

# 2023 Impact Report

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### 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, Nunnery Gallery, 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 900 artists, designers and makers are affiliated with Bow Arts through our workspace, Nunnery Gallery, affordable housing for creatives, and award-winning schools and young people's learning programme.



Kat Anderson, 2023 East London Art Prize winner, in her studio

## Director's welcome



We set up the East London Art Prize to celebrate and provide opportunities for the incredible community of artists and creatives working in and around east London. To this aim, we wanted the Prize to be centred around a whole host of activity, not just the Prize winners, creating something truly unifying and unique.

Ahead of the open call launch we brought on board supporting Prize partners with the aim of broadening the breadth of opportunities we could bring to artists and to encourage a wider audience reach. We envisaged an event programme that provided networking, career development and paid opportunities for artists. We brought together a terrific judging panel, whose concerns for and dedication to artists were akin to our own. When we launched the first East London Art Prize in May 2022, we had no idea whether this ambitious vision for a new and different sort of Prize would come off.

What followed was a staggering number of entries, an engaged and impressive roster of supporting partners, an event programme that pushed boundaries and drew audiences, a shortlist of 12 incredible artists, and of course a bold and impressive winner, Kat Anderson. I don't think any of us could have anticipated the success of our first East London Art Prize cycle. Every element has been more thoughtful, more ambitious and, crucially, provided more support for artists than we originally envisaged.

I hope this overview of the 2023 Prize gives you a flavour of what we have achieved. What is truly special is the positive words of others – the comments from the artists, the partners, the participants – who have been involved.

I am especially grateful to our incredibly generous sponsors who have made this all possible, Ben Tucker and his team at Minerva, and Prue MacLeod. I'd also like to thank our amazing supportive partners, the British Council, Dulux, The Line, London College of Fashion, LLDC, University College London, V&A East and Whitechapel Gallery, who broadened our scope and possibilities beyond measure. And a huge shout out must go to the Bow Arts team, whose tireless energy and creativity created and realised this new project from scratch.

As we look forward to the next iteration of the Prize, we endeavour to be even more ambitious, fuelled by the learning and successes of our inaugural Prize. Starting a new art prize in these challenging times is not easy, let alone ensuring its continuity, but I believe we've begun something special in the East London Art Prize. These first years have gone above and beyond in proving the Prize as something needed and valuable, and we shall strive to continue its legacy.

Sophie Hill  
Director of Arts & Events, Bow Arts



East London Art Prize x Whitechapel Gallery takeover, part of the event programme

## Sponsor's welcome



Ben Tucker (Minerva), Sophie Hill (Bow Arts), Megan Piper (2023 judge) and Louisa Buck (2023 judge), outside the Nunnery Gallery

It's been a delight to partner with Bow Arts in the East London Art Prize.

As a firm focused on senior leadership recruitment, consulting and development, everything we do is about supporting talent, and working with artists has been a theme for us since we started more than ten years ago. The attraction of working with an organisation that has the heritage and depth of track record supporting ground-breaking artists that Bow Arts has is irresistible for us.

Although it echoes what has already been said, it is worth stating again how extraordinary the response was to the first open call. We never for one second expected such large numbers and quality, and it has been incredible to see the process of shortlisting and awarding of the prizes in action. We hope that the process has been rewarding at some level for all who participated, and as sponsors we have certainly learnt things that will be useful as we move into the next iteration of the prize.

Ben Tucker  
Partner, Minerva

# MINERVA

## Our partners

As a prize that celebrates east London, we are supported by a network of local partners whose commitment and energy for this inaugural cycle has been invaluable. Their support provides further opportunities for the artists involved at every stage of the Prize, and their collaboration has helped realise our ambitious event programme.

Our partners are the British Council, Dulux, The Line, London College of Fashion, LLDC, University College London, V&A East and Whitechapel Gallery.



