

Drempelprijs 2022
Honours Programme
Verdict

At the end of the day, the institutional structures eat at you with rabid hunger. We had one long day of viewing and of deliberation (10:00AM to 17:00PM - 7 HOURS!) and we went at it methodically.

To those that come after us in the judging process and to those that will be judged after it is fair to note that allowing for 2 hours of viewing works and 2 hours of jury deliberations is in no way enough to even begin experiencing 10 works. That adds up to 12 minutes of viewing per work, in the case in which some might propose documentaries of 30 minutes and others visual works that set their own pace in being discovered. Add to it the enthusiasm in presentation from each of the nominees and the fact that they each also worked on a thesis supporting their work and one is left barely touching the surface. Safe to say we allowed ourselves some overtime. But this is not a solution. Nor is it paid!

Set with these time limitations which imposed limits in understanding, we pondered sharing the prize among the 10 nominees of the Honours Programme - because how does one decide truly on who should deserve the prize?

And then we went at it by using a series of rather abstract criteria imposed by the institution:

- Specific problem statement resolved in an innovative way;
- A good example of artistic research in line with the vision of the Honours Programme;
- Potential for further long-term development (all nominees received the jury's vote of confidence! both because we can't accurately peer into the future and because we were thoroughly impressed with the high degree of enthusiasm, knowledge and passion they exhibited);
- Quality of presentation: relevance, design, implementation

While debating whether the criteria could really encompass such variety of works. From fictional documentary, to long photographic exposures in urban environments, to light diffraction, to unreliable memory, virtual fashion, the joy and pain of making, institutional spider webs, the morbidity of stop motion animation, surreal VR narratives, and grabbing the patriarchy by the privates.

And finally we introduced some randomness into the process towards the end of the deliberations. Not enough, maybe, to some jury member's opinions.

But, here we are, at the end of the day, with a winner.

Yeap, institutional requirements always win.

Let's hope they'll lose next year. We tried.

Yours in solidarity,
Andreea, Alina, Moosje, and Danae (as ever faithful secretary).

Winner

Senka Milutinović - *Momentary Lapse in Memory*

Momentary Lapse in Memory by Senka Milutinović is a sophisticated interactive digital artwork that examines the 1999 NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. Milutinović advances notions and methodologies from practices such as forensic architecture and memory studies by incorporating sonic explorations as well as an inquiry method of his own privileging networked relations among interviewees instead of imposing a traditional evidence-centered approach that tends to favor dominant discourses. In addition, the author was able to deliver a finished high quality product available for the general public, certainly an appropriate dissemination strategy when addressing a topic that tends to be dealt within obscure institutional settings.

The jury agrees that *Momentary Lapse in Memory* should be declared the winner of the Drempelprijs 2022 for its good use of digital design techniques, an excellent research paper, the pertinence of the topic of NATO's machine of war and its crimes in the name of "democracy", and the holistic non-linear vision that the author provided in this multidisciplinary endeavor. Congratulations!

Nominees

Pragya Jain - M² : Miscellaneous Matter(s)

This project borrows from the multiple ways in which science and artistic practice can blend together, with a feminist twist, or rather a non-hierarchical twist, which is also a feminist twist. We felt energized by the ambitious hunger for learning, which reflects in the research process, reaching out beyond the comforts of the art academy, setting up interviews with scientists from the ESA, visiting CERN, doing tests and what not! Never lose that spirit and joy in the making & thinking!

Vincent Boon - Diary of a Shapeshifter

Inspired by the Jungian concept of "the shadow", Boon presents a black and white VR experience that uses immersive techniques to explore the unconscious. The visuals and the setting facilitated a sense of dizziness and claustrophobia which were in coherence with the notion of identity crisis that the author addressed through the narrative he designed. The connection between the unconscious and the (virtual) materiality of VR is such a promising idea that challenges verbal-centered experiences and we truly hope to see more explorations on this territory in these times of global spiritual crisis.

