Press Release: June 2022

Title: Mansfield-Ruddock Art Prize 2022 Winners Announced

Founded in 2019, the Mansfield-Ruddock Art Prize aims to acquire one graduate and one undergraduate work from the Ruskin School of Art degree show each year for Mansfield College.

The Prize is kindly supported by the Ruddock Foundation for the Arts, with thanks to Sir Paul Ruddock, alumnus of the College.

Mansfield College is thrilled to announce this year’s winners of the Mansfield-Ruddock Art Prize winners: Joy Labinjo (MFA), Saba Qizilbash (MFA) and Eliza Owen (BFA).

Joy Labinjo’s work is rooted in her British-Nigerian heritage and her experiences as a Black woman in the UK. Her vibrant large-scale paintings depict intimate scenes of historical and contemporary life, both real and imagined, based on figures appearing in personal and archival imagery that include family photographs, found images and historical material. At the heart of her work is her bold interest in storytelling and ultimately in people’s lives.

Saba Qizilbash was born in Lahore and raised in Abu Dhabi and her work explores nationhood, citizenship and human movement. Her exceptionally detailed and large-scale drawings tell her stories and those of her ancestors. Saba writes on her website that she walks ‘through contentious borders and difficult landscapes in the form of [her] drawings’, ‘collapsing time, space, histories, and narratives, [she] visualise new possibilities of communication and exchange, looking at pre-colonial trade and conquest routes for inspiration’. See more at: https://www.sabaqizilbash.com/

Eliza Owen’s work focuses on movement between landscape and the architectural structures we build within that space. Memories of landscape inform the materiality of the work which plays with lightness, air, and fragility in relation to stronger structural forms and colours. Eliza builds installation subconsciously recreating the world around her in the abstract, and reiterates the installation map-like objects, prints, and in paintings. Her objects precariously balance on vertical and horizontal planes tying together the way that man-made constructions are held, balanced, and eventually washed away by the lines of land and sea and gravity.

View the works of the three winners and find more about them on the Ruskin Schools’ Degree show page here: https://www.ruskinmfa2022.co.uk/

The judges of the 2022 year’s Prize were: Yana Peel, Global Head of Arts and Culture at Chanel, Stephanie Straine, Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Galleries of Scotland, Rana Begum, contemporary artist, and Adam Lowe, Ruskin alumnus, founder of Factum Arte and Factum Foundation.

Due to the high standard of the work presented this year, an additional third prize was awarded. The winning artists’ work will enter the Mansfield collection and be displayed at the College. Through displaying works by Ruskin students in the College setting, Mansfield strives to open up new conversations and debates around contemporary art, to inspire its students and visitors, and importantly, to support some of the many talented emerging artists graduating from the Ruskin School.
Helen Mountfield, principal of Mansfield College, said:

"We are lucky at Mansfield College that, thanks to our distinguished alumnus Sir Paul Ruddock, we can offer an annual purchase prize, awarded by a distinguished panel of artists and curators, for the most exciting graduate and undergraduate art works from the Ruskin School of Art. We hope that in time the Mansfield-Ruddock collection will be a great collection of early 21st century art, and stimulate curiosity and interest in contemporary art among Mansfield students.

The judges, Yana, Stephanie, Rana and Adam, were impressed by the quality of the work they saw this year, and so they awarded three prizes, to Joy Labinjo, Saba Qizilbash, and Eliza Owen. We hope members of the Mansfield community will enjoy the work, which will be exhibited at Mansfield during the course of this year, and to hold an event to discuss the winning works with some of the winning artists and judges early in 2023.

We are grateful to Sir Paul, the judges and the Ruskin School of Art for enabling this exciting collaboration to take place."

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Notes for Editors:

Mansfield College is one of Oxford’s most open and forward-thinking colleges. Proud of its non-conformist roots, it aims to be a model for access to higher education, and of how social and intellectual diversity enriches an academic community.

Mansfield has the highest intake of UK undergraduates from the state sector (usually over 95%), and one of the most diverse communities of all the Oxford colleges in terms of the social, educational and ethnic backgrounds of its students. This comes after two decades of pioneering outreach work which has seen Mansfield lead the way in widening access to Oxford. The College regularly appears in the top half of the Norrington table (a record 5th in 2018/19), an annual ranking of the academic results of Oxford colleges.

Mansfield is also home to the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, part of the University’s Law Faculty, which was opened by Kofi Annan in 2018. The Institute is a perfect reflection of the spirit of our College: plural, broad-minded, and respectful of the dignity and worth of all.

The University of Oxford’s Ruskin School of Art was founded in 1871 by the influential art critic, writer, thinker, artist and social reformer John Ruskin. Almost 150 years later, the School continues to teach undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in contemporary art practice, and attracts some of the most active and innovative UK and international teachers and artists. Today the Ruskin is one of the top art schools in Europe, renowned for its excellence in the research and practice of visual arts, and is integral to Oxford’s success as the foremost university for Arts and Humanities worldwide.