

PRESS RELEASE

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HELEN MARTEN WINS THE FIRST HEPWORTH PRIZE FOR SCULPTURE



The inaugural Hepworth Prize for Sculpture has been awarded to Helen Marten. The winner was announced at an award ceremony at The Hepworth Wakefield this evening.

The £30,000 prize, which recognises a British or UK-based artist of any age, at any stage in their career, who has made a significant contribution to the development of contemporary sculpture, was presented to the artist by Christopher Bailey, Chief Creative and Chief Executive Officer of Burberry.

Simon Wallis, Director of The Hepworth Wakefield and chair of the judging panel said: "Helen Marten is one of the strongest and most singular voices working in British art today. Her refined craft and intellectual precision address our relationship to objects and materials in a digital age. We believe that Marten is a fitting winner of the inaugural Hepworth Prize for Sculpture, which celebrates the legacy of one of Britain's finest sculptors."

The jury thanked the shortlisted artists for their outstanding contributions to the exhibition.

Helen Marten was born in 1985 in Macclesfield. She studied at the Ruskin School of Fine Art, University of London and at Central Saint Martins in London. Marten's recent solo exhibitions include *Parrot Problems* in Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany (2014) and *Plank Salad* at the Chisenhale Gallery in London (2012), and her work was included in the 2015 Venice Biennale. Marten has been shortlisted for the 2016 Turner Prize, and currently lives and works in London.

The exhibition, which runs until 19 February 2017, is the most ambitious ever mounted by the gallery. It features work by all the shortlisted nominees and reflects the wide range of sculptural practice taking place in the UK today.

The members of the judging panel comprised five leading international commentators within the field of visual arts:

1. **Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev**, Director of Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea and GAM – Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Torino
2. **Sir David Chipperfield**, architect and designer of The Hepworth Wakefield
3. **Sheikha Hoor al-Qasimi**, President Sharjah Art Foundation
4. **Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo**, President of The Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, collector and patron of the arts
5. **Alastair Sooke**, art critic and broadcaster.

The Prize was created to celebrate the gallery's 5th anniversary during 2016. Significantly, it is named after Barbara Hepworth, one of Britain's greatest sculptors and arguably its most celebrated female artist, who was born and brought up in Wakefield. The Hepworth Wakefield has the largest number of works by the artist on permanent display anywhere in the UK.

Sculpture communicates an immediate sense of life – you can feel the pulse of it
Barbara Hepworth (1959)

Sophie Bowness, art historian and granddaughter of Barbara Hepworth, said: "The Hepworth Prize for Sculpture is a fitting legacy for Barbara Hepworth, one of Britain's greatest sculptors, whose career was enhanced through a variety of awards from early in her professional life."

Christopher Bailey, who presented the award said: "I am so proud to have been a part of such a special evening, and I am so excited for not only Helen Marten on winning the first ever Hepworth Prize for Sculpture, but also for the rest of the incredibly talented nominees. Their work on display at The Hepworth Wakefield is a shining example of their creativity and outstanding contribution to the development of contemporary sculpture in the UK."

Sculpture is the art form of the moment – and the new Prize aims to demystify contemporary sculpture. Visitors to the exhibition have been encouraged to experience, debate and judge the Prize for themselves. The shortlist is multi-generational and covers the widest range of work in the medium.

The Hepworth Prize for Sculpture is supported by the following individuals:
Linda Bennett, David Liddiment and David Roberts.

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For images please visit the Media Centre: www.hepworthwakefield.org/press

NOTES TO EDITORS:

THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

The gallery is at the heart of Wakefield's regeneration. Designed by the internationally acclaimed practice, David Chipperfield Architects, it is funded by Wakefield Council and Arts Council England and an increasing number of charitable trusts, private individuals, Patrons and Members.

The gallery opened on 21 May 2011 and has since welcomed 1.6 million visitors.

CHRISTOPHER BAILEY MBE

Christopher Bailey was born in Halifax, West Yorkshire, and joined in May 2001 where his creative vision was applied to all aspects of the British brand from the outset. He currently holds

the position of Chief Creative and Chief Executive Officer and is a long-standing supporter and mentor of emerging British creative talent across multiple disciplines including fashion, art, music, theatre and film. Burberry has strong links to the Yorkshire region, which is the home of the Burberry trench coat factory in Castleford, and the Burberry Mill in Keighley, where the brand weaves its gabardine fabric and heritage check linings.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

In association with Yorkshire Post

Visitors are encouraged to judge for themselves and vote in the People's Choice Award. Vote in the gallery or after your visit at hepworthwakefield.org/prize.

The winner will be announced near to the end of the exhibition.

The Hepworth Wakefield, Gallery Walk, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 5AW.

Tel: +44 (0)1924 247360.

Free Admission

Opening Hours: 10am - 5pm Tuesday – Sunday

Closed Mondays (except local school holidays and bank holidays)