

Media release

PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

Announcing the shortlist for the Platform Graduate Award

Four flagship contemporary art organisations will announce the recipient of the inaugural Platform Graduate Award later this month.

This pilot project, devised through the Contemporary Visual Arts Network (CVAN) is an inaugural mentor programme between galleries and emerging artists from the South East.

Over the last few months Aspex, MK Gallery, Modern Art Oxford and Turner Contemporary have each provided a platform for recent graduates from each of their region's art colleges.

In total 31 artists presented their work and eight have been short-listed for the Platform Graduate Award. They are:

Aspex: **George Bills** and **Joella Wheatley** Arts University College at Bournemouth Fine Art

MK Gallery: **Marion Piper**, Buckinghamshire New University and **Karolina Lebek**, University of Bedfordshire

Modern Art Oxford: **Cara George** and **Kamila Janska**, Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, Oxford.

Turner Contemporary: **Dominic Maffia**, University for the Creative Arts and **Naomi Eaton-Baudains**, Canterbury Christ Church University

A selection panel comprising of artist Lindsay Seers and representatives of the participant galleries will decide the recipient of the twelve month tailored programme of professional development, and £2,500 bursary. This will be announced on **Thursday 22 November** at Modern Art Oxford alongside a panel discussion on the role of the institution in the professional development of young artists.

About Platform Graduate Award

Devised through the CVAN South East network, this project has brought together the professional expertise of both the higher education and public gallery sectors for the benefit of young artists.

With fantastic support from tutors and course leaders, teams of curators and education specialists from the four participating galleries attended local Summer degree shows, each selecting a handful of promising graduates for inclusion in their **Platform** exhibitions. These have been taking place over the past few months with each selected artist being given the opportunity to work with professional teams during the installation and production of their shows. All mediums were considered and each have shown the rich variety and quality of work being produced by our next generation of artists in the South East.

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Notes to Editors

The announcement of the Platform Graduate Award will be at Modern Art Oxford (www.modernartoxford.org.uk) on Thursday 22 November from 6pm. The panel discussion will be followed by the announcement and is open to the public. Book online (£5/£4 concessions) www.modernartoxford.org.uk

For interviews with the shortlisted artists and images of each artwork please contact the associated gallery through the following contacts.

Aspex Gareth Colwell gareth@aspex.org.uk

MK Gallery Katharine Sorensen ksorensen@mkgallery.org, 01908 558318

Modern Art Oxford Hannah Evans
hannah.evans@modernartoxford.org.uk, 01865 813826

Turner Contemporary David Yard DYard@turnercontemporary.org or
Bryony Bishop BBishop@turnercontemporary.org

Platform Graduate Award shortlist of artists

Aspex

George Bills The Wilson Project
Arts University College at Bournemouth, BA (Hons) Fine Art

George Bills' work relies on his sense of adventure and curiosity and about the world around him, often exploring the spaces we inhabit. Predominantly an installation artist, he often explores the spaces we inhabit. His approach is impulsive giving him freedom within all projects. The starting point might be anything, from material choices through to the context of the work's placement. Drawing is a large part of the way in which he works. It is where his ideas are developed first, and they sometimes becoming the finished piece. The Wilson Project is a combination of gallery object and film. Bills created a

transportable, mobile raft and documented its overland journey to the shore, where he successfully launched it and floated out to sea.

Joella Wheatley

Arts University College at Bournemouth, BA (Hons) Fine Art

Joella Wheatley's intense paintings explore the mind as a channel for restructuring the concept of space. Using the combination of drawing and painting as a springboard for invention, she challenges the boundaries of a first hand experience by containing herself within an actual physical space for a certain amount of time. This drastically reduces the amount of normal social interaction, of reasonable mental stimulus of exposure to the natural world, where almost everything that makes life human and bearable is emotionally, physically and psychologically removed. When the things that our brain and body rely on to connect to and understand are taken away from us, this denies us the ability to ask questions and seek reasons for explanations that allow us to understand ourselves. Joella challenges the concept that a space is only defined by what you believe it to be.

MK Gallery www.mkgallery.org The following artists each had their own week-long solo exhibition in MK Gallery Project Space, as part of the eight-week long Showcase 2012 series.

Marion Piper In Deed

Buckinghamshire New University

Marion Piper's practice is concerned with her sensory responses to the experience of walking through city spaces in London, New York and in her latest work, In Deed, through Milton Keynes. The performative activity of pacing through geometry physically connects her to the grid of the city.

Back in the studio she re-enacts the perceptual pleasure of the movement and observation within the structure of the city avenue, playfully interlayering clues from fiction, music, art history and theory. These include ideas of structure and movement within Dicken's A Tale of Two Cities, rhythm and harmony in the jazz music of Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli, and body motion and seeing from the writings of Paul Klee.

This latest series of paintings and drawings were created in June 2012, and include a selection of notebooks that play an important role within the work; along with several in progress canvases positioned on trestles.

Karolina Lebek Landscapes of Poland

University of Bedfordshire

Karolina Lebek presents a mixture of photography, video and sound

works which explore ideas of memory, distance and emotional loss.

Since moving from Poland to the UK, Lebek's emotional relationship with her native country has grown stronger, and has become the subject of this exhibition. In search of her own identity, Lebek kept revisiting places in Poland of great emotional charge. By confronting the utopian image of the past with the raw reality of the present surroundings, the artist has created a personal, emotional dialogue between the past and present. Captured landscapes and objects become visual references creating a diary of loss.

Modern Art Oxford

Kamila Janska *Stem, Bars 2, Big Toe, Yellow, yellow, yellow, red, red, red... Grids – Pink & White, Grid –Brown, Grid – Green* 2012
BA Fine Art, Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art

Kamila Janska investigates the control of social behavior through architecture. Her plaster and steel sculptures process discarded forms and combine them with raw materials, investing them with new meanings.

Cara George *Bird Man, The Point was on a Corner, It's what I call wallpaper* 2012
BA Fine Art, Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art

Cara George uses sound and HD video editing techniques to blur the boundaries between fact and fiction. Platform presents three works by George; a 'documentary' on *Bird Man* Chris Lawton, *The Point was on a Corner*, an observational video of two voices recalling the same incident and *It's what I call wallpaper*, a manipulated audio recording of a conversation with a BBC war correspondent.

Turner Contemporary

Dominic Maffia *Sisters*, 2012
University for the Creative Arts

Dominic Maffia was selected for his series of monochromatic paintings based on colour photographs taken from a family album. The artist's older sisters feature in each of the paintings in various stages of their childhood. Maffia sensitively handles the subject matter of personal memory and the particular moment captured in a photograph, to create a striking and memorable series of paintings.

Naomi Eaton–Baudains *Connection to the Earth*, 2012
Canterbury Christ Church University

Naomi Eaton–Baudains inspiring site-specific installation *Connection to the Earth*, 2012 is the result of her ongoing interest in the

relationship between science and nature. Eaton-Baudains curiosity led her to undertake a residency at Thanet Earth and has made a number of installations based on drawings made in a hydroponics greenhouse there. Eaton-Baudains research-based practice enabled the artist to produce an impressive body of work.