

PRESS KIT



PRIX LAURENCE 2022

24 April 2021



Prix Laurence goes Europe

The seventh edition of the Prix Laurence, a literary competition for young authors, will be one of the highlights of the program of the Commune of Bettembourg within the framework of its participation in "Esch2022, European Capital of Culture".

Partner cities

The call for participation was launched on April 24, 2021. It is extended to young people from the Greater Region (D-B-F), Kaunas in Lithuania, the partner city of Esch2022, and the partner municipalities of Bettembourg, namely Valpaços in Portugal and Flaibano in Italy.

Accordingly, young people will be able to submit their literary creations in seven languages: Luxembourgish, German, French, English, Lithuanian, Portuguese and Italian.

Participants have until 31 October 2021 to submit their unpublished contributions in two age categories, 12-17 and 18-26 years. Participation is via the website www.prixlaurence.lu.

A success story

The Prix Laurence is a central element of the LiteraTour, the literary festival in Bettembourg. Since its creation in 2015 in collaboration with the Bettembourg Youth and Culture Centre, 446 authors have participated in the Prix Laurence competition with 801 texts. The texts of the winners and participants of all editions of the Prix Laurence are available at www.prixlaurence.lu.

No limits to your creativity

As in previous editions, the organizers did not want to limit the young people in the subjects addressed in their creations or in the genre of literature.

"First of all, we want to let young people express themselves freely on subjects that are important to them and in the genre that they like best. We accept works of prose, poetry, theater, songs, rap... As we are evolving within the framework of Esch2022, we will invite young people to write about the vision of Esch2022, the European idea, Remix Europe, Remix Yourself and digitalization.", comments Pit Hoerold, co-organizer of the competition and president of the Luxembourg jury.

The Prix Laurence jury

A local jury in Lithuania, Italy and Portugal will make the pre-selection in the participating countries and submit their choice to the Prix Laurence jury, which will select the finalists.

The Luxembourg jury is composed of the following members

- Pit Hoerold, President
- Vesna Andonovic
- Martine Forty
- Jérôme Jaminet
- Christiane Kremer
- Christine Mandy
- Antoine Pohnu
- Thomas Schoos

A biography of the Luxembourg jury members will soon be available on the website www.prixlaurence.lu.

The promotional campaign

From 24 April to 31 October 2021, the municipality of Bettembourg (L) will promote the Prix Laurence competition via the website www.prixlaurence.lu, the municipality's social media pages, radio spots, as well as via the distribution of flyers and posters in schools, high schools and all places visited by the young public. A local language version is available to the Lithuanian, Italian and Portuguese partners for the promotion of the competition in their respective countries. All elements of the promotional campaign are available on the website www.prixlaurence.lu, which has been redesigned for this edition and is now available in seven languages.

The grand finale

The selected authors, aged over 18, will read their texts live in front of the Luxembourgish jury and the public during the grand final of the Prix Laurence, on 24 April 2022, in Bettembourg (L).

They will then be invited to participate in a five-day author's residence where creative workshops, tourist visits and exchanges around literature will be on the program.

The grand closing party of this seventh edition of the Prix Laurence is planned in Bettembourg (L) on the weekend of 29 April 2022 in the presence of guests from Kaunas, Flaibano and Valpaços, if sanitary restrictions permit.

The anthologies

The texts of the finalists of each year are published in the form of an anthology, with the participation of the publishing house "éditions guy binsfeld". The anthologies of the previous editions of the Prix Laurence can be purchased at the social bookshop « [de BicherKueb](#) » in Bettembourg (L).

The Prix Laurence, edition 2020 – Lively and authentic

Due to the pandemic, the finals of the Prix Laurence 2020 had to be postponed until September 2020. The finals took place in a small circle in the cinema Le Paris in Bettembourg (L) in the presence of Mayor Laurent Zeimet and First Alderman Josée Lorsché. The objective was to offer the young authors and their families lively and authentic finals despite the circumstances.

