



PRESS RELEASE
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FLEMISH MINISTER FOR CULTURE, MEDIA, YOUTH AND BRUSSELS AFFAIRS
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Alain Platel wins Flemish Culture Award for General Cultural Achievement 2014 during the Cultuurforum

Today, Flemish Minister for Culture Sven Gatz invited the cultural sector to discuss cultural policy in Flanders during the Cultuurforum 2020 at Flagey. The study day was dedicated to cultural participation and welcomed Professor Koen van Eijck as guest speaker. At the end of the day the Minister addressed the sector and announced his plans for the coming policy period. Finally, the Minister presented performer, director and choreographer Alain Platel with the Flemish Culture Award for General Cultural Achievement 2014. The jury was full of praise for the laureate because his work oozes personality and has set a lot of things in motion within the Flemish art world and beyond.

Flemish Minister for Culture Sven Gatz continues the annual meeting with the cultural sector during the public session of the Cultuurforum. During the Cultuurforum cultural professionals debated the main theme 'cultural participation'. Guest speaker Prof. Dr. Koen van Eijck (1967), who is Professor at the Department of Arts and Culture Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam, kicked off the Cultuurforum with an inspiring lecture on trends in cultural participation and taste patterns, art education and talent development. During the workshops the participants examined the theme in greater detail and from different angles.

At the end of the Cultuurforum the Minister addressed the participants. He elaborated on the outcomes of the Citizens' Cabinet (*Burgerkabinet*) which he called a success in terms of both content and process. Furthermore, Sven Gatz clarified a number of policy priorities he will set in the next year of operation. A pathway will be initiated, for instance, which is to result in a revision of the Participation Flemish Parliament Act and the Flemish Parliament Act on Socio-Cultural Work. The new Arts Flemish Parliament Act, which includes a new way of evaluating subsidy applications, among other things, will become fully effective. Another item on the agenda is the further implementation of the incorporation of the provinces' cultural institutions.

Alain Platel

Finally, Minister Gatz presented the respected performer, director and choreographer Alain Platel with the Flemish Culture Award for General Cultural Achievement 2014. His company *les ballets C de la B* achieved world fame with its unique, eclectic, surrealistic mix of contemporary dance, text theatre and music. Platel loves form experiments that broaden the audience's horizon. In his groundbreaking choreographies he bundles together contrasts and extremes. The imperfect and the vulnerable are the basic principles of his work, which is characterised by simplicity, humour, modesty and apparent chaos. The atmosphere swings from exuberance to melancholy, from romance to realism. In his wake several young choreographers were able to further develop their talents within *les ballets C de la B*.

According to the jury, "Platel inspires his performers and makes them rise above themselves". His unique creative process has influenced dancers and choreographers around the world. Also, *les ballets C de la B* profiles itself as a socially engaged group. Alain Platel's work often draws inspiration from political and societal themes. It testifies to great topicality and necessity.

Flemish Minister for Culture Sven Gatz said: "Alain Platel is a master in bringing together people, dance styles and disciplines. It has earned him world renown and lifted *les ballets C de la B* to a superior level which put Flanders on the international map. He is rewarded with a well-earned place on the glorious list of laureates of this Culture Award."

Flemish Culture Awards 2014

On the proposal of a jury of experts the Flemish Minister for Culture pays tribute to individuals or an organisation that, in the course of the past year, made a notable contribution to cultural life in Flanders. The Culture Awards Flanders create public awareness of the laureate at a major event in the sector, which generates attention and appreciation for both the sector and the winner. A cash prize of €12,500 is connected to the Culture Award. The Government of Flanders sets aside €20,000 for the Flemish Community Award for General Cultural Achievement. Each laureate also receives the bronze statuette 'La ultima isla' by Philip Aguirre.

For more information, please visit: www.cultuurprijzen.be