

8 January 2016

‘Unexpected associations that change our view of reality with ingenuity and humour’

The Goslar Kaiserring 2016 is awarded to the American artist, poet and activist Jimmie Durham

GOSLAR. The Goslar Kaiserring, one of the most renowned art prizes of the present day, is to be awarded in 2016 to Jimmie Durham. The news was announced today at the traditional New Year reception in the Kaiserpfalz by the mayor of Goslar, Dr Oliver Junk. The 75-year-old American artist, poet and activist, who now lives in Berlin, enjoys an international reputation in the contemporary art world. ‘I am most humbled and pleased by receiving this award. It is a great honour,’ said Durham. Jimmie Durham will receive the Kaiserring in Goslar on 8 October 2016.

Explaining their decision, the Kaiserring jury write: ‘Sculptures, installations, paintings, drawings, performances, videos and photographs: Jimmie Durham’s œuvre is many-sided and often results from a process of juxtaposing and contrasting different materials or objets trouvés. Created from natural or synthetic substances, from leftovers or waste, his works function by virtue of unexpected convergences, a transformation of the real being accomplished with ingenuity, far-sightedness and humour. Jimmie Durham’s œuvre cannot be pigeon-holed into any artistic movement. It transcends existing categories or taxonomies and, with its permanent demand for freedom, seeks to escape or slip out of every hierarchical system. It is above all this uniqueness, which on the one hand is based on a great challenge to himself, and on a poetic approach to and contact with the world that allows Jimmie Durham to be added to the continuing list of names of artists to be honoured with the award of the Goslar Kaiserring... The relationship between Jimmie Durham and the world that surrounds him is very personal. In a quite natural fashion he appropriates what seems to us to be ethnically distant, while alienating the familiar: ‘When I see a piece of wood, or a dog skull, or a plastic bottle I feel a connection. Each has a political and physical history similar to mine.’

Jimmie Durham

The artist, poet and activist Jimmie Durham (b. 1940 in the USA, lives in Berlin) began to work as a sculptor in 1964 and at the same time, in the early 1960s, was politically active in the American civil rights movement, including the rights of Native Americans. In 1973 he completed his art training in Geneva, and returned to the USA. In the 1970s, he was the co-founder and chairperson of the International Indian Treaty Council at the United Nations, where his activity led among other things to the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In 1987 Durham left the USA, settling first in Mexico and in 1994 in Europe. His artistic and literary work often focuses on the relationship between history and environment, between architecture and monumentality, as well as displaying a critical attitude towards political power relationships and narrations of national identity. Durham laws a visiting professor at Malmö Art Academy and the Università Iuav in Venice.

Durham’s first solo exhibition was held in Austin/Texas in 1965. Since then, his works have been displayed at numerous exhibitions in many countries, most recently, for example at: Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2014; 2003; 1993); Venice Biennale (2015; 2005; 2003; 2001; 1999); Museo Madre, Naples (2001; 2008); MuHKA – Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (2012); Swiss Institute, New York (2012); Documenta, Kassel (2012);

1992); 29. São Paulo Biennale (2010); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2010); Kunsthalle Bern (2010); Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2009); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2006).

Solo exhibitions (selection)

Various Items and Complaints, 2015, Serpentine Gallery, London
Here at the Center, 2015, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin
Venice: Objects, Work and Tourism, 2015, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice
Traces and Shiny Evidence, 2014, Parasol Unit, London
Wood Stone and Friends, 2012/13 Museo Madre, Naples
Streets of Rome and Other Stories, 2012/13, MACRO, Rome
A Matter of Life and Death and Singing, 2012, M HKA, Antwerp (retrospective)
Rocks Encouraged, 2010, Portikus,
Pierres rejetées... , 2009, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris

Group exhibitions (selection)

Venice Biennale (2015; 2005; 2003; 2001; 1999)
Whitney Biennale, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2014; 2003; 1993)
Documenta, Kassel (2012; 1992)
29th São Paulo Biennale (2010)

Publications:

1993 A Certain Lack of Coherence, collected essays, Kala Press, London
2014 Waiting To Be Interrupted, collected essays, Mousse Publishing, Milan
1985 Columbus Day, a book of poems, West End Press, Albuquerque.
2012 Poems That Do Not Go Together, a book of poems, Wiens Verlag and Edition Hansjörg Mayer.

Further publications:

1995 Jimmie Durham, a comprehensive survey of his art, Phaidon
1996 Der Verführer und der Steinerner Gast, Springer, Vienna
1998 Between the Furniture and the Building: Between a Rock and a Hard Place, Walter König, Cologne
2001 Stoneheart, CCA, Kitakyushyu
2004 Jimmie Durham, Edizione Charta, Milano
2005 The Second Particle Wave Theory, University of Sunderland and the Banff Centre
2009 Pierres rejetées, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (retrospective)
2012 A Matter of Life and Death and Singing, MuHKA, Antwerp (retrospective)
2015 In Europe, n.b.k. , Berlin/Walther König, Cologne
2015 Venice, Work and Tourism, Mousse Publishing, Milan
2015 Various Items and Complaints, Serpentine Gallery, London

Kaiserring Goslar

The Goslar Kaiserring is one of the most internationally renowned prizes for modern art. It has been awarded since 1975. The first prizewinners were Henry Moore, Max Ernst and Alexander Calder. They were followed by pioneers of contemporary art such as Joseph Beuys,

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Stadt Goslar
Der Oberbürgermeister

Beuys, Gerhard Richter, Nam June Paik, Christo, Cindy Sherman and Jenny Holzer. Jimmie Durham's predecessors in recent years include Andreas Gursky, Bridget Riley, David Lynch, Olafur Eliasson, Wiebke Siem and Boris Mikhailov.

Contact:

Further information and pictures can be found on the website of the Mönchehaus Museums (www.moenchehaus.de) and the City of Goslar (www.goslar.de). Any questions may be addressed to the press and public relations department of Goslar city council (tel: +49 5321 704226). Information can also be obtained from the director of the Mönchehaus Museum, Dr Bettina Ruhrberg, tel. +49 5321 4948, ruhrberg@moenchehaus.de

Photo: Jimmie Durham, Photographer: Anno Dittmer

More press information:

<http://www.moenchehaus.de/museum/service/presse/>
Passwort: W2xb3k