

Who's going to win? A look behind the scenes of the presentation of the Weltenbauer.Awards 2019

For the third time this year the Weltenbauer.Awards ceremony will take place at the fair Stage|Set|Scenery. The competition, organized by Deutsche Theatertechnische Gesellschaft (DTHG) and Messe Berlin, honors creative stage technology solutions that "enchant" audiences with originality and creativity. A jury of experts selects the winners of both categories from the submissions to the competition.

by Juliane Schmidt-Sodingen

The Weltenbauer.Award was open to theatres, musicals, shows, television and event productions with live performances from 2017 to 2019.

The Weltenbauer.Youngsters.Award is a special prize for young stage technicians. This year's task was to submit projects or project outlines on the subject of "Leonardo da Vinci", the 500th anniversary of whose death will be in 2019.

With the permission of the jury – Daniela Schaudinn (A. Hausmann GmbH), Patricia Pohle (Messe Berlin), Hans Peter Boecker (Technical Director State Opera Hamburg ret.), Wesko Rohde (Chairman DTHG), Dr. Michael Merschmeier (Der Theaterverlag), Hubert Eckart (Co-Publisher BTR) – we would like to give you an overview of the submissions from which the jury selects the winners.

Entries in the category Weltenbauer.Award 2019:

„Un Barbier“ (A Barber)

Co-production: Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Opéra Grand Avignon, Opéra municipal de Marseille - Théâtre de l'Odéon, Opéra National de Montpellier Occitanie, Opéra de Nice Côte d'Azur, Opéra de Toulon Provence Méditerranée, Opéra de Reims, Opéra de Rouen Normandie, Opéra de Vichy

after "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" by Gioachino Rossini

Staging: Damien Robert

Musical direction: Adrien Perruchon

Stage design: Thibault Sinay

Light: Samaël Steiner

Costume-design: Irène Bernaud

Premiere: 15.12.2017, l'Opéra de Rouen Normandie

This performance is intended as an "Opéra participatif" ("Opera to Participate"): At seven moments, the audience is invited to sing along. To make this easier, a simplified libretto in French was prepared and the text is offered to the visitors as part of a music set for preparation. The concept offers an opportunity to introduce new audiences to opera.

The staging leads with a poppy, modern visual language into the confusion of love, which is directed by Figaro, the mischievous barber of Seville. The stage highlights include two vehicles: a small yellow remote-controlled van with the singers and the pianist on board, and Figaro's bicycle with a hairdresser's chair as a passenger seat, a kind of mobile hairdresser's salon.

„Dialog der Konfessionen – Bischof Julius Pflug und die Reformation“

Dialogue of Confessions – Bishop Julius Pflug and the Reformation

Special exhibition at Moritzburg Castle, Zeitz, 5.06.-1.11.2017

Commissioned by: Vereinigte Domstifter zu Merseburg und Naumburg and the collegiate monastery of Zeitz

Concept and realisation: steiner.architektur-gmbh, Berlin

This exhibition focuses on Julius von Pflug (*1499 in Eythra; †1564 in Zeitz), the last Catholic bishop of the diocese of Naumburg. At the time of the Reformation, he was a supporter of tolerance. The visitors of the exhibition will be guided through 2500 m² of exhibition space, both through existing and "artificial" rooms in the interior and exterior of the Moritzburg.

The exhibits include many original objects as well as newly designed installations, including medial, often interactive, objects with sound and/or image elements.

A highlight of the exhibition is a crystal, developed from a dodecahedron, a body with twelve pentagonal surfaces. Five triangles form a flat pyramid in each of nine surfaces. In total, 45 crystalline triangular glass surfaces create a precious stone, inside which a soundtrack deciphers the secret of form, namely the symbol of Christianity with its many denominations. From the centre, four glass cuboids protrude diagonally into the room. They are used to present books and objects.

