



Press Release

Stockholm, 12 May 2017

Winners of 2017 Absolut Art Award announced

Anne Imhof wins 2017 award for Art Work Huey Copeland wins 2017 award for Art Writing

Absolut is delighted to announce the winners of the 2017 Absolut Art Award. The 2017 prize for Art Work is awarded to Anne Imhof and the prize for Art Writing is awarded to Huey Copeland.

As the winning artist, Anne Imhof will receive a cash stipend of €20,000, complemented by a budget of €100,000 to produce and exhibit a new artwork or project. As the winning writer, Huey Copeland will receive a cash prize of €20,000, complemented by a budget of €25,000 for the development and publication of a new art publication, in collaboration with a leading publishing house. An award ceremony to honour the two winners will take place from 22 – 24 September 2017 in Stockholm, Sweden.

Led by the 2017 Jury President Daniel Birnbaum, Director of Moderna Museet, Stockholm, the distinguished international Jury comprising of Simon Castets, Director and Curator of Swiss Institute, New York and co-founder of 89plus; Elena Filipovic, Director and Chief Curator of Kunsthalle Basel; Polly Staple, Director of Chisenhale Gallery, London; and Jack Bankowsky, critic, curator, and Editor-at-Large at *Artforum*, selected the winners based on their proposals to create a new artwork, project or piece of art writing, free from commercial constraints.

Jury citation: Anne Imhof

“The Jury awards the Absolut Art Award for Art Work to Anne Imhof for her proposal to produce a new work set in salt desert in Death Valley, California. Although drawing on previous performances, the work will represent the beginning of something new in Imhof's career in that it exchanges the white cube for the Badwater Basin, pushing the production outside the parameters offered by the art institution. The performance and the musical score will culminate in a film.”

Jury citation: Huey Copeland

“The Jury awards the Absolut Art Award for Art Writing to Huey Copeland for the book proposal *Touched by the Mother*, a collection of essays that provide a multi-faceted perspective on the methods of American art and discourse of the last fifty years. Building upon and extending on the works of thinkers such as Ralph Ellison, Frantz Fanon, and Fred Moten, the book promises to be both a personal account of what it means to navigate the world of contemporary American culture as a gay black man, and a critical consideration of the works of many of today's most important artists.”

“Congratulations to Anne Imhof and Huey Copeland – this year's winners of the 2017 Absolut Art Award. Selected from an amazing group of finalists, Daniel and the Jury have chosen two incredible winners whose projects we are excited to help realise in the coming months. We are thrilled to be collaborating with them and look forward to celebrating with them at the Absolut Art Award ceremony this September in Stockholm,” said Saskia Neuman, Global Art Manager, Absolut.

Anne Imhof (b. 1978) lives and works in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Anne Imhof graduated from the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main in 2012. Imhof was awarded the Preis der Nationalgalerie in 2015 and went on to produce the opera *Angst*, which was presented in three acts at Kunsthalle Basel, Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, and the Biennale de Montréal in 2016. She is representing Germany at the 57th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2017.

Imhof's performance cycles *Deal* (2015), *Rage* (2014), *Aqua Leo* (2013), and *School of the Seven Bells* (2012) were shown in solo exhibitions at MoMA PS1, New York (2015), the Carré d'Art – Musée d'art contemporain de Nîmes (2014), Portikus, Frankfurt am Main (2013), and elsewhere. Her art has also been featured in international group exhibitions, including at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris, the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2015), and the Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main (2014).

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Huey Copeland (b. 1976) lives and works in Chicago, USA.

Huey Copeland is an art historian, administrator, teacher, critic, and curator. He is currently Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in The Graduate School and Associate Professor of Art History at Northwestern University. His writing focuses on modern and contemporary art, with an emphasis on articulations of blackness in the Western visual field.

A Contributing Editor of *Artforum*, Copeland has also published in *Art Journal*, *Callaloo*, *Camera Obscura*, *Nka*, *October*, *Parkett*, *Qui Parle*, *Representations*, and *Small Axe* as well as in numerous international exhibition catalogues and edited volumes, such as the award-winning *Modern Women: Women Artists* at the Museum of Modern Art. Most notable among his previous publications is the book *Bound to Appear: Art, Slavery, and the Site of Blackness in Multicultural America*, published in 2013 by the University of Chicago Press.

The 2017 Absolut Art Award Jury

2017 Jury President:

Daniel Birnbaum has been the Director of Moderna Museet, Stockholm since autumn 2010. He was the Rector of Städelschule in Frankfurt from 2000 – 2010, and Director of the Kunsthalle Portikus. He is contributing editor of *Artforum* in New York and has curated exhibitions including 'Airs de Paris' at Centre Pompidou in Paris (in co-operation with Christine Macel) in 2007. In 2009, Daniel was the Director of the 53rd Venice Biennale.

2017 Jury Members:

Simon Castets is the Director and Curator of Swiss Institute, New York and co-founder of 89plus. In addition to exhibitions at Swiss Institute, recent curatorial work includes 'Rachel Rose' at Aspen Art Museum, 'Champs Elysées' at Palais de Tokyo, Paris (with Julie Boukobza and Nicola Trezzi), 'Poetry will be made by all!' at Moderna Museet, Stockholm, and 'Filter Bubble' at LUMA Foundation, Westbau (both together with Hans Ulrich Obrist for 89plus).

