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Jindřich Chalupický Award 2015 Announces Five Finalists



An international jury has selected five finalists for the upcoming edition of the most prestigious Czech award for young artists; Jindřich Chalupický Award. 25 years since the death of Jindřich Chalupický and since the founding of the award carrying his name, artists working in traditional media as well as those dealing with conceptual art have met in the final. They will present their work in the course of the year and primarily at the final exhibition held at the Moravian Gallery in Brno in the fall. The name of the 26th award holder will be announced on November 20, 2015 in Brno.

The five finalists were selected by a seven-member international jury; with a single exception, the members of the jury are the same as in the last edition. The jury is chaired by Holly Block, renowned curator and director of the Bronx Museum of the Arts in New York. The jury further includes visual artist Jiří Kovanda, art theorist and director of the Slovak National Gallery Alexandra Kusá, Iceland's Gunnar B. Kvaran, director of the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art in Oslo, art theorist and curator Pavlína Morganová, and Marina Shcherbenko, curator and consultant of Bottega Gallery and Shcherbenko Art Centre in Kiev. Art critic and curator Marek Pokorný, art manager of the Ostrava City Gallery PLATO and former director of the Moravian Gallery in Brno, is a new member of the jury.

This year's finalists include **Vojtěch Fröhlich, Lukáš Karbus, Barbora Kleinhamplová, Pavla Sceranková and Pavel Sterec**. Fröhlich, Karbus and Kleinhamplová are new to the final while Pavla Sceranková and Pavel Sterec have already been nominated once. In the course of the year, they will present their work at related events held in several cities in the Czech Republic and their participation in Jindřich Chalupecký Award will be completed by the exhibition Final 2015 held from September 25, 2015 to January 3, 2016 at the Pražák Palace of the Moravian Gallery in Brno. The award ceremony of the 26th Jindřich Chalupecký Award will be held on November 20, 2015 at the Community House of the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra in Brno under the baton of theatre director Ivan Buraj, art director of Brno's HaDivadlo.

The names of the five finalists were selected from the portfolios of eight dozen young artists. *"In the course of two days, the jury went through the portfolios of all applicants and held lively discussions about the five finalists. The selected group points out the diverse forms of visual art that are present in the contemporary art world as well as on the local visual art scene. The final selection was preceded by a whole range of debates, reflections and idea exchanges among the individual jury members. We are amazed by the quality of artworks made in the Czech Republic,"* says Holly Block, chair of the jury of Jindřich Chalupecký Award.

"The first glance at the selected names pleased me while raising a whole range of questions as to how to make the best out of the highly diverse approaches during the fall exhibition. We have cooperated with most of the finalists before and I am looking forward to the new challenges and inspirational moments to be brought by their common presentation," says Karina Kottová, new director of Jindřich Chalupecký Society.

Kottová took over the position of director of Jindřich Chalupecký Society and thus also of Jindřich Chalupecký Award from art critic and curator Lenka Lindaurová this year; Lindaurová is leaving the post after five years of intensive work. In the course of that period, Jindřich Chalupecký Award has strengthened its position of the most prestigious Czech art award, professionalized its organizational process, gained major sponsors and enriched its activities with numerous related events.

The winner of the 26th Jindřich Chalupecký Award will receive a trophy designed by Maxim Velčovský, which was introduced last year, as well as the traditional financial contribution of 100 000 crowns for the organization of an award or the realization of a project. The new award holder will further receive a six-week scholarship in New York City as well as a residency with the possibility of an exhibition in a gallery of one of the Czech Centers.

This year's edition will also present a unique event. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the founding of Jindřich Chalupecký Award and of the death of the prominent theorist who gave his name to the award, the Veletržní Palace of the National Gallery in Prague will present an extensive exhibition exploring the "anatomy" of the award, its institutional aspects as well as the tension between its history and present. The exhibition will be curated by Adam Budak, chief curator of the collections and exhibitions of the National Gallery in Prague. The exhibition will be held from September 30, 2015 to January 3, 2016.

For more information about this year's finalists, the award program and related events, please, go to www.cjch.cz/en.

