



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Bow Arts announces shortlist for 2025 East London Art Prize



Left to right: Laisul Hoque, *An Ode to All the Flavours*, 2024; Yang Zou, *I love you, life. I hope it's great again*, 2024; Kuda Mushangi, *The Question*, 2023.

Bow Arts is delighted to announce the 12 shortlisted artists for the second iteration of the East London Art Prize, established in 2023 with the aim of celebrating and promoting the diverse art and talent of east London.

The shortlisted artists, chosen from over 870 submissions by artists and collectives living or working within the 'E' postcode, were selected by panelists Jonny Tanna (Founder, Harlesden High Street), Louise Benson (Director of Digital, ArtReview), Phoebe Collings-James (artist), and Sam Wilkinson (Head of Public Art, UCL Culture).

The shortlisted artists are: **Darcey Fleming, dmstfctn, Eugene Macki, Fatima Ali, Gusty Ferro, Joseph Ijoyemi, Kuda Mushangi, Laisul Hoque, Liang-Jung Chen, Lydia Newman, Mo Langmuir, and Yang Zou.**

Represented in the shortlist are themes including migration, African diasporic perspectives, microhistories, mental health, social justice, dynamics of public space, hyperlocality, and the deployment of political narratives through cultural production. This diverse thematic selection is mirrored in an equally varied range of media, with submitted works spanning painting, sculpture, film, installation, and performance.



The shortlisted artists will present their artworks at a shortlist exhibition in late January 2025, where the winner of the East London Art Prize will be announced on opening night. The Prize winner will be awarded £15,000 and a solo exhibition at the Nunnery Gallery, to be developed with Bow Arts' Director of Arts & Events, Sophie Hill, and taking place in early 2026.

The runner up will receive a year's free studio space at one of Bow Arts' studio sites. Mentoring and career development opportunities are also provided for the entire Prize shortlist during the year following the shortlist exhibition, including opportunities to get involved in the East London Art Prize events programme.

The winner of the inaugural East London Art Prize (2023-24) was filmmaker Kat Anderson, whose exhibition *Mark of Cane* was on show at Nunnery Gallery from 9 February until 21 April 2024. The second prize went to multidisciplinary artist Cora Sehgal-Cuthbert.

**Sophie Hill, Director of Arts & Events at Bow Arts, said:**

*"The stories told and the themes explored across the shortlist truly represent the excitement, energy and diversity of art being made in east London – a snapshot of why this area of London is so important to the development of contemporary art today.*

*The shortlist draws on the true power of different media to evocatively tell a story – from Laisul Hoque's food display summoning memories of her father, to Joseph Ijoyemi's metallic origami using the same Alumbro metal that was used on the Cutty Sark."*

**Jonny Tanna, Founder of Harlesden High Street, said:**

*"The East London Art Prize is about giving access and platforming to people from East London; newer artists, older artists, in a wide variety... It was good to give a platform to people who are what some might call outsider artists, too, who haven't had a formal art school education or training"*



**Louise Benson, Director of Digital at ArtReview, said:**

*"It's a very diverse group of entries, which definitely reflects the multiculturalism of East London, as well as a broad range of practices and backgrounds in terms of the work that artists do outside of their practice – whether that's as a cleaner or a student or working in many other arts organisations today."*

*"The Prize has a completely open submission and I think there's something really encouraging about that, where there are no barriers to entry and it's an opportunity for artists who might not find a platform or voice otherwise to get their work seen."*

**Phoebe Collings-James, artist, said:**

*"I'm really looking forward to seeing the works in dialogue with each other. There are lots of works across mediums that we really felt lit up on their own, but also really spoke to one another in a way that was often sensitive and profound, and had a lot of energy and force and integrity...so I'm excited to see that all come together."*

**Sam Wilkinson, Head of Public Art, UCL Culture, said:**

*"East London is very, very important in terms of its cultural landscape – and we need to celebrate, [to] keep reassuring and building on that, and generate opportunities for people to continue to live and make work and present their work in East London."*

*"I've always known that East London has an incredible wealth of artistic practitioners across all sorts of disciplines, and the snapshot that we've looked at today really celebrates the quality of work of those artists."*

Bow Arts is firmly rooted in the fabric of east London's cultural landscape, providing affordable studio spaces to local artists for the past 30 years. The East London Art Prize is sponsored by Minerva and Prue MacLeod, and supported by a network of local supporting partners, including The British Council, Dulux, The Line, London College of Fashion, London Legacy Development Corporation, UCL East, V&A East and Whitechapel Gallery.

**ENDS**



## Notes to editors

### 2025 East London Art Prize shortlist exhibition

**31 January – 13 April 2025**

Private view Thursday 30 January, 6–9pm

Nunnery Gallery, 181 Bow Road, London E3 2SJ

Opening hours: 10am–4pm, Tues–Sunday (free entry)

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### About the East London Art Prize

The East London Art Prize celebrates and promotes the incredible talent and diversity of art made in the cultural hive of east London. Proudly sponsored by Minerva and Prue MacLeod, the winner receives a cash prize of £15,000 and a solo exhibition at our Nunnery Gallery. The runner-up second prize is a year's studio space with Bow Arts. The entire shortlist is presented at an exhibition at the Nunnery Gallery, with all artists given mentoring and career development opportunities.

