



## SUBMISSION PHASE FOR THE ERICH SOKOL AWARD BEGINS

International prize for satirical drawing presented by the Province of Lower Austria in cooperation with the Karikaturmuseum Krems

Krems, 01 June 2026. From 1 June to 31 December 2026, artists worldwide are invited to submit their portfolios of caricatures and satirical graphics for the SOKOL – Prize for Digital Caricature, Critical Drawing and Satire. The prize has been awarded since 2018 in a five-year cycle by the Province of Lower Austria in cooperation with the Karikaturmuseum Krems. A new focus is on works that critically engage with artificial intelligence. The award ceremony will take place as part of a gala in July 2027. From that time on, the prize-winning works will be on display at the Karikaturmuseum Krems until July 2028. The exhibition is conceived as a survey of current caricature strategies in the field of tension between digitalization, the public sphere and satire.

The SOKOL Prize honours its namesake Erich Sokol – an artist internationally renowned for his innovative and forward-looking approach. Under the patronage of Annemarie Sokol, widow and estate administrator of Erich Sokol, an internationally composed jury selects the prizewinners. The jury is made up of artists, media experts and representatives of the Department of Art and Culture of the Province of Lower Austria as well as the Karikaturmuseum Krems.

*“With its third edition, the Erich Sokol Prize has already become firmly established and underscores its international standing. We are once again looking forward to numerous submissions, drawn traditionally or digitally, from all continents. For the first time, we are placing a special focus on a critical examination of artificial intelligence and a reflection on its processes”,* explains Director Gottfried Gusenbauer from the Karikaturmuseum Krems.

*“Where algorithms smooth things out, caricature is allowed to sharpen them. Especially in dealing with artificial intelligence, it becomes clear how relevant critical drawing is today – as commentary, as contradiction and as a precise form of pointed exaggeration,”* says curator Anna Steinmair from the Karikaturmuseum Krems.

The SOKOL – Prize for Digital Caricature, Critical Drawing and Satire is awarded in four categories with a total sum of more than € 30,000: the SOKOL Recognition Award for lifetime achievement or outstanding accomplishments (€ 11,000), the

SOKOL Main Award for Digital Caricature (€ 11,000), the SOKOL Advancement Award (€ 4,000), and two AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Lower Austria scholarships.

**Call for entries in detail:**

<https://www.kunstmeile.at/en/institutions/karikaturmuseum/erich-sokol-prize/open-call-2027>

The prize's namesake, Erich Sokol, is regarded in the fields of caricature and satire – and above all in his supreme discipline, portrait caricature – as a pioneer of a new Austrian school. Even as a young man, he was seen as a visionary and a role model for younger generations. His decades-long career as an illustrator for *Playboy* magazine began during a period of study in the USA in 1957. The former Art Director of ORF is equally well known for the “ÖVP-Tant” in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, the ORF station logo, the so-called ORF eye, and his caricatures of Bruno Kreisky. His covers for the Austrian theatre and culture magazine *Die Bühne* (since 1982 *Bühne*) are legendary. In 1971 he was awarded the Goldene Kamera. Sokol received the Golden Medal of Honour of the City of Vienna in 1982 and the Nestroy Ring in 1986. He created numerous front pages for the *Kronen Zeitung*. Further works by Erich Sokol appeared, among others, in *Die Presse*, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *profil*.

The SOKOL – Prize for Digital Caricature, Critical Drawing and Satire reflects this artist's outstanding achievements and highlights his cross-media and modern working methods. The prize helps to promote the work and name of Erich Sokol internationally.

The wide-reaching publication of critical drawing cannot be taken for granted. It is therefore important to make a contribution. With the SOKOL Prize, the Province of Lower Austria and the Karikaturmuseum Krems are sending out a signal of international relevance. The partners promote engagement with forward-looking media – such as digital caricature – and with critical discourse on artificial intelligence. Beyond the awards themselves, the SOKOL Prize understands itself as part of an international network that keeps artistic exchange alive and makes art visible as a socially effective practice. It strengthens dialogue and fosters sustainable relationships between artists and institutions across national borders.

**Winners 2018 and 2023**

The Erich Sokol Prize was first awarded in 2018 to Sebastian Krüger (Germany, SOKOL Recognition Award for Outstanding Accomplishments), Thomas Fluharty (USA, SOKOL Main Award), Nadia Khiari (Tunisia, SOKOL Advancement Award), Frank Hoppmann (Germany, AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Lower Austria scholarship) and Ramize Erer (Turkey, AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Lower Austria scholarship).

Gerald Scarfe (United Kingdom, SOKOL Recognition Award for Lifetime Achievement), Florian Satzinger (Austria, SOKOL Main Award), Liz Montague (USA, SOKOL Advancement Award), the artist duo EtchingRoom1 (Ukraine, AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Lower Austria scholarship) and Ghita Ait Bensalah (Morocco, AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Lower Austria scholarship) emerged as the prizewinners of the Erich Sokol Prize 2023.

**Press images can be found here:**

<https://celum.noeku.at/pinaccess/showpin.do?pinCode=sokol-preis>