

B R E D I N P R A T

PRIX JEAN-FRANÇOIS PRAT

Press release: Wednesday 13 April 2016

Jānis Avotiņš wins this year's Jean-François Prat Prize, in its fifth edition

Exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris celebrating the fifth year of the Jean-François Prat Prize, showing 14 artists – Thursday 14 to Sunday 17 April 2016

The artist Jānis Avotiņš has been awarded the Jean-François Prat Prize, in its fifth year. On Wednesday 13 April 2016 at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, he was presented with the award by Bertrand Lavier, who is chairing this year's edition of the Prize, also coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the law firm Bredin Prat.

The two other finalists were Nicolas Chardon and Anne Neukamp.

For four days, from Thursday 14 to Sunday 17 April, a special exhibition of the finalists' work is being presented at the Palais de Tokyo. The focus is on contemporary painting, with 14 artists encompassing nine nationalities: Farah Atassi, Jānis Avotiņš, Zander Blom, Guillaume Bresson, Nicolas Chardon, Mathieu Cherkit, Philippe Decrauzat, Stelios Faitakis, Maude Maris, Anne Neukamp, Gavin Perry, Raphaëlle Ricol, Matt Saunders and Rezi van Lankveld. An occasion for an extraordinary panorama of contemporary painting.

Jānis Avotiņš



Sparse, 2005



Untitled 2015

Jānis Avotiņš

Born in 1981, lives and works in Riga, Latvia
Graduated from the Latvian Academy of Art
Represented by Ibid Gallery, London - Los Angeles

Presented by: **Matthieu Lelièvre**, associate curator at the Thaddaeus Ropac Gallery Jānis Avotiņš has had several solo exhibitions in Europe, including in particular at the Latvian National Museum of Art in Riga in 2016, Ibid Gallery in London in 2015, Vera Munro Gallery in Hamburg in 2014 and Johnen Galerie in Berlin in 2013.

The isolated figures and narrative elements in the light, distant paintings made by Janis Avotiņš float free of past, present and future. This work whose spatio-temporal line seems irremediably broken, sometimes prompting anxiety, appears to hide a mystery. The sources of his work are to be found in the art books and museum catalogues that he pored over with curiosity and delight as a child, and in the landscapes of Lithuania, the setting of his first adventures. However, also manifest is a growing determination to take on board a kind of obsession with the illustrations and photographs that he has begun to collect and appropriate. For him, images from the Soviet press, ubiquitous and

decisive in the 20th century but then suddenly made lifeless and indecipherable by the death of those who were there, are part of the cultural furniture. They became an essential inspiration for this artist who was born too long ago to be unfamiliar with them, but not so long as to have been a participant. It was almost indirectly, by means of disappearance, that Avotinš engaged in his pictorial meditation. Although painting was a privileged instrument for Soviet propaganda's manipulation of the masses, Avotinš art is not political. It is existential. Nor is any romantic interpretation of the sublime waiting in the wings to justify the vaporous aspect of his fine, light pictorial surfaces. In this luminous, abstract field drowning a partial and fragmentary real, he seeks to confront his subjects with the difficulty of finding a correct position in painting, in their environment. The subtlety of his contrasts evokes the difficulty of perceiving the real, of envisaging the space of myth and confronting the betrayal of memory. What he sees has to do not with incarnation but with the ghostly perception of the subject.

Matthieu Lelièvre

The Jean-François Prat Prize

To honour the memory of Jean-François Prat, who died on 26 March 2011, and who was a contemporary art enthusiast, the partners of the law firm Bredin Prat, which he co-founded, and his family, decided to pay tribute to his name by creating a contemporary art prize. Created in 2012, the Jean-François Prat Prize specifically aims to promote and encourage contemporary painting and to enable emerging artists, whether French or any other nationality, to advance their projects.

The Prize consists of an award of €20,000 for the winner and €2,000 for each of the other two shortlisted artists, as well as publication of a catalogue presenting the work of the three artists and a two-month exhibition of a selection of their paintings in the firm's offices.

The fifth edition of the Jean-François Prat Prize is chaired by the artist Bertrand Lavier, who follows on from Jean-Jacques Aillagon (the 1st edition in 2012), Jennifer Flay (2013), Christian Langlois-Meurine (2014) and Caroline Bourgeois (2015).

Bertrand Lavier is a very natural choice for this fifth edition of the Jean-François Prat Prize. His work questions in an iconoclastic way the very notion of painting, by challenging its codes, notably through humour and appropriation of objects. His Walt Disney Productions series, the Van Gogh "touch", and the battered Ferrari coated in that famous red paint illustrate this spectacularly. Bertrand Lavier (born in 1949 in Chatillon-sur-Seine, lives and works in Paris and Aignay-le-Duc) is a contemporary artist whose work has recently been shown at the Centre Pompidou (2012).

