

Introduction

The Swiss Society for Medal Art (Smed'A), founded in January 2023, in collaboration with the Numismatic Museum («Münzkabinett») of the City of Winterthur, announces an art medal competition for plastic artists in Switzerland and abroad. Smed'A is supported by the Swiss representatives of FIDEM (the Association of International Medal Art).

The competition is being held as part of the exhibition «THE BIG IN THE SMALL – MEDALS FROM THE RENAISSANCE AND THE PRESENT» in the Numismatic Museum («Münzkabinett») of the City of Winterthur.

The competition results will be awarded and presented in the museum on March 3, 2024.

From March 23, 2024, an exhibition of the prize-winning works will be held at the Winterthur Museum.

Goal

The aim of this call for entries is to promote contemporary medal art internationally. The medal of art should be brought closer to people interested in art, but also to artists. The medal of art is still a very unknown medium. It is only the size of a hand and offers the opportunity to take a stand on personal or social issues in a small format. Unlike a sports medal, it does not pursue an honouring purpose, but serves its idea alone: namely the individual artistic statement.

Incentives are created by two or more medal sides that allow a topic to be illuminated from different aspects, often supported by the use of texts or quotations. It is also appealing that an art medal only reveals itself when you take it in your hand, turn it over and thereby experience an additional haptic pleasure. With this call for entries, the organisers would like to encourage artists in Switzerland and other countries to engage with this art form.

ArtMedals: MEDALS AS INDIVIDUAL CHRONICLES OF THE PRESENT

«There is hardly a medium of contemporary art that draws its innovative potential so strongly from the tradition of art history as does the current medal art. A tradition only remains alive by developing it further. Medals can be regarded as an alternative form of historiography that has its origins in the aesthetic thinking of artists.

What these small works of art show is a commitment to radical subjectivity in dealing with contemporary history, which can be interpreted as resistance against both the monopoly of the mass media on the interpretation of current world events as well as against the increasingly politically formulated prohibitions on thinking and commemorating... Art medals with literary or poetic texts stand out from the high speed of the digital information flow and open up an aesthetic space in which there is actually something to think about.»

Dr. Joachim Penzel, art historian in Halle/Saale, quoted from the book «KUNST IM GRIFF Contemporary Medal Art». German Society for Medal Art, 2022

An art medal is a small, original and sculptural work of art that is usually designed as a one-sided or multi-sided relief.

Although the reliefs are spatially designed, the object itself is not a three-dimensional small sculpture. Medals are works of art and not artistically designed objects of daily use. They can be made of a wide variety of materials: Metals, ceramics, papers, plastics, collages—there are no limits to the techniques.

Announcement of the competition and regulations

1. General regulations

1.1 Organisers

Smed'A
Cabinet de Numismatique
Musée d'art et d'histoire de Neuchâtel
Esplanade Léopold-Robert, 1
CH-2001 Neuchâtel

Münzkabinett der Stadt Winterthur
Villa Bühler, Lindstrasse 8
CH-8400 Winterthur

1.2 Eligibility

The competition is open to artists from all over the world.

Jury members are not allowed to participate in the competition.

1.3 Dates

Start of competition: October 1, 2023

End of competition: January 31, 2024

Judging: February 2024

Announcement of prizes: March 3, 2024

Return of non-award-winning entries: by May 31, 2024

1.4 Technical requirements

The submitted works must be no more than 5 years old. The art medal must have two or more (sides). It must not stand on a base. Inscriptions may be a design element.

Category A: Completed works

The medal must be made of the final material (metal, ceramics, glass, stone, plastics, etc.). It can be a unique piece or a multiple in an edition of maximum 10 pieces. For struck medals, an edition of 100 pieces is permitted.

Category B: Projects

The projects submitted must be conceived in three dimensions. Admitted are models, drawn or digital designs that present the idea in a mature form.

Projects must include a detailed description of the final realization: material, technique, patina, etc.

The diameter or dimension of the work must not exceed 15 cm. Reproductions (photos or drawings) submitted must therefore also be presented in the specified size.

1.5 Selection procedure

A jury will anonymously judge the submitted competition objects (see paragraph 2: Application and deadlines). The jury selects the works for the exhibition and awards the prizes.

2. Registration and dates

2.1 General provisions

The deadline for participants to register using the enclosed registration form is January 31, 2024 (see paragraph 5: Address). Participants must designate a code with which all works will be sealed.

2.2 Deadline for the submission of works

Participants send or bring their works at their own expense to the Münzkabinett Winterthur by January 31, 2024 (see paragraph 5: Address). The postmark is decisive. Digital submissions must be received by 5 pm.

