

VIA Arts Prize launches its 2019 Prize and Call for Entries

The VIA Arts Prize, the UK's only Ibero-American themed arts award, has launched its 2019 Call for Entries, and is celebrating the fifth edition of the respected Prize.

The VIA Art's Prize's mission is to deepen cultural awareness of Latin American, Spanish and Portuguese arts and cultures in the UK. UK-based artists of any nationality are invited to submit an original artwork specifically inspired by Ibero-American arts and culture. Through this specific brief, those behind the prize seek to promote the significant global and historical reach of Ibero-American art and culture, both past and present, and encourage intercultural exchange.

The VIA Arts Prize is organised by the ACALASP (the Association of Cultural Attachés of Latin America, Spain and Portugal) and is hosted annually at the Embassy of Brazil in London. The initiative is sponsored by Itaú, and supported by People's Palace Projects (Queen Mary University of London) and Instituto Cervantes.

The Embassy of Brazil's Cultural Attaché, Paula Rassi says:

"From Lygia Clarke to Gabriel Orozco, Latin American, Spanish and Portuguese art interacts with the UK's in a process of cross-cultural exchange. Ibero-American art is more relevant today than ever before and is becoming increasingly accessible in important art and cultural institutions. The fifth edition of the VIA Arts Prize encourages entrants to explore and immerse themselves in Latin American and Iberian culture to create original visual artworks that form connections with these regional outputs."

The Prize culminates in a group exhibition of 30 shortlisted works in the Embassy of Brazil's impressive Sala Brasil gallery, in the cultural heart of London. A jury of high-profile personalities from the Arts world make the final selection of winning entries at the opening of the exhibition. Cash prizes, provided by Itaú, are awarded to the Jury's first (£5,000) and second (£2,000) choices. The VIA Arts Prize winner is also awarded a solo show at the Embassy of Brazil, running concurrently to the shortlisted artists' show in the subsequent year.

The 2019 jury members will be announced shortly. Previous jury members include Will Sorrell of the London Design Biennale, James Nicholls of Maddox Gallery, collector and patron Catherine Petitgas, Marko Daniel of Tate Modern, Nayia Yiakoumaki of the Whitechapel Gallery, Aaron Cezar of the Delfina Foundation and Alastair Smart.

Previous winners of the prestigious prize include Taiwanese artist Ting-Tong Chang, British sculptor Susan Phillips and Portuguese artist Hugo Brazão.

The People's Choice Award will be awarded to the public's favorite artwork. Visitors can vote in situ during the exhibition of the final 30 selected works and results will be revealed at the end of the show.

Applicants can submit their work between 12:00 on Monday 15 April and 23:59 on Monday 30 September 2019 by filling out the submission form on the website www.viaartsprize.org.

For further information please contact Phoebe Ruffels, phoebe.ruffels@damsonpr.com or 020 7812 0645

Notes to Editors

ABOUT ACALASP

The Association of Cultural Attachés from the Embassies of Latin American countries, Spain and Portugal is a non-profit organisation that promotes these cultures within the UK. They run cross-cultural initiatives, events and competitions to provide freelance artists across all disciplines with creative opportunities, which simultaneously help to raise the profile of their Ibero-American home nations.

ABOUT ITAÚ

Itaú is the largest financial conglomerate in Latin America, with operations in 19 countries throughout the Americas, Asia and Europe. It is a universal bank with a range of services and products serving the most varied client profiles – both individuals and companies of all sizes, from major international groups to local micro-entrepreneurs. It has almost 50,000 ATMs and 5,000 full-service branches in Latin America. With the purpose of encouraging people's transformation power, Itaú is recognised for its governance practices and management, which is focused on the generation shared value to its employees, customers, shareholders and society.

Itaú BBA is the Wholesale and Investment division of Itaú, and the largest corporate and investment bank in Latin America. Itaú BBA International offers wholesale, investment, and institutional treasury banking activities and services to institutional investors and clients, based out of headquarters in London and with offices in Paris, Madrid, Frankfurt, Lisbon and Dubai. Further information: www.itaubba-en/

ABOUT INSTITUTO CERVANTES

Instituto Cervantes is the official Spanish Language and Cultural centre. Founded in 1991 by the Spanish Government, Instituto Cervantes' mission is to promote Spanish language teaching and promote the cultures of Spanish speaking countries. Further information: londres.cervantes.es/en

ABOUT PEOPLE'S PALACE PROJECTS

People's Palace Projects seeks to ask how the arts can bring about positive social change through participatory arts projects, performances, educational initiatives and debates. The institution brings artists, activists, academics and audiences together for projects that address a wide range of social justice and human rights issues. Based in the East End of London (Queen Mary University of London), they have worked with a wide range of local communities, in partnership with a range of arts organizations and artists across England and Wales with a legacy of international collaborative projects in West Africa, South America and Eastern Europe. For the past two decades they have maintained a special focus on strengthening cultural links between Brazil and the UK. Further information: peoplespalaceprojects.org.uk

ABOUT THE VENUE

Opened in 2012, Sala Brasil has become the main venue for a variety of cultural events carried out by the Embassy of Brazil. With generous space, suitable for an ambitious cultural programme, Sala Brasil hosts a series of attractions, from art exhibition to concerts, in an effort to give the public an opportunity to experience the quality and diversity of Brazilian culture. Sala Brasil is a beautiful Grade II listed room, once the P&O ticketing office, where it is said that tickets for the Titanic were sold. It is located on the ground floor of the Embassy with an open plan area of approximately 250m² and a mezzanine of approximately 60m².