The selection committee comprises professionals from the world of art:

- **Marie-Aline Prat**, art historian, author of several books and articles on art
- **Juliette Laffon**, senior curator emerita in modern and contemporary art
- **Frédéric Bonnet**, art critic and curator
- **Frédéric Brière**, art collector, author of *Le Guide de l'Artiste*

The Prize was awarded after a deliberation, during which the jury — made up of the people having chaired the preceding editions of the Prize, the partners of Bredin Prat and the members of the selection committee, met together in a plenary session, "in chambers" to hear the cases of the three rapporteurs presenting and defending their chosen artists. The quality of the "pleadings" played a part in determining which artist should win.

Exhibition celebrating the first five years of the Jean-François Prat Prize

From Thursday 14 to Sunday 17 April 2016 at the Palais de Tokyo

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Jean-François Prat Prize, the exhibition, open to the public at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris free of charge, presents the finalists of the previous editions, offering an international panorama of contemporary painting as it is today.

Artists presented in the exhibition

- **Farah Atassi**, winner in 2012
- **Jānis Avotiņš**, winner in 2016
- **Zander Blom**, winner in 2014
- **Guillaume Bresson**, finalist in 2013
- **Nicolas Chardon**, finalist in 2016
- **Mathieu Cherkit**, finalist in 2013
- **Philippe Decrauzat**, finalist in 2015
- **Stelios Faitakis**, finalist in 2014
- **Maude Maris**, finalist in 2015
- **Anne Neukamp**, finalist in 2016
- **Gavin Perry**, finalist in 2012
- **Raphaëlle Ricol**, winner in 2015
- **Matt Saunders**, winner in 2013
- **Rezi van Lankveld**, finalist in 2014

Works shown in the exhibition



Farah Atassi, *Still Life in Red Interior*, 2015,
Courtesy Wassim Rassamny Collection
© Frédéric Lantermier



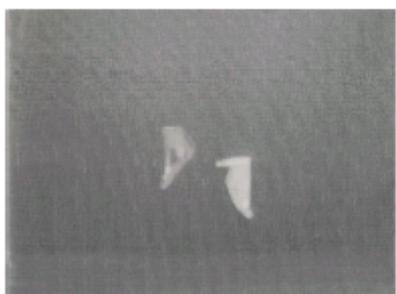
Farah Atassi, *The Office II* 2011
© Frédéric Lantermier



Janis Avotiņš, *Sparse*, 2005
Courtesy Galerie ibid., Londres



Janis Avotiņš, *The First Forty Years*, 2007
Courtesy Galerie ibid., Londres



Janis Avotiņš, *Untitled* 2011
Courtesy Galerie ibid., Londres



Janis Avotiņš, *Untitled* 2015
Courtesy Galerie ibid., Londres



Janis Avotiņš, *Untitled* 2015
Courtesy Galerie ibid., Londres



Janis Avotiņš, *Untitled* 2015
Courtesy Galerie ibid., Londres



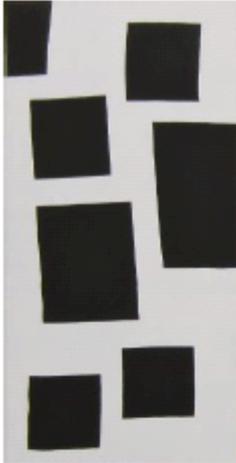
Zander Blom, *Untitled (1.574)*, 2014



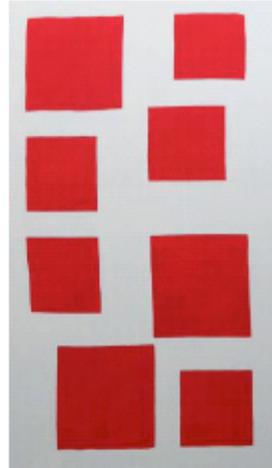
Zander Blom, *Untitled (1.759)*, 2015
Courtesy Galerie Hans Mayer



