

The 2011 Rietveld Thesis Prize

This year the jury for the Rietveld Thesis Prize consisted of:

Anna Tilroe, Art critic and Professor of Art and culture at the Radboud University in Nijmegen
Koen Kleijn, art critic of the magazine De Groene Amsterdammer and Thesis Mentor at Design Academy Eindhoven.

Jeroen Boomgaard, Lector Art and Public Space at Gerrit Rietveld Academie

The jury was impressed by the high level of the theses that have been nominated by the departments. All of them testify to a strong wish to connect questions of art and design to more general problems in society, to come up with new visions, ideas and answers. The jury could see a new generation of artists in the making that knows how to connect art and theory.

Although the originality of the theses is for the largest part much greater than you can find in theses written at universities, language and research methods were not always adequate. For some students the internet -Wikipedia- seems to be the only reliable source of information. This lack of research quality is however compensated by a very strong capacity for visual analysis: Rietveld students look better and see more than others.

After long and often intense discussion the jury selected the following theses for the shortlist:
In alphabetical order:

Michiel Hilbrink, Dogtime Fine Arts, Onvolledige encyclopedische berg, or: incomplete encyclopedic mountain. An amazing box full of textual fragments in the form of mountains, maps and pictures that form together a landscape for the reader to wander in. This beautiful designed combination of form and content shows in all kind of ways the role mountains have played in literature and what they can mean for us.

Luis Rodil-Fernández, Dogtime ID-UM: Doubt everything, find your own light.

A very intelligent analysis of the procedure of make believe that shows the difference between the position of the "faker", someone who plays his tricks on you and makes clear that he is doing that, and the "believer" that really fools you for profit. All this very well written and presented in the form of a website that very elegantly combines all the possibilities of the new media.

Daniel de Zeeuw, Dogtime ID-Um: Something Is Out there! Networked Encounters of the nth Kind: The Art of Conspiracy

A very thorough research on internet and its relation to notions of conspiracy. A text in which everything is so well connected and hangs so good together that the reader starts suspecting a conspiracy. Daniel has such a complete knowledge of the field he is writing about and has such an extensive grip on the vast amount of literature he has handled that the text sometimes starts looking like a PhD dissertation.

Felicia Broberg Von Zweigbergk, Fine Arts: The childhood of a leader.

A hilarious story about the problems of the King of Sweden who is not functioning very well and who is so dyslectic that he spells his own position as Knig instead of King. The thesis also deals with memories about insomnia en reflections on music. Under this very

well written piece of text is a serious reflection on the question how to escape from a given form.

Winner:

It was very hard to decide because all 4 candidates have outstanding qualities. But in the end the jury came to the conclusion that there was only one choice possible, because there is only one text that really is a masterpiece:

Daniel de Zeeuw, Something Is Out there! Networked Encounters of the nth Kind: The Art of Conspiracy