

Press Release

16 January 2018

Akademie der Künste Presents *Kunstpreis Berlin Jubiläumsstiftung 1848/1948* (Berlin Art Prize – Jubilee Endowment 1848/1948):

Thomas Demand Awarded the 2018 Grand Prize

Awards Ceremony with Berlin’s Governing Mayor Michael Müller and Akademie President Jeanine Meerapfel on 18 March on Pariser Platz.

Thomas Demand, a sculptor and photographer, is awarded the *Großer Kunstpreis Berlin* (Berlin Art Prize: Grand Prize) in 2018. The Akademie der Künste presents this annual award, endowed with €15,000 prize money, on behalf of the federal state of Berlin. Each year, on a rotating basis, focus is drawn to one of the disciplines represented by the Akademie’s six sections. According to the jury, made up of Akademie members Tacita Dean, Wulf Herzogenrath, and Marion Ackermann (art historian and director of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden), Demand makes clear to us, “that the greatest deception is the depiction of reality and our almost unshakeable faith that it is possible to reproduce and represent what actually exists.” Six additional artists are honoured with Berlin Art Prize awards of €5,000 each.

Thomas Demand produces true-to-life paper models of (crime) scenes that have been documented in press photos, and then photographs his own paper models. Demand’s photograph of his replica of the Oval Office landed his work on the cover of the *New York Times Magazine*, which is to say in the real world of media that generally only serves his own purposes.

The artist (b. in 1964 in Munich) – who lives in Berlin and in Los Angeles – studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, and subsequently went on to study sculpture under Fritz Schwegler at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. In 1994 Demand took his Master’s at Goldsmiths, University of London. From 2010–11 he was a Getty Scholar at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. At the HFBK in Hamburg he has been a professor of sculpture (a major field of study) and has also been teaching courses on photography since 2011. Demand has exhibited internationally since the mid-1990s. MoMA (New York) showed his work in a solo exhibition presented in parallel to the opening of its new building in 2005. In addition, Demand was given large solo exhibitions by the Fondazione Prada in the context of the Venice Biennale (2007), at Hamburger Kunsthalle (2008), and at the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin (2009–10). In 2010 the Nouveau Musée National in Monaco commissioned him to curate the inaugural exhibition at its newly opened museum. Demand’s works *Kontrollraum* and *Vault* were included in the Akademie der Künste exhibition *Schwindel der Wirklichkeit* (*Vertigo of Reality*) in 2014.

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The 2018 winner of the Berlin Art Prize in the Visual Arts Section is the painter and video artist **Dominik Lejman**, born in Gdansk. The Architecture Section award is being presented to **Philippe Block**, teaching architect and engineer at the ETH Zürich. Ukrainian composer **Anna Korsun** is being honoured by the Music Section; **Daniela Danz** in the Literature Section; Australian director **Simon Stone** in the Performing Arts Section; and **Christoph Brech**, a photographer and video installateur, is receiving the award in the Film and Media Art Section.

Berlin's governing mayor, **Michael Müller**, commented on the awarding of the prize: "Our city is a European cultural metropolis, one which views itself as a place of artistic production, and at the same time as a place of perception and appreciation of the artistic achievements of others. This is what the Berlin Art Prize stands for. I congratulate all those who will receive this honour in 2018. Thomas Demand, the winner of the Berlin Art Prize – Grand Prize, resides between Berlin and Los Angeles, our oldest partner city. Thus, his creative work is the realisation of such a cultural connection with the USA. Demand deals with reality and how it can be communicated. Reality as it is represented in the media is his subject matter. And there is hardly another issue that is currently more relevant or topical."

The **Berlin Art Prize – Jubilee Endowment 1848/1948** was founded by the Berlin City Council in 1948 to commemorate the 1848 March Revolution. Since 1971, the Prize has been awarded by the Akademie der Künste on behalf of the federal state of Berlin. In recent years, Grand Prize winners included Emin Alper (2017), Frank Castorf (2016), and Sherko Fatah (2015).

This year's **Awards Ceremony** will be held on Sunday, 18 March, at 7 pm at the Akademie's **Pariser Platz** location.

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