Headed by Bow Arts and supported by a network of local supporting partners, including The British Council, Dulux, The Line, LCF, LLDC, UCL, V&A East and Whitechapel Gallery, the Prize forms part of our ongoing support and development of opportunities for artists.

### About the shortlisted artists

**Darcey Fleming** (b.2000) works across sculpture, video, drawing and writing. Using overlooked materials such as recycled twine donated to her by local farmers, Fleming creates immersive environments that protect, hide, free and connect her. Fleming's work has been exhibited at institutions such as the Royal Academy and UNIT London. Her works are in Tim Marlow's (OBE) private collection, and her commission for Soho House is the largest artwork in the company's art collection.



Fleming is currently an artist in residence on the Lee Alexander McQueen Sarabande Foundation.

**dmstfctn**, pronounced demystification, is a London-based artist duo exploring opaque systems of power through performance, installation, video games and film. Their work often involves audiences directly, inviting them into the 'demystification' of systems by replicating and replaying them, and into their 'remystification' by building worlds, characters and myths atop them. Since 2018, dmstfctn have performed and exhibited internationally in venues such as Berghain, Serpentine, Design Museum, HKW and at festivals such as Unsound, CTM, transmediale, Impakt. In 2021, Krisis Publishing released *ECHO FX*, the duo's show about Brexit market manipulation later included in *Ø* (Flatlines/Hyperdub). In 2019, Mille Plateaux released *Flash Demons*, a collection of performances focusing on financial market crashes. From 1 November 2024 to 31 March 2025, dmstfctn's video game *Godmode Epochs* will be exhibited at the Singapore Art Museum as part of *Open Systems*, curated by Rafi Abdullah and Duncan Bass

**Eugene Macki** (b. 1998) is a sculptor and performer. Macki is a member of the British Art Network and the Royal Society of Sculptors. He completed his Masters in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in the United States. He has exhibited at the National Liberty Museum (USA); The Salisbury Museum (UK); The Royal Academy of Arts (UK); GroundWork Gallery (UK); Aspex Gallery (UK); James Cohan Gallery at The Campus (USA) and performed at Socrates Sculpture Park in New York, among others.

**Fatima Ali** is a multidisciplinary artist working across painting, photography, sculpture and spoken word.

**Gusty Ferro** works across sculpture, video, sound and drawing. Gusty considers their approach a form of personal cartography, one that centres the 'other' as witness to the shifting dynamics of control, negotiation, and desire that shape public space. They graduated in BA Visual Arts at Centro Universitário Belas Artes de São Paulo in 2011 and participated in the fine arts roaming programme School of the Damned (2019). Ferro has exhibited extensively across Latin America and the UK, including at Glasgow Sculpture Studios, SWG3 Gallery, Abingdon Studios (Blackpool), Palmer Gallery (London), Manchester Contemporary, and Centro Cultural São Paulo. *Hello*



*Neighbours* is their first solo project in London, currently happening at TACO! (SE London). Ferro will graduate from the Royal Academy Schools postgraduate programme in 2025.

**Joseph Ijoyemi** is a Swedish–Nigerian multidisciplinary artist whose work combines diverse materials and imagery to tell stories fuelled by life experiences, cultural conversations, and a deep connection to his heritage. His output includes sculptures, multimedia installations, and sound performances, through which he shapes conversations around the African diaspora. Joseph holds a MA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins. He has previously won the prestigious Helen Scott Lidgett Award, and was shortlisted for the Evening Standard Prize 2023. His works were exhibited at Camden Art Centre, London, and Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool as part of Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2023. Joseph is co-founder of *The Collective Makers*, an organisation that mentors and empowers young creatives, and he was recently awarded the MEAD Fellowship at UAL for his project *Tracing Roots: Exploring Nigerian Heritage Through Ondo's Treasures*.

**Kuda Mushangi** (b. 1995) is an artist and architect based in London. Mushangi studied architecture at the Liverpool School of Architecture and earned his Master of Architecture degree in 2020. He gained recognition as a young emerging artist through an open-call competition held by Tate Modern and Tate Collective in 2020, and his work was featured on a billboard in Brixton, London. In 2021, he was awarded the Holy Arts Art Gallery Prize, and in 2022 became a finalist for The Ingram Prize, the leading contemporary art collection in the UK.

**Laisul Hoque** (b. 1998, Dhaka, Bangladesh) is an artist based in London. Drawing from his memories and lived experiences, he creates image-based works and installations that explore and decode microhistories and their global impacts. His practice investigates communication, miscommunication, and adopts a reparative reading of the past. By creating spaces to revisit societal norms and traditions, and advocating for the recognition of adverse elements, Hoque imagines how we can act in society.

