

# YOUNG ART FROM CEE

## VIG SPECIAL INVITATION – part of the ESSL ART AWARD CEE

**From 31 May until 29 June, 2012**

### **Curators**

Concept: ESSL MUSEUM – Contemporary Art

Design: Philippe Batka

### **Official opening**

Wednesday, 30 May 2012, 6.30 pm (by invitation only)

### **Venue**

Exhibition Centre in the Ringturm

1010 Vienna, Schottenring 30

### **Opening hours**

Monday to Friday: 9 am to 6 pm, free admission  
(closed on 7 and 12 June)

### **Enquiries to:**

Silvia Polan

T: +43 (0)50390 ext. 21064

F: +43 (0)5039099 21064

E-mail: [silvia.polan@vig.com](mailto:silvia.polan@vig.com)

*“The Group’s support for arts and cultural projects goes back a long way, and is an integral part of our philosophy. Our backing for the ESSL ART AWARD CEE provides young art students from Central and Eastern Europe with an additional platform where they can present their work to an international audience. We also want to promote cross-border appreciation and awareness of contemporary and emerging artistic trends in the region.”*

**Günter Geyer,  
Chairman of the Managing Board, Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein**

*“Our decision to instigate this biennial award was prompted by the desire to nurture up-and-coming artists from Central and Eastern Europe, and provide an international, museum-based forum to showcase their work. We are especially pleased to have secured a valued partner and sponsor in the shape of VIG. The philosophy of VIG – which like our organisation has a presence throughout the CEE region – fits perfectly with our own.*

**Prof. Karlheinz Essl,  
ESSL MUSEUM**

The Vienna Insurance Group and its main shareholder Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein are long-standing partners of the Essl Museum and sponsors of the ESSL ART AWARD CEE. The award was inaugurated in 2005 with the aim of promoting young art students from Central and Eastern Europe. The Vienna Insurance Group’s cross-border support for culture and the arts reflects the company’s rapid expansion into Central and Eastern Europe, where it is represented in 25 countries. In 2011, at the initiative of Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein, the Vienna Insurance Group again awarded a VIG SPECIAL INVITATION to each of the national competition winners.

The invitation gives the recipients the chance to present their latest work to a wide audience at the Vienna Insurance Group’s Ringturm headquarters in the heart of the Austrian capital, as part of the Young Art from CEE exhibition. Visitors to the exhibition are given a fascinating insight into the work of talented young artists from Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia. This initiative symbolises the ever-closer ties between the Vienna Insurance Group and the Essl Museum, as well as providing an additional forum that brings the award-winning students’ work to a broader public.

The Group’s support for the ESSL ART AWARD CEE also underlines the company’s long-standing dedication to fostering young artistic talents – a tradition which dates back to the 1920s. At that time, a series of artworks were commissioned with an eye to reaching as broad a cross section of society as possible. In later years, the company also acquired pieces from young Austrian artists for its own collection.

This exhibition covers various forms of artistic expression, ranging from paintings and sketches to interactive and multimedia exhibits. Young Art from CEE is open to the public from 31 May to 29 June, 2012, and admission is free.

## The winners of the VIG SPECIAL INVITATION – part of the 2011 ESSL ART AWARD CEE

Teodora Axente (Romania), Maja Rožman (Slovenia), Milan Vagač (Slovakia), Sabina Mikelić (Croatia), Josef Bareš (Czech Republic), Anett Hamori (Hungary), Albena Stefanova Baeva (Bulgaria)

### Selected statements from the winners

#### TEODORA AXENTE

\*1984 Sibiu (RO)

Teodora Axente has been a student at the University of Art and Design in Cluj-Napoca since 2005. Her works have been exhibited in Germany and Romania. She lives and works in Cluj-Napoca.



#### BECOMING I, 2012

Oil on canvas  
92 x 118cm

#### BECOMING III, 2012

Oil on canvas  
50 x 33cm

*"I feel that everything I see around me is scenery, a simulacrum. To me, the world is a giant stage with a constantly changing cast of characters. Besides the actual social event that takes the limelight, I also discover intimate personal experiences. This simulacrum embodies the human ability to make peace with the past. But in my view it's all just a game. Because we have the freedom to think and act, this playful approach is about more than creating a completely new world where events take place and are then reconstructed."*

#### MAJA ROŽMAN

\*1981 Zagreb (HR)

Maja Rožman has been studying at the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts and Design since 2008. Her works have been put on display at exhibitions in Croatia and Slovenia. She lives and works in Zagreb and Ljubljana.



#### DOROTHY, WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE! (floating), 2011/2012

Sketch and digital print  
80 x 120cm

#### DOROTHY, WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE! (the walk), 2011/2012

Sketch and digital print  
80 x 120cm

*"I'm fascinated by dreams, but I put the analysis to one side so that I can focus on the opportunities and sensations that dreams open up. Whenever we dream, we live a new life. A few years ago I started putting my dreams into words, and sketching whatever I couldn't describe. The drawings on display stem from the situations, emotions and atmosphere in my dreams. I see this series of works as an intimate study of spaces in my subconscious. The title comes from the movie The Wizard of Oz. It is a way of saying that the world we live in is no longer reality, but fiction."*

## **MILAN VAGAČ**

\*1987 Bratislava (SK)

The works of Milan Vagač, a student of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava since 2006, have gone on display at various exhibitions in his native Slovakia. He lives and works in Bratislava.

