

PRESS

Jusun Lee and Marielena Stark to receive the Kunst-halle Wien Prize 2023

The two first prizewinners as well as eight other graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and the University of Applied Arts Vienna will be featured in a group exhibition to be held at **kunsthalle wien** next spring.

The *Kunsthalle Wien Prize*, which is awarded for the ninth time this year, exemplifies **kunsthalle wien's** longstanding and thriving cooperative relationship with Vienna's two major art schools. In recent years, the prize has garnered wide recognition as a vital instrument for the promotion of young artists living and working in Vienna; for many prizewinning artists, it has marked a key first step in their careers.

Awarded by a jury to selected graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and the University of Applied Arts Vienna, the *Kunsthalle Wien Prize* comes with participation in an exhibition and inclusion in the associated publication; one graduate of each school wins the first prize, which comes with an additional cash award of € 3,000.

The diversity of the creative approaches the award has spotlighted is evident in the exhibition of last year's winners, *Unfreezing the Scene. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2022*, which remains on view at Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz through September 10.

The Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2023

For this year's prize, the jury reviewed altogether 114 diploma and master's projects from the fields of visual and media art—49 graduates of the Academy and 65 graduates of the University of Applied Art submitted their work for consideration. The award's appeal is indicated by the considerable increase over last year in the number of applicants as well as the wider range of classes and studios they represent—for the first time in the award's history, graduates of the Graphic Arts and Printmaking as well as Stage Design departments and the interdisciplinary program Art & Science are among the winners.

In light of the high quality and thematic diversity of the submissions, the jury chose to stand by last year's decision to invite ten graduates

to participate in a group exhibition, which will be shown at **kunsthalle wien** Karlsplatz in the spring of 2024:

Jusun Lee, winner of the first prize for the Academy, won over the jury with the two-part installation *Safe Zone* and *Illusion*, which melds a rigorously conceived yet sensual materiality to the study of a subject that is of personal as well as social and political relevance: it invites the visitors into an immersive environment that beckons with safety and comfort while prodding them to reflect on social rejection, safe zones, and self-empowerment.

Jusun Lee (born in 1992, lives in Vienna and Seoul) studied Sculpture and Installation with **Nora Schultz**, diploma in June 2023.

Marielena Stark wins the first prize of the University of Applied Arts for her installation *Afterlifestyle*. Fabrics dyed with indigo and walnuts transform basketballs that seem to hover in the gallery into ghosts—spheres of light, as the artist puts it. The imagined movements of the ballgame, the balls' trajectories, the air drag, and the force of gravity that pulls them downward find their match in the motions of the colors seeping into the fabric in the process of dyeing.

Marielena Stark (born in 1986, lives in Vienna) studied Painting with **Henning Bohl**, diploma in June 2023.

The additional prizewinners selected by the jury are **Željka Aleksić**, **Michael Amadeus Reindel**, **Anne Schmidt**, and **Marc Truckenbrodt** (all of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna) and **Mila Balzhieva**, **Luisa Berghammer**, **Daniel Fonatti**, and **Valentin Hämmerle** (all of the University of Applied Arts Vienna).

Voices on the Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2023

WHW (Ivet Ćurlin, Nataša Ilić and Sabina Sabolović), artistic directors, **kunsthalle wien**: "In hosting the *Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2023*, we are pleased to once again provide a platform for local positions and support young artists as they sharpen their practices. Every year, the dialogue with the prizewinning artists opens up valuable new perspectives for us, and we are committed to including our audiences in this exchange of ideas with the group exhibition. We are very grateful that we can count on the continued support of the two Viennese art academies in this endeavor."

Johan F. Hartle, rector, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna: "I am extraordinarily pleased by our cooperation with **kunsthalle wien** and the joint exhibition, which is one of the highlights in the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna's academic calendar. It is an important and prominent public forum for the graduates that will provide crucial impulses for their future practices. The works by **Željka Aleksić**, **Jusun Lee**, **Michael Amadeus Reindel**, **Anne Schmidt**, and **Marc Truckenbrodt** contain a wide spectrum of discursive references and point up germane new directions for contemporary art today. It will be thrilling to discover the installations, graphic art, performances, and sculptures with their diverse materials representing a range of creative approaches as they interact in the group exhibition."

Eva Maria Stadler, vice rector, University of Applied Arts Vienna: "The *Kunsthalle Wien Prize* is the most important emerging artists award for contemporary art in Austria and offers graduates a vital opportunity to present their final projects to a jury of experts. By introducing the young artists to the operations of the art world and initiating dialogues with curators and colleagues, the award provides them with valuable assets. Even more valuable is the public platform of the exhibition at **kunsthalle wien**, which lets public audiences engage with the art, ideas, and concerns of today's young generation. At the University of Applied Arts, we are exceptionally pleased that **Marielena Stark** will receive the *Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2023*. We also offer our heartfelt congratulations to the other prizewinners, **Mila Balzhieva**, **Luisa Berghammer**, **Daniel Fonatti**, and **Valentin Hämmerle**."

The award winners at a glance

Winner of the first prize of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Jusun Lee (Sculpture and Installation / Nora Schultz)

Further prizewinners of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Željka Aleksić (Contextual Painting / Ashley Hans Scheirl and Despina Stokou)

Michael Amadeus Reindel (Sculpture and Installation / Nora Schultz)

Anne Schmidt (Object Sculpture / Julian Göthe)

Marc Truckenbrodt (Graphic Arts and Printmaking Techniques / Christian Schwarzwald)

Winner of the first prize of the University of Applied Arts Vienna

Marielena Stark (Painting / Henning Bohl)

Further prizewinners of the University of Applied Arts Vienna

Mila Balzhieva (Art & Science / Virgil Widrich)

Luisa Berghammer (Stage Design / Bernhard Kleber)

Daniel Fonatti (Sculpture and Space / Hans Schabus)

Valentin Hämmerle (Stage Design / Bernhard Kleber)

The expert juries of the two art academies

The jury of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

For the Academy: Veronika Dirnhofer (professor for Drawing), Iman Issa (professor for Sculpture, in the winter term 2022/23), Nora Schultz (professor for Sculpture and Installation, in the summer term 2023), and Johan F. Hartle (rector of the Academy)

For **kunsthalle wien**: WHW, Astrid Peterle, and Nicole Suzuki

External juror: Vít Havránek (curator and vice rector of the Academy of Fine Arts Prague)

Chair: Johan F. Hartle

Organization: Christine Rogi

The jury of the University of Applied Arts Vienna

For the University of Applied Arts Vienna: Robert Müller (curator of the art collection and archive), Vika Prokopaviciute (alumna), and Eva Maria Stadler (vice rector of the University of Applied Arts)

For **kunsthalle wien**: WHW, Astrid Peterle, and Nicole Suzuki

External juror: Vít Havránek (curator and vice rector of the Academy of Fine Arts Prague)

Chair: Eva Maria Stadler (vice rector of the University of Applied Arts)

Organization: Anette Freudenberger

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