



Jury report Prix de Rome 2013

The Prix de Rome is a national prize, the only one for young visual artists, which in itself makes it special. Unlike most others prizes, it adjusts to the circumstances every few years, thereby keeping it highly topical, which is also expressed in an attempt to reflect the current state of affairs in art. This year, for instance, the maximum age limit has been raised from 35 to 40 years, a modest difference, indeed, but two nominees have immediately benefitted from it.

The jury is pleased to note that this year's entries demonstrate that the Netherlands remains a major international centre for art. A place where young artists like to settle for a longer period and further develop their work thanks to the various cultural facilities, not least the three large postgraduate institutions in this country. The jury did not select the artists for their background, but observes that two nominees were born outside the Netherlands and that three have attended one of the postgraduate institutions.

In the final presentation, beautifully displayed by the nominees in collaboration with the specially appointed coaches and the staff of de Appel arts centre, the performative interest that the jury observed in the pre-selection on the long list is translated into four solid installations, each with a completely individual character, design, theme and temporality. Surprisingly enough, the works on display appear to subtly affect one another, as in a group exhibition compiled by a curator.

The nominated artists offer a confrontational, sometimes even slightly disturbing view of contemporary reality, as is appropriate in a world that wrestles with complex issues of political, economic and social nature. The jury commends the fact that the artists do not avoid the confrontation with reality, even expressly seeking it out, in order to chart a course through it in their own, inspiring way. This has led to highly stratified art, rich in content, which does not immediately yield its secrets but nonetheless remains very accessible.

All the nominees make an impression in their own way. Remco Torenbosch presents a stunning installation that might be termed museological, the modernist appearance of which – with a nod to Yves Klein – conceals a unique and enormously rich study, devoted to Europe and its characteristic unity through diversity. Christian Friedrich radically seeks experimentation in an audacious sound installation that tests the observer in various ways. Ola Vasiljeva catches us unawares with a very open installation that appeals to all the senses in an inspiring story, based on the history of culture, about the way in which humans do all they can in language and manufactured objects, to determine their place in the world. Falke Pisano surprises us with what for her is a highly political installation in which she reflects on 'the body in

crisis', based on a fascinating historical analysis of the consequences of privatization in the prison system, for instance in an American penitentiary.

With all the stimulating mutual polarities between the works, the corresponding reciprocal enrichment that the jury discovered during its tour of the presentation and in the conversations with the artists, the deliberations led to a unanimous conclusion. The jury is delighted to award the Prix de Rome 2013 to an artist who despite the necessary success dares to develop further and with great precision and persuasiveness heads in a new direction, building further on her existing work. Even though distance is sought in time, with subjects from the past, the work remains compelling and up-to-date. The Prix de Rome 2013 goes to Falke Pisano.