



PRIX DE ROME

Press Release
Amsterdam, 31 October 2019



LTR: Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science Ingrid van Engelshoven, winner Prix de Rome 2019 Rory Pilgrim, Queen Máxima, director Mondriaan Fund Eelco van der Lingen. Photo: Shinji Otani

Rory Pilgrim wins Prix de Rome Visual Arts 2019

Artist Rory Pilgrim (Bristol, 1988) received the Prix de Rome Visual Arts 2019 from the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Ingrid van Engelshoven, in the presence of Queen Máxima. Pilgrim received this award for his new film *The Undercurrent* (2019-ongoing). The award comes with a 40,000 Euros cash prize and a work period at the American Academy in Rome. The Prix de Rome is awarded once every two years to a talented visual artist in the Netherlands.

Rory Pilgrim made the fifty-minute film *The Undercurrent* in which he transports the visitors to the world of a group of young people in the American city of Boise (Idaho). The film features beautiful cinematography, wonderful music, and is meticulously edited. Furthermore, the artist raises a number of topical issues in the film. Initially, climate change appears to be its most important theme, but gradually it becomes clear that the young people have other problems too. Central to this film is a house that appears to function as a sanctuary for the main characters. The concept of the sanctuary is also used for the protection of nature. In this way, the film is hinting at a subtle connection between the earth that needs attention and protection, and the young people who need a home for intimacy, security and their future. The result is a disarming portrait of the insecurities, hopes and expectations of a generation, and what's more a film that gives the young people an opportunity to address themselves directly to the viewer. The jury greatly appreciates how the artist has engaged with this group and also values his intention to continue the collaboration in other ways. This characterizes the integrity of the project and makes the jury curious about a follow-up. The jury was unanimous in its decision to award the Prix de Rome Visual Arts 2019 to Rory Pilgrim.

Rory Pilgrim lives and works in Rotterdam and Isle of Portland. Pilgrim studied Fine Art at the Chelsea

College of Art and Design, London (2005-2008) and was a participant at De Ateliers, Amsterdam (2008-2010). Rory Pilgrim was nominated by Anke Bangma and Louwrien Wijers.

The other nominees for this year's Prix de Rome besides Rory Pilgrim were Esiri Erheriene-Essi, Femke Herregraven and the artist duo Sander Breure & Witte van Hulzen. All finalists were judged on the basis of new work realised during a five-month work period. The exhibition with the work of the nominated artists will be on show at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

Click [here](#) for the jury report.

Prix de Rome

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. For Prix de Rome 2019 the Mondriaan Fund collaborates with Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (exhibition), Jap Sam Books (publication) and Mals Media (introductory films).

Jury

The jury of the Prix de Rome 2019 consists of Lonnie van Brummelen (visual artist, winner Prix de Rome 2005), Amira Gad (artistic director Lehmann Maupin, London), Peter Gorschlüter (director Museum Folkwang, Essen), Yasmijn Jarram (curator GEM, The Hague) and Frank Koolen (visual artist). Chair without right to vote is Valentijn Byvanck (director Marres, House of Contemporary Culture, Maastricht).

Exhibition

The final presentations by Sander Breure & Witte van Hulzen, Esiri Erheriene-Essi, Femke Herregraven and Rory Pilgrim can be viewed until 22 March 2020 at Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

Publication

The 2019 Prix de Rome is accompanied by a publication by Jap Sam Books, in cooperation with Mondriaan Fund. The artists are introduced by the authors Maarten Buser, Brenda Tempelaar and Sophia Zürcher. In an introductory essay, the art historian Sacha Bronwasser connects the work of the nominees to current developments in the world around us, and in the artworld in particular. Lesley Moore made the design for the publication.

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www.prixderome.nl/en

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