

ZÜRCHER THEATER SPEKTAKEL

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Media release

ZKB Prizes 2016: The Winners

Today on the occasion of the Zürcher Theater Spektakel, the mayor of Zurich, Corine Mauch, and Dr. János Blum, member of the bank presidium of the Zürcher Kantonalbank, have awarded the ZKB Patronage Prize (30'000 Swiss Francs), the ZKB Acknowledgement Prize (5000 Swiss Francs) and the newly created ZKB Audience Prize. The jury, consisting of five theatre experts, has unanimously taken the following decisions: The Patronage Prize goes to the Syrian production «While I Was Waiting» by Omar Abusaada (director) and Mohammad Al Attar (writer). The jury praised the theatre piece as «a work of art rendered historically urgent by the ongoing Syrian crisis, while embedding aesthetic qualities that outlive the considerations of time and geography».

The Acknowledgement Prize is awarded to the Iranian performance artist Sorour Darabi for her Short Piece «Farci.e», in which she questions sexual identity and gender politics. The jury deemed the work relevant and courageous as it impresses by determination and provocative power as well as by adept use of composition and dramaturgy.

For the first time, the spectators could select their favourite from the nominated productions and award the ZKB Audience Prize of 10'000 Swiss Francs: By a large majority they chose the astonishing circus production «A Simple Space» by the Australian company Gravity & Other Myths.

((Find the detailed statements of the jury at the end of this press release.))

Nominees ZKB Patronage Prize 2016

- Omar Abusaada & Mohammad Al Attar (Syria): While I Was Waiting
- Nicoleta Esinencu & Teatru-Spălătorie (Republic of Moldova): Life
- Bouchra Ouizguen & Compagnie O (Morocco): Ha!
- Tabea Martin (Switzerland): Pink for Girls and Blue for Boys
- Gravity & Other Myths (Australia): A Simple Space

Nominees ZKB Acknowledgement Prize 2016

- Royce Ng (Australien, Hongkong): Kishi the Vampire
- Jeannot Kumbonyeki (Congo-Kinshasa): Le Kombi
- Cie. Sündenbock (Switzerland): Do you know Schubiduwhuah?
- Farah Saleh & Salma Ataya (Palestine): La même
- Volmir Cordeiro (Brazil, France): Céu / Ciel
- Bahar Katuzi & Samaneh Zandinejad (Iran): Special Relativity
- Sorour Darabi (Iran, France): Farci.e
- Buhlebezwe Siwani (South Africa): Izwe / Umhlaba / Ngimhlophe

ZÜRCHER THEATER SPEKTAKEL

Jury 2016

The members of the jury were

- Geoliane Arab, Beirut, independent cultural manager
- Anne Fournier (42), Zürich, journalist
- Marisa Godoy (50), Zürich, dancer, choreographer and lecturer
- Rucera Seethal (35), Johannesburg, programme manager Pro Helvetia
- Sankar Venkateswaran (37), Kerala, theatre and festival director

Statements of the jury

ZKB Patronage Prize 2016: «While I Was Waiting» by Omar Abusaada & Mohammad al Attar

With «While I Was Waiting», the jury awards a work of art rendered historically urgent by the on-going Syrian crisis, while embedding aesthetic qualities that outlive the considerations of time and geography.

Unanimously decided by the jury, the distinguished ZKB Patronage Prize 2016, thus awards the collective work of the company that brought this theatre piece to life, written by Mohammad al Attar and directed by Omar Abusaada. The jury recognises the relevance and humanity of this artwork in a fragile political context and the omnipresence of exile in the background, skilfully merging the dramatic theme with the reality of the artists. The different languages used on stage – from daily life dialogues to testimonial documentaries through video, music, or even journalistic reporting of a painful past – finely and rightfully intertwine stories and temporalities. They set the necessary distance, accentuated by the metaphor of a “comatose” situation eroding a family as much as a country.

The jury also appreciates the search for new forms of representation: a finely elaborated composition echoed by a scenography in strata. “While I Was Waiting” thus builds on the artifice of contemporary staging to give way to perceptible polyphony, receptive of today’s failures, disappointments and conflicts that both jostle daily life and the search for the individual within.

The jury strongly believes that “While I Was Waiting” – by its openness and its multi-perspective representation – paves the way for new creative approaches in future works.

ZKB Acknowledgement Prize 2016: «Farci.e» by Sorour Darabi

“Farci.e” by Sorour Darabi, was immediately pertinent and audacious. It not only poignantly pitched the queering of sexual identity and gender politics, but metaphorically presented a broader appropriation of global processes of deconstruction, transformation and the creation of language.

Rupturing conventions of performance, from the insistence of a mutually scrutinizing audience/artist gaze, to the artist’s choice and accomplishment of a delicate, beautiful, powerful yet physically demanding performance, the artist showed adept use of composition and dramaturgy overall.

The clever layers of meaning exposed themselves to the viewer long after the show was finished. This is the kind of work that lingers and will be carried by all who watch it, the impression simultaneously provoking and resolved. Congratulations to Sorour on a courageous and excellently executed artistic proposition.

Should you have questions or need further information please contact us.

You can reach us on +41 44 488 18 80 or via presse@theaterspektakel.ch

Pictures of the award-winning productions as well as of the award ceremony you find on Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xg46li78fgmi44k/AAAMeQ6iJ41PS-CyaX6h4HTsa?dl=0>

We thank you for your interest.

Kind regards

Esther Schmid

Head of communication