

Skopje, 29 January 2025

To: **MEDIA in Macedonia**

PRESS RELEASE

Dear friends from the media in Macedonia,

The activities of the OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024, which have been taking place with great success throughout 2024, will have their conclusion on **6 Feb. 2025 (Thu.) at 7 p.m. at the National Gallery of the Republic of Macedonia – Cifte Hammam Skopje** with the opening of the official exhibition and presenting of awards and recognitions to artists and collaborators of OSTEN. This event is even more significant given the fact that it is the first in a series of events planned in this jubilee year – **80 years of OSTEN's existence!**

Symbolically, the exhibition will feature **80 award-winning artists and finalists from over 40 countries**, most of whom are coming to Skopje in person from different parts of the world to receive the awards. Works of visual arts will be exhibited - art on paper, painting, objects, installations, photographs, video and multimedia art.

OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024 – CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES

OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024 began with the announcement of the international OPEN CALL, to which **273 artists from 51 countries applied with 863 works!**

January - June 2024 the PREVIEW PROGRAM of OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024 took place at the OSTEN Gallery with a series of solo and group exhibitions of the artists who applied;

23.4. - 5.5.2024 the exhibition "**The Wheel of Time**" by the extraordinary Italian artist **Marco Bagnoli** (<http://www.marcobagnoli.it>), which was organized by OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje at **NGM - Cifte Hammam** in collaboration with ZERYNTHIA (ZERYNTHIA <http://www.zerynthia.it>) - Association for Contemporary Art from Rome, and with the support of the Italian Institute of Culture and the Italian Embassy Skopje, as an appropriate announcement of the decision of the OSTEN Council "COUNTRY IN FOCUS" at OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024 to be ITALY (more about the event: <https://bit.ly/3woHZVw>)

11.5.2024 at 12 noon, OSTEN Skopje presented the official award GRAND PRIX for lifetime achievement of OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024 to one of the greatest artists of today - MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO. In accordance with the desire of the Pistoletto to be a motive for connecting and uniting people and institutions in the region, the award ceremony took place at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, as part of the program for his solo exhibition "Preventive Peace". The official GRAND PRIX - a sculpture by Petar Hadzi Boškov, was presented to Maestro Pistoletto by Kornelija Koneska, Executive Director of OSTEN Skopje.

The event was organized in cooperation with the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, Serbia "Zerynthia" - Association for Contemporary Art, Rome, Italy and Mario Peroni.

27.6.2025 at 19 h. in the OSTEN gallery the **OFFICIAL PROGRAM** of the **OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024** began with the solo exhibition of the self-taught surrealist and great Macedonian painter **Vangel NAUMOVSKI – paintings, drawings and graphics** (from the OSTEN collection) ... which ran until **December 2024** with the group exhibitions of the selected artists of the Biennial;

30.6.2024 was the deadline for the open call, after which the **SELECTION of artists** followed (selector **Kornelija KONESKA, N. Macedonia** <https://www.osten.mk/kornelija-koneska>)

27-31.8.2024 JURYING was held by an international jury consisting of:

Bruno CORA, Italy (chairman) https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruno_Cor%C3%A0 – a prominent figure in the art world, known for his contribution as a critic, author and educator since the 1960s, curator of numerous art biennials and exhibitions including Alberto Burri, Yves Klein, Lucio Fontana, Michelangelo Pistoletto and many others.

Dr. Pick KEOBANDIT, Belgium (jury member) <https://www.facebook.com/pick.keobandith> – founder and director of the Brussels-based organization Inspiring Culture <https://www.inspiringculture.art> – an organization for art and cultural diplomacy, editor-in-chief of the magazine “Target Global”.

Maja KOLARIC, Serbia (jury member) <https://www.facebook.com/maja.kolaric.16> – art historian and curator, director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade (<https://msub.org.rs>).

The jury awards emerged from several days of activities of the international jury.

OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024 – AWARDED ARTISTS

* More about the awarded artists in a special prologue..

