

## Sasha Pirogova is selected for Present Continuous, V-A-C / M HKA Acquisition Programme 2016

V-A-C / M HKA  
Acquisition Programme 2016

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Sasha Pirogova has been selected for Present Continuous, V-A-C/M HKA Acquisition Programme this year. The four Russian artists shortlisted were Sasha Pirogova, Alexander Plusnin, Haim Sokol and Olga Zhitlina. A jury consisting of V-A-C Director Teresa Iarocci Mavica, M HKA Director Bart De Baere and guest jury member Katerina Koskina, Director of EMST, chose Sasha Pirogova, based in Moscow, whose work will go to the M HKA collection.

This is the fourth year of Present Continuous, V-A-C / M HKA Acquisition Programme, set up to support the new generation of artists in Russia and to open up Russian contemporary art to the wider world.

The annual scheme is broken down into different stages: Russian curators, institutions, critics and editors by invitation come up with an initial long-list of who they consider to be the most talented young and emerging artists in Russia today. They bring the names to the table for discussion and narrow the list down to four artists, whose details are then passed to the jury to select one finalist. All of the shortlisted artists are included in a database and website that will be launched in the spring and that over the years will become a survey of emerging Russian art. Previous finalists include Olga Chernycheva (2013), Taus Makhacheva (2014) and Evgeny Antufiev (2015).

V-A-C invited the following critics and editors to participate this year: Maria Cravcova, Valentin Diakonov, Valery Ledenev, Maria Semendyaeva and Alexander Shchurenkov.

The jury commented that Haim Sokol has a genuine approach to the crucial societal questions of memory and identity, Alexander Plusnin's work is rooted in traditional techniques while bringing a contemporary awareness that is an index of possibilities of change, and Olga Zhitlina is combining activism and art in a truly personal way, weaving her actions into the situations she encounters.

Sasha Pirogova was the final choice because of the rapid pace at which she committed herself to a precise goal. She originally trained in theoretical physics, but decided to become a dancer and from there moved into contemporary visual art. She translates existential contemporary issues into a language of relations between humans, objects and their environment.

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Sasha Pirogova was born in 1986 in Moscow. She studied in the Faculty of Physics at the Moscow State University, graduating in 2010. In 2014, she graduated from the Moscow Rodchenko Art School, Video and New Media course. In 2012, she was a prize winner at the Extra Short Film Festival (ESF). She was nominated for the Kandinsky Prize in 2013 in the 'Young Artist – Project of the Year' category. She also won the Innovation Prize in the 'New Generation' category in 2014. She has participated in Insight&Forsight, Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, Moscow; Stability. Phantoms, Random gallery, Moscow; Burning News, Hayward Gallery, London; Balagan!!!, Kühlhaus, Berlin; Focuses, Manege, Moscow; and Cabaret Kultura, Whitechapel Gallery, London. She lives and works in Moscow.

V-A-C Foundation is dedicated to the international presentation, production and development of Russian contemporary Art – across a multitude of forms and within the framework of an invigorated and informed exhibition, educational, and publishing programme. Particularly important to the new generation of artists in Russia, V-A-C's focus is on practically supporting and expanding the platform for home-grown talent, giving artists the opportunity to experience, engage with and interrogate international cultural practices whilst developing an authentic and autonomous artistic language. It is deservedly considered as one of the key proponents in opening out contemporary Russian culture to the wider world, and practically supporting and developing emerging artists through finding new international platforms for exhibition and opportunities for commissions as well as ways of encouraging cross-cultural exchange - especially important in the current climate.

M HKA is the Flemish museum for contemporary art, film and visual culture, based in Antwerp. It takes the international post-war avant-garde as a base to engage with the art from the contemporary multipolar world. M HKA connects artistic issues and broader societal issues, international and regional perspectives, artists and audiences, tradition and renewal, reflection and presentation. It positions itself as a Eurasian museum, interpreting Eurasia in the vein of Joseph Beuys and Jimmie Durham. It organized substantial exhibitions of Russian art and has a major collection of contemporary art from the former soviet sphere.  
[www.muhka.be](http://www.muhka.be)