

State Art Commission

Competition jury

**Open competition for a work of art for the new building of the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts on Sörnäisten Rantatie, 2020**

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Date & time: Thursday, 1 October 2020, from 09:00 to 17:00, and Monday, 5 October 2020, from 12:00 to 14:00

Place: Kokoustila Kuha, Hakaniemenranta 6, Helsinki

Present: State Art Commission

Henri Terho, chair

Jari Auer

Marja Helander

Liisa Kantanen

Paavo Paunu

Ari Pelkonen

Kirsti Saarikorpi

Nora Tapper

Eija Aarnio, secretary of the jury

Heli Ahmio, competition liaison

Experts heard on Thursday, 1 October 2020, from 13:00–14:45

Hanna Johansson, Dean; Mika Elo, Professor of Artistic Research; Harri Monni, Lecturer in Painting; Denise Ziegler, Visual Artist and Post-Doc Researcher (Academy of Fine Arts at Uniarts Helsinki); and Asmo Jaaksi, Architect (JKMM Arkkitehdit Oy)

1. Legality and quorum of the meeting

The Chair noted that the meeting was duly convened and quorate.

2. Review of competition rules and competition brief

The jury read the competition rules and competition brief.

It was noted that the competition was an open art competition organised by the Finnish State Art Commission in collaboration with the Academy of Fine Arts at University of the Arts Helsinki. The Finnish State Art Commission served as the competition jury.

Competition documents had been downloadable starting Friday, 12 June 2020, at the State Art Commission's website, and the competition ended on Tuesday, 15 September 2020. The competition languages were Finnish, Swedish and English.

3. Submissions

It was noted that a total of 112 competition entries had been received by the deadline, submitted by aliases listed in Annex 1.

#### 4. Satisfaction of competition criteria and disqualifications

It was noted that 108 entries satisfied the criteria set out in the competition brief. Four entries (numbers 083, 091, 099 and 102) did not satisfy the criteria set in the brief, because the competitor's contact data was visible in the submitted documents.

#### 5. General assessment

The purpose of the competition was to find ideas for works of art for the new building of the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, under construction on Sörnäisten rantatie in Helsinki. The competition searched for artworks for both interior and exterior spaces. Site-specific and permanent artworks as well as intangible and/or temporally limited works were all equally eligible. Artists could also suggest several works for several different spaces that might be thematically linked, regardless of the medium. The works were expected to contribute to the distinctive identity of the space and to support education at Uniarts Helsinki. Assessment focused especially on artistic quality, viability of implementation, and development potential of the entries.

The jury noted that the competition was of a high standard. The various sites for artworks, the identification of different spaces in the building, community and performativity were all considered in the entries. The entries displayed an understanding of the special nature of Uniarts as an international academy focused on visual arts. The sites for artworks determined in the new building, their lighting conditions, scale and materials had all inspired the artists. The competition entries displayed diversity in the use of materials and forms. The form and temporality of the entries incorporate an openness and modifiability that will allow students of the Academy of Fine Arts to alter or reinterpret the works in the future. Many of the entries were interesting as regards their use of space, their functionality and ecological sustainability. While the variety of the field of visual art was evident in the submissions, there were also many entries that were founded on a more traditional conception of art.

Competitors had the right to request further clarification and information concerning the competition. Queries that were received concerned the dimensions of the sites for artworks, the cost of implementation of the works chosen for implementation, and acoustic dampening of the spaces.

#### 6. Selection of winners and assessment of submissions in the upper category

The jury chose the following six entries for the upper category, and noted the following assessments:

##### 017 PASSAGE

The jury particularly appreciated the sensitivity and non-materiality of this conceptual light work, to be sited in the connecting corridors between the new building and the former electric motor factory. Consisting of a row of fluorescent tubes and two convex mirrors, the installation engages with the motion of passers-by, with shadows and reflections. The work generates an event in which the viewer is able to observe her own

movement in the space. In a subtle nod to colour theory, the colour temperatures of the fluorescent lights vary from blue daylight to yellow-green.

