

DRAWING PRIZE

OF THE CONTEMPORARY ART FOUNDATION

DANIEL & FLORENCE GUERLAIN

THE THREE NOMINEES FOR THE 2010 PRIZE

*Dove
Allouche*



Chemins dans la caillasse d'ombres, 2009,
8 graphite drawings, 40 x 60 cm.

*Thomas
Müller*



Untitled, 2006, crayon, Indian ink and
acrylic on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.

*Catharina
van Eetvelde*



Jam, 2009, crayon, gouache and
acrylic on paper, 102 x 64 cm.

INTERVIEW.

Daniel and Florence Guerlain.

For its third edition, what conclusions are you able to draw from this contemporary drawing prize?

The meeting with artists whom we knew, and on whom we have worked, is a source of great personal enrichment. The recognition from our public and from art lovers who are interested in contemporary drawing is also very satisfying. The more we advance, the more we are aware that there is a real and growing passion for this medium with both artists and collectors. Paper drawing has once again become a great work amongst all the other art forms, definitively a leading means of expression for artists. Although it was given less consideration at a certain moment, which is a good thing in times when the art market is moving very fast, its status is changing, perhaps at the risk of one day being too much in fashion. Since the prize's creation, we have maintained

a very good relationship with the former members of our jury. For instance, the collector Dakis Jouannou, totally convinced by our endeavour, is ready to open his collection of drawings to the Foundation's "Cercle des Amis".

For 2010, you have decided to make the prize an annual event, why?

Florence wanted it like that from the beginning, in order to give greater visibility to a greater number of artists. But I wanted to proceed cautiously for fear that the Foundation might not be able to financially support an annual rhythm for the prize, whose endowment is 15 000 euros for the winner, and 2 500 for the two nominees. When we launched this prize, we didn't know exactly how it would be received, but very quickly we could see how important it was becoming. Today, sponsors and art patrons come and support us and we think that the more we advance, the more we will have the means to promote and raise the profile of our prize.

Who are these new art patrons?

This year, we met with the President of Guerlain, Laurent Boillot, a man in quest of the heritage of both the company and the family. He found us to be real enthusiasts perpetuating the name of Guerlain and the action of Daniel's grandfather, himself a collector of Impressionism. It is important and symbolic that the House of Guerlain, today belonging to the LVMH Group, is helping to support this prize. The company had begun to become interested in contemporary art by participating in the FIAC's private visit for which we had lent some works, but it was the human contact that solidified this commitment. The second art patron to join us is the company Axa art. This shows that our prize has acquired the kind of recognition and visibility that makes people want to be a part of it. Moreover, Guerlain and Axa art might lead other art patrons to follow suit. Let's remember that we are only at two awards! Nevertheless, we have carried out significant work and our Foundation's background has allowed us to progress very quickly.

The other new feature concerns the awarding of the prize and the exhibition of the three nominees at the Salon du Dessin...

The Salon du Dessin seems to us to be a way of completely entering into the subject, with a reading turned exclusively towards this medium. This salon is visited by collectors and curators from all over the world. It is a privileged and exceptional place where for 8 days the only subject of conversation is paper drawings. The invitation for us to present part of our collection for the 2009 edition and the recent opening of the Modern and Contemporary Salon has comforted us in this choice. We also salute the initiative of the Contemporary Drawing Salon, which reinforces Paris's place as the capital of drawing. Indeed, it was there last year that we discovered Thomas Müller, one of our three nominees.

Interview
Marie Maertens

The nominees are to be announced on the 17th of décembre 2009 in the Chapelle des Augustins at the Ensba, at noon.
Prize awarded on the 25th of march 2010 during the Salon du dessin, palais de la Bourse.