

Ansuya Blom receives the prestigious Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art 2020



Ansuya Blom
Photo: Milette Raats

The international jury of the Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art has awarded the prize to visual artist Ansuya Blom. She will receive 100,000 euros, half of which is intended for a publication and/or exhibition. The jury described Ansuya Blom's work as intimate, engaging and poetic. The Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art is the biggest visual art prize in the Netherlands, financed from a private fund, the Dr A.H. Heineken Foundation for Art. Established in 1988, this year's biennial prize is being awarded to a visual artist for the seventeenth time. The exact date of the official award ceremony will be announced at a later date as a result of the Covid-19 measures.

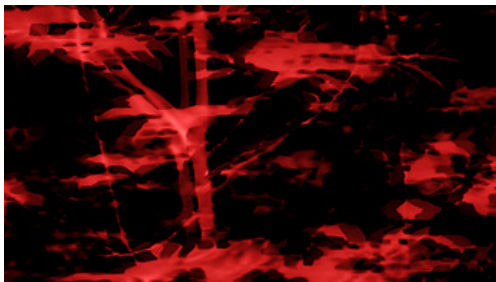
Jury report

Her work does not clamour for attention, nor does Ansuya Blom herself. She chooses to stay in the background and lets her work subtly penetrate. For more than forty years Blom has been steadily working on an oeuvre that explores the boundaries of the inner world of experience. In films, drawings, paintings, installations and texts, she always manages to get under the skin and portrays humankind's struggle with itself and the environment in an engaging and poetic way.

Blom's work radiates a great social and societal commitment. With her interest in psychoanalysis and psychiatry, her work offers a space for the voices of those who are often not heard: the marginalised or forgotten people. The artist asks critical questions about the position of the individual, collective and society. At a time when much debate is polarised, her work is characterised by subtlety. Blom offers a look into the human soul, in all its fragile vulnerability, and does so authentically and autonomously.

The jury also praised her generous attitude in the Dutch art world, where Blom repeatedly takes on the task of mentoring young artists. The Heineken Prize for Art comes at an important time, during which a new generation of artists and curators is rediscovering Blom's oeuvre and becoming very interested in it. The prize increases this momentum and will enable Blom to make new connections.

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Left: Ansuya Blom, **Lola Magenta**, 2018, 11'09, videostill, *courtesy the artist/ Galerie van Gelder*

Right: Ansuya Blom, **Concept of Anxiety**, '07-'08, photo Tom Haartsen, *courtesy the artist/ Galerie van Gelder*



Ansuya Blom, **Fragments (Ellen W.)**, detail - 36 drawings, 23x21,3cm each, photo GJ Rooij, *courtesy the artist/Galerie van Gelder*

About the laureate

Ansuya Blom (Groningen 1956) lives and works in Amsterdam. She studied at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague and Ateliers '63 in Haarlem. Blom has been working in various art forms, including drawing, painting, photography, film, text, collage and sculpture, since the late seventies. In 1981 she received the Royal Award for Modern Painting. Her films have been screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Rencontres Internationales Paris-Berlin, IDFA Amsterdam and at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Her work can be found in the collections of museums, including the EYE Filmmuseum, Tate Modern and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. She has had solo exhibitions at the Camden Arts Centre in London, the Douglas Hyde Gallery in Dublin, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and recently the Casco Art Institute in Utrecht. Blom also holds a master's degree in psychoanalysis from Middlesex University in London and is an associate member of the Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research in London.

Ansuya Blom is an advisor at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam and was a guest advisor at art institutions in the United Kingdom, South Korea, Surinam and Indonesia in 2019. She is a regular speaker at public lectures, and in interviews and panel sessions, most recently at the Nola Hatterman Institute in Suriname, the EYE Film Museum, the Casco Art Institute and De Appel.

Jury composition

The jury of the Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art 2020 was chaired by Frits van Oostrom, Distinguished University Professor of Dutch Literature of the Middle Ages at Utrecht University (member and former President of the Academy). In addition, the jury consisted of Patricia Pisters, professor of film science at the University of Amsterdam (member of the Academy), Aernout Mik, visual artist and laureate of the Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art 2002 (member of the Academy of Arts), Bart Rutten, director of Centraal Museum Utrecht and Elena Filipovic, director of Kunsthalle, Basel.

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Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art

Alfred Heineken established the prize that bears his name to recognise and encourage exceptionally talented artists. The Foundation awarded the prize for the first time in 1988 and every other year since then to an outstanding artist living and working in the Netherlands. The prize consists of a sculpture, a publication and/or exhibition (budgeted at EUR 50,000) and a cash prize of EUR 50,000. Previous laureates included Peter Struycken, Mark Manders, Barbara Visser, Job Koelewijn, Daan van Golden, Aernout Mik, Guido Geelen, Wendelien van Oldenborgh, Yvonne Dröge Wendel and Erik van Lieshout.

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Note for editors

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About the Heineken Prizes

In the past five decades the Heineken Prizes have grown to become an internationally renowned institution and are nowadays Netherlands' most prestigious awards for arts and sciences. Every two years, five internationally renowned researchers and one artist who lives and works in the Netherlands are honoured. They are all laureates whose work offers new perspectives, achieves unexpected breakthroughs and opens up new avenues for others. Since 2010, the next generation has also been encouraged in this way. Four young researchers working at a Dutch research institute whose work shows promise, receive the Heineken Young Scientists Awards.

The laureates are selected by juries made up of members of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (the Academy), the Young Academy and international experts. Each of the Heineken science prizes is USD 200,000. The artist receives EUR 100,000, half of which is intended for a publication and/or exhibition. The incentive prizes for young scientists are EUR 10,000 each.

The Heineken Prize was established in 1964 by Alfred H. Heineken (1923-2002) in honour of his father Dr Henry P. Heineken (1886-1971). That year the Dr H.P. Heineken Prize for Biochemistry and Biophysics was awarded for the first time. Five more Heineken Prizes were subsequently added to this award: the Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art (1988), Medicine (1989), Environmental Sciences (1990) and History (1990) and the C.L. Carvalho-Heineken Prize for Cognitive Science (2006).

Alfred Heineken's daughter, Charlene L. de Carvalho-Heineken (1954), continues this tradition as chair of the Stichting Alfred Heineken Fondsen and the Dr. A.H. Heineken Stichting voor de Kunst, which finance the prizes.

The science prize winners will be announced in June 2020.

For more information: www.heinekenprizes.org