jury Statement

"The jury was impressed by the quality of the nominations and the significant number of artists nominated for the BelgianArtPrize 2020 edition, reflecting and confirming the diversity of the Belgian art scene and the complexity of the existing practices.

A long, transparent and thoughtful debate preceded the difficult decision of choosing the finalists of the BelgianArtPrize. The jury members, with different backgrounds and a variety of activities stemming from public and private spheres, all closely examined various aspects of the artist's work and career, looking into the artist's practice from distinct angles and taking into account the singularity of each artist, generating a particularly engaging debate.

The jury took on the challenge to not only consider the relevance of each artist's work and practice, but also the conditions and the climate in which the works exist and respond to current challenging reality, determining the relevance of the position of the artist in today's tumultuous world. The jury also looked at the artist's accountability towards their subject matter, and at the diversity in both their practices and the audiences they address.

The jury deliberately selected 5 finalists and did not want to make up a list of reserve candidates.

The jury argued that each of the 5 finalists open up multiple ways of being, existing and seeing the world. The jury members are convinced that the finalists' works can help develop a multiple perspective, both physically and emotionally, about our reality as they each have a very accurate eye on their own

position and history, as well as the capacity of insightful analysis of their immediate social and cultural surrounding.

All of the finalists express their own personal views on the complicated times we live in and offer at the same time possibilities to engage with various positions and viewpoints we must take into account, whilst being concerned about the fact that notions and matters that we take for granted are being questioned.

The jury emphasizes that the finalists' works therefore do not only echo in Belgium but resonate transnationally.

By selecting these 5 finalists for the BelgianArtPrize, the jury truly wishes to enable the artists to deepen the dialogue they have already engaged with the public(s) as they deserve a wider recognition, as aimed by this Prize."

About the BelgianArtPrize

The BelgianArtPrize is a prestigious Award for Contemporary Art in Belgium. Organised since 1950 by La Jeune Peinture Belge/De Jonge Belgische Schilderkunst in close collaboration with the Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR), it aims at supporting Belgian and international artists residing in Belgium for at least a year and strengthen their national and international recognition.

Every two years, the shortlisted artists are given the opportunity to realize a new artistic project that is exhibited at BOZAR. The winner is awarded the Crowet Prize (€ 25,000). The winner of the Public Choice receives € 10,000, offered by ING, the Prize's structural partner.

The selection of the 4 finalists of the previous edition generated a vigorous public debate resulting in the cancellation of the 2019 edition of the Prize. Having carefully listened to the different views and discussions, the organizers of the Prize have adapted and clarified the procedures of the BelgianArtPrize 2020 edition, which are set out on www.belgianartprize.be/contest/regulations. Those ensure that more diversity was taken into account at any given stage of the Prize's procedures and that any form of discrimination, be it racial, ethnic, based on age, religious beliefs or convictions, sexual orientation or gender, is eliminated.

With these changes the Prize hopes to respect and honour as much as possible the multiplicity of artistic expressions that characterize the Belgian art scene.

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Biographies

Agency

"Agency" is an international Brussels-based initiative that was founded in 1992 by Kobe Matthys. Agency constitutes a growing list of "boundary things" that are mostly derived from recent and historical controversies and juridical cases involving intellectual property (copyrights, patents, trademarks, etc...) from various territories of world integrated capitalism. The colonial concept of intellectual property relies upon the fundamental assumption of the split between culture and nature and consequently between expressions and ideas, creations and facts, subjects and objects, humans and non-humans, originality and tradition, individuals and collectives, mind and body, etc... Each "thing" or controversy on the list, witnesses a resistance in terms of these divisions. Agency calls these "boundary things" forth from its list in varying "assemblies", which combine the formats of exhibition, performance and publication.

Amongst recent presentations of Agency: KIOSK, Ghent (2018-19); La Verrière - Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, Brussels (2014); Objectif Exhibitions, Antwerp (2011); Animism - Extra City, Antwerp (2010); Le Plateau, Paris (2010); Contemporary Art Museum, St Louis (2010); PhotoCairo 4 - CiC Cairo (2009); Unscene – WIELS, Brussels (2009); Agency was nominated for the Visible Award in 2017. In 2020, Agency will be on show at the HKW - Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin.

Sammy Baloji

Born in 1978 in Lubumbashi, Sammy Baloji is a visual artist and photographer, as well as the co-founder of the Picha Encounters, a photography and video biennial in Lubumbashi. Since 2005, he has been exploring the memory and history of the Democratic Republic of Congo. His work is a perpetual research into the cultural, architectural and industrial heritage of the Katanga region, as well as a questioning of the effects of Belgian colonization. His videos and photographic series highlight how identities are shaped, transformed, perverted and reinvented.

