

Hsin-Chien Huang's 'Bodyless' Wins at Paris' NewImages Festival

By Ben Croll



Courtesy of Hsin-Chien Huang

The immersive VR piece “Bodyless,” director [Hsin-Chien Huang](#)’s dreamlike exploration of his own childhood growing up under Taiwanese martial law, took home top honors at Paris’ [NewImages Festival](#) on Friday evening. Along with its newly minted Masque d’Or for best VR work, the 25-minute piece walked away with €6,000 (\$6,978) in prize money.

Led by French music producer and composer Jean-Michel Jarre, this year’s jury – which also included directors Julie Bertuccelli, Jérémy Clapin and Alice Diop alongside actor Vimala Pons – honored two films with a second place tie, offering the special jury prize to both Ainslee Robson’s exploration of Ethiopian-American identity “Ferenj: A Graphic Memoir in VR,” and Fabito Rychter and Amir Admoni’s wryly surrealist “Gravity VR.”

Jarre’s jury also awarded Marie Blondiaux and Charles Ayats’ interactive project “MOA – My Own Assistant,” which was adapted from a novel by French writer Alain Damasio, and which made its world premiere at the NewImages Festival, with the special jury prize for augmented reality.

The three jury prize winners will each receive €3000 (\$3,489) in prize money.

On the industry side, NewImages’ second XR Financing Market hosted 40 project pitches, with Nihaarika Negi’s immersive theatre/VR hybrid piece “A City of Foxes,” produced Tamanoir Immersive Studio, winning the prize for this year’s top project in development. Selected by a panel of industry decision makers, the project will be included in the Kaleidoscope Slate Funding program for 2020.

For the second year in a row, NewImages partnered with the Kaohsiung Film Festival and the French Office in Taipei for a three-month VR residency program that includes mentoring sessions and €30,000 (\$34,894) in funding. This year’s laureate is director Hayoun Kwon, who is mounting his project “The Guardians of Jade Mountain” with Balthazar Auxietre and Richard Turco of Innerspace VR.

The third edition of NewImages began on Sept. 23 and will run until Sept. 27.

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[Hsin-Chien Huang, NewImages Festival](#)
