# Awards honour leading lights of culture in Flanders



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Flanders' cultural heavyweights gathered in Brussels this week for the annual Ultimas award ceremony. The event honours creators in disciplines including art, architecture, circus and film, and reflects on the sector's achievements over the previous year.

Among the winners were the Ostend Street Orchestra, filmmaker Lukas Dhondt, young Antwerp slam poet Hind Eljadid and the Citizens' Platform for Refugee Support.

"The celebratory presentation of our Ultimas has become an event that is eagerly anticipated by the entire cultural sector," said Flemish culture minister Sven Gatz, who handed out the awards at the ceremony at concert hall Ancienne Belgique on Tuesday. "It is also the occasion par excellence to party with the cultural field as a whole, and, who knows, set up new collaborative projects."

Each winner receives €10,000, a photo and video report on their work and an award statue created by conceptual artist Stefaan Dheedene.

The Ultimas were previously known as the Flemish Culture Awards and began in 2003. They were created to celebrate Flemish artists, or artists living in Flanders, who have made an outstanding contribution to film, stage, music, literature, architecture, design, amateur arts, culture policy, visual arts, cultural enterprise, social-cultural work, immaterial heritage and general cultural services. In 2018 a new category was added: the BILL Award for young artistic talent.

Theatremaker Jan Decorte and actor Sigrid Vinks were awarded the General Cultural Merit prize. Together, the judges said, they have "paved the way for a new form of theatrical narrative and inspired countless performing artists".

This year's other winners are: The Ostend Street Orchestra, architect Marc Dubois, visual artist Otobong Nkanga, circus performer Danny Ronaldo, heritage project Bokrijk Brandmerkt, film director Lukas Dhont, non-profit heritage initiative Reveil, author Peter Verhelst, singer Tamino, performing arts platform d e t h e a t e r m a k e r, Citizens' Platform for Refugee Support and slam poet Hind Eljadid.

*Photo: The laureates gather on stage at Ancienne Belgique*
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