„Eurydike“ (Eurydice)

Space installation, free production

Artistic Director & Executive Producer: Evelyn Hriberšek, Munich

Spatial Sound Composition: SØS Gunver Ryberg

Visual Arts & Graphics: Christopher Grouls

Costume Design: Denise Fleckenstein, Evelyn Hriberšek

Software: Nikolaus Völzow

Photography: Adrian Schätz

There is no audience for this piece, only actors. Each "visitor" experiences the work differently, depending on his/her own interactions. In order to convey the feeling of being on his/her own, each visitor individually enters an augmented reality laboratory in a protective suit and equipped with AR/VR glasses and follows in the footsteps of Eurydice – a drama character of whom we actually only know that she was Orpheus' great love and he tried to rescue her from Hades. What kind of woman was she? Evelyn Hriberšek invites us to learn more with her mix of interactive art installation, music theatre and real-life game.

"Eurydike" has already been performed in Munich (Alte Feuerwache|Kreativquartier, 2017) and Stuttgart (Theater Die R

„Grimmige Märchen“ (Grim fairy tales)

Schauspielhaus Zurich

A fairy tale by Herbert Fritsch

director and stage: Herbert Fritsch

Costumes: Victoria Behr

Light: Gerhard Patzelt

World premiere: 7.04.2017 at Pfauen (Schauspielhaus Zurich)

Herbert Fritsch has invented a new, even more evil, radical and enchanted story on the basis of the "children's and house tales" of the Brothers Grimm, in which well-known figures and creatures meet in a new mix.

The stage represents a golden room with a huge cushion on which the actors play.

The cushion was carved by theatre sculptors from individual parts in their own workshop. Computer models and a clay model, from which a gypsum cast was made, served as models. The individual parts are mounted on a mobile underframe on the

stage, in the middle a trampoline is installed. There is also a cover for this stage cushion: the surface is decorated with a kilim pattern painted by theatrical painters according to the "drapery" of the cushion.

„Katia Kabanova“

Opéra national de Lorraine, Nancy

Staging: Philipp Himmelmann

Stage design: David Hohmann

Costume Design: Lili Wanner

Construction: Sébastien Carlier

Premiere: 28.01.2018

20 stage wagons form the basis of a 130 metre long, seemingly endless wall with a wallpaper of water lilies, which forms the background of the staging. Like the Volga, the cars, pressed by a powerful engine, "flow" across the stage from left to right during the performance. On the left side, the cars are threaded into a rail; on the right, they are sorted in the backstage and either parked or re-lined up on the left. The speed is freely selectable between one and six metres per minute. Each car carries a double-deck construction, the front of which is covered with wallpaper. The performers appear through doors in the walls, and every second car is equipped with a ladder from behind to enable them to also perform on the second floor.

„Nach Europa – ein Theaterstück auf dem Weg nach Europa“

(To Europe – A play on the way to Europe)

Theatre duo EURE FORMATION

With: Lukas Ullrich & Till Beyerbach

Text: Uwe Hoppe

Stage and costumes, video cut: Lukas Ullrich

Music: Andrew Zbik

With anti-democratic tendencies strengthening in Europe, the actors want to (re-)awaken awareness of the value and vulnerability of democracy. "Nach Europa" is about two refugees – one Christian, one Muslim, one murderer of the other's family – who set off for Europe in a boat. Their ideas of Europe are different, their boat leaks, together they fight for their survival.

The work is performed as a guest performance at theatres, in schools and in churches. The stage design consists of a wooden boat skeleton and virtual spaces created by the use of two lasers.

The premiere took place on 10 April 2018 in the Theater der Altstadt, Stuttgart; numerous performances are planned for 2019, including on 21 June on the large stage of the Schauspielhaus Dortmund.

"VIVID"

Friedrichstadt-Palast Berlin

Author and director: Krista Monson

Costume design and headdress design: Stefano Canulli, Philip Treacy

Lighting design: Chris Moylan

Video design: Maxin10sity

Technical direction: Franz Münzebrock

On 11 October 2018 the production "VIVID" celebrated its glamorous world premiere at the Friedrichstadt-Palast Berlin. For all teams of artists, special stages were designed, for which complex grid floor constructions, podium systems and many movable

elements had to be developed in advance (BTR 1/2019). The interaction of art and technology is confronted with great challenges. Safety, communication, mutual understanding and the recognition of dangers caused by wrong routines are important aspects of a show that has been in the program en suite for a long time. The ensemble of the Friedrichstadt-Palast demonstrates impressively how well this can succeed.