**Liang–Jung Chen** works across drawing, object, installation and performance. Her practice is informed by material culture in anthropological study, which leads her to investigate the usage, consumption, creation, and trade of artefacts as well as the



behaviours, norms, and rituals that the artefacts take part in. Intrigued by tensions embedded in everyday scenarios, each series of her work scrutinises a specific interaction between a daily object and its user. Chen is an associate lecturer at Chelsea College of Arts.

**Lydia Newman** Newman's work spans painting, sculpture, live performance, and installations, aimed at fostering dialogue and connection through art. Focusing on themes such as social justice, mental health, and personal liberation, she brings a collaborative and inclusive approach to a deeply interconnected practice. Newman has extensive experience in community-focused projects, combining artistic expression with meaningful social impact. Her current body of work explores Black British womanhood; dismantling societal oppression and the multiple masks they adopt to navigate western capitalist society.

**Mo Langmuir** is a multi-disciplinary practitioner using social art to explore being human on a shared planet by critically engaging with, contextualising and expanding traditional Western science and knowledge-making systems. Informed by a background in environmental biology, her practice foregrounds process. Langmuir works with communities to co-create projects which recombine and re-enchant the scientific with the hyperlocal, with a focus on mapping and museology. Projects manifest in a way that is led by the collaboration, but typically result in drawing, textiles and land art. Mo has won support from Akademie Schloss Solitude, Arts Council England, Climate Art, Imperial College London, Makerversity, Near Now, Public Lab, University of Nottingham and The Institute for Art and Innovation.

**Yang Zou** (b. 1987, Taiyuan, China) lives and works between London and Shanghai. Yang Zou is a multidisciplinary visual artist working across film, installation, and photography. His work particularly addresses 'soft power' – how political narratives are deployed through cultural production by the state to communicate certain principles and aspirations. Yang Zou's work combines a purely observational style with poetic elements that focus on people's emotions. He holds a MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art, and has been selected as one of the Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2024.



## About the selection panel

**Louise Benson** is a writer and editor based in London. She is currently the Director of Digital at ArtReview, where she commissions widely on the visual arts, film, literature and music. She is also the co-founder of Scenic Views, an independent interiors magazine focused on overlooked design histories. Previously she was the Deputy Editor of Elephant for five years, and Editor-in-Chief of POSTmatter, a magazine about modern life and culture in the digital age. As a writer she is interested in exploring what happens at the edges of the art world, going behind the scenes to hear the stories of those who play a crucial role in the production of art but who often remain invisible. In addition to international artists and photographers, she has interviewed everyone from gallery attendants to life drawing models, and written extensively on the working conditions of the culture industry. She is interested in how art gets made, and in who gets to make it at all.

**Phoebe Collings-James** is a sculptor whose works function as “emotional detritus” that speak of knowledges of feelings, the debris of violence, language, and desire which are inherent to living and surviving within hostile environments.

**Jonny Tanna** is a North West London native and the Director of Harlesden High Street, a BIPOC led gallery space. Harlesden High Street was founded in 2020 with the mission of facilitating access between experimental/outsider artists and the traditional gallery system. Working across several spaces in London, the gallery exhibits contemporary art by both local and international artists with a focus on exhibiting work by people of colour. In addition to its gallery programme, Harlesden High Street also hosts a cultural outreach programme with an aim to engage audiences in un-gentrified neighborhoods, through workshops, talks and artist initiatives. In 2023, Tanna also co-founded Minor Attractions, an inclusive micro-fair that gives access to both London and international galleries during Frieze London art week.

**Sam Wilkinson** is UCL Head of Public Art and Cultural Engagement. Since 2017 Sam has developed public art policy for the university and commissioned works from Rachel Whiteread, Thompson and Craighead, Bouke de Vries, Emma Hart and David Blandy and Larry Achiampong amongst others. Sam is committed to the establishment of artist residencies and collaborative programmes of work where





artists, academics and communities work in partnership co-creating work for the UCL Campuses. Sam has been commissioning artists working in the public realm for many years and was the curator in residence working with Neville Gabie for the Olympic Delivery Authority. Past clients have included Cambridge University, the Gatsby Trust, Land Securities, Hammerson, and various local authorities across the UK.

### **About Bow Arts**

Since 1994, Bow Arts has nurtured London's diverse creativity and talent. We've provided artists and creative practitioners with affordable workspace, connecting them with local communities and supporting their professional development. We give communities throughout London greater access to and interaction with the arts, through our schools programme, workshops, exhibitions and events.

We're an arts and education charity and a social enterprise; our services support the growth of sustainable local creative economies. Over 600 artists, designers and makers are affiliated with Bow Arts through our workspaces, Nunnery Gallery, affordable housing for creatives, and award-winning schools and young people's learning programme.

### **About Minerva**

Minerva is the sponsor of the East London Art Prize, committed to championing the talent of east London. Founded in 2013, Minerva provides executive search and leadership services for clients across the cultural, social impact and education sectors. Minerva stands out for its commitment to diversity, leadership development and supporting governance.

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

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