Talented participants

The jury, composed of Pit Hoerold, Christiane Kremer, Martine Forty, Vesna Andonovic, Thomas Schoos and Jérôme Jaminet, had the delicate task of selecting the 26 finalists from among the 76 authors who participated in the competition with 113 contributions.

The winners designated during the finals:

12-17 years age category:

- Jelena Thiel (1st price)
- Roksan Maly (2nd price)
- Lena Rubio Doering (3rd price)
- Elissaveta Staneva (Special jury mention)
- Céline Urwald (Coup de cœur)

Catégorie 18-26 ans :

- Lynn Reimen (1st prize)
- Caroline Ruppert (2nd prize)
- Cosimo D. Suglia (3rd prize)
- Lis Dostert (Special jury mention)
- Anouk Schreiner (Coup de coeur)

An optimistic look into the future

The texts were of a remarkable literary quality and the authors showed that the younger generations have a lot to say. Since its creation in 2015, the Prix Laurence has provided a platform for them to express their thoughts and emotions in a very personal way and also proves that there is no need to worry about the future of the national literary scene.

Anthologie 2020

The texts of the finalists of each year are published in the form of an anthology, with the participation of the publishing house "éditions guy binsfeld". The anthologies of the previous editions of the Prix Laurence can be purchased at the social bookshop « [de BicherKueb](#) » in Bettembourg (L).

Interview with Jelena Thiel, Laureate Prix Laurence 2020, 12-17 years age category

What was your inspiration to take part in the Prix Laurence?

Sometimes I feel a sudden itch to write a story. Perhaps because there's a particular concept stuck in my head or a character or even just one line of dialogue. So I keep thinking about it, somewhat anxious I'll forget the whole time, and as soon as I can I sit down and write. Sometimes it works out well, sometimes rather less. Some of the stories I never even finish and some make me cringe in shame just days later. But every now and then, I'll manage to make something I'm actually quite happy with, I'll get way too excited about it and I'll want to show it to everyone...

Well, this is about what happened, and as the deadline hadn't passed yet I thought it wouldn't hurt to send something in again after I'd previously participated for an English assignment and gotten third prize.

Can you elaborate on your writing inspiration?

The spark that inspired me to write about those two gravediggers was actually my coming across an article on the *Winter of Discontent*—a very dramatic, but fitting name given to the harsh winter of 1978-1979 by the UK press— that also happened to feature a strike amongst Liverpool gravediggers. The idea of all those corpses lying around sounded nauseating to me, but that was the entire point. People don't go on strike for nothing after all, and you probably don't want to bite the hand that inhumes you. It got me thinking about essential workers in these present times.

Of course, keeping with the Shakespearean theme of the seventies' headlines, the skit was also very much inspired by the iconic cemetery scene in *Hamlet*— my favourite Shakespeare play which, despite being a tragedy, also has much to offer as far as admittedly morbid humour goes.

The poem, then, I wrote in 2019...and I actually don't quite remember what prompted it, but I find a little hubris and insanity much fun to write.

Your texts were in French and English. In which languages do you write and read? Is there a preference?

There's definitely a preference...to be completely frank, I think I read and write in English too much these days. Sometimes I even forget words in Luxembourgish, nonetheless my mother tongue! But I can't help loving the language. I've always been surrounded by it when I spent

summers with my family in Scotland, and even for all the quirks and inconsistencies I've always felt at ease writing in English.

As for French, I must confess that, although it's what I chose for my poem, I probably use it the least out of all the languages I speak passably well. I don't have trouble reading or writing in French, and yet it doesn't always flow as easily as German or English. I suppose it mostly comes down to the mood I'm in, though I've noticed that if I write in French it tends to be poetry almost exclusively while everything else is in German or English...make of that what you will.

How did you experience the Prix Laurence? What did you get out of the experience?