“ At Whitechapel Gallery we're thrilled to be a partner of the East London Art Prize which platforms the brilliant, diverse practices of local artists. The Takeover event we organised in collaboration with the Bow Arts team was a highlight of our summer 2023 programme - engaging over 700 people on one evening throughout our Gallery spaces and demonstrating the amazing quality of the shortlisted artists ”

Richard Martin, Whitechapel Gallery

“ It was great to contribute to a programme which provides artist development opportunities tailored so uniquely to each of the artists needs.

As well as getting to work with the brilliant team at Bow Arts whose energy and enthusiasm for supporting early career practitioners was inspiring ”

Mirren Kessler, London College of Fashion

# 2023 Prize in numbers

To submit to the East London Art Prize artists must either be living or working within an 'E' postcode (E1-E20, SE1-SE28 and EC1-EC4) and be able to show a demonstrable commitment to their practice.

All artists and art lovers were welcome to the Prize's event programme and all events and exhibitions were free.

## Artist engagement

**670**  
submission entries

**33%**  
entrants identified as Black, Asian or ethnically diverse

**12**  
shortlisted artists

**54**  
paid opportunities created for practitioners

**70**  
artist mentoring sessions carried out

## Online engagement

**18,251**  
visits to the Prize webpage

**34,500**  
instagram users reached

**11,600**  
instagram profile visits

## Public programme

**20**  
events delivered

**967**  
event attendees

**2**  
exhibitions presented

**1344**  
exhibition visitors

**44%**  
event attendees identified as Black, Asian or ethnically diverse

**80%** of event attendees surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that "After attending this event, I feel a stronger connection to east London and the creative community here"

**71%** of event attendees surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that "The event responded to a need or gap in my knowledge that I had relating to my creative practice"

**75%** of event attendees surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that "After attending this event, I have a better understanding of the different opportunities available for artists working and practising today"

## 2023 judging panel

The Prize is judged by a panel invited for their commitment to both supporting artists and to east London. The line-up is made up of an artist, art critic, Prize partner representative and a 'mover and shaker' in the art world.



**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.

“It’s really important to be able to celebrate a really incredible and energetic part of London”

**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. Louisa was a judge for the 2005 Turner Prize.

“It’s a really holistic prize, it’s not just about first past the post gets a gong, it’s actually thinking about East London, thinking about all the creativity here”



**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.

“The prize highlights the breadth of creativity of artistic practice, of artists pushing boundaries with different mediums”



**Ellie Pennick**, Director and Founder of Guts Gallery, is one of the youngest gallerists navigating the art world today. Pennick launched Guts to generate a fair art-business model and to champion emerging artists, helping artists to demand the respect - and ownership - they deserve.

“The East London Art Prize is an amazing platform...the art prize is important because there’s not enough support out there”



## 2023 winner: Kat Anderson

The 2023 Prize winner was Kat Anderson, receiving a £15,000 cash prize and the opportunity to present a solo exhibition at Bow Arts' Nunnery Gallery. Anderson is a visual artist, musician and filmmaker, currently working under an artistic and research framework called 'Episodes of Horror', which uses the genre of horror to discuss representations of mental illness and trauma as experienced by or projected upon Black bodies in media.

Anderson's winning work was the film *John* (2019) which tells the story of a young male patient of a psychiatric hospital who witnesses the death of another Black male patient at the hands of white staff. Anderson's technique is deeply resonating, and all four judges spoke of how the work had stayed with them following selection.

**“ I am immensely grateful to Sophie and the Bow Arts team, for the work that they have put into making the East London Art Prize, an enriching experience for a community of artists and audiences alike ”**



Anderson's winner's exhibition *Mark of Cane*, shown at the Nunnery Gallery a year after winning the Prize, was an ambitious undertaking. Presenting a new film 'Las, Fiya' ('Last, Fire'), the show also explored a new media for Anderson through new paperworks.

*Mark of Cane* explored the impact of sugar on the African-Caribbean Diaspora, confronting the haunting legacies of the Industrial Revolution and the Transatlantic Slave trade. The exhibition was an immersive audio visual experience, presenting Anderson's new fictional short film which uses the genre of Horror to explore the subjects of ancestral trauma, dispossession and the power in the return/retrieval.

