

## **Prince Claus Awards Committee Report for the 2020 Next Generation Award June 2020**

### **The Next Generation Prince Claus Award**

The Next Generation Award is presented to an individual under the age of 35 for outstanding achievements and contributions in the field of culture and development. It honours an individual who is a role model for younger generations and whose cultural actions have a positive impact particularly on young people in their society. In keeping with the Prince Claus Fund's guiding principles, the award highlights significant contributions in regions where resources or opportunities for cultural expression, creative production and preservation of cultural heritage are limited.

### **Procedures**

The Fund invites cultural experts from its global network to nominate candidates for the Next Generation Award. Research is carried out by the Fund's Bureau and second opinions are sourced for all nominations. The Prince Claus Awards Committee meets twice a year to consider the information about the nominated candidates and presents its recommendations to the Board of the Prince Claus Fund. This year the Next Generation Award is presented globally via the internet in December. The Next Generation Award is also presented to the recipient at a ceremony in their respective country by the Dutch Ambassador.

### **2020 Prince Claus Awards Committee**

Manuel de Rivero (Chair), Architect and Urbanist, Lima, Peru

Hoor Al Qasimi, Curator and Visual Artist, Sharjah, Emirate of Sharjah

Sandra den Hamer, Director of the EYE Film Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Amar Kanwar, Visual Artist and Filmmaker, Delhi, India

Neo Muyanga, Composer and Musician, Cape Town, South Africa

Fariba Derakhshani is Programme Coordinator of the Awards and Secretary to the Awards Committee.

### **Policy and Criteria**

The Prince Claus Fund maintains a broad view of culture open to all artistic and intellectual disciplines. The Next Generation Prince Claus Award is presented to artists and intellectuals in recognition of both the excellent quality of their work and their significant impact on the development of young people in their society. It recognises creative work that engages young people in the building of more inclusive, open-minded societies. It honours cultural endeavours that enable youth to explore issues related to gender, diversity and inclusion, and that allow young people to create alternative narratives and see their world in new and different ways. The Next Generation Award is given to individuals based mainly in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Outstanding quality is a *sine qua non* for the Next Generation Award. The quality of a laureate's work is assessed in professional and personal

contexts and for its positive influence on cultural and social fields. The Next Generation Award recognises artistic and intellectual qualities, experimentation and innovation, audacity and tenacity. It seeks to foster inspirational leadership and to enhance the positive impact of cultural expression on societies.

## Recommendation for the 2020 Next Generation Award

### 2020 Next Generation Award

#### **Hira Nabi**

Pakistan

Filmmaker and Multimedia Artist

Hira Nabi (1987, Lahore) is a filmmaker who combines a thoughtful research-based approach with beautiful imagery, imagination and innovative narrative strategies to document realities.

Her documentary film *All That Perishes at the Edge of Land* (2019) offers a highly sensory and moving new interpretation of shipbreaking at Gadani, Balochistan. Employing the unusual technique of giving a voice to the massive container vessel that is being dismantled, she creates a conversation between the ship and the men dismantling it. The men are migrant labourers, forced to travel across Pakistan to find employment in this back-breaking, life-threatening work for meagre wages, with minimal safety gear and appalling living conditions. Initially sceptical, they were won over by Nabi's patient, respectful approach and, over the course of the nine months it took to film, they spoke openly, sometimes angrily or emotionally.

The conversation, narrated by disembodied voices, is a reciprocal exchange of experiences, juxtaposing the lives of the ship and the workers: their origins, journeys and work, the men's homes, struggles to survive and feed their distant families, lack of rights and fair pay. Both ship and workers have dreams, and face danger, ruin and death. They talk about pollution, the mutation from fishermen to shipbreakers, the ships' toxins destroying the men's health - driven by the system to destroy each other. Only those controlling the exploitative system gain while ship, people and environment are broken. Despite all, the men hope for a better future for their children.

The film records an array of evocative images and sounds encompassing violent scenes of the ship's destruction, moments in the workers' routines, the sea and the beautiful changing light. It reveals unexpected beauty in an ugly industrial site - sculptural forms, human gestures, momentary details - but Nabi boldly cuts frames, contrasting the aesthetic with harsh fact, conveying the many strands of reality. Presenting the facts in an imaginative way, the film compels renewed reflection on globalisation and globalised degradation. Nabi persuaded the workers to attend a screening in Karachi and the film had its world premiere at CPH:DOX. It was selected for Colomscope 2019, Sundance 2020, Kosovo's DokuFest 2019 and numerous environmental justice events around the world.

In *El Retorno* (2016), Nabi uses reticence and understatement to advantage. Set in Cuba, a stranger engages in an intermittent dialogue with a taxi driver, eventually revealing he is a released prisoner from Guantanamo. After driving several hours through the run-down, polluted environment, the man decides to return to the prison.

*What Do The Trees Tell Us?* (2017), a video diptych exploring the impact of plant migrations on Pakistan's landscape and identity, is part of Nabi's long-term research project on botanical aspects of environmental change. Current research is focused on plant adaptation and the urban changes needed to counter increasing heat.

Nabi studied film and post-colonial studies at Hampshire College, Massachusetts, and graduated with an MA in cinema and media studies from The New School, New York. She teaches at Beaconhouse National University and researches cinematic cultures, contributing to the establishment of an archive of Pakistani cinema.

Hira Nabi is honoured:

- for her poetic and aesthetically captivating use of evocative imagery and sound to bring everyday situations alive with remarkable intensity;
- for her innovative combination of imagination and narrative in documentary filming, increasing people's understanding and engagement;
- for witnessing the lives and telling the stories of people forgotten or made invisible in today's societies;
- for her care in avoiding the camera's tendency to turn people into objects and using the privilege of her social status to get marginalised, peripheral voices heard on central platforms;
- for translating her intense observation of multiple issues and layers of meaning into focused but multifaceted films;
- for her thoughtful, research-oriented approach to developing socially engaged cinema;
- for intently developing her personal aesthetic vision and intellectual path, inspiring next-generation filmmakers to sustain individuality within the audiovisual discipline; and
- for confidently projecting the possibilities open to Pakistan's young women.