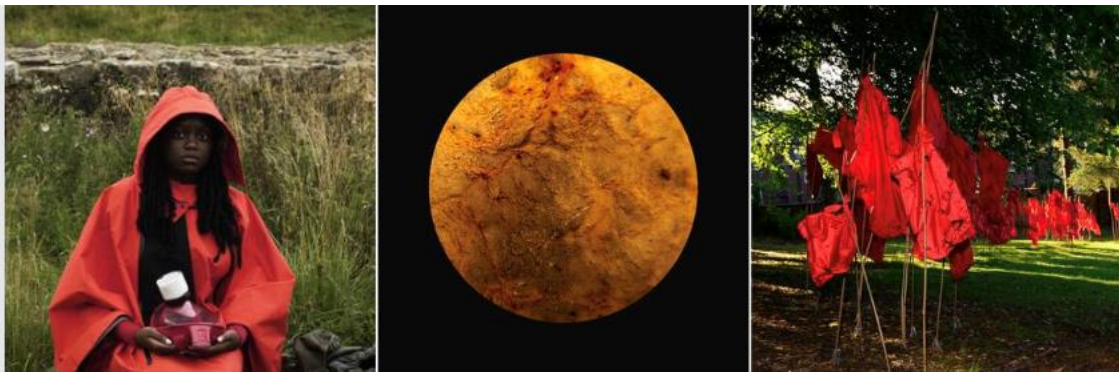


Press release
February 2023

York Art Gallery

Creative Visionaries: The Aesthetica Art Prize Exhibition 2023

The 2023 Aesthetica Art Prize Exhibition, a celebration of international contemporary art, returns to York Art Gallery between 24 March and 4 June 2023.



The 2023 exhibition brings together 21 talented artists in a show that offers creativity as a form of expression, with projects spanning the boundaries of genre – from painting, photography and sculpture to installation, mixed-media and video. These works survey the ethics of representation, mass digitisation, globalisation, diaspora and the fragility of our planet.

This year's shortlist of international artists takes the temperature of today's world and offers a new set of solutions as a tonic to life in the 21st century. For example, **Lavinia Keller's** *NFMe* discloses the invisible impact of technology with a sensitivity that invites viewers to rethink ownership and identity. Her work sits between analogue and digital

spaces. It is dedicated to capturing the audience's emotions, which outlast the rapid pace of contemporary media culture.

Larry Achiampong's *Wayfinder* dissects ideas surrounding class, gender, cross-cultural and digital identity. The film examines his communal and personal heritage – in particular, the intersection between popular culture and the residues of colonialism. These investigations survey constructions of “the self” through the activity of splicing the audible and visual materials of personal and interpersonal archives, offering multiple perspectives that reveal the deeply entrenched inequalities in society.

Elsewhere **Becky Probert** uses the camera as a conduit to question the vastness of outer space. *Invisible Planets* was created through a close-up photographic exploration of details and patterns within the immediate environment. This is reflective of the way that the particles and patterns that make up the cosmos are echoed between the smallest and largest scales.

For the first time the exhibition will also incorporate part of the Artist's Garden behind York Art Gallery with *The Red Bags* (2022) by Scotland-based artist **Bea Last**. The eye-catching installation is both a reaction to and a statement of issues affecting society at large, such as war, displacement and the climate crisis. There is a contrast between the fragility and strength, asking - what does it mean to be human.

Cherie Federico, Director of the Art Prize, notes: " Art is a way to convene and make sense of the here and now at this critical juncture in history. The impact that art has on society is

profound. It's transformational and invites conversations that challenge the status-quo. Art offers hope and solutions to problems that are bigger than any one individual or country. The artists in the Aesthetica Art Prize 2023 demonstrate the power of art to present reality and question how the past is remembered. I am thrilled to bring you this year's nominees."

Morgan Feely, Senior Curator of York Art Gallery, says: "The Aesthetica Art Prize will bring together a range of exciting art to York Art Gallery. The themes covered within the exhibition are complex, thought-provoking and inspiring. We look forward to welcoming visitors to see for themselves the huge range of talent in this show."

The Aesthetica Art Prize is an annual platform for the world's best artists. The award's alumni continue to demonstrate excellence across the globe, from residencies and renowned awards to publications and must-see exhibitions. Their work has been shown at major international institutions, include Centre Pompidou, Foam Amsterdam, MOMA PS1, Tate Modern and V&A. They have won, or been nominated for a range of prestigious awards, including the Jarman Award, John Moore's Painting Prize, Sony World Photography Awards and Taylor Wessing Portrait Prize. Collectively, they have achieved publication and further recognition in *Frieze*, *Art Review*, *The Guardian*, *The New Times* and *Vice*. Most recently, shortlisted artist **Jenn Nkiru** won a Grammy, **Terrance Musekiwa** has exhibited at the 2022 *Venice Biennale*, and **Reuben Wu** was commissioned for the cover of *National Geographic*.

