



TAJSA

ROMA CULTURAL HERITAGE PRIZE 2019

In 2019, the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) launched the annual Tajsja Roma Cultural Heritage Prize.

The Tajsja Prize, which embodies ERIAC founding principles, honors an outstanding Roma individual who enriches the Roma arts and culture scene by drawing inspiration from Roma cultural heritage while shaping and re-inventing forms of Roma cultural expressions for the next generation.

The Tajsja Prize is unique as it is sponsored entirely by ERIAC associate members. With a community of over 90 Roma and non-Roma individual and institutional members, the Tajsja Prize is financed exclusively through the membership fees to promote the pedagogy of Roma contribution and self-determination. In this way, the contributions made to ERIAC are re-invested back into the community to support development and growth of an exceptional Roma professional in the field of arts and culture. In 2019, the Tajsja Prize comes with an endowment of 5200 euros.

The nominations for the Prize were submitted by ERIAC associate, Barvalipe Academy and Board members. The Barvalipe Academy – composed of 15 influential Roma arts and culture personalities from across the world who act as ERIAC advisory body – acts as the international jury of the Tajsja Prize.

Tonight they will reveal the winner of the 1st edition of the Tajsja Roma Cultural Heritage Prize 2019.



ERIAC
EUROPEAN ROMA INSTITUTE
FOR ARTS AND CULTURE
PRESENTS

TAJSA

ROMA CULTURAL HERITAGE PRIZE 2019

BERLIN, DECEMBER 9, 2019 AT 18:30 AT MAXIM GORKI THEATER

OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS



Federal Foreign Office



Alliance for European
Roma Institute

GORKI

Andalucía



TAJSA ROMA CULTURAL HERITAGE PRIZE 2019

FINALISTS



ALINA SERBAN (ROMANIA)

Alina Serban is an award-winning actress, playwright and director. Born in 1987, Serban grew up in Bucharest, Romania. For her first leading role in cinema, Serban stars in Marta Bergman's feature film 'Alone at My Wedding', which premiered at the Cannes International Film Festival in 2018 and earned her several Best Actress awards. As a playwright, Serban pioneered Roma feminist political theatre, with three plays to her name by the age of 29, including 'The Great Shame'.

Romania's first play about the taboo topic of Roma slavery, becoming the first Roma woman director to have a play included in the permanent repertoire of a state theatre in Romania in 2018.

"As an independent Roma artist, I am honored to have had the chance in the last 10-12 years to make space both on stage and on screen for Roma stories told from a Roma perspective. (...) My work is driven by a strong sense of social justice, a desire to question prejudice and privilege, and the need to plant some good in the world -- however small the seed."



SELMA SELMAN (BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA)

Selma Selman, an artist and activist, was born in 1991 in Bihac, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her work embodies the struggles of her own life as well as her community, employing a plethora of media such as performance, painting, photography and video installations. Her aim is to break down the prejudice which essentializes her community to the lowest common denominator denying them the right to self expression. Selma is a founder of the organization "Get The Heck To School" whose aim is to empower Roma girls all around the world who faced the ostracization from society and poverty. Lives and works in the USA and Europe.

"My art comes from my personal experience, which I use to explore the realities of life and change things which have to be changed and solve problems which must be solved. People can feel the power of my works and the risk I take when I make art - and this is why they want me to succeed. (...) I make art as a tool to change or challenge the world."



ROBERT GABRIS (SLOVAKIA/ AUSTRIA)

Robert Gabris was born in Slovakia, lives and works as a freelance artist in Vienna. Gabris deals with drawing and engraving, describing the content of his work as a socially critical, political and activist confrontation with identity issues and new perspectives of the Roma in the European context. Starting point of his work are new experimental forms of drawing as a resistance against exclusion, homophobia and racism.

"I describe the content of my work as a social - critical, political and activist confrontation with identity issues and new perspectives of different minorities in a European context. Starting point of my work are new experimental forms of drawing as resistance to exclusion and racism. In my concept of life, I'm an activist, skeptical idealist, futurist, but primarily drawer of poetic realism."



ÁRPÁD BOGDÁN (HUNGARY)

Born in 1976 in Hungary, Árpád Bogdán is a film director and writer, known for Genezis (2018), Boldog új élet (2007) and Gettó Balboa (2018).

His feature film received a special mention from the Berlinale's Panorama jury in 2007, was shown in Toronto and Karlovy Vary, and won several awards in Europe. He is also a painter and has published several works of poetry.

"I'm of Roma origin. For me, the movie is my poem. And my job is to write poems about people, about life. Because I can't do anything else. Because that's what I got as a heritage."



HAMZE BYTYÇI (KOSOVO/ GERMANY)

Hamze Bytyçi is actor, director, performer and pedagogue. He is the chairman of RomaTrial and founder of different initiatives like the Herdelezi celebration in Berlin, the annual international youth commemoration on 2nd August at Auschwitz (since 2010) and Berlin (since 2013), the AKE DIKHEA? Festival of Romani Film. In 2018 he was co-curator of the 1st Roma Biennale COME OUT NOW!. He performs in his live shows "Hilton 437" and leads youth projects like the "Balkan Onions" film school. Since 2016, he is member of the Berlin board of the party Die Linke.

"The biggest drive behind my (artistic) practice is the ongoing social injustice to which Roma are exposed to worldwide. I could never tolerate injustice. This is the main reason why artistic, political and social aspects are always interlinked in my work - in my understanding art, politics and social aspects cannot be separated from one other."