

Amsterdam, 22 April 2015

## Shortlist Prix de Rome Visual Arts 2015

The Mondriaan Fund has announced the names of the visual artists shortlisted by an international jury for the 2015 Prix de Rome Visual Arts. The four nominated artists are:

**Foundland** (Lauren Alexander, Capetown, 1983, & Ghalia Elsrakbi, Damascus, 1978, live and work in Amsterdam)

**Hedwig Houben** (Boxtel, 1983, lives and works in Brussels)

**Christian Nyampeta** (Rwanda, 1981, lives and works in the Netherlands and London)

**Magali Reus** (The Hague, 1981, lives and works in London)

They will each receive a working budget and will be given the opportunity to create a new work during a five-month residency. The work will be exhibited at de Appel arts centre in Amsterdam. On the basis of the new work, the jury will announce a winner medio December 2015. The winner will win €40,000 and a residency at the American Academy in Rome.

The jury selected these artists from a list of seventy artists, a number of whom were nominated by scouts selected by the Mondriaan Fund. Other artists initiated proposals themselves or were nominated by a third party. All the shortlisted artists were nominated by a scout.

The jury was impressed by the high quality of all candidates. The jury members were delighted to be introduced to such rich and varied emerging artists with plans arousing their curiosity for more. Eventually the jury convincingly proposed three artists and one artist collective. Important criteria were the quality of the work, and a positive attitude towards innovation and experiment. Despite overlap in subject matter and research, each candidate works from a specific position and approach. The jury has high hopes on the outcome of the work periods of these artists and believe the work periods will contribute to interesting developments in their artistic careers.

**Foundland** Collective consists of Lauren Alexander and Ghalia Elsrakbi. Alexander completed her MA at the Sandberg Institute, Amsterdam. In 2009 she pursued an MFA at the Dutch Art Institute in Arnhem. Elsrakbi completed her BFA at ArtEZ Academy of Art & Design, Arnhem, followed by a MA at the Sandberg Institute, Amsterdam. In 2009, she followed a research post-graduate at the Jan Van Eyck Academy in Maastricht. Foundland work draws on visual arts, graphic design, research and text. They focus on a critical analysis of topics related to political land locational branding. Since 2011, Foundland focuses on the Middle East and the Arab Spring. The jury appreciates the precision used by the artists in approaching their subjects and the freedom exhibited in the use of images and texts to visualize their work. Foundland was nominated by Katja Diallo (artistic director Noordkaap, Dordrecht).

**Hedwig Houben** completed her studies at the St Joost Academy in Breda and afterwards studied at the Art academy of Düsseldorf and at the HISK in Gent. By means of performances, installations and video registrations she reflects on the value and meaning of art, its objects and creators. The jury is impressed by the manner in which Houben refers to the representation and non-representation of the human body and by the playful way she relates to the disfunctionality of the body and clichés in the visual arts. Hedwig Houben was nominated by René Bosma (director AKV | St. Joost Den Bosch).

**Christian Nyampeta** has the Dutch nationality which he acquired after migrating to the Netherlands from Rwanda. After attending art school in the Netherlands (ArtEz), he went to London to attend the Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London and since 2011 he has been following a PhD program at Goldsmiths University. In his work he investigates how individuals and communities negotiate forms of socially organized violence. This focus generates a multiplicity of objects, images, interiors, situations, texts and publications. The jury is impressed with the precision, the openness and the adventurousness with which he approaches his topics and by how he manages to transport them to the contemporary. Christian Nyampeta was nominated by Binna Choi (director Casco, Utrecht).

**Magali Reus** switched from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy to the Goldsmiths College in London in 2002. During 2013 en 2014 she attended the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam. With her sculptures she captures the essence of the relationship between twenty-first century consumer products and the human body. The jury appreciates the intelligent approach with which Reus translates digital elements into physical work. Her work is both humorous and critically aware, both poignant and subtle. Magali Reus was nominated by Roos Gortzak (director Vleeshal Middelburg).

The jury consists of Pernille Albrethsen (freelance critic, author and curator), Beatrix Ruf (director Stedelijk Museum), Jan van de Pavert (visual artist), Francesco Stocchi (curator modern and contemporary art Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) and Roy Villevoeye (visual artist). The chair is held by Birgit Donker (director Mondriaan Fund).

The Prix de Rome is the oldest and most generous Dutch award for visual artists below the age of 40. The purpose of the award is to identify talented visual artists and to encourage them to develop and increase their visibility. The Mondriaan Fund has been responsible for the award from 2012 on.