

PRESS RELEASE 8 September 2020

Johannes Vermeer Award 2020 goes to photographer Rineke Dijkstra

The Johannes Vermeer Award 2020, the Dutch state prize for the arts, is awarded to Rineke Dijkstra by Ingrid van Engelshoven, Minister of Education, Culture and Science. The jury, chaired by Andrée van Es, unanimously nominated her for the award. Rineke Dijkstra receives the award because of her iconic contribution to photography. According to the jury report, she is ‘the queen of Dutch portraiture’. The presentation ceremony will take place on Thursday 29 October 2020 in the Ridderzaal in The Hague.

According to the jury, Rineke Dijkstra makes a major contribution to the international prestige of Dutch visual arts with her work. The jury calls her portrait photographs and video installations unique in the world. In its summary, the jury says the following: “This work is for eternity. Few artists have been given the talent to create these types of images.”

Rineke Dijkstra’s career really took off in 1992, when she presented her *Beach Portraits*. The jury has the following to say about these portraits: “The vulnerability of these young adults, whether they are self-conscious about their appearance or not, and the intimacy that Dijkstra manages to achieve, characterise her entire oeuvre. Like her exceptional antenna for not just the eyes or the face, but the whole body as a mirror of the soul.”

The jury has emphasised the importance of the Johannes Vermeer Award this year, against the backdrop of the corona crisis. It says: “The extreme circumstances this year have made the importance of this State Prize even more tangible for the jury: as a symbol of respect and appreciation for the arts, but also as an expression of the exceptional importance of artists for our society.”

About the award

The Johannes Vermeer Award is the Dutch state prize for the arts and consists of a sum of 100,000 euros. The winner can spend this sum on a special project within his or her field of work. The Dutch government instituted the award in 2009 to honour and encourage exceptional artistic talent. The award is intended for artists working in the Netherlands and across all disciplines. Former recipients of the award are Ivo van Hove, Janine Jansen, Iris van Herpen, Steve McQueen, Michel van der Aa, Irma Boom, Rem Koolhaas, Marlene Dumas, Erwin Olaf, Alex van Warmerdam and Pierre Audi. This year, the jury consists of Andrée van Es (chair), Pierre Audi, Annabelle Birnie, Jamal Ouariachi and Romana Vrede. The presentation of the Johannes Vermeer Award to Rineke Dijkstra, by Ingrid van Engelshoven, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science, will take place on Thursday 29 October 2020 in the Ridderzaal in The Hague.

Not for publication, for the editorial board only:

The Boekmanstichting, knowledge centre for art, culture and policy in Amsterdam is responsible for jury supervision and the overall coordination of the Johannes Vermeer Award. The organisation and PR of the award ceremony is in the hands of LUSTR, organiser of cultural events and programmes in The Hague. For more information about the award or media requests, please contact Trix van Alphen: +31 (0)20 612 7000, trix@publicity.nl