

## Jury report of the Françoise van den Bosch Prize 2006

If one reads the jury reports of the Françoise van den Bosch Prize of the last years one can have an idea of the discussions and the challenges that the field of contemporary jewellery arises currently. In a way, the activity of the Foundation seeks to act as a “thermometer” of the vitality and developments of the discipline.

In 2002, for example, it was observed that it was missing an attention beyond Europe’s border, when much is made abroad that deserves to be appreciated. The prize was given to the New Zealander Warwick Freeman. The Françoise van den Bosch Prize 2004 was given to Robert Smit as a recognition of his pioneer, personal and extraordinary work. If a concern with a wider perception of space was stated, soon a concern with the concept of “time” had to arise.

For the jury of the Françoise van den Bosch Prize 2006 the award has to be an impulse and an inspiration for someone in the middle of his/her career that will be encouraged to go further. It was agreed that this time the prize would not be given to an artist at a nearly end of the career, honouring a whole *oeuvre*. This year, the prize should be more than a recognition, it aspires to have a energizing impact on an artistic career in process.

There is a whole new generation of jewellery designers born in the 1960’s, that are featuring the exhibitions’ scene and are leading the discussion in art schools around the world. Some of them have already an interesting development of more than 15 years of career and this forms a remarkable body of work. And most important, they are broadening and giving more visibility to contemporary jewellery, stablishing complicities with the fields of art and design and creating stronger links with the public. There was no doubt in the jury to agree that the artist that best represents this change of paradigm is Karl Fritsch.

Karl Fritsch (Sonthofen, 1963) is an example of young creators today, trained by artists who revolutionised the nature and function of the jewel in the 1960’s. As opposed to the militancy of their predecessors, they have found new ways of commenting on the world, since the status of the artist has changed. Instead of pioneer heroism and severe conceptualism today we find awareness of limitations, inspiration in the everyday and extreme sensitivity: what looks modest can have a great impact.

Slow and coherent, Karl Fritsch’s unmistakable jewellery reflects a measured evolution. Enthusiasm and obstinacy are his best tools to develop a personal language, experimenting with the banality of the everyday and obtaining unexpected beauty. His work challenges convention and broadens the conceptual and aesthetic horizons of contemporary jewellery today.

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