Anna Jaël Vetulani - The Wardrobe of Imagination

Anna Jaël Vetulani presented an innovative approach on virtuality applied to media that is not usually associated with this concept such as perfume and garments. We appreciate that the work can be read as a proposal of artistic research that attempts to exceed the merely linguistic and positions the author in an interesting role of fashion designer/stotyteller. Vetulani's ideas have great potential to develop further and we hope that she will bring this idiosyncratic way of working to the perhaps more traditional work table at the studio of her Paris Masters programme, this certainly makes for a great combination!

Julia Wilhelm - Autoarachnology

It's hard to convey a spirit if the spirit is in ephemeral moments of togetherness, making, doing, letting things happen spontaneously. Julia made a welcoming space in the exhibition, with (plant and herb) links to the WdKA rooftop where she was part of diverse community/ group events. We hope that these initiatives continue with a focus on institutional critique and creative possibilities to activate exhibition spaces.

Anej Golcar - Rotkind

So much pleasure, so much conviction! It is very moving to see such a great group effort, it can be so easy to just talk about the importance of collective work however we don't see so often actual manifestations of this approach. For instance, we were delighted to see that the team took the task of teaching the first years stop motion animation practice. It might be a failure of the academy that the students self organize to teach each other, but it's also quite a radical thing to see them take their own knowledge gaining trajectory into their hands.

The story is macabre but humorous, its idea is simple (which it has to be, for a short film) but with a psychological backstory, and it is funny how you have integrated the materiality and tactility of stop-motion into the story. The smartness of this project lies in these kind of subtleties and nods to the genre.

Very beautifully done & made, congratulations to the entire team!

Jannes van Arkel - Place-est-beaux

Cruel optimism is what first comes to mind. Maybe a dash of toxic positivity. The fact that we have the power to delude ourselves into feeling better, a power which we can exercise, but it's also a question of how long we can keep up the act. This same power of deluding ourselves can also be applied to making. "Fake it 'till you make it". We play other people like instruments and we also play ourselves. A lot of playfulness, but also a lot of sadness, but one can work through the sadness by sheer enthusiasm. We acknowledge and value the passion and vulnerability offered by the artist at the moment of engaging with spiritual affairs and we encourage further explorations in matters of embodied rituals.

Ciska Meister - A Place where Reality Lies

It's hard to look at a genre so established as documentary from a new angle, but once you realise the fact that documentary can be fiction, and I mean, it's not a wholly original idea (but what is originality also?) you can begin to break things open. And you can do that also by playing with who's part of the filmmaking team.

The questioning ends up being fruitful. Rather than just questioning alone, the filmmaker starts engaging in conversation with other filmmakers and allowing their voices to take precedence, showing that there is not just one angle into how documentary can be produced. This is a relevant project not only for the journey of a young documentary-making but also for this specific moment in history where new elements/forms of documentary (phone footage shared online, vlogging, social media) and issues such as the spread of fake news and receptivity to conspiracy theories are thrown into the mix.

Jasper van der Ende - Exposure Value ZERO

A clear research question and method, humble but/and realistic, and focused in its execution. Speaks to the history of the discipline, both in conceptual as in aesthetic terms. The jury appreciates the classic but well-executed presentation and the aesthetically pleasing visual results. It was a bold choice to opt for analog technology as a scientific research tool, a perfect match with the quite poetic idea of the loss of data because of overexposure.

Anna Jastrzębska Ylmaz - Shhh(e)...

Difference and repetition. Zooming in. The patriarchy. Taking the reins of female representation. Way to go, girl! Pardon, woman! The process is on view during the exhibition. There's step one - the problem, being looked at as a woman throughout art history - , there's step two - grabbing the male figure by their privates, multiplying breasts, intense stares. One is curious about what step three, etc, might be. Should the works be displayed behind glass? Not unless she can help it. The non-hierarchical presentation, the variety of mediums used, which were unified by the colour palette and topic, tied together beautifully. We can't wait for the next chapter to materialize in what is certainly a very appealing style and convincing way of working.