I was very nervous about the reading, and rather skeptical about 'playing' two characters at the same time in my skit. You would not believe my heart rate when I stepped onstage. Before performing, I normally feel strangely calm, but that day I was on edge for some reason. Still, after I was done with it I felt quite satisfied with myself, even if I did not expect to win anything. It was a very strange moment when I saw I had been given first place, though I must say I felt a bit of pride as I held the trophy, as well as pain in my left arm (the thing is *heavy*).

I am overall motivated to keep writing, and I think the experience was only conducive to that.

What are your plans for the future? Do you see writing more as a hobby or as a profession?

I'd certainly like to publish a full-length novel one day. I'm working on a first draft at the moment that I'd like to be done with by the end of this year, but saying there is still much work to do would be an understatement. It's very slow-going...

I hope I'll be able to combine what I like with what can earn me a living in the future, or at least balance it, since I know it's really hard to make enough just from creative work these days. I think I'll be happy either way as long as I don't end up in an office job, or one where I have to get up too early. But then again, who can tell what the future brings?

What role does the Prix Laurence play for today's generation? Is there still a lot of reading?

Humans are a storytelling species. As far as I'm aware, we're the only ones in the book—From bonfire tales about ancestral spirits to mediaeval drinking songs I'd get in trouble for writing down here, from riveting nineteenth-century epics to strange internet fanfiction—we've always told them and we always will. Maybe I got a bit carried away right there, but I just think that is a wonderful ability to have. And events like these, I believe, provide a lovely opportunity for young people to get their first attempts out there and say, *hey, I wrote this*.
Take five minutes of your time and listen!

Now I don't necessarily think stories need to stand any sort of tests, nor should they have to be made public at all to be of value to the author themselves—practice is practice, after all but nevertheless the competitive aspect can be an excellent motivation for young writers, some of whom, in a few years' time, may feel inspired to become genuine literary voices in their own right.

As for the reading. . . I may not have too large a reference pool, but I feel like we don't have to sound that knell just yet (or dig that grave, indeed). I think it's unfair to assume that all our generation does is vegetate over our phones like brainless zombies. While there certainly are people who avoid reading anything but toothpaste labels like the plague, they're not exclusively a gen-z phenomenon. And on the subject of phones, there are also many young people today who use social media to discuss what they've been reading, or even just to make memes about their favourites. Overall, I think reading is alive and well for the time being.

Do you have any recommendations for this year's candidates?

I don't really feel qualified to give recommendations, but I'd say write something *you'd* like to read. If you wouldn't want to read it, you're probably wasting your time writing it. (Note that this does *not* apply to schoolwork...mostly.) Write for yourself, even if it's weird and niche I guarantee there's *someone* out there who would gladly read it. And write as much as you can. Even if turns out to be mostly gunk there's bound to be a gold nugget somewhere.

Also, read. Read a bit of everything, read the 'classics', read nonfiction, read contemporary voices from all around the world. Don't force yourself to finish something you don't like, but give everything a fair chance and you may be surprised where the journey takes you.

(And if you buy your books new, it would probably be a nice touch to support independent bookstores doing so!)

Most of all, I'd say have fun with your own creativity.

The texts of the winners and participants of all editions of the Laurence Award are available at www.prixlaurence.lu.

Interview with Lynn Reimen, Laureate Prix Laurence 2020, 18-26 years age category

(in Luxembourgish language, available in English on demand)

Wat huet lech deemools motivéiert, beim Prix Laurence matzemaachen?

Ech hu scho säit ech ganz kleng sinn ëmmer gäre Geschichte geschriwwen. Wéi ech méi al gi sinn hunn ech dunn ugefaange, mech fir Poesie z'interesséieren. Eisen Däitschproff huet eis 2017 vum Prix Laurence erzielt, an do hunn ech mir geduecht, ech kéint jo einfach eemol probéieren, zwee Gedichter anzeschécken. Op eemol war ech an der Final an hunn déi drëtt Platz gewonnen... D'läscht Joer wollt ech et dann och eemol bei der Erwuessenenkategorie probéieren.

