



Siobhán Hapaska wins the 2014 New City Art Prize

The inaugural MK Community Foundation *New City Art Prize for the Visual Arts* has been awarded to Siobhán Hapaska.

The 2014 New City Art Prize, funded by MK Community Foundation, recognizes an outstanding and innovative UK artist, and aims to connect emerging visual artists in and around Milton Keynes to national developments in contemporary art.

The £10,000 prize was presented to the winner at MK Gallery on 4 December 2014 during the preview for the exhibition of work by the four shortlisted artists: experimental filmmaker Beatrice Gibson, sculptor Siobhán Hapaska, video artist Jimmy Merris and photographer Roger Palmer.

The shortlist was selected by jury members Penelope Curtis, Director, Tate Britain; Candida Gertler, Outset Contemporary Art Fund; Roger Hiorns, artist; Adrian Searle, art critic, The Guardian; Anthony Spira, MK Gallery and Julia Upton, MK Community Foundation. A free exhibition of the shortlisted artist's work is on display at MK Gallery from 5 December 2014 – 11 January 2015.

Presenting the award, Penelope Curtis congratulated the shortlisted artists on the strength of their respective practices and said that the exhibition presented a diverse range of interests, subjects and media, offering a snapshot of contemporary practice across the UK. She said that the jury had awarded the prize to Siobhán Hapaska for her beautiful, unsettling, and very individual work. Formally complex, it has an aggressive femininity, both delicate and violent, and the jury admired the coherence of her work over an extended period.

MK Gallery Director Anthony Spira said: *"We are delighted to be launching this important new art prize with a shortlist of this calibre. In some respects, the exhibition reflects the diversity of art practice in the UK today and will also hopefully provide inspiration for artists in Milton Keynes. In anticipation of our major expansion, we are delighted that this Prize will increase the city's cultural profile."*

Julia Upton, Chief Executive of MK Community Foundation said *"This award demonstrates Milton Keynes' passion for the arts, having been home to many innovative artists over the years. Our city deserves national recognition for its arts community and this award will help raise our profile and support the work of local artists. I am delighted that by working in partnership with MK Gallery we've been able to develop a UK wide art prize."*

The shortlisted artists will be In Conversation with Guardian Art Critic Adrian Searle at MK Gallery on Thursday 11 December at 7pm. Free tickets are available to book via the gallery's website at www.mkgallery.org.

Editors Notes

Shortlisted Artists

London based **Beatrice Gibson** (b.1978) is an experimental and process-led filmmaker, who was nominated for the *Jarman Award* (2013) and shortlisted for the *MaxMara Prize for Women Artists 2013-15*. Her work often explores the relationship between music-making and film, particularly experimental notation.

Siobhan Hapaska (b.1963) is a sculptor known for making multi-layered work combining disparate images, forms and narrative styles, ranging from the figurative to the abstract, using such diverse materials as olive trees, (fake) animal fur and industrial metals.

Jimmy Merris (b.1983) works primarily with video, but also performance, assemblage and print. Some videos, shot in low resolution, often involving a collaged pop soundtrack are short, tragi-comic vignettes of everyday life.

Based in Glasgow, **Roger Palmer** (b.1946), predominantly large black and white analogue photography has consistently, since the 1970s, documented man's impact on natural landscape.

New City Art Prize 2014

This prize replaces MK Community Foundation's annual arts bursary and is one element of the charity's overall arts funding strategy for Milton Keynes. The 2014 New City Art Prize will be awarded to an artist working in the visual arts; in future years the prize may focus on other artistic disciplines. By creating a national profile for this programme, MK Community Foundation and MK Gallery hope to draw a renewed national focus on the arts in Milton Keynes for the benefit of local people, who create, support and enjoy the arts in the city. The launch of the 2014 New City Prize for the Visual Arts has been inspired by the early days of Milton Keynes, when the Milton Keynes Development Corporation created opportunities for artists to come to Milton Keynes and contribute to the artistic life of the new city.

MK Community Foundation

www.mkcommunityfoundation.co.uk

MK Community Foundation is the leading grant-making charity in Milton Keynes working for and at the heart of Milton Keynes. It connects people and resources to projects and ideas to create positive change in its communities. Since the MK Community Foundation began in 1986, it has awarded £14 million worth of support through grants and rent subsidy to its local voluntary sector, and established an endowed Art Fund to support a broad range of arts initiatives, including the 2014 New City Art Prize.

MK Gallery

www.mkgallery.org

MK Gallery is one of the UK's leading public galleries, presenting a critically acclaimed programme of international contemporary visual art, together with regular community exhibitions in its Project Space and an extensive public events and formal and informal learning programme. Admission is free.

MK Gallery Artist Support Programmes

MK Gallery is developing a range of artist support programmes to encourage new talent and support artist professional development, including: MK Gallery Young Artist of the Year (for 16-19 yr olds); MK Gallery Associate Artists Programme (piloting bi-monthly critiques and mentoring sessions for early career artists who have previously engaged with MK Gallery's programme and/or have a connection to Milton Keynes) and a 2015 MK Gallery Student Season

MK Gallery Supporters

MK Gallery is supported using public funding by Arts Council England and by Milton Keynes Council.



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