

Press Release

10 January 2020

Akademie der Künste to award the Berlin Art Prize – Jubilee Endowment 1848/1948

Younghi Pagh-Paan awarded the Berlin Art Prize – Grand Prize 2020

Awards ceremony on 18 March at Pariser Platz by the Senator for Culture and Europe, Klaus Lederer, and Akademie President Jeanine Meerapfel

South Korean composer Younghi Pagh-Paan is to receive the Berlin Art Prize – Grand Prize 2020. The prize will be presented on 18 March by Klaus Lederer, Senator for Culture and Europe, and Akademie President Jeanine Meerapfel. The Akademie der Künste awards the prize, endowed with 15,000 euros, on an annual basis and in rotation among its six sections on behalf of the state of Berlin. The jury consists of Akademie members Manos Tsangaris and Samir Odeh-Tamimi together with musicologist Lydia Jeschke.

As a child, **Younghi Pagh-Paan** had already been familiar with both Western and traditional Korean music, which defined her musical horizons from an early stage. Years later, these experiences resurfaced in her consciousness when she witnessed first-hand the political unrest of 1968 as a music student at the University in Seoul. From then on, she realised that advanced composition in Korea could not mean imitating Western role models, but rather that new Korean music would have to be linked to its own cultural traditions. Since the 1970s, Pagh-Paan's compositional creativity has therefore focused on integrating these worlds while at the same time maintaining their peculiarities. She has achieved this in an individual and impressive manner using the characteristic tone colours, gestures, poems and metaphors in her works and in personal contact with musicians and major orchestras internationally. Thanks to her very idiosyncratic, vibrant, aesthetically consistent and humanist approach, Younghi Pagh-Paan has created a distinctive and rich compositional oeuvre. Last but not least, through her work she has served as an incentive and role model for the next generation of artists worldwide. (From the jury statement; short biography, see page 2)

In addition to the Berlin Art Prize – Grand Prize, the **six Berlin Art Prizes**, endowed with 5,000 euros each, will also be awarded on 18 March. These prizes go to American painter **David Schutter** (visual arts), **architecture magazine ARCH+** (architecture), Danish composer **Christian Winther Christensen** (music), writer **Norbert Zähringer** (literature), playwright **Sasha Marianna Salzmann** (performing arts) and Austrian camerawoman **Christine A. Maier** (film and media art).

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The **Berlin Art Prize – Jubilee Endowment 1848/1948** was established in 1948 in memory of the March Revolution of 1848 by the Berlin Senate. It has been awarded by the Akademie der Künste on behalf of the State of Berlin since 1971. Recent winners of the Berlin Art Prize – Grand Prize include Renee Gailhoustet (2019), Thomas Demand (2018) and Emin Alper (2017).

This year's **award ceremony** will take place on Wednesday, 18 March at 7 pm in the Akademie building at **Pariser Platz**.

Short Biography Younghi Pagh-Paan

Younghi Pagh-Paan was born in 1945 in Cheongju in present-day South Korea. She moved to Germany in 1974 on a DAAD scholarship in order to continue her studies under Klaus Huber at the Hochschule für Musik (University of Music) in Freiburg. She gained broad public recognition at the Donaueschingen Festival in 1980 with her orchestra piece *Sori*. After visiting professorships at the Universities of Music in Graz and Karlsruhe, she was the first woman in Germany to be appointed Professor of Composition at the University of the Arts Bremen in 1994. There, she founded the "Atelier Neue Musik", which she directed until 2011. Younghi Pagh-Paan has received many international awards, most recently the 15th KBS Global Korean Award in her home country. She was elected to the Akademie der Künste in 2009. In 2011, the Senate of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen awarded her the Senate Medal for Art and Science, in 2013 she received the Paiknam Prize from the Paiknam Memorial Foundation in Seoul, in 2015 the Prize for European Church Music, in 2017 the Special Contribution Prize of the Dawon Music Awards and in 2018 the FEM-Nadel of the German Composers' Association. The government of South Korea honoured Pagh-Paan with a Bogwan Order of Cultural Merit in 2018. Since 1980, her works have been published by G. Ricordi & Co. Berlin. In 2013, she handed the documents pertaining to her compositional work over to the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel, where they are permanently archived and made available for international music research. Since 2016, the South Korean Cultural Centre, Department of Cultural Affairs of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Berlin has been awarding the "Younghi Pagh-Paan International Composition Prize". She lives in Bremen and Panicale, Italy.

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