AWARDS from the COUNCIL of AMBASSADORS of OSTEN

The GRAND PRIX for Lifetime Achievement was awarded to **Michelangelo PISTOLETTO** (b. 1933) – Italian artist (painter, artistic actions, objects) and theorist, one of the founders and main protagonist of Arte Povera, a radical Italian art movement of the last century, whose artists explored a series of unconventional processes and the use of non-traditional “everyday” materials.

The WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE award was awarded to **Vangel NAUMOVSKI** – one of the greatest Macedonian artists whom theorists classify as self-taught surrealist painters – quite appropriate to pay tribute to his work on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth (1924 - 2006) and the 100th anniversary of surrealism (1924 - 2024).

SPECIAL GRAND PRIX was awarded to **Simon SEMOV, N. Macedonia** – one of the most prominent artists on the Macedonian contemporary art scene, most specific in his work with handmade paper.

SPECIAL GRAND PRIX to **Mrđan BAJIĆ, Serbia** – one of the most important contemporary artists in Serbia, representative of Serbia at the Venice Biennial, winner of a grant from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation and Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters

In cooperation with **WAVA – WORLD ASSOCIATION OF VISUAL ARTS**

(WAVA – World Association of Visual Arts) the following awards were traditionally awarded:

ARTIST OF THE WORLD Award to **Kiro URDIN**, N. Macedonia

REMBRANT Award for Excellence in Art to **Jean BOGHOSSIAN**, Belgium

BALKAN ARTIST Award to **Danco ORDEV**, N. Macedonia

AWARDS by the INTERNATIONAL JURY

FIRST AWARD for drawing, prints, mixed media on paper – **Pavol TRUBEN**, Slovakia

FIRST AWARD for painting on canvas, installation, objects – **K.S. SHRIVATHSHAN**, India

FIRST AWARD for photography, video, multimedia – **Filip JOVESKI**, N. Macedonia

SPECIAL AWARD by the Jury– **Sungchan KIM**, South Korea

SPECIAL AWARD by the Jury– **Nikola MARKOVIC**, Serbia

SPECIAL AWARD by the Jury– **Mari TERAUCHI**, Germany

SPECIAL RECOGNITION by the Jury – **Anica KITANOSKA**, Italy

SPECIAL RECOGNITION by the Jury – **Bruno PAVIC**, Croatia

SPECIAL RECOGNITION by the Jury – **Thodoris TRAMPAS**, Greece

AWARDS by the OSTEN BOARD

GOLDEN OSTEN AWARD – **Steven BALOGH**, Hungary / USA

GOLDEN OSTEN AWARD – **Anca BOERIU**, Romania

GOLDEN OSTEN AWARD – **Pantelis TSATSIS**, Greece

GOLDEN OSTEN AWARD – **Lia LAPITHI**, Cyprus

GOLDEN OSTEN AWARD – **Jana LULOVSKA**, N. Macedonia

OSTEN Award – **Tatiana AN**, The Netherlands

OSTEN Award – **Gjon ANTONI**, Croatia

OSTEN Award – **Arleta CEHICH**, Bosnia and Herzegovina

OSTEN Award – **Philippe LEBLANC**, Belgium

OSTEN Award – **Judith STURM**, Germany / Spain

OSTEN AWARD for **BEST INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATION** – **Lisette SOLORZANO**, Cuba

OSTEN AWARD for **BEST GROUP PRESENTATION** – **BUFF Group**, Greece

OSTEN AWARD for **NATIONAL REPRESENTATION** – **ITALY**

OSTEN AMBASSADORS

OSTEN Ambassadors are artists and art professionals with whom we share the same mission, who recognize OSTEN's role on the contemporary visual arts scene, and who support OSTEN in the realization of its goals. On the occasion of its 80th anniversary, OSTEN appoints the following collaborators as AMBASSADORS:

Bruno CORA (b. 1942) Italy

A prominent figure in the art world, known for his contributions as a critic, author and educator since the 1960s, curator of numerous art biennials and exhibitions including those of Alberto Burri, Yves Klein,

Lucio Fontana, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Jannis Kounellis, Joseph Beuys ... President of OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024.