„Die Parallelwelt“ (The parallel world)

A simultaneous performance between the Berliner Ensemble and Schauspiel Dortmund by Alexander Kerlin, Eva Verena Müller and Kay Voges

Directed by Kay Voges

Stage: Daniel Roskamp

Costumes: Mona Ulrich

Direction & lighting design: Voxi Bärenklau

Video design: Mario Simon, Robi Voigt

Music: T.D. Finck von Finckenstein

Technical production management (Dortmund): Lucas Pleß

Technical production management (Berlin): Edmund Stier

Premiere: 15.09.2018

In parallel on two stages – one in Berlin and one in Dortmund – seven actors each play the story of the life of the protagonist Fred in seven stations. In Berlin the story from birth to death is performed – in Dortmund in reverse order. In the middle of the performance – at Fred's wedding – the two festive societies face each other and nobody is able to distinguish reality and fantasy (or other spaces of reality?) any more. The question of the possibilities of alternative ways of life arises. Does today's people live from images from which they construct their world?

The actors and the audience can see and hear their counterparts in the other city in real time – by means of a fibreglass cable that transports the images and sounds back and forth between Dortmund and Berlin at the speed of light.

„Weihnachten neu erleben“ 2017 und 2018

(Experience Christmas anew 2017 and 2018)

Christmas event in the dm-Arena Karlsruhe

Producer: Kinder und Jugend ARCHE Karlsruhe e.V. in cooperation with IcF-Karlsruhe e.V.

Performances: 8.-10.12.2017 (six shows with 30.000 spectators) / 14.-16.12.2018 (eight shows with 50.000 spectators)

In the center of this Charity Christmas show, in which over 1000 persons are involved as actors, dancers, musicians and assistants, stands an older gentleman, who is in its "miraculous Weihnachtsbus" on the way. The performed acts reinterpret the "old" Christmas story. For the stage construction the contrasts old/new and past/present were taken up as design motto.

75 walk-in "pixel" boxes measuring 2.07 m x 2.00 m offer a construction for the actors' performances. 20 boxes are positioned next to each other; some of them have floors above them in the form of up to five boxes. Each "pixel" is equipped with an LED bar with changing colours. The "old" technology is honoured by the fact that each box is individually covered by hand with a printed foil for each scene or is performed live in it. Thus the locations Berlin, Paris, Venice and "Opera" are created. In addition, two 60 m² LED screens, a 22 m long stage bridge, four satellite stages and 280 individually controllable LED lights, which represent a starry sky, are used.

Entries in the category Weltenbauer.Youngsters.Award 2019: Topic "Leonardo da Vinci".

„Brücken schlagen“ (Building bridges) (Workshop)

Maria del Mar Sanchez Exposito and Luca Marie Grabo

Wilhelm-Ostwald-School, Berlin

Twelve non-treated wooden bars measuring 250 cm x 25 cm x 15 cm form the basis of a workshop. "Building bridges" is the motto, based on the self-supporting bridge developed by Leonardo da Vinci. The participants of the workshop rebuild this bridge according to a model made of wooden beams and thus also build a bridge to each other. This interaction serves the following playful confrontation with conflict situations and the discussion of controversial topics, which can be much more motivated, respectful and thus more effective after the successful joint bridge construction.

„Der Flug der Ratte“

(The flight of the rat) (model building and fake news newspaper article)

Emilia Chojnacka

Wilhelm-Ostwald-School, Berlin

In a fake news article designed in the layout of the German weekly newspaper ZEIT, Emilia Chojnacka draws attention to a spectacular find: a flying apparatus developed by da Vinci in 1495 which is operated by a rat moving in a running wheel in the lower part of the apparatus. As a carrier of life-threatening diseases, this "flying rat" represents a biological weapon.

Inspired by da Vinci's "propeller" and the fact that da Vinci invented both "good" and warlike devices, Emilia Chojnacka built this flying apparatus as a model for the exhibition stand of the Wilhelm-Ostwald-School on the Stage|Set|Scenery 2019 (estimated dimensions: 70 cm x 70 cm x 50 cm).

