



New East London Art Prize announces shortlist from an impressive near 700 entries

Bow Arts' is delighted to announce the shortlist of 12 east London-based artists for the new East London Art Prize; **Alaa Alsaraji, Kat Anderson, David Aston, Lulu Bennett, Damien Cifelli, Phoebe Collings-James, Sophie Cunningham, Cora Sehgal Cuthbert, Ufuoma Essi, Woo Jin Joo, Lulu Wang and Xinyao Yu.**

Selected from an impressive 670 entries – roughly 17% of artists working in east London today – the Prize submissions were encouragingly reflective of east London's diversity, with one third of entrants identifying as Black, Asian or ethnically diverse and including work from across the visual arts spectrum.

The highly respected selection panel, made up of artist Larry Achiampong, art critic and broadcaster, Louisa Buck, Ellie Pennick, Director of east London's Guts Gallery, and curator and Director of The Line, Megan Piper, were impressed by the quality of submissions but managed to whittle them down to a final list of 12 for a striking and thought-provoking inaugural shortlist exhibition.

Aiming to celebrate one of the most vibrant cultural hubs in Europe, the Prize's shortlist includes artists born in South Korea and China, as well as those local to east and southeast London. Themes explored in the shortlisted works included cultural displacement, the shared histories of black British women, isolation and belonging within Muslim communities, disability and navigating everyday life as a disabled person. There was also a broad range and exploration of media in the shortlist, with film, ceramic, painting, performance, and sculpture all included.

All shortlisted artworks will be presented in an exhibition at Bow Arts' prestigious Nunnery Gallery in January 2023 where the overall winner of a £15,000 cash prize will be announced. In addition to the cash award, the winner will receive a solo exhibition at the Nunnery Gallery in 2024, developed in conjunction with Bow Arts and run as part of the Gallery programme. A second prize of a year's free studio space at Bow Arts, equivalent to £2,000, will also be awarded. The winners will be announced at the shortlist show in January.

Sponsored by Minerva and supported by East Bank and other east London based partners including V&A East, Whitechapel Art Gallery, UCL, LCF, and LLDC, the Olympic Park Charity, as well as the British Council and Dulux, the Prize is designed to celebrate and showcase the quality of art made by professional artists living or working in east London.

Sophie Hill, Director of Arts & Events at Bow Arts said: *"We were bowled over by the sheer number of submissions to our first East London Art Prize. The shortlisted artists represent a stellar line-up with original and thought-provoking works which cleverly and creatively probe important societal issues. The works use humour, personal experience, documentary interviews, pain and a re-imagining of our world to create their unique narratives; the coming shortlist exhibition in the Nunnery Gallery will be very special indeed"*

Louisa Buck, writer and broadcaster said: *"It's been really interesting going through the submissions, I use the word diversity not just in terms of medium and method but also in terms of content and the representation of every kind of sexual or ethnic background. All sorts of extraordinary stories have been told - expressions of the sheer range of what art can communicate. The shortlist truly demonstrates what an incredibly creative destination East London is."*



Larry Achiampong, artist said: *"I think the thing I've enjoyed the most is seeing the high level of tenacity and hunger in the submissions; anyone coming to see the shortlist exhibition in January 2023 will equally be impressed by this. They all have strong ambition in what they're creating and display a hunger for conversation. I think that's really important in these polarising times within the UK, let alone the world"*

Megan Piper, Director and Co-founder of The Line said: *"A prize like this is important because it's open to all artists - working in different mediums and at different points and in their careers. It's about opening up opportunities; not only is there a substantial cash 1st prize with exhibition at the Nunnery, but there is also year-long studio space for the runner up and group exhibition for all the finalists."*

Bow Arts has been at the centre of the cultural community of east London for 27 years as a vital provider of studio spaces, and currently supports a community of over 400 artists with affordable, secure and creative workspaces, as well as affordable artist housing schemes. The Bow Arts Prize is an opportunity to shine a light on the work of this important and much-loved east London institution, as well as providing a valuable opportunity for artists across the area.

