



Judging Panel Announced for the prestigious 2017 VIA Arts Prize

The prestigious VIA Arts Prize has announced an impressive list of arts heavyweights for its third annual prize.

The panel of four includes world-renowned photographers Anderson & Low, Founding Director of the Delfina Foundation Aaron Cezar, journalist Alastair Smart and art critic and curator Dr Michael Asbury.

Drawing on their distinguished careers the panel will decide both first and second place winners based on their original works and their understanding of this year's theme. The theme for the 2017 edition is Dialogues, encouraging creative and cultural responses from UK-based artists, inspired by the regions of Latin America and Iberia. Artists are required to produce an original work that establishes a point of communication with an artist, work or artistic style characteristic of the regions. This is an opportunity for artists to explore the history and heritage, culture and perception of Latin American and Iberian countries.

Ana E. González, President of ACALASP, says *"We are delighted to be working with such an esteemed judging panel for this year's VIA Arts Prize. We look to the judges for their extensive knowledge of art critiquing and personal interpretations of this year's theme. As ACALASP seeks to promote greater knowledge of Latin America and Iberia, we look forward to seeing how the entries engage artistically with these inspiring regions for this year's prize."*

Anderson & Low, the artistic duo formed by **Jonathan Anderson and Edwin Low**, have been collaborating since 1990. Their work includes portraiture, architectural studies, abstract images, reportage, nudes, and landscapes and is noted for its attention to concept, form, lighting, and printing. Their work is exhibited world-wide, residing in many public and private collections including: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, National Portrait Galleries of both the UK and Australia, Museum of Fine Art, Houston, High Museum of Art, Baltimore Art Museum, Atlanta, National Gallery of Australia, Akron Museum, The National Gallery of Australia, the US Olympic Center, the Southeast Photography Museum, Florida, and Museet Fotokunst, Denmark.

Anderson & Low are particularly interested in this year's collaborative entries, as a collaborative partnership themselves.

Jonathan Anderson comments *"Dialogue is a word that has many meanings. It means a conversation, it can be ideas coming together, it can be confrontational. It is without emotional intent attached - it can be a good, or a bad conversation. There is no magic to working collaboratively - it's really teamwork. After thirty years working together we still often have our differences, but at its peak it's a crossover, where we meet on a different plane altogether - something we hope will be apparent in this year's entries to the VIA Arts Prize."*

After winning an art prize at the beginning of their career Anderson and Low have experienced firsthand the impact of art prizes on an artist's career:

Edwin Low adds *"The recognition of an art prize is truly valuable. The day after we received a prestigious art prize we had people calling us saying they wanted to work with us. We look forward to seeing very diverse works and helping these artists in their careers."*

The international duo want applicants to capture the cultural and historical heritage of both Latin America and Iberia, delving into the assimilation of the plethora of music, arts, writing, peoples and backgrounds found across the regions.

Alastair Smart was Arts Editor of both The Daily Telegraph and The Sunday Telegraph before recently moving to become Associate Editor of Christies online.

After completing postgraduate studies in Mexico, Smart has not only been a key critic of Latin American art showing in London but has been an active promoter of Latin American exhibitions in the UK. He has worked closely with cultural institutions and embassies across the country.

Smart comments *"Art prizes are highly important for two reasons: they provide a platform for a range of artists to show their work, which otherwise wouldn't exist, and act as a bellwether for the latest artistic trends."*

Smart believes successful entries will interpret the theme and show an understanding of dialogues as a topical subject given the current political climate.

He adds *"The world is waking up to the fact that Latin America was a major centre of modernism: recent exhibitions such as Radical Geometry at the RA and the heavy investment by Tate in art from Latin America is the testament to that. Latin American art has been under-appreciated for a long time, particularly in the UK."*

Michael Asbury is an art critic and curator based in London. He is Reader in the History and Theory of Art at Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London (UAL) and founding member of the research centre for Transnational Art, Identity and Nation (TrAIN). Over the last twenty years he has worked on themes involving modern and contemporary Brazilian art and has curated a number of exhibitions including those by Alfredo Volpi, Anna Maria Maiolino, Antonio Manuel, Cao Guimaraes, Cildo Meireles, Ibero Camargo, Jose Oiticica Filho, Jose Patricio, Rosangela Renno. His shows have revolved around themes such as Brazilian Photography and Architecture, Neoconcretismo and The Monochrome in Contemporary Art.

Aaron Cezar is the founding Director of the Delfina Foundation, where he develops, curates and oversees its interrelated programme of residencies, exhibitions and public platforms.

Over the last ten years, Cezar has positioned the Delfina Foundation as a meeting point and incubator of creative talent, forming partnerships with leading institutions internationally. Independently and through the Delfina Foundation, he has sat on numerous boards, committees and advisory groups such as All Change Arts, Shubbak, Davidoff Art Initiative, Caspian Arts Foundation, the Young Arab Theatre Fund, the Marrakech Biennale, Art Brussels, and Alserkal Avenue. He has been a jury member for a number of awards, including the Jarman Award (2012), LIVE WORKS Performance Act Award (Vol.4 - 2016), and many others. In 2017, he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the Royal College of Arts.

Prior to the Delfina Foundation, Cezar worked as Project Director of Metal, the artistic laboratory space established by Jude Kelly OBE, ultimately becoming Managing Director of Metal's arts-based consultancy overseeing creative projects with a focus on urban regeneration. He has also worked with London 2012, as part of its culture team that secured London's Olympic bid; at The Place, London; and in New York, as a management consultant. Cezar has degrees in Economics and Dance from Princeton University and a postgraduate degree in the Creative Industries from King's College London.

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Deadline for entries: 16th of October 2017

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