

# Roswitha Haftmann Stiftung

## Press release

Zurich, 16 May 2013

### Formal presentation of the 2013 Roswitha Haftmann Prize to Pierre Huyghe.

**Today, Europe's best endowed art award is presented for the first time to a Frenchman. Pierre Huyghe (\*1962) will receive the Roswitha Haftmann Prize in the presence of 300 invited guests at the Kunsthaus Zürich. The encomium will be given by Foundation Board member Philipp Kaiser.**

In his situations and films, Pierre Huyghe employs multiple levels of reality: an arrangement that initially appears random reveals itself to be a sophisticated construction, partly using simple means, that has a profound impact on its audience. As he dramatizes various models of presence between the viewer and his work, his role is akin to that of a director, creating inter-spaces and intermediate worlds in which art and life become one. Huyghe's work has already made an important contribution to contemporary art, and has continued to develop, especially in recent times. It is for these reasons that the Board voted unanimously to award the 2013 Roswitha Haftmann Prize – worth CHF 150,000 – to Pierre Huyghe.

#### THE PRIZEWINNER AND HIS WORK

Pierre Huyghe was born in Paris in 1962. Between 1982 and 1985 he studied at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, Paris. By the mid-1990s, his work could already be seen in significant exhibitions around the world. The appreciation of his work spread from France, Italy and Switzerland to the Nordic countries and thence to institutions in the US, where he was offered the chance to stage solo exhibitions. Today, Huyghe's activities span the globe. His works often start by intensifying the potential in a given body, institution, situation, biological entity, system or object. His live situations are constructed yet contingent and speculative. He sets the conditions for something to emerge, whether factual or imaginary, allowing a process of transformation. He questions the nature of the image and its conditions of appearance and considers the exhibition as a medium in itself. Play and conversation are at the heart of his work and of his frequent collaborations. In 2012 he was invited to be part of Documenta (13) in Kassel. Over the course of many months he developed a site where plants, animals, a human and inanimate objects were left to themselves for the 100 days of the exhibition – a much discussed work that hit the headlines even beyond the art world. In September 2013 he will have a major exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, which will tour to the Museum Ludwig, Cologne and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

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#### THE FOUNDATION AND THE FOUNDATION BOARD

The Prize was originally the initiative of Roswitha Haftmann (1924-1998), whose Foundation has awarded it since 2001 to a living artist who has created an oeuvre of outstanding quality. The winner is chosen by the Foundation Board, which is chaired by Christoph Becker, Director of the Kunsthaus Zürich, and whose members also include the directors of the Kunstmuseum Bern, the Kunstmuseum Basel and the Museum Ludwig in Cologne. They are joined by members who are personally named in the deed of foundation or who are appointed by the Foundation Board.

Further information on the current and previous prize winners, the founder and the Foundation Board can be found at [www.roswithahaftmann-foundation.com](http://www.roswithahaftmann-foundation.com).

#### NOTE TO MEDIA

The award ceremony begins at 6.30 p.m. Representatives of the media are welcome to attend. TV crews are requested to register in advance. We are happy to provide visual material or a copy of the encomium or to answer any questions.

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