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Press Release

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Five shortlisted artists announced for the 8th edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women 2019 – 2021

The **Whitechapel Gallery**, **Collezione Maramotti** and **Max Mara** are delighted to announce the **five shortlisted artists for the 8th edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women: Allison Katz, Katie Schwab, Tai Shani, Emma Talbot and Hannah Tuulikki**. This weekend the artists travelled to Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia, Italy, for the announcement, and to celebrate the opening of the major art work *Che si può fare*, by the seventh winner of the prize, Helen Cammock. *Che si può fare* tours from the Whitechapel Gallery where it was unveiled this summer.

The artists shortlisted for the 2019 - 2021 iteration of the prize were selected by a judging panel chaired by Iwona Blazwick OBE, Director of the Whitechapel Gallery, joined by gallerist Florence Ingleby, artist Chantal Joffe, collector Fatima Maleki and art critic Hettie Judah.

The Max Mara Art Prize for Women was established by Whitechapel Gallery in collaboration with the Max Mara Fashion Group in 2005. Its aim is to promote emerging female artists based in the UK, enabling them to develop their potential; and to inspire new artistic perspectives on 21st century Italy. The winning artist, announced in early 2020, is awarded a bespoke six-month artist residency in locations around Italy after presenting the judges with a proposal for a new body of work. The resulting work is premiered at the Whitechapel Gallery and travels to the Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia, Italy, in 2021.

Iwona Blazwick, OBE, Director of the Whitechapel Gallery and chair of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women jury, said: 'This unique prize offers time, space and funding to enable artists to develop their potential. For too long women artists have had to fight for recognition. The Max Mara Art Prize offers practitioners of different generations the opportunity to spend formative months exploring Italy; and the resources to create a major new commission that situates them on the world stage'.

The shortlisted artists for the Max Mara Art Prize for Women 2019-21 are:

Allison Katz (b. 1980)

Allison Katz was born in Montreal, Canada and lives and works in London. Her practice includes painting, ceramics, graphics and writing. Her works imbue familiar images including animals, human figures and still-life with abstract and surreal narratives. Ranging from the domestic to the monumental Katz adds a textural dimension to her paintings by encrusting them with sand or rice. Puns and wordplay abound in her work, which draws upon humorous slippages between word and image to create paradoxical, even absurd, confluences. The artist aims to balance personal experience with collective iconography. Katz has been the subject of solo shows at Oakville Galleries, Canada and MIT List Visual Arts Centre, Boston, USA (2018), and Kunstverein Freiburg in Germany (2015). Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Leeds Art Gallery, Bonner Kunstverein, Powerlong Museum Shanghai, Museum of Modern Art Warsaw (all 2019), Tate St. Ives (2017), the Serpentine Galleries (2016) and South London Gallery (2014).

Katie Schwab (b. 1985)

Katie Schwab lives and works in London. Her works evolve by embracing the social, historical and formal contexts for which they are made. Developed through a process of facilitating workshops and interviews, undertaking tuition, partaking in tours and looking through archival records, oral histories and sample books, she documents knowledge and skills that have been shared between artist, students, museum staff, technicians and local residents. Schwab's diverse methods include tapestry, ceramics, embroidery, furniture, printmaking, video and more, unified by a consideration of collective manufacture. Recent exhibitions include *A Working Building*, The Gallery at Plymouth College of Art, Plymouth (2019), for which she created wallpaper, stitched and tufted textiles, wall panels and videos inspired by the history of the Cryséde textile factory in St Ives and visits to Plymouth's civic spaces. Other exhibitions include *Jerwood Solo Presentations*, Jerwood Space, London (2016); *Making the Bed*, Laying the Table, Glasgow Sculpture Studios, Glasgow (2016) and *Together in a Room*, Collective, Edinburgh (2016). Recent projects include *This Interesting and Wonderful Factory*, Clore Sky Studio Commission, Tate St Ives, St Ives (2018); *Atrium Commissions*, mima, Middlesbrough (2017) and *A Portable Mural*, Serpentine Galleries, London (2017). She was the recipient of the 2016 Nigel Greenwood Art Prize, the 2017 Wilhelmina Barns-Graham Residency at Porthmeor Studios, St Ives, the 2018/19 New Contemporaries/SPACE Studio Bursary and the 2017-19 Design Residency at Plymouth College of Art.