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Notes to Editors

East London Art Prize Shortlist Exhibition

20 January – 19 February 2023 (press and private view, Thursday 19 January)
Nunnery Gallery, 181 Bow Road, E3 2SJ

About the Selection Panel

Larry Achiampong

Larry Achiampong is a British Ghanaian artist whose work examines his communal and personal heritage – in particular, the intersection between pop culture and the postcolonial position, seeking to reveal the entrenched socio-political contradictions in contemporary society.

Achiampong has worked on commissions, residencies and exhibitions with major institutions both in the UK and internationally including Tate, the Venice and Singapore Biennales, Somerset House and Art on the Underground (his commission for Westminster Station, Pan African Flags for the Relic Travellers' Alliance, was installed until February 2020). In 2022 his work will be the subject of a major solo exhibition presented by Turner Contemporary, which will tour to MK Gallery, Milton Keynes and BALTIC, Newcastle.

Louisa Buck

Louisa Buck is a writer and broadcaster on contemporary art. She has been Contemporary Art Correspondent and Contributing Editor for The Art Newspaper since 1997 and is a regular reviewer on BBC radio and TV.

Her books include *Moving Targets 2: A User's Guide to British Art Now* (Tate 2000); *Market Matters: The Dynamics of the Contemporary Art Market* (Arts Council England 2004) and *Owning Art: The Contemporary Art Collector's Handbook* (co-authored with Judith Greer) (Cultureshock Media 2006). Louisa was a judge for the 2005 Turner Prize.

Ellie Pennick

Director and Founder of Guts Gallery, Ellie Pennick is one of the youngest gallerists navigating the art world today. As a working-class, queer Northerner with no art background, Pennick's footing in the art world came through her frustrations at the politics of the arts education system, and lack of opportunities available. After receiving a place at a renowned institution in London, but unable to accept her place due to her financial status, Pennick began to question the wider, social austerity within the arts. Pennick launched Guts to generate a fair



art-business model "worth far more importance to me than a piece of paper with a Masters grade on it", and to champion emerging artists, helping artists to demand respect - and ownership - they deserve.

Megan Piper

Megan Piper is the Co-Founder and Director of London's public art walk, The Line, which opened in 2015. Connecting Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2, its outdoor exhibition programme offers a journey through a dynamic urban landscape where everyone can explore art, nature and heritage for free. Prior to setting up The Line, Megan ran The Piper Gallery in Fitzrovia.

More about The East London Arts Prize

The East London Art Prize is open to artists currently living or working in an 'E' postcode London area. Submitted work can be in any medium and artist collectives and joint submissions will also be accepted.

The East London Art Prize is a new biennial event, with prize exhibition and open call taking place on alternate years. The winner's exhibition will be staged at the Nunnery Gallery in January 2024. The next open call will be Spring 2024.

About Bow Arts

Bow Arts was established as an educational arts charity in 1995 and currently runs 13 different studio sites across east London, two affordable artist housing schemes and the Nunnery Gallery, a contemporary art gallery which supports a diverse range of local, national and international exhibitions and events.

Bow Arts Learning runs an innovative programme of workshops, projects and training in schools, developing confidence, skills and imagination, valuing the impact that creativity can have on learning. Our work makes learning accessible and directly impacts on children and young people's attainment and wellbeing.

Bow Arts has an incredible reach and following from artists across east London and beyond, including a 6,000-strong mailing list, just under 85,000 twitter followers and over 35k website views a month.

bowarts.org | @BowArts

About Minerva

Founded in 2013, Minerva provides executive search and leadership services for clients across the cultural, social impact and education sectors. We stand out for our commitment to diversity, leadership development and supporting governance.

Our commitment to art has been at the heart of the firm since we started, including previously sponsoring the FBA Futures exhibition at the Mall Galleries and working with the Van Gogh House in Brixton supporting summer residencies.