



OPEN CALL

COAL PRIZE 2021 - FOREST

CALL FOR ENTRIES OPEN TILL 1ST MARCH 2021

In just a few decades, the forest has become both symbol and focal point of the greed, environmental disasters and struggles that are shaking up the contemporary world in crisis. Thirteen million hectares of forests disappear every year, due to increasing agriculture, overgrazing, logging, and urbanization. Entire swathes of forest in the Amazon, Australia and sub-Saharan Africa are burning while others die standing as they suffer the effects of global warming, depriving wildlife of their natural habitats. Worldwide, people are fighting in defence of these reserves of life and culture and to use them as blueprints for future worlds yet to be built.

Forests alone are home to 80% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity. They act as climate regulators by contributing to the production of oxygen and constitute the second largest carbon sink after the oceans. They regulate river flow and sea level rise,

maintain soil fertility, protect coasts from extreme climatic events and even create migratory corridors for various animal and plant species. Both a chain and a link in the planetary ecosystem, a preserved and restored forest is one of the primary Nature-based Solutions capable of halting the biodiversity and climate crisis.

Forests are vital to the overall balance of ecosystems, but are just as important to human societies, which have for millennia lived directly or indirectly from its resources. Now the excesses of forest management and exploitation such as monoculture must be curbed. Wood is on its way to becoming once more a primary natural resource for energy and materials, considered "renewable", from housing construction to paper manufacture.

As a source of income and means of subsistence, the forest is also home to many indigenous peoples who

today wage war to the death to defend a different relationship with nature and the living. The "wood" is a political space, historically a refuge for libertarians and resistance fighters. The marginalised, the outcasts and the witches, cohabiting with wolves and the cursed, haunt the imagination of the forest. Whether as an object of fear or a haven of peace, the forest is a conduit for the multitude of knowledge and stories that bring us back to the confines of humanity.

The 2021 COAL Prize invites artists from all over the world to reveal these woodland riches, to feel and experience the ecological balance of forests, to promote the diversity of beings and cultures that inhabit them, to revive their ancestral knowledge and give birth to new ones, to nourish the movements of resilience they inspire, to act with their protectors and to invent other ways of being together in the woods.

Created in 2010 by the COAL association, the COAL Prize has in ten years become a vehicle for the identification, promotion and dissemination of artists all over the world who dare to imagine and experiment, to transform territories, lifestyles, organizations and production methods. Together, they contribute to making changes visible, in building a new collective narrative, a new imaginary world, a common heritage, a positive, optimistic and necessary framework, to help everyone find the means and the motivation to implement necessary changes for a shared and livable Earth.

The COAL - Culture & Diversity Student Prize, launched in 2020 by COAL and the Culture & Diversity Foundation is open to the students of French arts and culture schools.

> [Click here to see the Student Prize open call](#)

CALENDAR

Launch of open call: 1st December 2020

Application deadline: 1st March 2021

Award ceremony: summer 2021

AWARD

The winner of the COAL Prize will be awarded 10,000 euros by the François Sommer Foundation and COAL. This sum is divided into a cash prize and a production aid for the artist residency offered by the Museum of Hunting and Nature at the Belval Domaine, property of the François Sommer Foundation.

The François Sommer Foundation was founded in 1966 by François and Jacqueline Sommer, pioneers in the implementation of a humanist ecology. Faithful to the commitments of its founders, it works towards the respectful use of natural resources, for sharing the wealth of natural, artistic and cultural heritage and for the protection of a biodiversity in which mankind find its proper place.

The Belval estate is located in the commune of Belval-Bois-des-Dames, in the French Ardennes. It spans an enclosed forested area of nearly 1000 hectares and is traversed by meadows and 40 hectares of ponds. A veritable observatory of rural life and wildlife, each year it welcomes selected artists who contribute to the representation of their vision of Man's relationship to his natural environment. Testament to the Foundation's commitment in supporting contemporary artistic creation, the residency at the Belval estate contributes to the dissemination of the artists' works to a wide audience. The combined knowledge of the scientific and educational teams of the Museum of Hunting and Nature and those of the Belval estate will also be available as a resource for the artists. We invite you to consult its charter on COALs website.

> [Click here to see the residency charter](#)

ABOUT THE PRIZE

Every year, ten projects are shortlisted by a committee of professionals among the projects received through the international open call. One winning project will be chosen by a jury composed of representatives of partner organizations and personalities in art and ecology.

In addition, all applications considered by COAL and the selection committee will become part of a network of artists and projects may be solicited or promoted for opportunities and actions carried out by COAL and its partners.

CRITERIA

Applicants will be judged on the following criteria: artistic value, relevance (understanding of the theme - FOREST), originality (the ability to introduce new approaches, themes, and points of view), pedagogy (ability to get a message across and raise awareness), social and participative approaches (engagement, testimony, efficiency, societal dynamics), eco-design and feasibility.

The COAL Prize supports artistic projects in progress. Its award is not intended to cover all production costs of the project but should be considered as an aid to its development.

APPLICATION

The application should include the following documents in a single PDF saved as SURNAME_Name_2021_Project-title, and not exceeding 30 Mb:

- *The completed application form, download it [HERE](#)*
- *A detailed description of the proposed project, describing its artistic dimension, its relevance to the theme FORESTS, including a note on the technical feasibility of the project and a budget estimation*
- *At least two visuals illustrating the project*
- *A CV and a portfolio*

All applications are to be submitted before March 1st, 2021 at 11:59 pm via the COAL server: upload.projetcoal.org

By entering this competition, applicants expressly authorize the COAL organization and its partners to publish, reproduce and display in public all or part of the elements of their entry for any purpose linked to the promotion and communication of COAL and its partners, via all platforms and media, in all countries, for the legal duration of the copyright. Entries submitted but not selected will remain in the archives of the COAL organization. They will, however, remain the property of their authors. Participation in this open call entails the full acceptance of these conditions.

PARTNERS 2021

The COAL Prize is supported by the European Union through the ACT – Art Climate Transition network, the Ministry of Ecology, the Ministry of Culture, the Museum of Hunting and Nature, the François Sommer Foundation and REI Habitat.

REI Habitat is an ecological real estate development group that since 2009 specialises in the construction of multi-family buildings with wooden structures. By favouring locally-grown wood from sustainably managed forests, as well as renewing forests through a reforestation strategy, REI Habitat intends to renew forests at the same pace as cities. REI Habitat is the first developer to be PEFC certified and is awarded the Bois de France label.

COAL

COAL, an association created in France in 2008 by professionals of contemporary art, ecology and research, has become the leading French actor in the expanding crossover between art and ecology, most notably through the COAL Prize, international cooperation actions and more than fifty exhibitions and territorial cultural projects.

CONTACT

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Image credits: Camille Plancher, 22-year-old French activist. He carries out acts of civil disobedience by attaching himself to trees at night in order to prevent foresters from accessing logging areas. Bialowieza, Poland. October 2017 © Andrea Olga Mantovani