The Aesthetica Art Prize Exhibition runs between 24 March and 4 June 2023 at York Art Gallery and is a testament to shared creativity in a time of rapid change. Entry to the exhibition is free and can be booked in advance on the York Art Gallery website.

The Aesthetica Art Prize Main Prize and Emerging Prize winners will be announced on 23 March 2023.

Aesthetica and York Museums Trust have been working in partnership for 11 years to deliver the Aesthetica Art Prize as part of their annual programme.

-Ends-

Image details:

1. Larry Achiampong, Still from *Wayfinder*, (2022). Single channel. 4K colour film. 83 min. Courtesy the artist and Copperfield London.
2. Becky Probert, *Draugr* (2021). Dimensions variable.
3. Bea Last, *The Red Bags*, (2022). Repurposed canvas / bamboo / bullet holes. Dimensions variable.

Notes for Editors

For further information and requests please contact: Siona Mackelworth, York Art Gallery | siona.mackelworth@ymt.org.uk

Cherie Federico, Director of the Art Prize, is available for interview on request.

For queries related to the Aesthetica Art Prize: contact artprize@aestheticamagazine.com

York Art Gallery Opening Times: Wednesday – Sunday 10am-4pm in March and 10 am – 5 pm from April and on Bank Holiday Mondays during May

Aesthetica

- To learn more about the 2023 Aesthetica Art Prize, click [here](#).
- To download press images, click [here](#).
- The Aesthetica Art Prize Exhibition runs 24 March – 4 June at York Art Gallery.

- A new edition of the Future Now Anthology will be published to coincide with the exhibition launch, profiling all of 2023's shortlisted and longlisted Aesthetica Art Prize artists. Available to purchase for £12.95 (+p&p).
- The Prize is a celebration of emerging and established artists from across the world, inviting audiences to be inspired by a wealth of ideas and perspectives. The £10,000 award celebrates contemporary art in all its forms, offering opportunities for publication and exhibition at a major public gallery. Entries are open for the 2024 edition until 31 August. To find out more, click [here](#).
- The Art Prize is hosted Aesthetica: www.aestheticamagazine.com
- The 2023 Aesthetica Art Prize Judging Panel is: Baff Akoto, Artist; Bindi Vora, Curator at Autograph, London; Cherie Federico, Co-founder & Managing Director, Aesthetica; Damon Jackson-Waldock, Programme Director, The Art House Wakefield; Hannah Starkey, Photographer; Harriet Cooper, Visual Arts Curator; Luke Kemp, Associate Curator, Barbican; Mariama Attah, Curator at Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool; **Nephertiti Oboshie Schandorf**, Producer, Commissioner & Artist; **Olivia Aherne**, Curator at Chisenhale Gallery, London; **Sophie Bownes**, Programme Co-ordinator at New Contemporaries; **Sutapa Biswas**, Artist; **Yukako Ta**

2023 Shortlist Artists:

1. **Ada Cotton and Etienne Joseph** *Progress 1968* (2019)
2. **Bea Last** *The Red Bags* (2022)
3. **Becky Probert** *Invisible Planets* (2019-2022)
4. **Caro Williams** *In the White Dawn* (2022)
5. **Computational Design & Visualization Lab.** *The Middle Passage* (2020)
6. **Dario Pilato** *MonoKinderchromie* (2021)
7. **Debi Cornwall** *Pineland/Hollywood* (2021)
8. **Gareth Phillips** *Caligo* (2022-2023)
9. **Johanna Marie Schimming** *97* (2020-2021)
10. **Julia Fullerton-Batten** *Contortion* (2021)
11. **Kristina Varaksina** *Self Reflection* (2021)
12. **Larry Achiampong** *Wayfinder* (2022)
13. **Lisa Traxler** *Shape Shifter* (2022)
14. **Rosie Sherwood** *The Seagrass Walk* (2021-2022)

15. **Steph Tari Odu** *The Language* (2022)
16. **Valentina Ferrandes** *Daaphne* (2022)
17. **Zoe Childerley** *Beneath the Waves* (2018-2022)
18. **Hope Strickland** *I'll Be Back!* (2022)
19. **Jacob Talbot** *Nurture; Nature* (2022)
20. **Lavinia Keller** *NFMe* (2022)
21. **Wen Ching Hao** *Observation-Station* (2019-2022)

York Art Gallery

York Art Gallery's collection of paintings spans more than 600 years and works range from 14th century Italian panels and 17th century Dutch masterpieces to Victorian narrative paintings and 20th century works by LS Lowry and David Hockney. The Gallery also holds the most extensive and representative collection of British Studio Ceramics, thanks to the acquisition of collections from Dean Milner-White, WA Ismay and Henry Rothschild and the recent long-term loan of Anthony Shaw's collection. Highlights are on show in the Centre of Ceramic Art (CoCA). The Gallery and its collections are cared for by the charity York Museums Trust, established in 2002. For more information visit www.yorkartgallery.org.uk