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AWARDS

Arte Laguna Prize Announced the 4 Winners of It's 14th Edition

by Islamic Arts Magazine

Arte Laguna Prize announced the four absolute winners of the 14th edition

From 120 finalists, selected among the over 10,113 works submitted from September to December 2019, the international jury, chaired by Igor Zanti, has identified four absolute winners. They will win the cash prizes of 10,000 euros each, for a total amount of 40,000 euros. An important recognition, especially in times of crises, that aims to promote talents and allow artists to invest in their careers. Art represents a starting point from which to draw to overcome the difficult period that the whole world has faced.

The official announcement took place during a Zoom meeting that involved the 120 finalists, eagerly waiting to find out the names of the winners.

For the **painting and photography sections**, the jurors Erin Dziedzic, Chief Curator at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, Missouri and Zhao Li, professor at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing and curator of the Chinese Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale have decided to award the Spanish artist Belén Mazuecos (Granada, 1978) with the work *Fragile artist: Handle with care II* (2017). The work was chosen for its contemporary approach, that speaks to a lot of universal themes that are happening in the world and specifically in the world of artists; a project that the jury found very interesting for representing the difficulties of being an artist, especially in these times. The artwork serves as a pretext to build a metaphor for what happens in the art world, highlighting the complexities of an extremely fragile ecosystem.



Belén Mazuecos, Fragile artist: Handle with care II (2017). Courtesy of Arte Laguna Prize

The jury of the **sculpture and installation, land art and urban art** sections composed by Riccardo Passoni, director of the Modern Art Gallery in Turin and Vasili Tsereteli, Director of the Moscow Museum of Modern Art awards the artist Moshe Vollach (1958) with his land art project 31 cubes (2016). The artist is awarded for his oxymoronic approach to land art, for the very poetic work he created, based on the idea of contrast and how natural elements can work together to transform the artwork. A row of 61 identical-size ice cubes is placed in the desert on a hot summer day, documenting the defrosting process. The work refers to the relationship between matter and space, dealing with issues such as global warming, radical climate changes, icebergs defrosting and desertification.



Moshe Vollach (1958), land art project 31 cubes (2016). Courtesy of Arte Laguna Prize

For the **video art, virtual art, digital graphics and performance** sections, Iwona Blazwick, director of the Whitechapel Gallery in London and Valentino Catricalà, contemporary art curator and art section director of the Maker Faire - The European Edition have decided to award the animated film *Cloud of the Unknown* (2019) by Chinese artist Gao Yuan (Kunming, 1986). The jury highly appreciated the artist for her ability to harness new technologies into an aesthetic and a style which have great beauty and invention. Through the animation of the frames hand-painted by the artist herself, she brings to life an existential work about the nature of being in the world.



Gao Yuan, *Cloud of the Unknown* (2019). Courtesy of Arte Laguna Prize

The jury of the **art design** section, composed by Karel Boonzaaijer, designer, architect and professor at the University of Applied Science in Aachen and Aldo Cibic, fundamental name of made in Italy design in the world, has chosen to give the prize to *Frankenstein's Bride* (2013) by Slovenian designer Primoz Jeza (Kranj, 1968). *Frankenstein's Bride* is a modular versatile working space assembled out of several different colour elements, a contemporary table that can be adapted for every situation in real life.



Primoz Jeza, *Frankenstein's Bride* (2013). Courtesy of Arte Laguna Prize

The finalists' exhibition of the 14th edition, postponed due to the Coronavirus, will open to the public from March 13 to April 5, 2021, at the Arsenale Nord in Venice together with the finalists of the 15th edition, for which the applications are currently open. Two editions of finalist artists will exhibit in a unique event with more than 200 works from all over the world, an unmissable opportunity to immerse into international contemporary art.

Also, the absolute winners of the 14th edition, together with the winners of all the 15 editions of the prize, will fly to Moscow in summer 2021 to participate in the collective exhibition at MMOMA - Moscow Museum of Modern Art.