

PRESS RELEASE

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Colombian artist Doris Salcedo, first winner of Lübeck Possehl Foundation's Prize for International Art Award ceremony and vernissage on 7 September 2019 at St. Annen *Kunsthalle*

Internationally renowned artist Doris Salcedo (born in 1958) creates objects, sculptures and large site-specific installations that reflect the effects of violence and exclusion in her homeland of Colombia and elsewhere in the world. According to the international awarding jury, Salcedo finds “poetic images for systems of political domination, racism and systematic inequality” with work that is “of maximum relevance for our times”. The nominations committee, likewise international in character, proposed a short-list of seven female and five male artists from nine different countries. Salcedo's first solo exhibition in Germany will be held between 7 September and 10 November 2019 at the St. Annen *Kunsthalle* in Lübeck. The award, endowed with €25,000, will be handed over at a ceremony which takes place on 7 September.

Fragile art against forgetting

Salcedo's work begins where others would turn away: her sculptures and installations tackle, with great sensitivity, the tragic consequences of violence as a result of dominant political and economic power structures, by leading the viewer into the emotional lives of victims and their families. Her homeland of Colombia, which has been in a permanent state of what amounts to civil war for five decades, is the starting point for numerous projects, such as the alienating *La Casa Viuda* (1992-1995), which takes the familiar details of domestic everyday life (such as furniture or clothing) and creates a sense of mourning for the loss of loved ones and also, in the room itself, a loss of home. At the eighth Istanbul *Biennale* (held in 2003), she created a stack of 1,500 second-hand chairs in the narrow gap between two houses in the quarter once inhabited by the city's Greek and Jewish minorities. In 2007, she took on Europe's treatment of migrants with *Shibboleth* (at the Tate Modern in London), by questioning – with a long, deep crack in the concrete floor of the Turbine Hall – the mechanisms of division and exclusion of the so-called “first world”. Works such as *A Flor de Piel* (2011-2012), a large expanse of pressed rose petals, delicately sewn together, and *Plegaria Muda* (2008-2010), stacked wooden tables with fine sprigs of grass growing from them, address the strength, beauty and fragility of life; in terms of both its meaning and its evocation of the sad fates of individuals.

Salcedo works not only in artistic terms; she is also extremely comprehensive and precise when it comes to the practical implementation of her projects. For example, she involves victims of violence in the creation of her works, thereby giving them a voice. The artist lives in Bogotá, where she is currently creating an “anti-monument” with some of the approximately 7,000 weapons given up by the FARC rebels. These arms are to be melted down and turned into floor panels for a new museum in the city center, designed as a place of reflection for the long years of violent conflict in Colombia.

Information on the Possehl Prize for International Art

The Prize for International Art of the Lübeck (Germany)-based Possehl Foundation is given to living artists of national and international renown for an individual life's work or an outstanding contribution to a group effort. It will be awarded every three years from 2019 onwards. Consideration for the prize requires an exceptional artistic confrontation and consistently outstanding artistic contribution over a period of at least ten years that is also deserving of special recognition. The award's nomination procedure covers the fields of sculpture, installation, new media and performance art, as well as certain types of artistic activism. Inter-media references to multiple forms of artistic expression within a body of work increase the chance of being nominated. The prize is endowed with €25,000 and includes the holding of an exhibition at the St. Annen *Kunsthalle* in Lübeck.

Jury members

- **Prof. Dr. Stephan Berg**
Director of the Bonn *Kunstmuseum*; voting jury member
- **Hannah Firth**
Director of Chapter, Cardiff; voting jury member
- **Dr. Anette Hüschen**
Director of the Kiel *Kunsthalle*; voting jury member
- **Dr. Oliver Zybok**
Director of the Overbeck Society; voting jury member
- **Max Schön**
Chair of Possehl Foundation; non-voting jury member
- **Prof. Dr. Hans Wißkirchen**
Director of the Cultural Foundation of the Hanseatic City of Lübeck, non-voting jury member

Nominations committee of the Possehl Prize for International Art

- **Achim Borchardt-Hume**
Director of exhibitions and programmes, Tate Modern, London
- **Adam Budak**
Chief curator of contemporary art, Prague National Gallery
- **Fanni Fetzer**
Director of the Lucerne *Kunstmuseum*
- **Karola Kraus**
Director general of the Ludwig Foundation Museum of Modern Art, Vienna
- **Roland Nachtigäller**
Director of Marta, Herford
- **Dr. Renate Wiehager**,
Head of the Daimler Art Collection, *Haus Huth*, Berlin

The Possehl Foundation

The Possehl Foundation promotes “the conservation of the beauty of the cityscape and its public spaces, charitable institutions and youth organizations, the encouragement of the arts and sciences and the alleviation of hardship for those in need” in Lübeck. It supports, with these wide-ranging and long-term initiatives, community development in the Hanseatic city.

The Foundation is named after Emil Possehl (1850-1919), a Lübeck entrepreneur and senator, whose will bequeathed his company, L. Possehl & Co. mbH, to the Possehl Foundation, which has been its sole shareholder ever since. The current organization, which functions as a holding company, is the parent of 180 medium-sized firms that employ approximately 13,000 people between them. L. Possehl & Co. mbH generates the resources that have allowed the Possehl Foundation to function as a non-profit organization for almost a century.

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