

# ashurst



September 2019

## ASHURST EMERGING ARTIST PRIZE 2019 - WINNERS ANNOUNCED

International law firm Ashurst and Oaktree & Tiger are pleased to announce the winners of the Ashurst Emerging Artist Prize 2019.

The prize has been hugely successful in its fifth year receiving 4,450 artworks submitted by over 1,900 artists, from around the world including artists from Israel, China, France, Pakistan, Ireland, Ukraine, America, Canada and the UK.

This year the prize launched two new awards; the Photography Award supported by Genesis Imaging and Fujifilm, and the New Media Award supported by Rich Mix London. The prize also moved to a new location, with the 30 shortlisted artworks, including works across a number of mediums including sculpture, painting, photography and new media, on display at Ashurst's new ground floor exhibition space in their London office in the iconic Fruit & Wool Exchange.

This year the prize also welcomed new guest judges, Mark Foxwell, Genesis Imaging creative director, and Averil Curci, independent art advisor, who judged the Photography Award, and Josh McNorton, head of programmes for Rich Mix, who led on the judging of the inaugural New Media Award. Sajid Hussein, former General Counsel for Bank of America Merrill Lynch and now at EY, also joined the judging panel, as a collector and supporter of the arts.

The overall winner, Sophie Peters, was born in Minnesota but grew up in the south of England. Sophie is a self-taught visual artist interested in the use of art in protecting human rights and disrupting societal assumptions, particularly regarding gender roles, power systems, consumerism and identity. She works primarily with paint, but also explores the use of mixed media, text and film. Sophie will receive £3,000 and an exhibition in Ashurst's Emerging Artist Gallery between September and December 2019.

The Sculpture Award, with a £1,500 award and exhibition, goes to Scottish sculptor and installation artist Ruth Brenner. Ruth is currently working on a practice led PhD at the University of Sunderland combining a study of phenomenology and sculptural practice to research corporeality and the bodily acts of making. Her exhibition is curated by Briony Marshall, sculptor and member of the Royal Society of Sculptors and Head of Professional Development at the Art Academy London.

The Ashurst Employee Choice Award, which invited Ashurst employees from across the firm's international network of offices to vote on their favourite artist, goes to Roberto Grosso. Roberto is a new media artist who takes inspiration from music, carefully constructing an image from the digitising of individual brushstrokes and incorporating

augmented reality to allow the viewer to interact with it and the associated musical piece. Roberto will receive the £1,000 cash prize and an exhibition in Ashurst's Emerging Artist Gallery.

The Photography Award goes to California based artist Brendon Kahn, whose work explores today's reality where the approach to photography is navigated by a mirage in the vicinity of contrast and unsettling moments, where uncanny disruptions defamiliarise our experiences with the ordinary. Guided by competition and paved by modernity's fierce push for perfection, these strangely manufactured channels of both sincerity and surreal moments raise questions around our notions of certainty and visual faith. Brendon will receive £500 as well as £1,000 production services and a mentorship with Genesis Imaging. His exhibition is also in the gallery from September to December 2019 and is curated by Averil Curci, an independent art advisor, curator and former director of Mayfair gallery Brancolini Grimaldi.

The New Media Award winner, British artist Thomas Webb, will receive £1,000 and a solo exhibition at Rich Mix London in October to December 2019. His practice orbits around real time data and how it can be applied to reveal present contemporary life. Thomas produces works that are programmed using numerous server systems connected to real time data sources and social media. The exhibition is curated by Josh McNorton, prize judge and Head of Arts & Culture Programmes at Rich Mix London.

Highly commended mentions go to Alessandra Bettolo, Elliot Nehra, Noga Shatz and Noa Pane. Their artworks further highlight the talent, variety of mediums, and ideas in contemporary art practice that the judge's felts worthy of highlighting.

The prize is also supported by the UK's leading independent art supplies retailer, Cass Art, who are giving a £500 gift voucher to the overall winner of the Ashurst Emerging Artist Prize to spend on art supplies, and a £250 gift voucher for both the Sculpture Prize and Employee Choice Award.

Prize Director, Conrad Carvalho (Oaktree & Tiger), commented:  
"We continue to support emerging artists all over the world by showcasing entrants to a wide audience, providing educational content and giving career development talks, hosted by Ashurst, to give artists the tools they need to survive and grow and to create better submissions for any opportunity, not just for our prize. This has had a clear effect on the calibre of entries we've received this year and has greatly helped the judges to select our winners, who not only present a promising and exciting art practice but also act as role models to our wider artist community."

Ruth Harris, Ashurst's London office managing partner, added:  
"Our congratulations go to all the winners and we hope that the awarding of these prizes represents a major milestone for them as emerging artists. We look forward to following their developing careers, and wish them and each of our shortlisted entrants all the success for the future. I would also like to thank each of the judges for their enthusiasm and commitment to the project."

For further details of the Prize, to be invited to the private view event or to arrange a viewing, please visit [www.artprize.co.uk](http://www.artprize.co.uk)



Sophie Peters  
Overall Award  
Winner



Ruth Brenner  
Sculpture Award  
Winner



Brendon Kahn  
Photography Award  
Winner



Roberto Grossi  
Choice Award  
Winner



Thomas Webb  
New Media Award  
Winner



Alessandra Bettolo  
Highly Commended



Elliot Nehra  
Highly Commended



Noa Pane  
Highly Commended



Noga Shatz  
Highly Commended

...ENDS...

**For further media information/interview opportunities please contact:**

Ashurst: Kirstin Munro - +44 20 7859 2448 / [kirstin.munro@ashurst.com](mailto:kirstin.munro@ashurst.com)

Oaktree & Tiger: Conrad Carvalho - +44 7803 244159 / [artprize@oaktreeandtiger.com](mailto:artprize@oaktreeandtiger.com)

Media Resources available at <http://www.artprize.co.uk/media-room.html>