

PRESS RELEASE

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The Vincent Award 2006

September 15, 2006 through January 14, 2007

The Vincent, The Vincent van Gogh Biennial Award for Contemporary Art in Europe, is being accommodated at the Stedelijk Museum for the first time this year. Founded by The Broere Charitable Foundation in 2000, the award's goal is to stimulate talented European artists and to encourage communication about art in a free, united and peaceful Europe. The following five artists are nominated for the Vincent 2006: Urs Fischer (Switzerland, 1973), Andrei Monastyrski (Russia, 1949), Dan Perjovschi (Romania, 1961), Wilhelm Sasnal (Poland, 1972) and Cerith Wyn Evans (United Kingdom, 1958). From September 15 on their work can be seen at Stedelijk Museum CS. On November 17 this year the winner of The Vincent Award 2006 will be announced.

The biennial Vincent Award has produced three winners so far: the Finnish video artist Eija-Liisa Ahtila, the German painter Neo Rauch, and the Polish artist Pawel Althamer. Until 2004 the exhibition took place in the Bonnefanten Museum in Maastricht, where the last two times only the work of the prize-winner was shown. With the move to Amsterdam the original intention of a group exhibition with multiple nominated artists has been restored, and the manner of jurying has changed: the six-person select five artists from a longlist of about 40 artists, recommended by correspondents from all over Europe, who compete for the award through participation in the exhibition. In this way an attempt is made to stimulate discussion over the differences and the significance of the nominees' work. The correspondents for The Vincent 2006 were: Zdenka Badovinac, Daniel Birnbaum, Harald Falckenberg, Jens Hoffmann, Chus Martínez, Viktor Misiano, David Neuman and Beatrix Ruf.

The jury is comprised of: Manuel Borja-Villel (Director, MACBA, Barcelona), Ian Dunlop (art historian, London), Ingvild Goetz (Sammlung Goetz, Munich), Udo Kittelmann (Director, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt) and Poul Erik Tøjner (Director, Louisiana, Humlebæk), chaired by Gijs van Tuyl (Director, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam).

In terms of their ages, nationalities and disciplines, the five nominated artists symbolise a diverse and heterogeneous Europe. **Urs Fischer** creates bizarre, surrealistic installations, for which he uses materials such as tar, bread and silicon as well as metal and unfinished building materials. His associative and impulsive manner of working can produce nimble, but also melancholy works. With a feeling for theatre and irony, Fischer defies the established values of sculpture. Together with Ilya Kabakov, Yakov Abramov and Nikolai Koslov, **Andrei Monastyrski** belonged to the Moscow conceptualism of the 1980s, and can be seen as its methodological founder. In addition, thirty years ago he founded the still existing artists' group *Collective Actions*, which was of great importance for the creation of a collective art practice oriented to performance, and is now inspiring a new generation of artists. In his installations, videos and actions Monastyrski draws precise and controversial connections between word and image, art object and performance, art practice and art criticism, and art and everyday reality. The power of the work of **Dan Perjovschi** lies in his sharp and humorous commentary on social and political events, the contemporary art system, and human traits such as greed and stupidity. Generally he expresses himself in drawings with a short life span, for periodicals (such as the Romanian magazine *22*, for which he is the political illustrator and 'art director'), or on exhibition walls, floors and windows in art institutions. Perjovschi's individual drawings in exhibition spaces are sure to be seen autonomous, but collectively they form a closely woven fabric that can be read as a mirror held up to a world gone somewhat mad. As the point of departure for his paintings and films, **Wilhelm Sasnal** takes subjects with a quasi-insignificant content: his wife smoking a cigarette, the director of a factory in his home town, or a building that has a historical significance only for the immediate vicinity. He does not visualise any specific world events, but rather details from a larger archive, which barely betray their context. With this he forces the viewer to observe carefully and interpret without preconceptions. The work of **Cerith Wyn Evans** is characterised by a great elegance, behind

which lurks a radical content that only comes through after some time. Wyn Evans is able to translate his background as a filmmaker and his wide knowledge of literature, philosophy, music and photography in a fascinating way into works that stimulate thinking about language, time and perception.

Dialogue with the artists

Preceding the opening of the exhibition, on Thursday, September 14, the nominated artists will engage in a dialogue with Mariá Hlavajová (Director of BAK, Utrecht). This discussion will be recorded and together with several other video documents will be shown in a separate gallery in the exhibition.

Publications

A catalogue is appearing to accompany the exhibition, with an introductory essay by Michaël Zeeman, and texts about the artists' works by Marius Babias (Dan Perjovschi), Roos Gortzak (Cerith Wyn Evans), Boris Groys (Andrei Monastyrski), Beatrix Ruf (Urs Fischer) and James Tierney (Wilhelm Sasnal). The catalogue will be for sale in the Museum Shop.

A series of interviews with the artists involved will be published in *Stedelijk Museum Bulletin 3* and *Stedelijk Museum Bulletin 4-5*, 2006.

SMCS on 11

The lecture programme SMCS on 11 will also devote attention to The Vincent 2006. More information on this follows in a subsequent press release to appear at the end of August.

Press conference

Preceding the discussion with the artists on Thursday, September 14, there will be a press conference. The exact time and location will be announced.

Website

A special website is being launched for The Vincent: www.thevincentaward.eu. Developments and information concerning The Vincent 2006 will be posted and kept up to date on this site.

The Vincent, The Vincent van Gogh Biennial Award for Contemporary Art in Europe, was founded in 2000 by The Broere Charitable Foundation in memory of Monique Zajfen, a beloved friend of the Broere family and former owner of Galerie 121 in Antwerp. Her involvement with and passion for contemporary art will once more be an incentive for directing attention to talented artists from Europe. The award's secondary goal is encouraging communication about art in a free, united and peaceful Europe.

More info and visual material: www.stedelijk.nl/press or telephone +31 (0)20 5732.656

The Vincent van Gogh Biennial Award
for Contemporary Art in Europe 2006



Partner



Stedelijk Museum CS

Post CS building, 2nd storey, Oosterdokskade 5, Amsterdam

Open: daily from 10:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m. Closed on January 1.

Entrance: Euro 9,00; reduced fee: Euro 4,50; children 0-7 years and MK: free

Info & travel directions: www.stedelijk.nl