To make the film, Anderson travelled to Jamaica, shooting largely on an existing sugarcane farm, weaving historical methods of harvesting sugarcane and sugar production with the cinematic concept of the 'Origin Story'. Anderson's new paperworks were hand-made using the extracted by-products of sugarcane, and produced with the support of Prize partner UCL East as part of an ongoing residency.

**“ The programme of events for ELAP, for my solo exhibition and now our continued work together, shows the organisation's deep commitment to supporting emerging artists.**

**I look forward to the next chapter of our exchange and collaboration ”**



## 2023 runner-up: Cora Sehgal Cuthbert

The 2023 Prize runner-up was Cora Sehgal Cuthbert, who received a year-long studio residency with Bow Arts. Sehgal Cuthbert is a multidisciplinary artist, working in media including video, sculpture, text, and photography. Her practice explores the intersections between the personal, the cultural, and a universal spirituality or humanity, creating installations or artworks that present and provoke these connections.

Sehgal Cuthbert's shortlisted work *My Life and Yours, Birth, Beer and Sex* (2021) is a film commissioned by Don't Google It, in which she explores how having dwarfism has informed her experience of drinking down the pub and sex / desire. In this work she focuses on what she sees to be the contradictory elements, such as pleasure and danger, involved in these activities and how having a disability can emphasise such contradictions.

Sehgal Cuthbert began her studio residency with Bow Arts in 2024 with a studio at the Rum Factory site. Sehgal Cuthbert has also led and participated in several events and workshops with Bow Arts since winning runner-up.

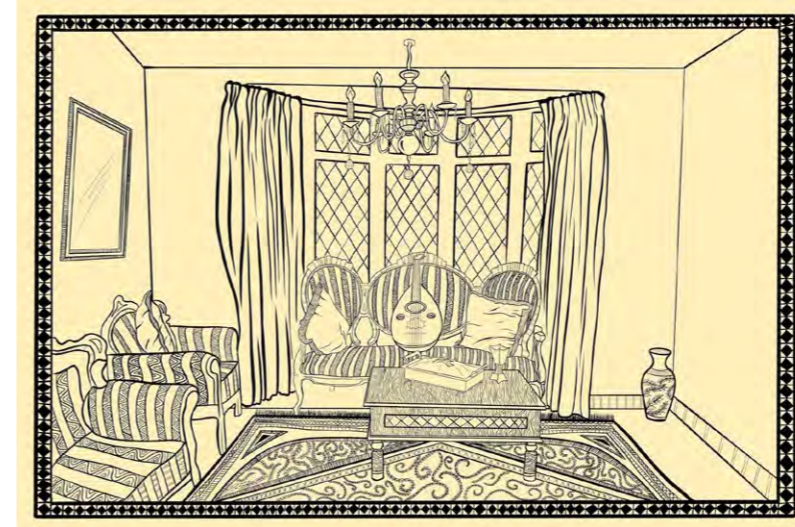
**“The studio the prize has given me has been amazing, it's given me the space I need to breathe.**

**This has been much needed as my practice is expanding in line with the commissions and opportunities I have received over the past year ”**



