**Jury report AHK Graduation Prize 2020**

This year, the jury of the AHK Graduation Prize had the pleasure of assessing no less than 61 projects. There have never been so many submissions in the history of the Prize. Perhaps it is a sign of these times and that the students feel the need to show their art more than ever during the coronavirus crisis.

The jury noticed that the students did not turn inwards with their art, but clearly dared to reveal themselves instead. Words like ‘spectacular’, ‘exuberant’ and ‘energetic’ were frequently bandied around during the jury deliberations. The social engagement was also clearly evident once again this year in projects that were extremely topical, innovative, unifying and sometimes even taboo-breaking. It therefore heralds a new crop of artists in the labour market who clearly have something to say.

The jury would like to express its admiration and appreciation for what the students managed to achieve in these times of coronavirus. That is not only the case for the nominated projects, but also for all submissions that didn’t make the shortlist. The jury ultimately decided to nominate five projects in both categories that in its opinions best satisfied the criteria of the Prize: connection with the outside world and innovation in the field of study. These are the nominees in the Bachelor’s category:

**Bachelor’s nominees**

**Harmonia**

*Harmonia* is a film that is in keeping with these times, in terms of style and in terms of subject. It demonstrates a rough edge, it grates, it provokes. It is an exceptionally well-made film, which manages to convince through both the narrative and technical quality. The film is compelling and exudes grandeur, with lots of locations, lots of actors and lots of contrasts in terms of light and dark. The creators demonstrate that they are fully in control of this complexity and have a keen eye for the pressure to achieve that is so visible among the current generation of students. Masters of their craft!

**Hedda**

With *Hedda*, Rebekka Nilsson and Roel Pronk bend a classic from the theatrical repertoire completely to their will. And they do that extremely well. They seek their own path entirely, overcome the barriers that they come across in the process and arrive at a production that challenges and confronts, which raises questions and provokes discussion. In a visually and technically perfect stage design, they demonstrate that there are two creators here who are looking at theatre with an extremely mature vision. More classics should be tackled like this!

**MAD VOICES**

This show about the anger of women is raw, confrontational, overwhelming and, above all, courageous. Sanne Bokkers clearly picked a theme that lies close to her heart and has built a show around that which captures your attention. She also manages in an outstanding way not to hammer home the theme, but rather to ensure it remains multidimensional. So much happens and there is so much common ground for the spectator that you, as audience, never get distracted. That is what art is about.

***Waarom bleef je niet voor mij?***

With *Waarom bleef je niet voor mij?* (Why didn’t you stay for me?), Milou Gevers has made a moving film in which she approaches a difficult and heavy topic in a beautiful, sober way. The combination of documentary with animation is never forced and the way in which the children are allowed to speak is a testament to a great level of care on the part of the documentary maker. In this way, an organic film arises that presents a taboo, which is still prevalent, with great integrity. In one word: beautiful.

**You Can Not Lockdown My Fantasies**

Playful, expressive, daring, scintillating. *You Can Not Lockdown My Fantasies* is all of these things. A coronavirus-proof online theatre experience, which is like a breath of fresh air. The creators tackle a universal theme and present that with so much zest for life that the energy bursts through the screen. The actresses are so well-attuned to each other that they seem to have no trouble at all in sustaining their concept. A welcome, light-hearted surprise in difficult times.

**Final assessment**

The jury is delighted to present the AHK Graduation Prize 2020 in the Bachelor’s category to a project that pulls you in, that communicates a difficult subject with great integrity and that will leave nobody unmoved. That project is *Waarom bleef je niet voor mij?*

**Master’s nominees**

**A Fire-Scape**

*A Fire-Scape* touches on the way in which we, as humans, must deal with climate change. All the ingredients for a convincing Master’s project come together. A complex issue is researched in an impressive manner, the relevance is abundantly clear and it is a total success aesthetically. Hanna Prinssen sheds new light on a problem that will increasingly require a solution in the coming years.

**BijBloemPraatPlantsoen**

Parental involvement in sex education for children is a subject that will always remain topical. The BijBloemPraatPlantsoen (BirdsandBeesPublicGardenforDiscussion) is a great initiative that lends a tangible appearance to this important theme. The intrinsic motivation of the creators, the realisation of the project at a school in Amsterdam Zuidoost and the way in which the target groups are involved all make this project an example of good practice. Educational, social and urgent!

**Earwash**

With Earwash, **Alberto Granados Reguilón has made an artwork that ties in 100% with the coronavirus pandemic. With his composition of overlapping sounds and the way in which he uses them to neutralise an excess of stimuli and cleanse the soul, he joins in a relevant discussion about our mental and physical health. He has also responded to the new reality in a clever and creative way, and used his discipline in a unique manner to make the outside world a little bit better.**

**Parrhesia of Traces**

With *Parrhesia of Traces*, Lea Grüter delves into a subject that has been topical for years and causes a great deal of controversy: how should we deal with art whose original owners disappeared in the Holocaust? She manages to put together a beautiful philosophical, political and theoretical structure through which she adds a new voice to this discussion. *Parrhesia of Traces* is a courageous and socially relevant project that adds a new perspective to something about which much has been written already. An extraordinary achievement!

**Poku Oso**

Interdisciplinary and intercultural: *Poku Oso* is both of these things. Architecture is connected with music in a surprising concept for the Conservatorium van Suriname. Lindsey van de Wetering has analysed and elaborated on this issue in an outstanding way. The value of the concept lies in the unifying power that it radiates, as a result of which people can give substance to it on the basis of their own frame of reference and it is not a top-down approach. A project with a great level of social engagement.

**Final assessment**

The jury has unanimously decided to award the AHK Graduation Prize 2020 in the Master’s category to a project in which topical problems, aesthetics, research and a convincing solution come together in an impressive manner. It is with great pleasure that we award the prize to *A Fire-Scape*.