„Gedankenkarussell“

(Carousel of thoughts) (stage design)

Louisa Bott, Nikola Kaiser, Carlotta Schlegel

The design was developed for a one-person play at the Erfurt Opera House, which is intended to present da Vinci as a personality split between thirst for knowledge and social demands. A rotating rondel known as the "miracle drum" represents the contrasts between the world of thought and outward appearance. From the outside the drum is provided with a brick imitation, which symbolizes the locked exterior of a genius. A moving pair of eyes is temporarily projected onto it. Slits in the drum allow glimpses into the interior: horizontally arranged sequences of images derived from paintings and drawings by da Vinci, which "come to life" when the drum is rotated. A hanging light bulb symbolizes flashes of thought. The production should also encourage the audience not to let their personal miracle drum (ideas and talents) be slowed down by everyday life.

„His Greatest Work“ (Film: Spec Spot)

Josia Brezing and Felix Fahle

Fahle Film, Ludwigsburg

Leonardo da Vinci was known for his numerous inventions, including the design of drives and mechanisms for various purposes. In a cheeky, creative spec spot

(advertising film "on good luck" without a corresponding order) with an impressive historical set design, Josia Brezing and Felix Fahle let da Vinci create a satisfaction machine and put it into operation because of the artist's unrequited love for his Mona Lisa – as potential advertising for a corresponding product for men today.

„Kleben geblieben“

(Remaining stuck) (Painting)

Annika Konitzki, Potsdam

Trainee as stage painter, Stage Service Berlin

The admiration of the universal genius da Vinci made a lasting impression on us today. Annika Konitzki has created a 120 cm x 60 cm painting of a face covered over and over with painted sketches of da Vinci: from an embryo on the lips to war equipment on the forehead. In the documentary, Annika Konitzki gives an insight into the preliminary work on her creation: she printed and moistened sketches of da Vinci on a person's face and photographed them. Alternatively, the painting can also be interpreted as the face of da Vinci, whose "face" (in the sense of his character) is difficult to grasp because his achievements are always in the foreground.

„Leben der Bücher“

(Life of the Books) (Stage Design)

Julia Stürze, Berlin

Wilhelm-Ostwald-School, Berlin

Julia Stürze has developed a set design for a (not yet existing) play for children with the working title "Life of Books", in which ten-year-old Lotte, as the main character, discovers her enthusiasm for books and the life story of Leonardo da Vinci, which she is to portray in a presentation. The design, which is made from a book and paper elements, envisages a huge book placed on a rotatable stage as the central element of the stage design, from whose fold-out pages objects and figures appear that illustrate Leonardo da Vinci's world.

„Leonardo da Vinci – ein inklusives Raum- und
Ausstellungskonzept für die Sinne“

(Leonardo da Vinci - An inclusive space and exhibition concept for the senses)

Sandra B.

A rotatable stage divided into three segments invites visitors to immerse themselves in Leonardo da Vinci's world with all their senses. Sandra B. has designed a model for an interactive exhibition in which visitors can and should enter the rotatable stage. In each of the segments, which are furnished like possible living spaces of da Vinci (two rooms and a garden or park), certain senses are addressed: The first shows paintings and sketches in the style of da Vinci, the second shows a portrait of the Mona Lisa and miniature components of da Vinci's constructions, and the third presents natural sounds and the Italian language and the smells of plants, paint, parchment, charcoal and wood.

„Leonardos großer Traum“

(Leonardo's great dream) (design for a puppet theatre)

Johanna Brosius

Wilhelm-Ostwald-School, Berlin

Hans de Beer's children's book "Leonardo's Great Dream" is about the water-shy penguin Leonardo who dreams of flying – which he finally succeeds in doing with the help of an airplane discovered in the snow. Johanna Brosius has recognized parallels

between the penguin and Leonardo da Vinci: from the underdog role to curiosity and precise observations to attempts to build flying machines. In order to introduce children to the work of da Vinci, Brosius developed a concept for the realisation of the play as a puppet theatre – with drawings for a small puppet theatre with retractable backdrops and a projection screen as well as affectionate sketches for the bird marionettes, the airplane and the wings built with technically thought-out instructions.