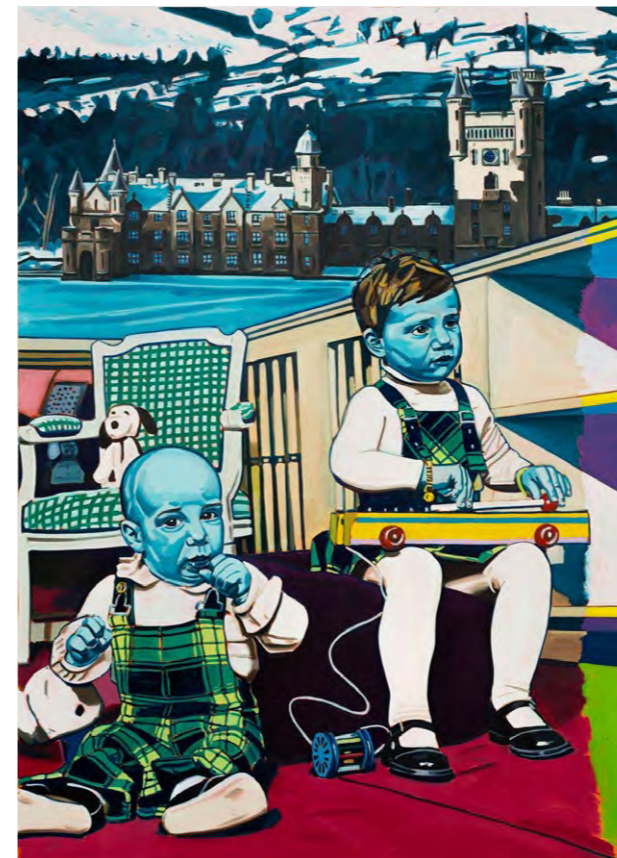
## 2023 shortlist

12 artists were shortlisted for the East London Art Prize, encompassing a variety of media, from painting and sculpture to ceramics, print and textiles. All works were exhibited in the shortlist exhibition at the Nunnery Gallery. All artists then went on to take part in the event programme and received mentoring support through the Prize's mentoring scheme.



