

Mario Merz Prize list announced

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The second Mario Merz Prize will be awarded to one of the five finalists for the year 2017. As the list is already announced, the contenders for the prize are artists Francesco Arena, Petrit Halilaj, Gili Lavy, Shahryar Nashat, and Suha Traboulsi.

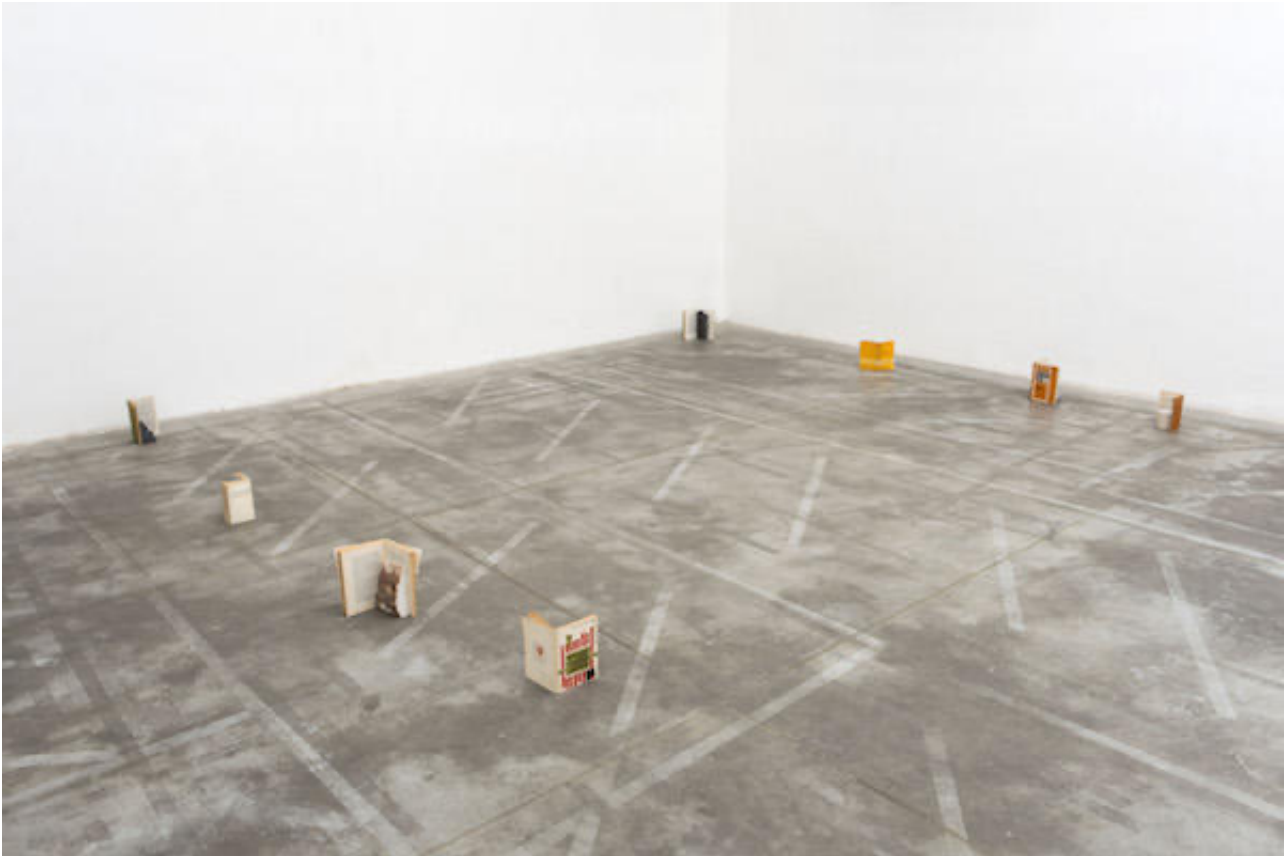
The list was announced couple of days ago during the world premiere of "*Al Araba Al Madfuna III*" by Wael Shawky, at the Auditorium Kunsthaus in Zurich, Switzerland. Shawky is known as the winner of the inaugural edition of the biennial prize. The jury who selected Arena, Lavy, Nashat, Halilaj and Traboulsi was led by Nicholas Cullinan, director of London's National Portrait Gallery, artist Marisa Merz and the independent curator Claudia Gioia.



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"Examining the numerous candidates, we have sought those that are closest to the spirit of the Mario Merz Prize, an award dedicated to those who are firmly committed to pursuing their work despite any opposition resulting from political, social, or geographical belonging," - said Beatrice Merz who's the president of the Fondazione Merz.

These five artists will have their work exposed in a group exhibition at the Fondazione Merz in Turin, which will open in March 2017. Manuel Borja-Villel, director of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, Massimiliano Gioni, artistic director of New York's New Museum and of Milan's Fondazione Trussardi, the artist Lawrence Weiner and Beatrice Merz will present the jury to choose the winner.



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Except jury's decision, the public will be also included in this contest by giving its thoughts on who should win the prize. It will be also possible to vote for the candidates via the dedicated prize's website as soon as this exhibition kicks off.

The 2017 Mario Merz Prize winner will have the opportunity to have a solo exhibition in several museums in northern Italy and Switzerland. This prize was originally initiated in 2015, with the idea to celebrate the talent in contemporary arts and music, but also to commemorate Merz. "The Fondazione Merz founded and developed in contrast to the concept of art as monument, or as the image of memory. The Fondazione today interprets its role as a center of energy for art that goes beyond borders and the Mario Merz Prize plays an important role in this," – said Beatrice Merz to the media.



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The shortlist for the music Merz prize was also announced. The contenders will be artists Gabriele Cosmi, Elvira Garitzyanova, Goeffrey Gordon, Cahterine Milliken and Pierre Marietan. The jury was presented by Giacomo Agazzini , violinist and professor at "Conservatorio G. Verdi" in Turin, Stefano Pierini, composer and professor at "Centro di Formazione Musicale" in Turin, and Philip Samartzis, sound-designer and professor at Melbourne University.

The winner for last year, Wael Shawky, is an Egyptian artist born in Alexandria, Egypt. He graduated the School of Fine Arts, in the University of Pennsylvania, United States in 2001. Most notable solo exhibition of this artist were "Contemporary Myths" in Cittadellarte Fondazione Pistoletto in Biella, Italy in 2010 and "Larvae Channel 2" in Project Bernili in Berlin, Germany in 2009.