2.3 Submission requirements

Works must be entered anonymously:

- Each work must bear the 6-digit code number issued personally by the participant
- Each work must be accompanied by an entry form (see point 2.1 Entries) on which the details of title, material, technique, year and insured value must be filled in; on a voluntary basis, a brief description of the subject represented of a maximum of 5 lines is permitted.
- The dossier must be enclosed in a sealed envelope with exact details of the artist (surname, first name, address, telephone number, email). Only the code number of the participant should be clearly written on the envelope.
- Digital applications should be sent with the subject: Art Medal Competition/Code (See point 5 Address). In the attachment, the sketches are to be coded as follows:

Design.Code
 Sender.Code
 Registration form

A maximum of two works / designs may be submitted per participant. Submissions that are incomplete or do not meet the above requirements – in particular the anonymity rule – will be eliminated.

3. Selection

3.1 General provisions

A jury of five will assess the entries for their compliance with the requirements set out in point 1.3 «Technical specifications» and award the prizes.

3.2 Composition of the jury

Members with voting rights :

Doris Althaus	Artist SGBK, Solothurn
Jaques Rais	Artist, Teacher of Engraving, La Chaux-de-Fonds
Nicolas Consiglio	President of the Swiss Medal Art Society SMed'A, Curator, Cabinet de numismatique, Musée d'art et d'histoire Neuchâtel, Delegate FIDEM for Switzerland, Neuchâtel

Pierre Zanchi	Vice-President (ret.) of the International Federation of Medal Arts FIDEM, Prilly
Rea Reichen	Art Historian, Exhibition Curator THE BIG IN THE SMALL Münzkabinett Winterthur, Winterthur

Secretary / Administration (without voting rights) :

Benedikt Zäch, Director Münzkabinett Winterthur

Substitute members

To be appointed by the individual jury members if required.

3.3 Judging criteria

- Artistic quality in terms of form and content
- Correspondence of the different medal pages
- Category A Quality of execution
- Category B Quality of the submitted designs
- Innovation

3.4 Prizes

The total amount of the prizes is CHF 8000. Four prizes will be awarded. The prizes are equal in rank, the jury reserves the right to divide the prize money as it sees fit.

1. CHRONIK DER ZUKUNFT, Sponsorship award Swiss Society for Art Medals SMEd'A
2. INNOVATION, Prize/purchase Münzkabinett Winterthur
3. MUSEUM, Prize/purchase Musée d'art et d'histoire, Neuchâtel
4. ZEITZEUGE, Prize/purchase of the Friends of Münzkabinett Winterthur

The two categories (paragraph 1.3.: Technical specifications) will be judged separately. The best projects in category B will receive the prize in the form of a «voucher for implementation». In this case, the organisers will take care of commissioning the execution by a medal manufacturer.

Artists who wish to carry out the execution themselves will receive the prize sum in cash.

The medals awarded by the sponsored prizes of at least CHF 2000 (see 1.4 / Category A) will be purchased by the sponsors. One piece of the winning work becomes therefore the property of the organisation that sponsored the award. The copyrights remain in the possession of the artists.

The jury may recommend further works to the museums for purchase.

3.5 Decision of the jury

At the end of their deliberations, the jury will draw up a report which will be sent to all participants. Works not selected will be returned to their creators by May 31, 2024. The selected artists will be notified in writing.

The candidates will be assured of strict confidentiality by the jury and the organisers.

The decision of the jury is final.

No correspondence will be entered into outside of the report.

4. Special provisions concerning the exhibition of the selected works

4.1 Note

The artists whose works have been selected by the jury will receive precise written information on the organisation and duration of the planned exhibitions. Interested persons should take note of the following (subject to change):

4.2 Transport of the works

The participants are responsible for the transport of the works to Winterthur and back. Transport and possible insurance costs will be borne by them.

After the exhibition in Winterthur, the works will be returned to the participants. The return shipment is made with a normal postal package and cannot be extra insured. Artists who wish to collect their works themselves must contact the organisers in writing before the end of the exhibition.

4.3 Insurance

The museum insures the works from the moment they are received until the moment they are returned to the artists.

4.4 Organisation of the exhibition

The organisers are responsible for the organisation, presentation, administration and supervision of the exhibition.

4.5 Sale

The presentations in the museum do not offer the possibility of sale.

Participation in the competition implies unconditional acceptance of these competition regulations. Any legal appeal procedure is excluded.

5. Address for entries and information

Competition entries must be sent anonymously or handed in personally at the following address by January 31, 2024:

Münzkabinett der Stadt Winterthur
 Benedikt Zäch, Director
 Villa Bühler, Lindstrasse 8
 CH-8400 Winterthur

Mail address for digital submissions:
 benedikt.zaech@win.ch (subject: Art Medal Competition/personal code)

If you have any questions about the competition, please contact Gilles Peret, member of the board of Smed'A: Gilles.Perret@ville-ge.ch.

Schweizerische Gesellschaft für
Société Suisse pour l'art de la médaille
Società Svizzera d'arte medagliaria
Swiss Society for Art Medallenkunst

SMed'A