#### 024 Kello 25:59

The work takes the form of a digital panel mounted on the external wall of the building. Instead of real time, the panel displays changing numbers and symbols. Conceptually the work references the passage of time, information, and the multiplication and disintegration of content in our current situation. The entry was considered amusing, surprising and absurd, and fitting in the context of an art school. The work presents for interpretation something else than appears at first glance. With its inventive content, it will also be a comment on other digital displays in the vicinity of the building.

#### 044 Ilmastorituaali – ritualistinen seminaariteos

*Ilmastorituaali* is both an intervention in the Academy and a social sculpture. It calls attention to environmental and climate crises and their ecological, psychosocial, historical and political causes and effects. The entry aims to challenge traditional ideas so as to make room for ritualistic forms of being and knowing. The jury considered the concept to be good and deeply meaningful. The work is experimental, bold and incorporates a community aspect.

#### 074 BABA MAMA YAGA

Public art can promote biodiversity. Made of bronze, wood and concrete, this sculpture features an interior space that functions as a large bat house, a cave that can serve as a habitat for animals. The work aims to communicate with nature and animals in the hard urban environment. The jury considered the entry interesting both conceptually and functionally, and one that would generate discussion. Mounted on top of the neighbouring silo or on the corner of the rooftop terrace, the expressively rough large bust would be part of the visible façade of the building. The human figure is a traditional starting point in plastic art and in any search for form.

#### 092 Kuva/Pic

The entry is a virtual and interactive application that plays on screens in the building. *Pic* is an artificial member in the community of the Academy of Fine Arts, an artificial person, a kind of developed AI that resembles a human being in appearance. It has the ability to learn and to understand things, the ability to play or imitate. The interactive work changes over time and can also be used in teaching. Being based on artificial intelligence, the work raises questions about ethics, interaction, communication and learning.

#### 103 Käännekohta

The work makes use of the physical structures of the new building as part of a process of image making. It transforms darkened spaces into a gigantic pinhole camera, a camera obscura. Monumental negative images depict recorded views from the vicinity of the building. The siting of the work between the new and the old building was appreciated as a thematically strong choice. The connection between the exterior and the interior and the process of depiction that the work establishes create an interesting concept.

The jury decided

to award a joint first prize to three entries, each to receive 4,000 euros

044 Ilmastorituaali – ritualistinen seminaariteos  
074 BABA MAMA YAGA  
103 Käännekohta

to award the following three entries 3,000 euros each

017 PASSAGE  
024 Kello 25:59  
092 Kuva/Pic

The prizes are tax-free.

7. Implementation of winning entries

It was decided to launch negotiations for further development and implementation with the three entrants that shared the first prize.

8. Disclosure of the identity of entrants

The envelopes containing information about the identity of winning submissions were opened, to note:

Joint first prize

044 Ilmastorituaali- ritualistinen seminaariteos; Mikki Noroila  
074 BABA MAMA YAGA; Benjamin Orlow  
103 Käännekohta; Kristian Jalava

Next three prize-winning submissions

017 PASSAGE; Tuula Närhinen  
024 Kello 25:59; Henriikka Kontimo  
092 Kuva/Pic; Jani Ruscica

9. Announcement of result and decision regarding online exhibition

The result of the competition will be announced on Tuesday, 13 October 2020, at the State Art Commission's website. The winning entries and honorary mentions as well as the jury report will be on view online from 13 October 2020 to 9 April 2021 at the competition website at [www.valtionaideteostoimikunta.fi/kuvataideakatemia-taidekilpailu](http://www.valtionaideteostoimikunta.fi/kuvataideakatemia-taidekilpailu). Unawarded entries with their identifying data will be destroyed six months after the resolution of the competition.

10. Closing of the meeting

The Chair closed the meeting on Monday, 5 October 2020, at 14:00.