Lars KÆRULF MØLLER, (b. 1950) Denmark

Art historian, former director of the Bornholm Museum of Contemporary Art (Bornholms Kunstmuseum), member of the Board of Directors for the establishment of the National Gallery of Greenland, decorated for his services by the Queen of Denmark. President of OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2020 and 2022.

Oksana ZHUDINA BOGO (b. 1971) Italy

President and founder of OKXSA projects (www.okxsa.com) European Association for Interaction and Cooperation in Education, Culture and Sport; Vice President of the International Pushkin Foundation; Ambassador for Culture and Diplomacy of the Diplomatic World Institute. Partner of OSTEN ART in the project "Art Unites the World" and of OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje 2024.

About OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje

The very existence of such an event as the OSTEN BIENNIAL, which is based on the 80-year tradition of OSTEN Skopje (founded in 1945), is a success in itself, because the standards are high and maintaining the level of the event is a challenge.

However, the OSTEN team continuously raises the reputation of the Biennial through:

- nurturing the organizational model established over the years and its constant improvement
- communication with top professionals in the arts, whose knowledge and expertise is the base for the awards system, with which we recognize, motivate and support artists
- building constant and contemporary communication with our most important collaborators – the artists, and together with all of them we become part of the process of creating lasting artistic values as the basis of the world's movable cultural heritage.

AWARD SYSTEM AT OSTEN BIENNIAL Skopje

AWARDS from the OSTEN AMBASSADORS COUNCIL

The OSTEN Ambassadors Council is an advisory body composed of artists (as a rule, the winners of the GRAND PRIX for Lifetime Achievement also become OSTEN Ambassadors), art professionals (some of the members of the international jury of the OSTEN Biennial of Drawing), as well as other OSTEN supporters and art lovers. The OSTEN Ambassadors Council proposes and makes a decision on the GRAND PRIX and WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE awards of each edition of the OSTEN Biennial.

The GRAND PRIX for Lifetime Achievement is awarded to an author who has distinguished himself at the peak of his professional life and whose work represents the highest achievement in world contemporary art (so far awarded: Joseph Kosuth, Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, Pierre Soulages, Tony Cragg, Marina Abramović, Christo, Vladimir Veličković...), and

The WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE Award refers to the work of a deceased author who has had a strong influence on the world history of art (so far awarded: Pablo Picasso, Victor Vasarely, Salvador Dali, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Oscar Kokoschka, Rembrandt...)

In cooperation with **WAVA – WORLD ASSOCIATION OF VISUAL ARTS***, awards are traditionally awarded as recognition, motivation and encouragement for international artists: REMBRANDT Award for Excellence in Art, ARTIST OF THE WORLD Award, ARTIST OF EUROPE Award and BALKAN ARTIST Award.

AWARDS from the INTERNATIONAL JURY

- 1x FIRST PRIZE for drawing, prints, mixed media on paper
- 1x FIRST PRIZE for painting, installation, objects
- 1x FIRST PRIZE for photography, video, multimedia
- 3x SPECIAL AWARDS from the JURY
- 3x SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS from the JURY

AWARDS from OSTEN decided by the OSTEN COUNCIL

- 5x GOLDEN OSTEN Awards
- 5x OSTEN Awards
- 1x OSTEN Award – for individual presentation
- 1x OSTEN Award – for group presentation
- 1x OSTEN Award – for national presentation

About WAVA – World Association of Visual Arts

www.wavizarts.org

WAVA is a voluntary, independent, non-profit organization formed to unite individuals and institutions around the world whose common denominator is the visual arts with the main goal of harnessing the potential of the visual arts to create a competitive environment through networking and joint action on the global art scene, as well as to promote, nurture and advance the visual arts as a vital component of the world's movable (material) cultural heritage.