**Alaa Alsaraji**

*Mother's Living Room, 2020*

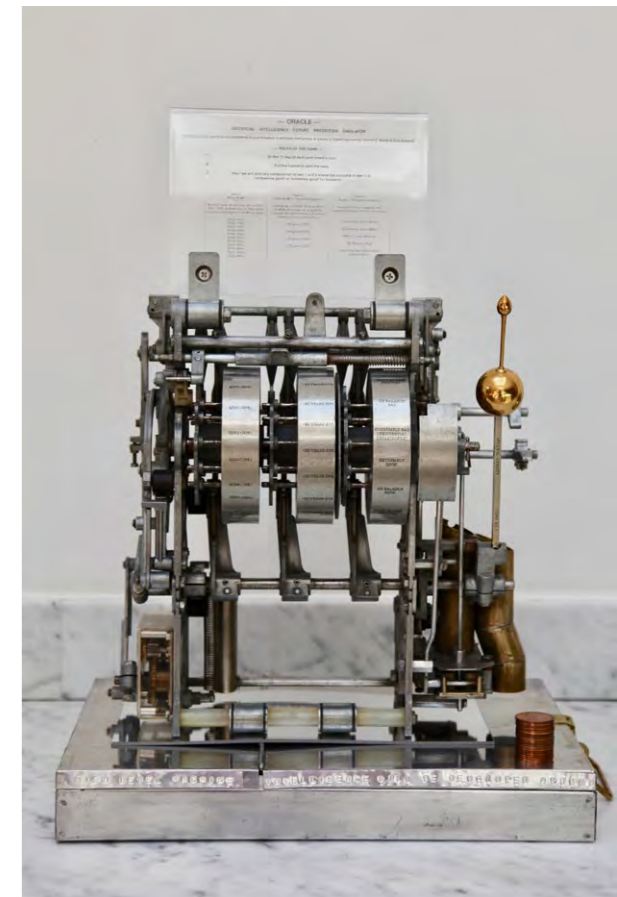


**Lulu Bennett**

*Balmoral Revisited, 2021*

**David Aston**

*Oracle, 2020-2021*





# 2023 shortlist



**Damien Cifelli**  
*The Cup Final (Pre Game), 2022*



**Ufuoma Essi**  
*From Where We Land, 2021*

**Woo Jin Joo**  
*Hat Dokkaebi, 2022*



**Phoebe Collings-James**  
*The subtle rules the dense, 2021*



**Lulu Wang**  
*LOVE, 2021*



**Sophie Cunningham**  
*Papier-mâché Boots, 2022*



**Xinyao Yu**  
*Wu Gui, 2021-2023*

# Artist mentoring programme

## Mentors

Charles Avery, Artist

Dr Danielle Barrios-O'Neill, Royal College of Art

Clémentine Bedos, Artist

Susan Bright, Curator

Tamsin Blanchard, Journalist

Sougwen Chung, Artist

Paige Denham, Artist

Poonam Dhuffer, Artist

Anthea Hamilton, Artist

Yasmin Jones-Henry, Co-founder & Curator at LabE20

Shama Khanna, Curator

James Lingwood, Curator

Dr Maggie Matić, Curator

Lucy Orta, Artist

Beatrix Pang, Artist & Publisher

Richard Parry, Curator

Gaby Sahhar, Artist

Sara Sassanelli, Curator, ICA

Meera Shakti Osborne, Artist

Sumitra Upham, Curator

Yaa Yeboah-Newton, Founder, Our Naked Truths & Black Woman's Therapy Fund

Livia Wang, Creative Director, Van Gogh House, San Mei Gallery

Zoe Whitley, Director, Chisenhale Gallery

The East London Art Prize aims to support the career development of all artists included in the shortlist. Together with the presentation of their work in exhibition, all 12 shortlisted artists were paired with mentors as part of the East London Art Prize mentoring scheme.

Over 70 mentoring sessions have been set up between the shortlist and their specially selected mentors, matched through research and discussion in relation to their needs. Mentors included professional artists, academics, curators, writers, and gallerists.

**“The generous mentorship scheme is allowing me to receive in depth, meaningful advice and guidance on several aspects of my practice”**

*Cora Sehgal Cuthbert, 2023 runner-up*

**“I rewrote my artist statement with my mentor's feedback, and I feel so much more aligned in the direction I want to go towards and ways to develop.**

**Thank you again for this amazing opportunity, and how wonderful it is to get this type of support!”**

*Woo Jin Joo, 2023 shortlist*

# Event programme

The East London Art Prize events programme is a dynamic, free public programme open to all, which builds on the Prize's ethos of providing ongoing support, development, and networking opportunities for artists in east London and beyond. Featuring a constellation of workshops, talks, panels, lunches, socials, labs, walks and takeovers in collaboration with our Prize partners – and featuring some familiar faces from our shortlisted artists – the 2023 programme celebrated and paid homage to the huge abundance of talent and creativity in east London. The events also drew a collective audience of near 1000.

**Artists & academics knowledge exchange lab: imagining and rethinking the future of our cities with UCL East**

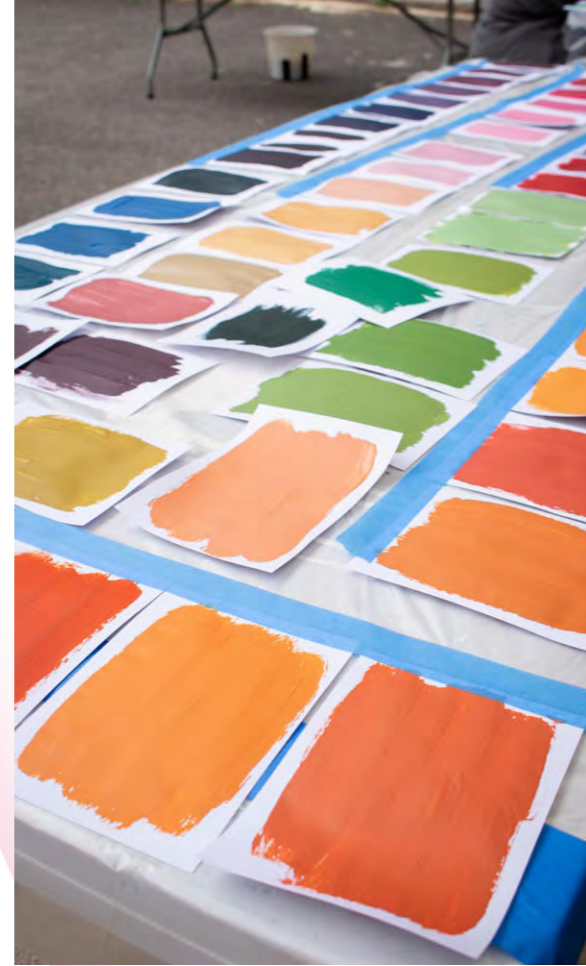


**Good Growth Hub + LLDC info session & meet some of the shortlist**



# Event programme

## Workshop: Colour Theory with Dulux



## Takeover: East London Art Prize x Whitechapel Gallery

All 12 shortlisted artists took over the entire Whitechapel Gallery building in an ambitious and boundary-pushing after-hours programme featuring workshops, music, talks, screenings, live performances and more.



