



JURY REPORT JAN ROËDE AWARD 2025

13 June 2014 marked the 100th anniversary of the birth of visual artist Jan Roëde (1914-2007) from The Hague. To mark the occasion, the board of the Jan Roëde Foundation, founded to manage his artistic legacy, established that year in collaboration with the Royal Academy of Art the Jan Roëde Award, an annual incentive prize for a graduating artist from the KABK's Fine Arts department.

As a token of recognition, the prize aims to encourage the laureate to further develop their talents and skills after graduation and is being awarded for the twelfth time this year.

The jury for the Jan Roëde Prize 2025 consisted of Lakisha Apostel, Josje Hattink, Louw van Sinderen, Dick Stapel and Huub van Wersch.

On 4 July 2025, the jury assessed the presentations by 31 students who graduated from the Fine Arts department this year and wanted to be considered for the prize. The jury faced a difficult task, as how to choose from very different projects, each with its own quality and eloquence? At the end of its deliberations, the jury decided to award this year's Jan Roëde Prize to:

Otso Prunnila

His graduation project '*to remember a house*' presents a painterly installation in which he, deliberate and precise, depicts impressions of a house that is about to be demolished in the Finnish town of Kotka. What remains when a building is about to disappear? With a skillfull wielded brush, Otso reflects on what the remnants reveal about themselves, now the house is no longer used as a residence for its inhabitants. Deprived of their functional coherence, thrown back on a existence as 'things', the window frames, the doors, the floorboards, the abandoned books on a shelf and a left-behind picture of the past inspire the artist to create a colourful visualisation of their mere existence, while the trees around the house remain

indifferent to their imminent disappearance. Wood is in this meditation omnipresent: wooden floorboards on which the residents once walked, wooden materials with which the house was erected, wood of trees that surround a dwelling whose days are numbered.

Why do these visual testimonies of a place that, along with its inhabitants, may also have lost its soul, affect us as viewers? Because the installation is more than just a consideration of a derelict, soon-to-be-demolished house. The artist uses figurative painting to reach beyond the depiction of memory, it shows the actual experience of a house on the brink of disappearance. The paintings sound like the creaking wood of its old floors. The canvasses on the walls give the impression that the subject is far away, in place, but even more in time. They are windows to elsewhere, to another lifetime. While the old house slowly fades into history, it is painted over with new layers. When you enter the installation on painted floorboards, everything is present: the Finnish house suddenly finds itself in the here and now of an art academy in The Hague. It is the end of an era, a farewell to an old house in Finland, and also a so long to the art academy as a home base. Soon the painter will leave it all behind to move on to new projects in new places, where time affects existence and the ephemeral nature of surroundings inspires to reveal their inherent value.

The installation shows artistic maturity in a way that feels deeply personal and unique to Otso's practice. It is clear that the artist devoted himself with an in-depth research to the subject matter and has managed to translate this into a well-considered artistic expression. The installation is as simple as it is complex, which highlights the most important quality of the work: Otso succeeded in setting the work free. It is about a house somewhere in Kotka, Finland, but even more so about any place, anywhere. This is everyone's house.

The jury was moved by this delicate, poetic and intelligent work. There are endless possibilities for this story to keep growing, but in this moment it feels complete. Convinced by both the qualities of the work and the promising skill and spirit of the artist, the jury is delighted to announce Otso Prunnila as the winner of the Jan Roëde Award 2025.

Huub van Wersch,
jury chairman

The Hague, 7 July 2025

The Jan Roëde Award 2025 consists of a sum of €3,000, intended as a donation of support to the artistic practice of the laureate. A certificate will also be presented to the laureate. The Jan Roëde Foundation will highlight the award ceremony and the artist who won the prize on its website (www.janroede.nl).