Tai Shani (b. 1976)

Tai Shani was born in London where she lives and works. Her multidisciplinary practice comprises performance, film, photography and installation. Shani creates vividly coloured sculptures that sit within elaborate installations sometimes involving experimental texts written by the artist. The artist sets out to re-imagine feminine otherness as a perfect totality, set in a world complete with cosmologies, myth and histories that negate patriarchy. Shani has presented her work in the UK and abroad; recent exhibitions and commissions include, *Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo* (2019); *Athens Biennial*, (2018); *Still I Rise: Feminisms, Gender, Resistance*, Nottingham Contemporary (2018); *Glasgow International* (2018); *Wysing Arts Centre*

(2017); Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm (2016); RADAR commission, Loughborough University, (2016), Serpentine Galleries (2016); Tate Britain (2016); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2015); Southbank Centre, London (2014-15); Arnolfini, Bristol (2013); Matt's Gallery, London (2012) and FRAC Nord-Pas de Calais and Loop Festival, Barcelona (2011); The Barbican, London (2011); ICA, London (2011). Shani is nominated for the 2019 Turner Prize for her participation in Glasgow International 2018, solo exhibition DC: Semiramis at The Tetley, Leeds and participation in the group exhibition Still I Rise: Feminisms, Gender, Resistance. In 2019, her book *Our Fatal Magic* was published by Strange Attractor Press and distributed by MIT press.

Emma Talbot (b. 1969)

Emma Talbot lives and works in London. Her work explores autobiography. Through drawing, painting, installation and sculpture, she articulates memories and psychological states as visual poems or associative ruminations. The imagery in the work is direct and hand-drawn, resulting in immediate, open, inventive representations of what is seen in the mind's eye. Incorporating her own writing and references and quotes from other sources, Talbot combines text, image and pattern to evoke the symbolic, the metaphoric and the everyday. The work explores the personal as political, social politics, gender, the 'natural world', our intimacy with technology and language. Talbot studied at the Birmingham Institute of Art & Design and Royal College of Art. Forthcoming solo exhibitions include *Sounders of The Depths*, Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, Netherlands (2019), Eastside Projects (2020) and Dundee Contemporary Arts (2020). Recent solo exhibitions include ArtNight 2019 commission: *Your Own Authority*, William Morris Gallery / *Do You See Yourself Projected?*, Mirth Marvel and Maud, London E17; *21st Century Sleepwalk*, Caustic Coastal and Salford Lad's Club, Salford (2018); *Woman-Snake-Bird*, Galerie Onrust, Amsterdam (2018); *Emma Talbot*, Nicolas Krupp Gallery 2018; *Open Thoughts*, Neuer Aachener Kunstverein 2017; *The World Blown Apart*, Galerie Onrust, Amsterdam 2017; *Stained With Marks Of Love*, Arcadia Missa, New York 2017. Her work is held in the collections of Guerlain, Paris, City of Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, David Roberts Collection, Saatchi Collection, University of the Arts London, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Fries Museum NL, Arnhem Museum NL, KRC Collection NL.

Hanna Tuulikki (b. 1982)

Hanna Tuulikki, born in Brighton, is an artist, composer and performer based in Glasgow, Scotland. Her practice spans performance, film and multi-channel audio-visual installation, blending together voice, dance, costume and drawing. Her multi-disciplinary projects investigate 'the ways in which the body communicates beyond words, gravitating towards the spaces 'in-between', be it human-and-more-than-human, male-and-female, or ancient-and-contemporary'. With a particular interest in 'mimesis' - the imitation or embodiment of the 'natural world' - within cross cultural traditions of music and dance, her work explores the place of folk narratives, memory, ritual and technology within specific environments and ecologies. Recent projects include *Deer Dancer* (2019), an audiovisual installation considering how imitation of deer behaviour in dance constructs masculine rituals; *cloud-cuckoo-island* (2016), a film featuring solo vocal improvisation in a natural amphitheater on the island of Eigg, Scotland, exploring madness, mythology and gender (shortlisted for British Composer Award 2017); *SOURCEMOUTH: LIQUIDBODY* (2016), an audiovisual installation inspired by Indian landscapes and the relationship between river-systems, the body, and Kutiyattam theatre (winner of New Music Scotland Award 2017).

