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Kandinsky Prize Goes to Irina Nakhova

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This year's Kandinsky Prizes, one of Russia's top awards for visual arts, were given out Friday in an award ceremony at the Udarnik Theater.

Artist Irina Nakhova won the main prize for 'Project of the Year' for her three-part work "Untitled," which consists of a video, a photo print on canvas, and a sculptural object.

"The Kandinsky Prize, if you please, is the most democratic of the existing prizes, as the artist himself can enter an application, which is a direct possibility to show one's project," Nakhova said, RIA Novosti reported.

The Kandinsky Prize was created in 2007 by the Artkhronika Foundation with the aim of developing Russian contemporary art and drawing more international attention to some of the country's leading artists. The Artkhronika Foundation was also the publisher of the arts journal of the same name, though the publication announced in August that it intended to cease print circulation and become solely a web portal.

The prize has also attracted attention and cachet due to the size of the award — up to 50,000 euros ($68,000) can be awarded to an individual artist, a large sum for an arts award, particularly given the low prices in the market for Russian contemporary art.

The prizes are awarded by a jury of seven members, including prominent art figures from Russia and abroad, who judge applications that are submitted by the artists themselves for individual works.

In addition to project of the year, an award is also given for oung Artist — Project of the Year, which this year was given jointly to Timofei Parshchikov for his work "Times New Roman. Episode 3: Moscow," and Yevgeny Granilshchikov for the project "Positions." This is the first time that the award has been split between two artists.

This year was also unusual in the fairly low profile of the artist behind the project of the year — previous years have seen the award go to recognized heavyweights like Vadim Zakharov and Anatoly Osmolovsky. Irina Nakhova has had comparatively little press, though this will likely change now that she is the Kandinsky laureate.

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