

Aesthetica Art Prize Winners Announced 2017

The winners were announced for the Main Prize and the Emerging Prize at last night's Private View and Prize Giving Ceremony at the Aesthetica Art Prize Exhibition within York Art Gallery.

Adam Basanta was awarded the Main Art Prize of £5,000, courtesy of Hiscox, for his piece *Curtain (white)* 2016 a sound installation considers the ubiquitous white earbud headphone, an everyday device that creates an interior environment in which one can retreat from the external world. Within this personalised bubble, the headphones function as a visual "do not disturb" sign.

Curtain (white) plays on this by producing a three-metre-long "curtain" which sections the space, both visually and sonically. Patterns of white noise sweep across the installation, which, despite being synthetically produced, resemble waves, wind, rain and insects. *Curtain (white)* was made possible through support from the Canada Council for the Arts and The Agosto Foundation.

Maryam Tafakory received the Emerging Art Prize of £1,000, courtesy of Hiscox. Part-moving image, part-performance, Maryam Tafakory's *Absent Wound* draws on self-censorship, womanhood and rites of passage, interweaving poetry and rituals whilst combining a minimalist syntax and figurative mode of representation.

In *Absent Wound*, a "Zoorkhaneh" ("house of strength") presents the contrasts between two opposites. The physical strength and expectations of wrestling are brought into proximity with a female protagonist who faces emergent womanhood at the advent of her menstrual cycle. The contradictory interrelationship between the social and textual disturbs stereotypes and gender-specific roles.

The Aesthetica Art Prize shortlisted artists are: Adam Basanta Adam Niklewicz, Alinka Echeverría, breadedEscalope, Dylan Martinez, Emmanuelle Moureaux, Jasmina Cibic, Judith Jones, Julio Bittencourt, Lesley Hilling, Maryam Tafakory, Sara Morawetz, Stanza, Stephen Johnston, Toby Dye and Webb-Ellis.

Cherie Federico, Director of the Aesthetica Art Prize, says: "It is with great pleasure that we showcase the 16 shortlisted artists at York Art Gallery. This year's exhibition brings together an inspiring collection of innovative projects by some of today's leading artists, and we are delighted to showcase these works to audiences and hope that they will find them inspiring and insightful."

The winners were chosen by a panel of judges comprising industry experts from across the creative sector. The Jury included **Whitney Hintz**, Independent Advisor and Curator of the [Hiscox Collection](#); **Alistair Payne**, Head, School of Fine Art, [Glasgow School of Art](#); **Olivier Richon**, Photography Lecturer, [Royal College of Art](#); **Reyahn King**, Chief Executive, [York Museums Trust](#); **Jonathan Watkins**, Director, [Ikon Gallery](#); **Susanna Brown**, Curator of Photographs, [V&A](#); **Rachel Ara**, [Artist](#), Aesthetica Art Prize Winner 2016; **Eleanor Clayton**, Curator, [The Hepworth Wakefield](#); **Cherie Federico**, Co-founder & Managing Director of [Aesthetica](#).

A series of lunchtime talks will take place at York Art Gallery throughout the exhibition, offering opportunities for visitors to exchange ideas, gain insight into current practices and discuss the works on show with artists, academics and curators.

Aesthetica Art Prize Exhibition, 26 May – 10 September, York Art Gallery, Exhibition Square, York YO1 7EW.

For more information on the exhibition and talks programme, visit www.aestheticamagazine.com/art-prize/exhibition-2017

For opening times and admission details, visit www.yorkartgallery.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

1. Hosted by Aesthetica Magazine, the Aesthetica Art Prize is a celebration of excellence in art from across the world. Entries are open until 31 August 2017. www.aestheticamagazine.com/artprize [@AestheticaMag](https://www.facebook.com/aestheticamagazine)
2. The **Judging Panel** enhances its position in the industry, bringing together specialists from leading cultural institutions. Judges: **Whitney Hintz**, Independent Advisor and Curator of the [Hiscox Collection](#); **Alistair Payne**, Head, School of Fine Art, Glasgow School of Art; **Olivier Richon**, Photography Lecturer, Royal College of Art; **Reyahn King**, Chief Executive, York Museums Trust; **Jonathan Watkins**, Director, Ikon Gallery; **Susanna Brown**, Curator of Photographs, V&A; **Rachel Ara**, Artist, Aesthetica Art Prize Winner 2016; **Eleanor Clayton**, Curator, The Hepworth Wakefield; **Cherie Federico**, Co-founder & Managing Director of [Aesthetica](#). To see Judges' biographies, visit www.aestheticamagazine.com/art-prize/judging-panel
3. The award attracts thousands of entries in a range of innovative media from locations as diverse as Australia, Germany, India, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the UK and the USA. Previous finalists include [John Keane](#), former official British war artist, currently represented by Flowers Gallery in London; [Julia Vogl](#), shortlisted for Saatchi Gallery and Channel 4's New Sensations; [Ingrid Hu](#), former designer at the Lubetkin-winning Heatherwick Studio; [Marcus Jansen](#), a leading modern expressionist; and [Bernat Millet](#), shortlisted for National Portrait Gallery's Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize.
4. **Sponsors and Partners:** Hiscox, York St John University, Spectrum, Arts Council England, V&A, The Hepworth Wakefield, Ikon, York Museums Trust, Prestel, Winsor & Newton, The Glasgow School of Art, Royal College of Art.
5. **Hiscox** offers a range of [business insurance](#) policies to cover the liabilities and property risks of small businesses and consultants in the UK, as well as profession-specific policies that you can tailor to suit the risks that your business faces. Hiscox also provides specialist [insurance](#) cover for homes and their contents, valuables and collections. For more information, visit www.hiscox.co.uk
6. *Future Now, 100 Contemporary Artists* is now available to purchase at the exhibition and online: www.aestheticamagazine.com/shop