### **SCREENSHOT III, 2011**

Acrylic on canvas

200 x 255cm



### **SCREENSHOT II, 2011**

Acrylic on canvas

200 x 255cm

### **SCREENSHOT I, 2011**

Acrylic on canvas

200 x 255cm

*“My paintings present images of a defunct visual technology. I use photos of broken LCD TV screens displaying abstract structures and the noise of television snow as my starting point. Today TVs and monitors dominate the media landscape and provide us with a glut of images. They are deeply embedded in our lives. My goal is to stop the flow of information, do away with deceptive images and expose the true language of visual technology. The destruction of the LCD screen and the scrambled TV signal are ways of portraying visual media that I then incorporate into my paintings.*”

## **SABINA MIKELIĆ**

\*1981 Rijeka (HR)

A student of the Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts since 2006, Sabina Mikelić lives and works in the Croatian capital. She has displayed her works at several exhibitions in Croatia.

### **WE ARE ALL MADE OF STARS, 2012**

Digital print on plexiglass, light box

132 x 197 x 12cm



*“My works are based on a photo of me that resembles a constellation of stars or the outline of a figure in the sky. Freedom is a major recurring theme in my art, the urge to break free from social, political and cultural shackles. The picture in which I seem to be drifting in space is pierced by light. It’s a sign that we are all made of the same material – light, energy, stars and our own bodies. Everybody is identical.*”

## **JOSEF BAREŠ**

\*1982 Prague (CZ)

Josef Bareš trained in the USA, Taiwan and Prague, and now lives and works in Shanghai. Exhibitions of his work have been held in various countries, including Austria, Germany, Russia and the USA.



### **CROSSING YANGPU BRIDGE, 2012**

6.8-second video loop, and black and white photographic print  
120 x 80cm

### **SKETCH OF CROSSING YANGPU BRIDGE, 2012**

Mixed technique on paper  
21 x 29cm

### **SKETCH OF CROSSING YANGPU BRIDGE, 2012**

Mixed technique on paper  
21 x 29cm

*“My main interest is in semiotic systems. I try to use a variety of methods to portray the process of creating meaning. My focus is mainly on the relationships between cities and language, between space and semantics. How do we interpret urban environments? Architecture is a “natural” universal phenomenon, but we also find huge cultural differences – the same goes for language. Research is the starting point for my work. Then I go through a phase of turning the information and experiences I’ve collected into research findings – my ideas. Then I transform those ideas into a format that is often tied to a specific location and presented using various media.*

## **ANETT HAMORI**

\*1985 Miskolc (HU)

Anett Hamori completed her degree at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in Budapest in 2010. She lives and works in the city. Her works have been exhibited in Germany, Hungary and Italy.



### **AFTER CATASTROPHE IN JAPAN, 2012**

Watercolour on paper  
150 x 230cm

### **JAPANESE RED CROSS SOCIETY, 2012**

Watercolour on paper  
150 x 180cm

### **SEARCHING FOR VICTIMS, 2012**

Watercolour on paper  
150 x 200cm

*“My works cover all aspects of interpersonal relationships: what people do, how they live, what they feel, how they move, as well as the messages they transmit to others. Our actions are often baffling and take on a kind of sign character when we interact with other people. That’s the reason why I leave empty spaces around the figures – the spotlight should be on the people and I don’t want the surroundings to distract attention from them. I think that international communication is so important nowadays because it allows us to maintain networks of global contacts. But what does that contact*

*actually look like? My work is designed to create a vivid relationship between people, their histories and the situations they find themselves in.”*

**ALBENA STEFANOVA BAEVA**

\*1983 Sofia (BG)

Albena Stefanova Baeva lives and works in Sofia, and is a student of the city’s National Academy of Art. In 2008 her work was displayed at an international exhibition in Turin.



**THANK YOU, 2012**

Interactive installation, variable dimensions

*“The role of the author, and the perspectives of the audience and their sense of artistic appreciation are often central themes in my work. But I quietly and surreptitiously turn the familiar on its head. Cause becomes effect. I also address the question of how audiences perceive contemporary art, which can sometimes be difficult to understand. Understanding and appreciating contemporary art demands dedication and a willingness to probe much deeper. A work of art can only exist as long as there is an audience to appreciate it – that is the thinking behind my work. So the ability to experience art is a privilege that needs to be earned.”*

A 190-page catalogue including forewords from Prof. Agnes Essl and Günter Geyer has been published to accompany the ESSL ART AWARD CEE. A limited number of free copies are available for journalists. If you have any enquiries, please contact us by e-mail at [public.relations@vig.com](mailto:public.relations@vig.com).

Further information on the ESSL ART AWARD CEE is available online at <http://www.essl.museum/>.