Wat wor Är Inspiratioun fir dëst Gedicht ze schreiwen?

Kuerz ier ech « Je suis tout ça et plus encore » geschriwwen hunn, hu mir an der Schoul e puer Gedichter iwwert d'Thema Identitéit behandelt an ech hunn och bei engem Danztheaterstéck matgemaach, dat « Identity » heescht a bei dem mir Jonker vill zesummen iwwert d'Iddi vun der Identitéit diskutéiert hunn, wat mech wierklech intresséiert an och dozou bruecht huet, eppes doriwwer ze schreiwen, wat Identitéit fir mech perséinlech ass.

Ären Text wor op Franséisch. A wéi enge Sprooche schreift a liest Dir, hutt Dir do eng Präferenz?

D'Gedicht, dat ech agereecht hunn, war mäin éischt franséisch Gedicht. Virdrunner hunn ech nëmmen op däitsch geschriwwen. Ech fannen awer, datt déi franséisch Sprooch et engem vill méi einfach mëscht, an enger ganz poetescher Sprooch ze schreiwen, wat mir och esou gutt gefält. Dowéinst liesen ech Romaner an Prosatexter am léifsten op Däitsch, während mir franséisch Dichter awer am beschte gefalen an mech och am meeschten inspiréieren.

Wéi hutt Dir de Präis erlieft? Wat huet et lech bruecht? Wéi eng Léieren hutt Dir doraus gezunn?

Ech fannen et ganz flott, datt et beim Prix Laurence net nëmmen drëms geet, en Text anzereeche an dann e Präis ze gewannen, mee och dorëms, en engem Public virzustellen. Doduerch datt ech schonns säit 14 Joer Theater spillen, huet et mir extrem Spaass gemaach, mäin Gedicht op der Bün virzeliesen, an och déi verschidden Texter vun de Finalisten ze héieren, an ze gesinn, wei verschidden eis Texter all waren. Ech hunn an deenen zwee Joer Prix Laurence geleiert, op dat wat ech geschriwwen hunn stolz ze sinn an mech ze freeën, et mat aneren ze deelen, och wann ech do virdrun schrecklech opgereegt sinn. Dat wat et mir bruecht huet, war awer och den Ënnerscheid tëscht der Schauspillerei vun enger Roll an dem Virdroen vu mengem eegene Gedicht, dat zu mir selwer, a net zu enger Roll gehéiert, ze erliewen. Béides fannen ech super intressant a mëscht mir richteg vill Spaass.

Wat sinn Är Pläng fir d'Zukunft? Gesitt Dir do d'Schreiwen éischer als Beruff oder Hobby?

Ech plangen d'nächst Joer Orthophonie ze studéieren; d'Schreiwen wëll ech dann als ganz flott an interessant Hobby fir mech bäibehalen.

Wéi eng Roll spillt de Prix Laurence fir déi jonk Lait haut? Gëtt nach Bicher gelies a vill geschriwwen? Wéi gesitt Dir dat?

Ech fannen, datt de Prix Laurence eng super Méiglechkeet ass, déi Jonk dozou ze bréngen eppes ze schreiwen, awer virun allem och, sech ze traue, dat wat si geschriwwen hunn engem Public an enger Jury ze presentéieren. An eiser Generatioun gëtt ënnerteneen just nach wéineg iwwert d'Liesen an d'Schreiwen geschwat, an ech denken, dass vill Jonker dowéinst nëmmen fir sech eleng schreiwen, an hier Texter kengem weisen. Do fannen ech d'Roll vum Prix Laurence ganz wichteg. Zemoools weist en awer och, datt eis Generatioun ëmmer nach un der Literatur an um fantaséieren interesséiert ass, an net nëmmen virum Ecran hänkt.