Notes for Editors

- The Max Mara Art Prize for Women in collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery is a biannual award established in 2005. It is the only visual art prize for women in the UK and aims to promote and nurture female artists, enabling them to develop their potential with the gift of time and space. The winner is awarded a six-month Italian residency tailored to fit the artist and their winning proposal for the Prize. During the residency, which is organised by Collezione Maramotti in collaboration with Max Mara and the Whitechapel Gallery, the artist has the opportunity to realise an ambitious new project which is presented in major solo exhibitions at the Whitechapel Gallery in London and Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia, Italy. The prize is open to women artists living and working in the United Kingdom who have not previously had a major solo survey exhibition. The partners of the prize are Max Mara, Whitechapel Gallery and Collezione Maramotti who collaborate on each phase of the prize. Each year a jury, chaired by Whitechapel Gallery Director, Iwona Blazwick, and including a gallerist, critic, artist and collector, agree on a shortlist of five artists before the winner is decided based on the artists' proposals. The Max Mara Art Prize for Women was awarded the British Council Arts & Business International Award in 2007 and has enabled winning artists to take major steps in their careers. Previous winners of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women are:
 - Helen Cammock (2017 – 19) – Cammock (b. 1970) presented a film, a series of vinyl cut prints, a screen-printed frieze and an artist's book exploring the idea of lament in women's lives across histories and geographies in her exhibition *Che si può fare*. Since winning the Max Mara Art Prize for Women she has been nominated for the Turner Prize 2019. *Che si può fare* was on display at Whitechapel Gallery London, United Kingdom from 25 June – 1 September 2019 and Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy from 13 October 2019 – 16 February 2020.
 - Emma Hart (2015 – 17) – Hart's (b. 1974) large-scale installation, *Mamma Mia!* (2016) consists of a family of large ceramic heads, whose interior space is filled with vivid patterns, designed and hand-painted by Hart after researching the designs and practice of the Italian tradition of maiolica pottery. This project represents the culmination of an investigation into pattern, from visual patterns to patterns of psychological behaviour.
 - Corin Sworn (2013 – 15) – Sworn (b.1976) created a work drawing from the *Commedia dell'Arte* improvised plays originating in 16th century Italy. The work was on show at Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy until 28 February 2016. Sworn was awarded the Leverhulme Prize 2015 which recognises the achievement of outstanding researchers whose work has already attracted international recognition and whose future career is exceptionally promising.
 - Laure Prouvost (2011 – 13) – Laure Prouvost created an ambitious new large-scale installation for her Max Mara Art Prize exhibition. In 2013 she was awarded the Turner Prize. Her project *Deep See Blue Surrounding You* was presented in the French pavilion for the 2019 Venice Biennale.
 - Andrea Büttner (2009 – 11) – Part of Andrea Büttner's work created for her Max Mara Art Prize exhibition, *The Poverty of Riches*, and titled *Untitled (Paintings)* (2011) was included in the Whitechapel Gallery's landmark exhibition *Adventures of the Black Square* in 2015.
 - Hannah Rickards (2007 – 09) – The prize enabled Hannah Rickards to realise an ambitious new work she had been researching before winning the Prize. Rickards was also awarded the Leverhulme Prize in 2015 and had a major exhibition at Modern Art Oxford in 2014.
 - Margaret Salmon (2005 – 07) – Margaret Salmon travelled to Italy and created a triptych of black and white films exploring themes of motherhood. She went on to exhibit at the Venice Biennale in 2007.
- The Max Mara Fashion Group was founded in 1951 by Achille Maramotti and is now run by the next generation. It is one of the largest women's ready-to-wear companies in the world, with more than 2600 stores in more than 100 different countries. www.maxmara.com
- The Collezione Maramotti opened to the public in Reggio Emilia, Italy in 2007. It is a private collection of contemporary art with an important historical collection (1950-2017); it continues to present new projects and commissions from international mid-career and young artists. For further information, please visit www.collezionemaramotti.org
- For over a century the Whitechapel Gallery has premiered world-class artists from modern masters to contemporaries. The Gallery is renowned for showcasing emerging and established female artists and has presented major solo exhibitions of Barbara Hepworth (1955), Eva Hesse (1979), Frida Kahlo (1982), Nan Goldin (2002), Sophie Calle (2009), Gillian Wearing (2012) and Sarah Lucas (2013). The Gallery is a touchstone for modern and contemporary art internationally, plays a central role in London's cultural landscape and is pivotal to the continued growth of the world's most vibrant contemporary art quarter. www.whitechapelgallery.org

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