Lessing's Sleep (costume design draft)

Vasilena Yalamova

National Academy of Arts (Sofia, Bulgaria)

Vasilena Yalamova successfully completed the Set and Screen Design Programme at the National Academy of Arts in Sofia in 2019. With no direct reference to the theme, she applied for the Youngsters Award with her master's thesis, a costume design for Heiner Müller's play "Lessing's Sleep" (German full title: "Leben Gundlings Friedrich von Preußen Lessings Schlaf Traum Schrei"). The figurines are drawn by hand with coloured pencils, watercolours, pastel chalks and ink. In addition, Yalamova used an image editing program to insert objects and symbols.

Yalamova chose this play because it represents the relationship between government and citizens in a way in which Yalamova discovered interesting parallels to today's situation.

„Die Manie des da Vinci“

(The mania of da Vinci) (stage design draft)

Lisa Kruse

University of Leipzig

Lisa Kruse has developed a stage design for a production on the backstage of the Schauspielhaus Leipzig for the performance of a two-person play, which introduces Leonardo da Vinci, a man oscillating between genius and madness.

In the middle of the stage there is a rotatable stage with an initially smooth surface made of the flame-retardant fabric AluShape, which can be written on, used as a projection surface and deformed. The foil is attached to a wooden scaffold with many empty surfaces hanging above the stage, symbolising the model character of the designs. In the course of the performance, it is deformed and lowered, giving it an increasingly three-dimensional character, as a symbol of discarded ideas on crumpled paper and mental hurricanes.

„Perfekte Konstruktionen“

(Perfect constructions) (stage design draft)

Nadezda Berendeeva

Moscow Art Theatre School, Faculty of Scenography

The 19-year-old Moscow student has made a stage design model out of paper and cardboard, which is supposed to represent the perfect constructions typical for da Vinci. She presents it in the form of photos with different lighting and explains it in a selfie video. The model shows columns made of cardboard tubes, stairs and galleries made of cardboard (as a symbol for the high and low phases within a creative process on the way to perfection), crumpled paper (as a symbol for discarded ideas) and rope connections, which stand for connections of thoughts and ideas. By using the paper material, she wants to remind us of papyrus as a historical material. The different types of lighting should express da Vinci's emotions.

„Ein Tag mit Leonardo da Vinci“
(A day with Leonardo da Vinci) (spatial model)
Faveola Kett

For an area of 27 m x 15 m, Faveola Kett has planned a walk-in installation that allows visitors to enter a possible living space da Vinci had in Italy in the late 15th century. The drawn floor plan and a model made on a scale of 1:50 show places where da Vinci may have lived in his everyday life: bedroom, living room, workshop, garden, market and street, similar to rooms in an apartment, separated by walls and doors. The model has been worked out very carefully, affectionately and with great attention to detail - including modelled figures and tiny utensils.

„Triton“ – A Theatre Fairy Tale with mask figures
Franziska Schubert/Compania Sincara (team performance)
Institute for Theatre Studies, University of Leipzig

The ten-member Leipzig theatre collective Compania Sincara bases its reference to the theme on the fact that some members of the ensemble study at the Institute for Theatre Studies at the University of Leipzig and thus, like Leonardo da Vinci, combine scientific research and artistic creation. In addition, the ensemble, like da Vinci, poses the question of what human nature is and how it can be represented. With their theatre production "Triton", premiered in 2017, they are applying for the Weltenbauer Award. This is dedicated to the "Anthropozene", the age in which "the human progress machine" negates its own future with its way of life. The main character is the little nymph Angela, who wants to become a human being. The production works with moving stage elements, masks, music, language, acrobatics and dance. The ensemble developed the scenery, the costumes as well as masks and hairstyles itself and submitted drafts, photos of the development and the finished stage design, scene photos and a performance video.

We are looking forward to the decisions of the jury! The award ceremony will take place for invited guests on 18 June 2019 from 6.30 p.m. during the Stage|Set|Scenery. The American actress Leslie Malton has been engaged as a laudator.