

Jury report AHK Graduation Prize 2023

Dear guests, my name is Liesbeth Kok and I'm the managing director of the Noord Nederlands Orkest and the jury chair. It was an honour and an incredible pleasure for the jury of the AHK Graduation Prize 2023 to be allowed to pore over all the entries for the best graduation works of the past year. We dove into all forty-five submitted projects; all of a high standard.

We were blown away by the ingenuity, artistry, social engagement and quality of the graduation projects. Out of all the work submitted, we selected just five Bachelor's projects and five Master's projects, which we felt stood out the most. Although it is sometimes difficult to compare, all these projects are characterised by a very high artistic level, an innovative perspective on the subject and an innovative working method. There appears to be a great urgency on the part of the creators to tell these specific stories and make a connection with the world around them through their work.

As far as we're concerned, all the nominees are an inspiration for their peers. We not only need you as innovative thinkers and doers in the arts, but you are a source of hope and inspiration, in these volatile times, for the future of our country.

These are the nominated graduation projects:

Bachelor's nominees

De (on)bevangen leerruimte by Isabella Giacomelli

An extremely topical and practically-applicable study; there is a strong link with the topic of social safety. Isabella shows how you go from a problem to a solution. The study is an example of solution-oriented thinking with a handbook for teachers as end result. Personal experience, extensive literature research and a field survey form the basis of this project. The visuals look professional and there is uniformity in the graphic style. All of this make it a very professional whole. Our compliments to Isabella!

Mírame by Julia Snijder

Mírame is a world-class professional act. The combination of influences including pop, electronic music, hip-hop and Latin American reggaeton leads to a unique sound. This is testament to a broad vision, as well as a mature knowledge of music styles and the ability to combine them. In addition to the excellent songs by Julia, the live show also has a unique character in terms of audio production, lighting plan and stage performance, and is worked out to perfection by all-rounder Julia and her band.

Paul en Paul by Hugo Drechsler, Joey Jansen, Thijmen Knook and team

A probing and honest family portrait that hits the viewer straight in the heart. The creators show a loving, but complicated, relationship between two brothers in a raw and uncompromising manner. The film displays strong visual style choices and is very well put together in a technical sense. As a result of the exceptionally careful way in which the bond of trust is built, the creators have managed to get to the core of their characters in an almost unparalleled way. This makes the narrative almost fictional without the work seeming overly directed. This working method pushes the documentary genre to greater heights.

Walking a Tightrope by Sophia van Hoek

The focus in this thesis is on striving for climate-neutral digital archives. For the professionals in this field, this is a source of inspiration within their work practice. It is an original and thorough piece of research. With this, Sophia has made a useful contribution to the field. It is impressive that the importance of this issue emerges clearly. We are convinced that this topic will be discussed more.

Tulpen uit Turkije by Ebru Gökteş

This is the best submission by far when it comes to a participatory approach. The material, which, for the most part, came from the performers themselves was used to research scenes. The subject of migration is given a stage, both literally and metaphorically; socially speaking, there is a clear topical link. The aim is to pay tribute with the target audience to the older generation. This is a wonderful example of how you can conduct research, ask questions, relate to the other and dive into your own history together with a group.

Final verdict

The jury is proud to be able to award the Graduation Prize 2023 in the Bachelor's category to a project that is extremely topical and professional, and that everyone employed within (and outside!) the education sector should see. It is unique for a trainee teacher to be assertive enough to dare to offer solutions for such a complex topic as social safety and student well-being. That project is *De (on)bevanging leerruimte* by Isabella Giacomelli

Master's nominees

Fun in Failure by Melvin van der Woude and Gina Sanches

Fun in Failure is a unique project and a relevant piece of research. It is worthy of a Master's degree due to the variety of activities that are performed with various parties from both the educational field and the arts field. The tools developed by Melvin and Gina have an extremely professional appearance. The educational product was developed specifically for girls. The pupils work and create together; this makes it a unique and instructive experience.

Average Place by Maria Khozina

This graduation project displays strong self-reflection on the student's own field and thus transcends the field of architecture. Maria's extensive research reveals a search for her role as an architect in the authoritarian state of Russia. She wants to connect people and get them thinking through the use of creative machines. Maria has not taken the easy path; the fact that she questions her own role demonstrates courage and strength. The jury was deeply affected by her activism.

It Is Not My Music, It Is the Film's Music by Anne Teikari

This is a meticulous and extensive examination of film music as a social art form, in which composing as a part of a collaboration leads to a different way of conducting artistic research. It demonstrates that collaboration between disciplines is more important than the disciplines themselves. By taking a short film as starting point, Anne shows what this new working method entails, and how it can benefit the film and the persons involved if you give everyone a voice.

Rethinking Contemporary Archival Practices by Clàudia Díez Gómez

Clàudia's graduation research into the establishment of an open archive in the Oude Kerk is of a high quality. She asks the topical and relevant question: how do you deal with your archive? The challenge of how you can make your archives visible and accessible is exciting and of social importance. And how much space should you offer to the response thereto? In this comprehensive thesis, Claudia encourages the possibility of dialogue.

Oh, Wild Gazelle, Where Are You? by Fariborz Karimi

This unique project is an artistic response to the situation in Iran. The piece represents reality through dreams about a friendship between people in Amsterdam and Tehran, a place that is difficult to reach. Fariborz collaborated with an artist in exile. He seeks connection with someone who is trapped in a regime and can no longer be a creator, and gives her space. This remarkable and unique remote co-creation deeply affected the jury.

Final verdict

The jury is proud to be able to award the prize in the Master's category to a project about an extremely relevant topic, which makes a strong connection with the outside world. The work demonstrates an activism that is unusual within the field. It is a genuine pleasure for the jury to present the Graduation Prize 2023 in the Master's category to Maria Khozina for *Average Place*.