Finalists of Jindřich Chaloupecký Award 2015

Vojtěch Fröhlich (1985) studied at FAMU in Prague and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague from which he graduated last year. He works in the media of photography, video, installation and live action. He puts his body and mind in difficult situations, frequently coping with the very architecture of the gallery space in a physical manner, literally as well as symbolically carrying over "outdoor" activities such as climbing and parachuting into the interior. The resulting installation is usually a strong gesture; such as walking on a tightrope stretched across the atrium of the Veletržní Palace, transferring the color of the sky onto the large surface of the gallery ceiling or a recording capturing the artist as he climbs the building housing the gallery. However, what is crucial is not the very physical act but rather the liberating spiritual exercise. Fröhlich has participated in a whole range of exhibitions in the European context and was selected among six finalists of Berlin's Szpilman Award in 2013.

Lukáš Karbus (1981) graduated from the Studio of Painting of the Faculty of Fine Arts at Brno University of Technology. To a large degree, his work has been influenced by country life and work, which are miles away from the urban art scene in which the artist participates rather symbolically, through sporadic yet remarkable exhibitions at larger institutions as well as alternative spaces in the Czech Republic. Karbus' large-size watercolor paintings deviate from current trends; which might be the very quality that endows them with their urgency. Their aesthetic character seems to respond to the modernist movements on one hand while being loosely guided by the observation of the landscape and simple life bordering on spiritual or even psychedelic visions on the other hand. Representing traditional qualities of beauty and craft, they are attractive for their sophisticated nature as well as a certain dose of naivety.

Barbora Kleinhamplová (1984) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague last year, representing the Academy at the international Start Point Prize with her diploma thesis. She has also studied at FAMU in Prague. Her work in the media of video, performance, photography and installation has undergone an interesting development. While her early actions usually featured the artist assuming unusual positions, frequently in interaction with everyday objects and the home environment, Kleinhamplová recently moved on to questions dealing with the position of man in contemporary consumerist society controlled by corporate rules. She follows these from the perspective of sidelined qualities such as sleep, hypnosis and unconsciousness. During her studies, Kleinhamplová exhibited her work primarily on the independent Czech gallery scene; however, her work has also appeared at established institutions both in the Czech Republic and abroad.

Pavla Sceranková (1980) has successfully concluded her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts by a doctoral degree. She ranks among Czech Republic's most remarkable artists of the new generation. Her primarily sculptural work is based on the proportions of the human body and the aesthetic of everyday objects transformed by the artist into playful, often kinetic objects and installations. These already show her interest in structures and systems that represent a natural bridge to the exploration of the human position in a much broader scope: in the context of cosmic constellations; which, however, are within our grasp in Sceranková's concept. She has introduced her work at respected institutions in the Czech as well as international context and has received a number of awards and residencies. She has already been a finalist of Jindřich Chaloupecký Award in 2007.

Pavel Sterec (1985) is among the finalists of Jindřich Chaloupecký Award for the second time as he has already introduced his work in the final in 2011. He studied at several studios at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague; currently he is a doctoral student at the Studio of Photography at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague. His work is based on personal and social encounters and situations transformed by the artist into conceptual installations. These combine an interest in the re-interpretation of mythical and ritual objects and natural phenomena in the context of contemporary thought and an engaged criticism of the social and political status quo. Sterec has introduced his work at a number of exhibitions primarily in the Central European and East European context; he has also been to several prestigious residencies.

PHOTOS OF THE FINALISTS AND THEIR WORK ARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT:

<http://www.amic.cz/tiskove-stredisko/fotoarchiv/vojtech-frohlich-1/>

<http://www.amic.cz/tiskove-stredisko/fotoarchiv/lukas-karbus/>

<http://www.amic.cz/tiskove-stredisko/fotoarchiv/barbora-kleinhamplova/>

<http://www.amic.cz/tiskove-stredisko/fotoarchiv/pavla-scerankova/>

<http://www.amic.cz/tiskove-stredisko/fotoarchiv/pavel-sterec/>

The international jury has the following members:

Holly Block, curator and director of The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, USA
chair of the jury

Jiří Kovanda, artist, Czech Republic
Alexandra Kusá, art theorist and director of the Slovak National Gallery, Bratislava, Slovakia
Gunnar B. Kvaran, director of The Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, Norway
Pavčina Morganová, art theorist and curator, Czech Republic
Marek Pokorný, art critic and curator, art manager of Ostrava City Gallery PLATO, Czech Republic
Marina Shcherbenko, curator and consultant of Bottega Gallery and Shcherbenko Art Centre, Kiev, Ukraine

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