## Walk: bringing art into the public realm with The Line



# Event programme

Workshop: Reimagining Tradition – reframing traditional crafting techniques with **V&A East**



East London Art Prize takeover of **London College of Fashion's** Designed for Life public programme



Shortlisted artists Woo Jin Joo's *People Who Deny the Existence of Dragons Are Often Eaten By Dragons*, from *Within* (left) and Sophie Cunningham's *Tin Foil Ghost* (right), included in *Designed for Life*, LCF's inaugural show at their new East Bank building

Talk & Social: International working and collaboration for artists with the **British Council**



London College of Fashion panel talk: LCF x East London Art Prize – The Artist as Storyteller with Woo Jin Joo, Maya Gurung-Russell Campbell, Christine Lai & Hannah Lim



# Event programme

London College of Fashion workshop: Designed for Life – Poster and Banner Making with Alaa Alsaraji & Sabba Khan



# What's next?

The East London Art Prize is a biennial Prize, taking place every other year. The year between the shortlist exhibition and the winner's exhibition at the Nunnery Gallery gives space for the event programme and for further opportunities to be created for the artists involved.

The next Prize launches in May 2024 and will announce shortlist its winners in early 2025.

All of our Prize partners will be supporting the 2025 Prize, and we will continue to push the boundaries of how we can further the careers of our winners and shortlisted artists.

Follow the East London Art Prize instagram account for all updates @eastlondonartprize

## 2025 Prize Timeline

May - Aug 2024 Open Call

Sep 2024 Judging

November 2024 Shortlist announced

Jan 2025 Winners announced

Jan - April 2025 Shortlist exhibition

April - Dec 2025 Event programme

Jan - April 2026 Winner's Exhibition

**“Being shortlisted is not only a great recognition of my art practice but has also truly changed my life.**

**It greatly assisted me in applying for the Global Talent Visa and provided me with valuable networking opportunities and career development guidance”**

Xinyao Yu, 2023 shortlist

Knowledge exchange lab: Earthly Values – Art, Research and Co-Existence with UCL East



## Design Credits

ELAP shapes (used throughout) by Abidemi Ibitoye

Overall design, Sophie Hill

## Image Credits

Cover images, from top left clockwise: photo Jason Bye; 'Las, Fiya' ('Last, Fire') film still, (detail), Kat Anderson, 2024. DoP: Edward PG Tucker. Colourist: Lulu Colour; photo Nana Ama; photo Nana Ama.

p.2: top image: photo Abidemi Ibitoye; bottom image, photo Nana Ama

p.3: photo Alberto Romano

p.4: photo Alberto Romano

p.8: top image, photo Emile Holba; bottom image, photo Claire Lawrie

p.9: top image, photo Marc Hibbert; bottom image, photo Thierry Bal.

p.10: *John* film still, 2019 © Kat Anderson

p.11: *Mark of Cane* installation at the Nunnery Gallery, photo Rohan Ayinde

p.12: photo Jason Bye

p.13-15: all artwork images © the artist

p.17: top image, photo Nana Ama; bottom image, photo yungbio

p.18: top images, photos Nana Ama; bottom image, photo Nunnery Gallery

p.19: both images, photo Nana Ama

p.20: top image, photo Ves Yuleva; bottom, photo Nana Ama

p.21: top image, photo Dennis Eluyefa; bottom images, photos Nana Ama

p.22: both images, photo Nana Ama

p.23: photo Hallie Primus

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2

exhibitions presented

12

shortlisted artists

20

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670

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