

Laudations winners Bio Art & Design Award 2018

Amanda Baum and Rose Leahy (UK): 'Microbiocene: Ancient ooze to future myths'

In collaboration with: Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ) (Stefan Schouten, Julie Lattaud, Laura Schreuder, Gabriella Weiss)

This proposal recasts our understanding of the geological or biological epochs, moving it to the perspective of the microbial. This seemingly simple thought experiment unlocks vast potential for imagining the far future as well as the distant past. By distancing ourselves away from an anthropocentric viewpoint, however briefly, we are invited to consider a new visual language, even a new type of monumentality. The jury also witnessed clear enthusiasm among the artist and scientific teams about working together and it is commendable that Amanda and Rose have returned to this process after an unsuccessful bid in the past. Finally, we point out the very poetic notion they begin their application with: 'Welcome to the Microbiocene. Although, you've always been here.'

Yiyun Chen (China): 'Horizontal Living - Long live in bed'

In collaboration with: Department of Nutrition and Movement Sciences, NUTRIM, Maastricht University (Patrick Schrauwen, Vera Schrauwen-Hinderling)

This project takes as its starting point the observation that trying to live well in bed is a struggle for a vast and growing number of people worldwide. These are literally millions of souls in this situation who are pitied but ignored, forgotten about, or even judged negatively for it. But the worst malady would be a lack of imagination for what to do to help. Ms. Chen's project dedicates her time, creativity, and physical and emotional health to finding ways to make such an existence more palatable, even sustainable. The jury was most impressed by how thoughtfully this is approached in the proposal and for its achieving something quite unusual: rather than making the microscopic or otherwise literally invisible realm visible, as much bioart does, this project brings illumination onto the figuratively invisible: the chronically ill, the recovering, and the shut-in.

Ani Liu (USA): 'Data Veins & Flesh Voxels: a search for what is Human'

In collaboration with: Academic Medical Center (AMC) Amsterdam, Department of Radiology & Nuclear Medicine, division of Musculoskeletal Radiology (Matthias Cabri, Onno Baur, Mario Maas)

This project works to translate social, physical, and even emotional data into new kinds of artistic representation. It proposes doing so in a legible way that still preserves the complexity and immensity of an identity. In this case, the jury also detected a strong cooperative spirit and mutual respect between the designer and the scientific team. In fact, they were even able to acknowledge an early shift in perspective on the part of the researchers, who, through the process of the application development, have arrived at a slightly more empathy-informed approach to patients. Another factor that impressed the jury was the thoughtful contextualization that Ani Liu offered in the first part of the application presentation, illuminating how the way we understand ourselves through the ages is based on the dominant technologies of the time.