Baloji participated in the African Photography Meetings in Bamako in 2007, the Lyon biennial in 2015, the Venice Biennale in 2015, the Photoquai Festival at the Musée du Quai-Branly in 2015, the Dakar Biennale in 2016 and the 14th edition of Documenta in 2017. His works have been exhibited at the Royal Museum of Central Africa in Tervuren, Mu.ZEE in Oostende, the Tate Modern in London, the Africa Center in New York and the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art in Washington DC. He has received several awards, including from the Prince Claus Foundation in the Netherlands, the African Photography Encounters in Bamako and the Dakar Biennale. He won the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative Award in 2014.

Saddie Choua

Saddie Choua (1972, Bree, BE) lives and works in Brussels. She uses meta-documentary tactics, humor, own (film)material, re-appropriation and collage of popular intercultural formats and autobiographical elements to put racism, discrimination against women and class, and her cats in the spotlight. She creates a new pseudo-realistic imaginary world that is at once highly recognizable and utterly alien. It is her way of undermining the (visual) language of our media and sharpening the critical and political self-reflective gaze of her audience. The challenge is to create 'situations' that reveal the power structures behind the images that we internalize and reproduce. Choua reveals how we consume images and dialogues about the other and how they influence our self-image and historical

consciousness. She investigates how she can speak and imagine differently from a subaltern position; or is it precisely the concept of 'the other' that locks her up in dominant images and narratives?

Saddie Choua had solo- and group exhibitions including BOZAR, Brussels, 2014; WIELS, Brussels, 2015; Marrakech Biennial, Marrakech, 2016; MU.ZEE, Ostend, 2016; Showroom, Sint Lucas School of Arts, Antwerp, 2016; KIOSK, Ghent, 2017; Festival Concreto, Fortaleza, 2017; Kooshk-Air Antwerp, Tehran, 2018; Kanal-Centre Pompidou, Brussels, 2018-2019; Savvy Contemporary, Berlin, 2018; Akademie der Künste der Welt - Richas Digest, Cologne, 2018; Villa Empain, Brussels, 2018; Laboratoire Bx, Bordeaux, 2018; Contour Biennial, Mechelen, 2019. Her work is in national and international private and public collections.

Jacqueline Mesmaeker

Jacqueline Mesmaeker, born in Uccle in 1929, lives and works in Brussels. Building on her early, experimental and creative work in architecture and design, and her career as a stylist from 1962 to 1972, Jacqueline Mesmaeker has subsequently focussed on the study of visual problems, analysing visual and textual questions with gentle humour through drawing, installation and video, and making use of archive photographs, films, postcards and scraps of text or objects she has collected over time. She graduated in 1967 from the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels (where she worked in Georges Vlamincq's studio), before moving on to the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Visuels in La Cambre, where she later taught from 1979 to 1984. She is the author of a body of work influenced by the romantic and literary conceptualism of Marcel Broodthaers.

Jacqueline Mesmaeker had solo-shows at a.o.: La Verrière - Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, Brussels (2019), Rectangle, Brussels (2015), Nadja Villenne Gallery, Liège (2015, 2013, 2011), Congres station, Brussels – JAP (2012), (SIC), Brussels (2009), Etablissements d'En Face, Brussels (2010; 2007), Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels (2005). She participated in many group shows: M HKA, Antwerp (2018); (SIC), Brussels (2017); Projets Arts Centre, Dublin (2015); Extracity, Antwerp (2014); MAC's, Hornu (2014); Mu.ZEE, Ostend (2014); Unscene II, Wiels, Brussels (2012), Les Brasseurs, Liège (2003).

Joëlle Tuerlinckx

Joëlle Tuerlinckx (born in 1958 in Brussels) explores the notion of context (places, architecture) in all its dimensions (historical, political, cultural) and maintains an inextricably physical and conceptual relationship with space. But it is really the dimensions of temporality present in all her work, which truly cross and form the basis of her oeuvre. Questioning the conditions and conventions of display and visibility of a work, the artist uses procedures chosen voluntarily outside the field of visual arts, which she borrows and diverts to explore or propose ever new modalities. She questions the limits, the infinitude of a process, an idea, a space. Tuerlinckx likes found objects, assemblages, relationships and space between things more than things themselves. Of the exhibition, she has made her medium, of the workshop her instrument; and her recurring subject that she likes to stage. In a world she calls parallel, she archives her work according to a logic of her own that she never stops reinventing.

Joëlle Tuerlinckx has won numerous awards for her work and books; her works are in several national and international collections; her recent monographic exhibitions include: Dia Beacon, New York (2018); Centre international d'art et du paysage, Vassivière (2018); Kunstmuseum Basel/Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel (2016); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2013); Arnolfini, Bristol (2013); Wiels, Brussels (2012); Reina Sofia, Palacio de Cristal, Madrid (2009); she also participated in Manifesta 10, Saint-Petersburg (2014); Manifesta 3, Ljubljana (2003); Documenta 11, Kassel (2002).