Wat kënnt Dir de Kandidaten a Kandidatinnen, déi dëst Joer mat un de Start ginn, mat op de Wee ginn?

Schreift iwwert en Thema, dat iech wierklech intresséiert an inspiréiert an hutt Freed un der Chance, är Gedanken oder Gefiller engem Publikum virstellen ze kënnen. Traut iech an hutt Spaass!

The texts of the winners and participants of all editions of the Laurence Award are available at www.prixlaurence.lu.

Make Your Move

At the launch event of the Prix Laurence 2022 on 24 April 2021 in Bettembourg (L), guests were treated to the premiere of a choreography created exclusively for the seventh edition of the literary competition by Claudia Urhausen and directed by Saïf Eddine Settif.

The choreography is based on elements of traditional dances mixed with modern and dynamic movements. It was inspired by the authenticity and richness of the participating countries, adding the style and vocabulary of the five dancers, creating a true mix that enhances the theme of "Remix Culture".

The dancers were Alicia Cano Smit, Julie Lahure, Vilela Nouredine, Simi Simoes and Nordine Jaouid.

Dancer and choreographer from Luxembourg, Claudia Urhausen has been involved in educational and artistic projects for over ten years. Passionate about art, active in numerous associations and a true jack-of-all-trades, she has just started her residency-mission with the artists' collective "K+A" at the [Annexes of the Bourglinster Castle](#) within the framework of the NEISTART- LËTZEBUERG - KULTUR package.

In addition to the realization of videos and dance performances, she assists and participates in the realization of plays, in particular with Saïf Eddine Settif, director and artistic director of the PATE troupe (petit atelier théâtre Esch), trainer in stage expression and improvisational theater as well as artist within the artist collective "K+A".

The music was composed by Max Hochmuth in close collaboration with Claudia. As with the choreography, the artists were also inspired by folk songs, but they also strongly integrated the concept of "Remix" with current sounds and rhythms, which provide an ideal playground for the choreography and the dancers.

Max Hochmuth is an artist and music producer with "[Unison Studios](#)", a collective of producers with a recording studio at CreativeHub 1535° in Differdange. Max writes and produces music with a multitude of artists and bands while composing soundtracks for visual arts, installations and performances.

A video clip of this realization will soon be visible on the [YouTube page](#) of the municipality of Bettembourg as well as on the Facebook page of [LiteraTour](#). This creation also gives a foretaste of the youth programming by the municipality of Bettembourg in the framework of its participation in Esch2022.

Stay tuned, there's more to come!

Contacts

Press Contact

Municipality of Bettembourg
Public Relations department
Tél. +352 51 80 80 2899
rp@bettembourg.lu
www.bettembourg.lu

Website Prix Laurence 2022

www.prixlaurence.lu

Social Media

Facebook

- [LiteraTour](#)
- [Commune de Bettembourg](#)

Instagram

- [Commune de Bettembourg](#)

YouTube

- [Commune de Bettembourg](#)

Photos & Logos

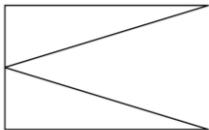
Available on demand at rp@bettembourg.lu



Prix Laurence logo



LiteraTour logo



Kaunas 2022
European Capital of Culture

KAUNAS 2022 (LT) logo



Municipality of Valpaços (P) logo



Municipality of Flaibano (I) logo



Poster Prix Laurence 2022



Flyer Prix Laurence 2022 available in 7 languages



Prix Laurence 2020 – Finalists
12-17 years age category



Prix Laurence 2020 – Finalists
18-26 years age category



Prix Laurence 2020 – Jelena
Thiel, 1st Prize, 12 – 17 years
age category



Prix Laurence 2020 – Lynn
Reimen, 1st Prize, 18 – 26 years
age category



Pit Hoerold, Co-organizer of the
Prix Laurence and President of
the jury



Prix Laurence Trophy



« Make Your Move »

Additional photos available at www.prixlaurence.lu.