

Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art 2006 awarded to Job Koelewijn

Amsterdam, 30 March 2006 - The Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art 2006 (EUR 50,000) has been awarded to Job Koelewijn for

'his richly variegated, poetic oeuvre'

The work

Although conceptual in nature, Job Koelewijn's work is also highly tactile. Koelewijn attracted attention early on, when he was still a student at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy. For his final project, he had his mother and aunts dress in traditional Spakenburg folk costume and ritually clean the Academy's glass exhibition pavilion. Since then his work has ranged from photography and film to architectural structures, and from small objects to large installations. He covered the floor of a Medieval hall in Middelburg with spaghetti, which was pulverised under the feet of visitors; he applied perfumed baby powder to the walls of a space at the Biennale in Venice; and he turned urban and rural landscapes into a 'film screen' by placing the auditorium of a cinema before them. Koelewijn makes abundant use of text in his work. He favours poetry, for example by Marsman or Beckett, and materials that appeal to the sense of touch, smell and hearing. His work is one of tremendous fragility and purity, qualities that, like cleanliness, he turns into themes; his 'stories' are always highly visual and imaginative and have an immediate appeal. Koelewijn's work is not really commercial; much of it is produced for exhibitions and is temporary in nature.

The artist

Job Koelewijn (born in Spakenburg, the Netherlands, in 1962) lives and works in Amsterdam. He studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam from 1987 to 1992 and spent a further year at the Sandberg Institute. In 1996 he spent a year in New York as an artist in residence at PS1, the contemporary art centre associated with MoMA. Koelewijn has shown his work at numerous exhibitions both in the Netherlands and abroad. In 1999 and 2001, for example, he submitted works to the Venice Biennale. His retrospective exhibition in 2005, held at Museum De Paviljoens in Almere, was entitled *People can only deal with the fantasy when they are ready for it*. His work has been purchased by the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (*Time Machine*, an installation, was one of the last purchases made by the Stedelijk's former artistic director, Rudi Fuchs) and many other major museums in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

Galerie Fons Welters in Amsterdam has presented solo exhibitions of Koelewijn's work since 1995. For *The World is My Oyster*, Koelewijn hacked away virtually the entire back wall of the gallery to create a splendid frame for a neighbouring back garden. Fons Welters is currently presenting another exhibition of Koelewijn's work

(until 22 April, entitled *Doorlopende Voorstelling* ('Continuous performance'), it shows four large-scale works, including a bookcase in the shape of a lemniscate. Job Koelewijn has received the Charlotte Köhler Prize (1996), the Sandberg Prize (1999) by the Amsterdamse Kunstenfonds, and the Nebest Award (2002) for artists whose work makes striking use of the theme of building and construction. Galerie Fons Welters published the monograph *History, Future* in 2003.

The Heineken Prize for Art

The Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art was awarded for the first time in 1988. Previous winners include Daan van Golden for visual art (2004), Aernout Mik for video art (2002), Guido Geelen for ceramics (2000) and Marrie Bot for photography (1990). The jury is awarding the Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art to the visual artist Job Koelewijn for his entire oeuvre.

Unlike the other Heineken Prizes, the Dr A.H. Heineken Prize for Art is awarded by a jury which is independent of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. Although a number of jury members are also members of the Academy, they are acting in a private capacity. For more background information, see <http://www.knaw.nl/heinekenprizes>.

The awards ceremony

The six Heineken Prizes for science, scholarship and art are presented every other year during a special session of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. This year the presentation will take place on Thursday 28 September at the Beurs van Berlage Building in Amsterdam.