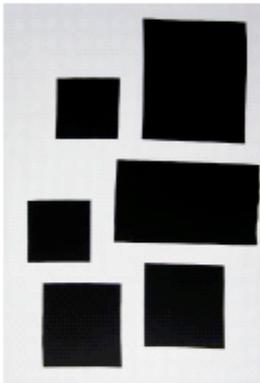
Guillaume Bresson, *Sans titre*, 2014



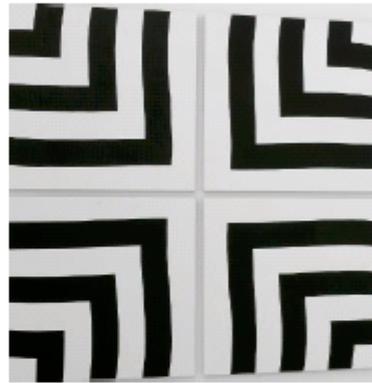
Nicolas Chardon, *Scenário noir 2*, 2013
Courtesy Galerie Jean Brolly



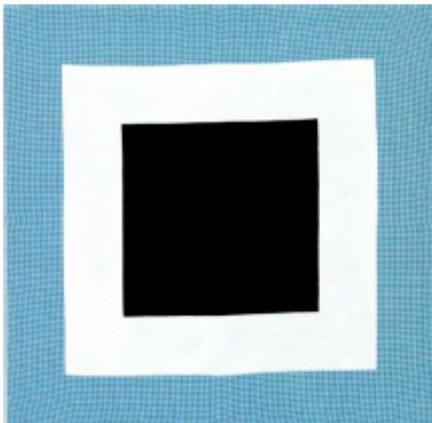
Nicolas Chardon, *Scenário rouge*, 2016
Courtesy Galerie Jean Brolly



Nicolas Chardon, *Scenário noir*, 2013
Courtesy Galerie Jean Brolly



Nicolas Chardon, *Cible*, 2013
Courtesy Galerie Jean Brolly



Nicolas Chardon, *Carré noir Gingham bleu*, 2014
Courtesy Galerie Jean Brolly



Mathieu Cherkit, *Dirty Banana*, 2014



Philippe Decrauzat, *Loop (The rest of your fellow ready ? go)*, 2015
© Stanislas Liban HD



Stelios Faitakis, *Ieke Romsi Adxuo Kvkzo Gubk*, 2016
Courtsey galerie The Breeder, Athènes



Maude Maris, *Le Quai* 2014



Anne Neukamp, *Condition*, 2013, © Roman März
Courtsey Galerie Valentin



Anne Neukamp, *Languet*, 2014
Courtsey Galerie Valentin



Anne Neukamp
Sans titre, 2016
Courtsey Galerie Valentin



Gavin Perry, *The Promise*, 2014
Courtesy Galerie Sultana



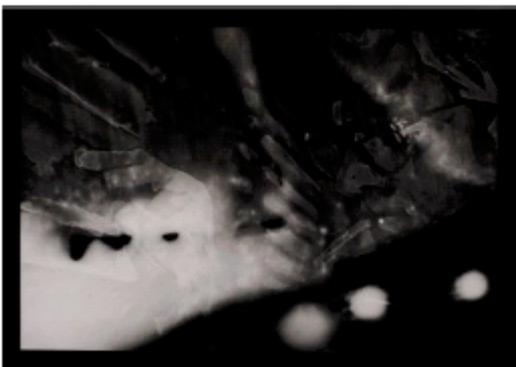
Raphaëlle Ricol, *Oedipe*, 2009
Courtesy galerie Patricia Dorfmann



Raphaëlle Ricol, *Sans titre*, 2015
Courtesy galerie Patricia Dorfmann



Matt Saunders, *Borneo (Rose Hobart #6)*, 2013



Matt Saunders, *Volker#1*, 2011



Rezi van Lankveld, *Brexxpop*, 2014

The law firm Bredin Prat

Founded in 1966, Bredin Prat today has 160 lawyers in Paris and Brussels, assisted by 75 support staff. In addition, the Firm benefits from working in cooperation with a large network of independent firms worldwide. Under the impetus of Jean-François Prat, and now Didier Martin, the Firm which was initially specialised in civil and criminal litigation, has evolved and now focuses its practice on business law, a field in which it is indisputably a leader.

By initiating the members of the Firm into contemporary art, Jean-François Prat did more than just adorn their office walls, he gave them something in common to share, other than just their professional association.

In celebrating its 50th anniversary on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the Jean-François Prat Prize, Bredin Prat is perpetuating Jean-François Prat's spirit of discovery and sharing attitude, and confirms its commitment to contemporary painting.

Exhibition information

Exhibition for the fifth anniversary of the Jean-François Prat Prize

> Admission free

From Thursday 14 to Sunday 17 April 2016 at the Palais de Tokyo (mezzanine)

13 avenue du Président Wilson, 75116 Paris

From midday to midnight everyday

<http://www.palaisdetokyo.com/>

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