Elena Filipovic is Director and Chief Curator of Kunsthalle Basel. She was Senior Curator at WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels from 2009-2014, and in 2008 co-curated the 5th Berlin Biennial with Adam Szymczyk.

Polly Staple has been Director of Chisenhale Gallery, London since 2008. She was formerly Director of Frieze Projects and Curator at Cubitt Gallery, London. Staple has written for numerous catalogues and publications; she was formerly Editor-at-Large of *frieze* magazine.

Jack Bankowsky is a critic, curator, and Editor-at-Large at *Artforum*. He served as Editor-in-Chief of *Artforum* from 1992 to 2003, and is the founding editor of *Artforum's* sister publication, *Bookforum*, where he was editor from 1996 to 1998.

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2017 Absolut Art Award Nominators:

Philippe Pirotte, Director of the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste - Städelschule and of the Kunsthalle Portikus, Germany

Thelma Golden, Director and Chief Curator, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York

Nana Oforiatta-Ayim, writer, filmmaker, and cultural historian based in Accra, Ghana

Venus Lau, Artistic Director of OCAT Shenzhen and Beijing

François Quintin, Executive Director, Fondation d'entreprise Galeries Lafayette

Solveig Øvstebø, Executive Director and Chief Curator, Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago

Bart van der Heide, Chief Curator, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

Diana Campbell Betancourt, Artistic Director, Samdani Art Foundation and Chief Curator of the Dhaka Art Summit

Sohrab Mohebbi, Associate Curator, REDCAT

Michelle Kuo, Editor in Chief, *Artforum*

Notes to the editor:

Absolut and Art

The first spirit brand to forge genuinely close ties with art and artists, Absolut has been active in the art world since 1985, when it invited Andy Warhol to create the first in a series of iconic advertisements inspired by the Absolut bottle. Since then, Absolut has collaborated with more than 550 artists on over 850 commissioned projects. Today, Absolut supports acclaimed artists, art writers and institutions in their efforts to present new works, stimulate ideas, bring people together and broaden access to creativity.

The Absolut Art Award

The Absolut Art Award was instituted in 2009 to mark 30 years of creative collaborations with artists. The award offers an artist and an art writer a unique opportunity to realise their dream projects, demonstrating our continued commitment to collaborating on transformative projects with the world's most creative talent. The winning artist will receive a cash prize of €20,000, complemented by a budget of €100,000 to produce and exhibit a new art work. The winning art writer will also be awarded a cash prize of €20,000, alongside a budget of €25,000 to be used towards the research and production of a new art publication.

In 2015 the Absolut Art Award for Art Work was awarded to Frances Stark and to Mark Godfrey for Art Writing. Stark's winning project, a digital film adaptation of Mozart's opera, *The Magic Flute*, was unveiled in April 2017. The remake featured musicians who substituted the characters, taking on their vocal melodies, and included animated lyrics onscreen to convey the plot of the traditional opera. Mark Godfrey will launch his winning project in 2018. Previous Absolut Art Award winners have included Renata Lucas (2013), Anri Sala (2011), Rirkrit Tiravanija (2010) and Keren Cytter (2009).

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Absolut continues to offer artists and writers a global platform through artist collaborations, most recently through a number of ambitious site-specific Art Bar installations. Previous collaborations include Jeremy Shaw on *Kirlian* (2012) and Mickalene Thomas on *Better Days* (2013) at Art Basel; Los Carpinteros on *Güiro* (2012) and Ry Rocklen (2013) on *Night Court* at Art Basel in Miami Beach; Adrian Wong on *Wun Dun* (2013), Nadim Abbas' *Apocalypse Postponed* (2014) and Guru Jimmy (2016) in Hong Kong; Olafur Eliasson on *Little Sun* (2014) at Coachella; artist collective Caravan (2014) and Yazan Khalili (2015) at Art Dubai; John Kørner (2015) and FOS (2016) at Chart Art Fair; Sangree at Material Art Fair (2016); Contributor Magazine during Stockholm Art Week (2016); Michele Ormas at Kölner Liste (2016); Clemens Behr at Berliner Liste (2016); Seth Troxler and RUN in Ibiza (2016) and João Vasco Paiva in Hong Kong (2017). In September 2015, Ilja Karilampi created *President Room* during the Absolut Art Award ceremony in Stockholm.

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#AbsolutArtAward

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The Absolut Company has the worldwide responsibility for the production, innovation and strategic marketing of Absolut Vodka, Malibu, Kahlúa, Wyborowa, Luksusowa and Frís. Absolut Vodka is the world's fourth largest premium spirits brand. Every bottle of Absolut Vodka is produced in Åhus, southern Sweden. Malibu is the number one rum-based coconut spirit in the world, sold in more than 150 countries. Kahlúa coffee liqueur is the world leader in its category. The head office is located in Stockholm, Sweden. The Absolut Company is a part of Pernod Ricard, which holds one of the most prestigious brand portfolios in the sector.