



## International Balzan Foundation

Press Release - 8 September 2025

### 2025 Balzan Prize

## **The Search for Excellence in the Past Heritage of the West, the Challenges of the Present and Glimpses of the Future**

***750,000 Swiss Francs (approximately 800,000 EUR, 940,000 USD; 695,000 GBP ), half of which must be invested in research***

Today, in Milan, the President of the International Balzan Foundation “Prize”, Maria Cristina Messa, and the Chair of the Balzan General Prize Committee, Marta Cartabia, announced the winners of the four 2025 Balzan Prizes for science and culture, two in physical and natural sciences and two in the humanities.

Democracy, art, time, and gene therapy are the four subject areas from which the candidates were chosen – subject areas which represent spheres of knowledge that are highly relevant for our world today and for the progress of humanity.

### **The Winners of the Four 2025 Balzan Prizes**

- **Josiah Ober** (USA) - Stanford University, for **Classics: Athenian Democracy Revisited**
- **Rosalind Krauss** (USA) - Columbia University, for **History of Contemporary Art**
- **Christophe Salomon** (France) - Laboratoire Kastler Brossel Paris, for **Atoms and Ultra-Precise Measurement of Time**
- **Carl H. June** (USA) - Perelman School of Medicine - University of Pennsylvania, for **Gene and Gene-Modified Cell Therapy**

The Balzan General Prize Committee based its selections on the soundness, timeliness, and coherence of the candidates' research, identifying specific factors of excellence in their respective fields of study that might contribute to a deeper understanding today's world and foster the advancement of knowledge without borders, according to the principles that inspired the institution of the Balzan Foundation.

Interdisciplinarity is a factor that the Committee pays particular attention to in evaluating the nominations it receives, as it upholds the conviction that only through the fruitful cross-fertilisation of knowledge and research from different fields of study is it possible to tackle the complex problems posed by nature and society.

The four subjects in which the Balzan Prizes are awarded change every year. They are chosen from two general categories: literature, moral sciences, and the arts; and physical, mathematical, and natural sciences, and medicine. The rotation of subject areas makes it possible to give preference to new or emerging lines of research and to support important areas of study that are often neglected by other great international forms of recognition.

The value of each 2025 Balzan Prize is **750,000 Swiss Francs** (approx. 800,000 EUR, 940,000 USD, 695,000 GBP), half of which must be allocated to research projects carried out by young researchers.

The awards ceremony for the 2025 Balzan Prizes will be held in Bern on 14 November in the presence of the President of the National Council of the Swiss Confederation, Maja Riniker.

At the conclusion of the announcement of the 2025 Balzan Prizes, the Chair of the General Prize Committee, Marta Cartabia, announced the **subject areas of the awards for the coming year, 2026:**

- The Social Science of Digital Technology
- Jewish Studies
- Biodegradable Polymers from Renewable Sources
- Molecular Evolution: Decoding Patterns of Genomic Change

**In 2026 the special Prize for Humanity, Peace, and Fraternity among Peoples will also be awarded.**



## International Balzan Foundation

### **The Motivations for the 2025 Balzan Prizes**

to **Josiah Ober** for Classics: Athenian Democracy Revisited

*For his groundbreaking research on the origins and functioning of Athenian democracy in classical times, which has had an influence far beyond the academic world. Ober has identified the factors behind its success using a refreshing, interdisciplinary approach that constantly draws comparisons with the present day, thus bringing these findings into contemporary socio-political debate*

to **Rosalind Krauss** for History of Contemporary Art

*For her outstanding scholarly achievements and her foundational role in the establishment of contemporary art as a field of research*

to **Christophe Salomon** for Atoms and Ultra-Precise Measurement of Time

*For his pioneering contribution in paving the way for the application of ultra-cold atoms to the creation of atomic clocks which have revolutionised the measurement of time*

to **Carl H. June** for Gene and Gene-Modified Cell Therapy

*Carl June has invented and developed a genetically engineered cellular therapy (CAR-T cells) which has cured fatal haematological cancers and holds promise for treatment of autoimmune diseases and solid tumours. His work has paved the way to the new realm of cellular therapy and synthetic biology with a broad impact in Medicine*

### **Facts and Figures of the Balzan Prize from 1961 to the Present Day**

- Prizes awarded: 171
- in the humanities: 90 -in the sciences: 81
- People: 189, from 32 Countries
- Cumulative value of the Prizes awarded until 2024: 105,475,000 CHF
- of which 41,750,000 have been invested in research

*The International Balzan Foundation was established in 1957 to support culture, science, and the most meritorious humanitarian initiatives promoting peace and fraternity among peoples. At the request of the Foundation, nominations are submitted by academic and cultural institutions around the world. The winners of the Balzan Prizes allocate half of the prize money to research projects carried out by young scientists and scholars. The Balzan International Foundation operates through two institutional offices, one in Milan and one in Zurich. The Balzan 'Prize' Foundation in Milan, through its General Prize Committee composed of internationally renowned members from all over Europe, chooses the subjects for the awards and selects the candidates. The Balzan 'Fund' Foundation, based in Zurich, administers the estate left by Eugenio Balzan.*

*Fondazione Internazionale Balzan – ufficio stampa t 02 7600 2212 m 334 1687132 [ufficio.stampa@balzan.it](mailto:ufficio.stampa@balzan.it)*