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The Praemium Erasmianum Foundation has awarded the **2014 Erasmus Prize** to the **Belgian festival director and curator Frie Leysen**. This year, the theme of the Erasmus Prize is **'Theatre, audience and society'**.

The Erasmus Prize is awarded annually to a person or institution that has made an exceptional contribution to culture, society or social science.

The Praemium Erasmianum is a cultural institution based in Amsterdam active in the fields of humanities, social sciences and the arts. It was founded in 1958 by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. The Foundation awards the annual Erasmus Prize and organises cultural and academic activities around the award ceremony. The Foundation is motivated by the cultural traditions of Europe and the ideas of Erasmus.



Frie Leysen is a

fearless champion of the arts and contributes to innovation in international theatre. She is a vigorous advocate of unknown theatre-makers, driven by her own artistic curiosity coupled with a desire to give audiences a special experience. She is always searching for new generations of artists and new forms of theatre, and is committed to providing a podium for non-Western productions in Europe. With her international orientation, fundamental curiosity and critical attitude, she exemplifies the Erasmian values that the Foundation embraces.

Between 1980 to 1991, Frie Leysen was the founding director of deSingel in Antwerp. Under her management, deSingel became an internationally renowned arts centre with a unique programme. In 1994 she founded the bilingual Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels. In the ten years that she headed this festival, it grew into an influential festival for both Belgian and international arts. In the following years, she expanded her area of work to extend into Europe and beyond. In 2007, Frie Leysen organized the multidisciplinary Meeting Points festival in nine Arab cities. In 2010 she was curator of Theater der Welt in the German Ruhr area and in 2012, held the position of artistic director of the Berliner Festspiele. Since 2014 she is working as theatre director of the Vienna Festival in Austria. In 2003, Frie Leysen was awarded the Flemish Community Award for General Cultural Contributions and in 2007 she received an honorary doctorate from the Free University of Brussels.

The award consists of a cash prize of € 150,000. The award ceremony will take place on a date to be determined in the autumn of 2014.

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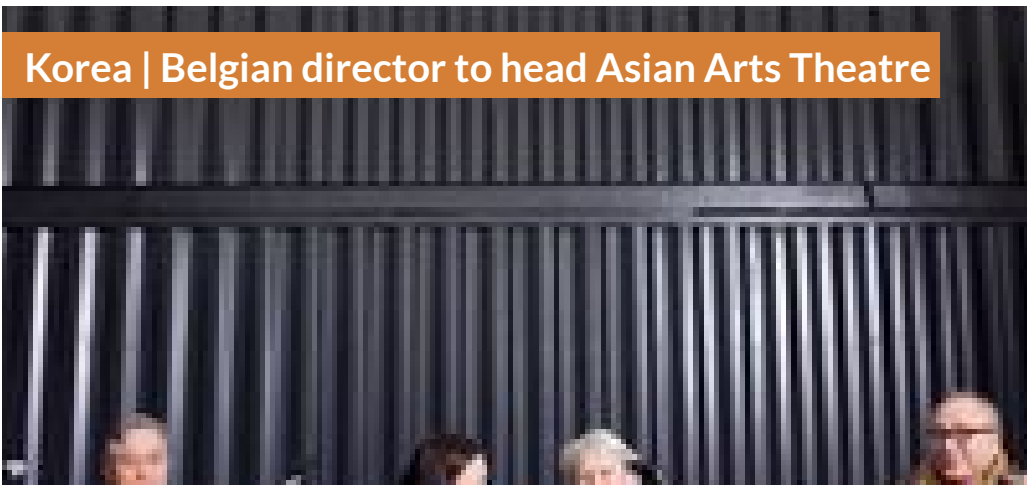


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