



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Saodat Ismailova wins Eye Art & Film Prize 2022**

Under embargo till Friday 10 June 2022 - noon

**Saodat Ismailova is the winner of the Eye Art & Film Prize 2022. The artist from Uzbekistan receives the prize for the remarkable talent she demonstrates working at the intersection of film and visual art. The jury describes Ismailova's films and installations as 'refreshing', 'urgent' and 'balanced'.**

[eyefilm.nl/nl/over-eye/eye-prize](http://eyefilm.nl/nl/over-eye/eye-prize)

**An international jury has selected Saodat Ismailova as the winner of the Eye Art & Film Prize 2022. The prize of £25,000 enables the artist to create new work.**

Chair of the jury **Sandra den Hamer**, director of Eye Filmmuseum: *"We are delighted that Saodat Ismailova is our eighth winner. We view her work with great excitement and admiration; Saodat succeeds in creating an almost spiritual space beyond images and soundtracks. She seduces us into 'hearing' images and 'seeing' sounds. Her body of work is intriguing, mysterious and committed."*

**Saodat Ismailova** was born in 1981 in Tashkent, in the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan. She studied film at Tashkent State Art Institute, and in 1999 she won the Grand Prix at the Tashkent Student Film Festival. In 2002 she accepted an offer to continue her studies at Fabbrica, Centre for the Study of Arts, in Treviso, Italy. Two years later her documentary *Aral: Fishing in an Invisible Sea* won Best Documentary at the Turin Film Festival.

Ismailova then mastered the art of directing and scriptwriting at Robert Redford's Sundance Institute. Her feature debut *40 Days of Silence* was nominated for Best Debut Film at the Berlin Film Festival in 2014 and won various international awards. The previous year she had attracted attention with *Zukhra*, her first video installation, shown in the Central Asian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

From 2015 to 2017 Ismailova studied at Le Fresnoy – France’s National Studio of Contemporary Art in Lille. Since 2017 she has taken part in numerous exhibitions and had solo exhibitions in such prestigious institutions as the Centre for Contemporary Art, Tromsø, Norway (*The Haunted*, dedicated to the Caspian tiger, which is threatened with extinction) and Musée de quai Branly in Paris (with the interdisciplinary project *Qyrg Qyz*, 2018, also shown at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York).

In 2022 Ismailova is taking part in **Documenta Fifteen** and in the main exhibition at the **Venice Biennale** (The Milk of Dreams). Work by the artist is held in the collections of Amsterdam’s **Stedelijk Museum** and the **Centre Pompidou** in Paris.

### **Filmography/installations (selection)**

*Sacred Trees* (2013) HD Video, 10’; *Stains of Oxus* (2016) HD Video, 22’30’’; *The Haunted* (2016) HD Video, 23’22’’; *Her Five Lives* (2020) HD Video 13’14’’; *Her Right* (2020) Videocollage 15’; *Menim ismim kim edi?* (2021).

### **Excerpt from the jury report:**

*“It was a great pleasure to learn about the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan through the work of Saodat Ismailova. Although active on the international scene as a representative of a new generation of artists from Central Asia, Saodat maintains close ties with her native region as a source of creative inspiration. Her powerful work feels both refreshing and urgent.*”

*“We viewed her work with tremendous excitement and fascination. Saodat succeeds in creating an almost spiritual space beyond images and soundtracks. She seduces us into ‘hearing’ image and ‘seeing’ sound. Her work is intriguing, mysterious and committed, while form and aesthetics are balanced rather than overwhelming.”*

Eye will organize an exhibition with Saodat Ismailova in the winter of 2023.

### **Eye Art & Film Prize**

The Eye Prize, an initiative by Eye Filmmuseum and the Paddy & Joan Leigh Fermor Arts Fund, supports artists and filmmakers whose work makes a remarkable contribution to new developments at the intersection of visual art and film.

The Eye Art & Film Prize was established in 2015 to support and promote artists and filmmakers who bring together art and film, thereby distinguishing themselves in terms of conceptual ability, imaginative power and artistic quality. The winner can use the annual prize of 25,000 pounds Sterling to create new work.

The previous winners were: **Hito Steyerl** (2015), **Ben Rivers** (2016), **Wang Bing** (2017), **Francis Alÿs** (2018), **Meriem Bennani** (2019), **Kahlil Joseph** (2020) and the **Karrabing Film Collective** (2021).

## **Jury**

Saodat Ismailova was chosen as the winner by an international jury chaired by **Sandra den Hamer** (the Netherlands), director Eye Filmmuseum.

## **International jury**

**Nalini Malani** (India);

Visual artist

**Chris Dercon** (Belgium/France);

President van de Réunion des Musées Nationaux-Grand Palais, Paris

**Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese** (Lesotho/Germany):

Filmmaker and visual artist

**Hila Peleg** (Israel/Germany);

Curator and filmmaker

**Nanouk Leopold** (Netherlands);

Filmmaker, theatre director, visual artist

The list of nominees for the Eye Prize was presented to the jury by an international advisory board of curators, directors and programmers, chaired by **Jaap Guldemond**, Director of Exhibitions at Eye Filmmuseum, in collaboration with **Marente Bloemheugel**.

## **International advisory board**

**Andrea Lissoni** (Italy/Germany);

Artistic director Haus der Kunst, Munich

**Solange Farkas** (Brazil);

Director and curator of Associação Cultural Videobrasil

**Rajendra Roy** (US);

Chief curator film, MoMA, New York

**Apichatpong Weerasethakul** (Thailand);

Film director

**Eva Sangiorgi** (Italy/Austria);

Artistic director VIENNALE, Vienna International Film Festival

**Simon Field** (Great Britain);

Producer

**Hoor Al Qasimi** (United Arab Emirates);

President and director of the Sharjah Art Foundation

**Cuauhtémoc Medina** (Mexico) ;

Curator, critic and art historian

## **PJLF Arts Fund**

The Eye Art & Film Prize is a joint initiative by the Eye Filmmuseum and Paddy and Joan Leigh Fermor Arts Fund. The PJLF Arts Fund was set up in 2011 to support artists, writers, filmmakers and musicians. Celebrated author Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915–2011) and photographer Joan Leigh Fermor (1911–2003) were keenly

interested and involved in the arts. The Paddy Leigh Fermor Archive and the Joan Leigh Fermor Archive are housed at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh.