



Artists' Moving
Image Network

Film London Jarman Award Winner Announcement Transcript

[The live premiere of this video will feature a two-minute countdown before the start of the presentation]

0:10

Hello my name is Adrian Wootton- I'm the Chief Executive of Film London and the British Film Commission, and I would like to give you my sincere Welcome to the 2020 Film London Jarman Award.

We are delighted to be presenting this thirteenth year of the Jarman Award, the prestigious prize celebrating the work of the UK's foremost artist filmmakers.

00:32

In this extraordinary year, we made the decision to take the award fully online. And we've got a packed but carefully crafted agenda this evening:

We'll show the six remarkable artistic practices that make up the 2020 Shortlist. Then Iwona Blazwick, Director of the Whitechapel Gallery, and one of the country's most well-respected cultural figures, will give insights into her experience as part of the Award Jury.

01:00

And special guest and Jarman Award Patron, Dexter Fletcher, will join us to announce the winning artist for 2020.

01:15

Text on screen

01:21

Mikhail Karikis: Well Derek Jarman has been very inspiring to me because he was an artist, a cinematic visionary who experimented, but also he was an activist, who fought, and he made films for the things that he believed in.

01:40

John Akomfrah; There are so few initiatives that recognise and celebrate artists film, which isn't the run of the mill. Because the Jarman Award stands for that- this protean, productive space in which different kinds of people come together to say: 'We want to find another way of doing things.' Just for that symbolic thing alone- that's important.

02:22

Adrian Wootton: It's wonderful to continue to honour the legacy of British filmmaker, artist and activist Derek Jarman.

This year also saw the successful purchase of Prospect Cottage, Jarman's studio and residence in Dungeness, Kent, following a vigorous campaign led by the Art Fund, Creative Folkestone and Tate. Its garden and archive will now be protected for the future.

02:46

Our huge thanks go to the Jarman Estate for making this possible.

We are also thrilled this year to announce eight Patrons on board to champion the Jarman Award.

Their knowledge and experience will undoubtedly help to sustain both Derek Jarman's legacy, and the legacy of artist filmmaking.

03:06

So I would like to welcome - and extend my sincere thanks to - our Patrons: John Akomfrah, Terence Davies, Rupert Everett, Dexter Fletcher, Hetain Patel, Tony Peake, Tilda Swinton and Toyah Willcox

03:26

Rupert Everett: What is very inspiring about Derek and what we can learn from him, is that Derek was always an outsider in our business- he was never accepted.

Everything he did was financed by him scrabbling around and finding things. And Derek always drove the whole thing on.

I think that is what is so inspiring about him- he was a survivor and he wasn't waiting-ever, actually- to be accepted by the business.

03:28

He was an artist, expressing the world as he saw it in Film. And he was a great inspiration. And whoever wins this Award, is going to win it because they have the kernel of that kind of attitude in them too.

04:31

Adrian Wootton: I would like to say a big thank to all at Film London, particularly the FLAMIN team, for helping bring this 'virtual' version of the Award to life.

And my very sincere gratitude to our funders - Arts Council England, and to our award partners, the Whitechapel Gallery, and to our generous sponsors - The Genesis Cinema.

04:55

And, of course, to the Jarman Award tour venues across the UK which exhibited the work of our shortlisted artists.

Now, let me hand over to Iwona Blazwick to introduce our shortlist...

05:10

Iwona Blazwick: The Whitechapel Gallery is proud to be a partner with Film London's Jarman Award and over the years we've been able to screen, not only the works that are produced, but invite the artists themselves to come and share their ideas. Moving Image work has indeed become ever more central to our programmes.

05:30

Throughout the year Whitechapel Gallery's Artist Film International brings to London developments from across the globe, but the Jarman Award gives us the opportunity to see what is happening here in the UK.

05:45

And judging by this year's shortlist, Britain continues to be one of the most vibrant crucibles for artists' film in the world. Serving on the jury is both inspiring and challenging, we get over 100 nominations and it's virtually impossible to choose. It is the case however that the six artists that make up the shortlist have produced extraordinary works over the last two years.

06:13

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the shortlisted artists, for the 2020 Jarman Award.

Like me, Michelle Williams Gamaker escaped her suburban upbringing through Saturday afternoon matinees of vintage movies. Part of her dissolution trilogy, 'The Eternal Return', made in 2019, is a ravishingly shot and staged black and white short story about cinema. Forever linked with magic and with the Indian elephant, charismatic child star Sabu has grown up, yet remains trapped in the narratives of race, and Empire.

07:01

Michelle Williams Gamaker: I'm Michelle Williams Gamaker, I'm an artist working in moving image, performance and installation. My work is often in dialogue with film history- in particular, Hollywood and British studio productions from 30s, 40s and 50s film. My brown protagonists are centralised and really articulate what they want to say about their positions with race, class, gender, and queerness.

I see my work as a form of fictional activism, and by that I mean that I'm now returning to the films that I loved, and looking at them, I suppose more forensically, thinking about their politically problematic roots, thinking about the imperialist colonial storytelling at their heart.

07:56

FILM *The Eternal Return*:

"I couldn't even read when they discovered me. I couldn't speak English. I just learned the sounds. I was a circus performer all along, little tricks."

08:09

"You make it sound like this is all beneath you."

08:13

“I have a wife Mr Arnold, and two young ones. Can’t you see shows like this are the beginning of the end?”

08:20

“The end?”

08:22

“You say I’m a star, but no. I’m a prince at best, a thief, a stableboy more often than not. I want to belong with the greats. But this. This can’t be my fate.”

08:40

Iwona Blazwick: Also renowned for their exquisite drawings, their installations, and performances, artist duo Hannah Quinlan, and Rosie Hastings, explore the architecture ethos, and dynamics of queer spaces.

Their research provides the mise en scene for ‘In my Room’. Made this year, this film celebrates the central role of dance in queer culture but it also asks questions about freedom and power that often remain a male preserve.

09:15

Hannah Quinlan: And so I’m Hannah Quinlan

09:17

Rosie Hastings: I’m Rosie Hastings.

09:19

Hannah Quinlan: So we’re an artist duo who’ve worked together since 2014, and we work in a lot of different mediums so film, drawing, installation, performance, and more recently we’ve been using fresco in our work as well.

09:33

Rosie Hastings: Our work explores the artifacts, behaviours, politics and history of LGBTQ culture in the Western context. We are particularly interested in looking at the affects of state violence on the LGBTQ community- that includes policing, gentrification and austerity, amongst a whole world of different things.

09:56

Hannah Quinlan: In the film, we were looking at the idea of how public sex occupies a certain area in the queer imagination and kind of when people are looking back, people view it as almost like a utopian, or a radical moment within queer history. I think we were keen to look at the ways in which public sex actually consolidates existing hierarchies, rather than challenges them.

10:21

FILM, *In My Room*: [Music plays]

11:05

Iwona Blazwick: Jenn Nkiru is an artist and filmmaker, who also explores cultural histories, looking at dance, music, and cinema, through what she has called an afro surrealist lens. Her extraordinary 2019 film: ‘BLACK TO TECHNO’ shows how the relentless rhythms of

industrial production of the Machine Age, have been infused by the human, with a transcendent spirit of self expression to create music of poetic and revolutionary fervour.

11:43

Jenn Nkiru: My name is Jenn Nkiru, I'm a director from, and based in Peckham South London. I work with moving image. A lot of my work is concerned with identities, particularly black identities and I'm making work within variable spaces so I'm making work within the commercial realm, making work within the gallery space, making work as a short film director, and I also make work as a collective.

12:15

Whilst I was in film school I also used to DJ do quite a lot, so I used to spin a lot of records and so a lot of my practice even as a DJ definitely finds itself in my filmmaking.

With 'BLACK TO TECHNO' and a lot of my pieces, I'm very much engaging the archive, because I'm interested in- how do I keep the archive alive, meaning how do I keep it relevant, so that it looks like it's a document from the future, as much as it being a document from the past.

12:49

FILM, *BLACK TO TECHNO*: "Anytime you listen to music, or anytime you listen to techno or hip hop, you better pay homage to Motown, you better pay homage to the Temptations, you better pay homage to Aretha Franklin, you better pay homage to the Belville three. And the creators of techno, you better pay homage to the people who spawned this culture. This is we existing here, this was the city of the Mecca is all about. This the heart this is the mecca, that's the foundation."

13:11

"Black to Techno"

13:21

Iwona Blazwick: Drawing on the dystopian narratives and futuristic aesthetic of science fiction, Larissa Sansour sets a powerful drama in a subterranean brutalist interior in a future post-apocalyptic Bethlehem. 'In Vitro', made in 2019, is a gripping meditation on the nature of genetic, historic, and political legacies, and how they might lay the framework for an alternative future.

13:56

Larissa Sansour: I started working with film in the early 2000s, and since then it has become an integral part of my practice. It's easy for me to think of my work in terms of film because I can combine sounds, visuals, and narrative and dialogue, that I have become increasingly interested in.

14:19

I work mostly with Palestinian politics and Middle Eastern politics, and I always try to find different ways of framing that dialogue. Recently I've been working with sci fi, and using that to contextualise the Palestinian question.

14:41

This is particularly interesting for me because when you shift the context that you normally see a particular conversation in, you create a new value system by which a new meaning can be decoded. And I think that has a lot to do with a lot of my work. I think that's maybe at the crux of what I'm trying to do.

15:06

FILM, *In Vitro*: [Subtitles on screen]

15:48

Iwona Blazwick: Project Art Works is an artist collective whose film: 'Illuminating the Wilderness' made in 2019, is an elegy, both to the natural world, and to different ways of seeing. Through the camera lenses of a group of neurodiverse practitioners, we see the world with fresh eyes, through a lived sublime aspects of the tiniest plant, and can translate an ineffable atmosphere into an immersive visual experience.

16:23

Kate Adams: I'm an artist and co-founder of Project Art Works, and we're a collective of neurodiverse artists and makers based in Hastings. We began working with moving image as a way of establishing an environment that in a sense reposition people, and the way that they're seen in society- as leaders and contributors and incredibly creative and productive people.

16:51

What's really important to us is to enable people to represent themselves, to inform, to advocate, in order to be able to enable neurodivergent artists and makers within the collective to continue to work. The film we've chosen to show, tracks a shared experience with a group of six neurodivergent artists and makers and their families and support teams.

FILM *Illuminating the Wilderness*: [Subtitles on screen]

18:26

Iwona Blazwick: In a recent collaboration with Artangel, Andrea Luka Zimmerman gives centre stage to those who live under the radar of urban society. 'Here for Life', made in 2019, is a revelation portrait of ten Londoners and a dog as the journey through the canals, markets, and streets of our city, culminating in a cathartic theatre performance for nomadic people, and as part of her wider ethos of looking for the sources of radical hope.

19:06

Andrea Luka Zimmerman: I make films, but I also curate and I write, but through making films I seek a profound re-relation between people, place and ecology. So I'm really interested in coexistence, in lives that are marginalised, because that's also where I come from.

19:24

The mainstream cinema for me is very limited because it literally articulates itself through tropes, and I don't recognise myself within it, and I don't recognise the beauty of a lot of the people whose lives I'm drawn to in it- other than they're victimised or they're again re marginalised or erased. So it's a deeper political project for me, in that sense, but it's a deeply poetic project.

19:49

FILM, *Here for Life*:

20:00

“You fish fish, you don't hunt fish”

20:02

“We don't need the semantics of it, you know what we mean. The fish are going around...”

20:04

“No, it's not semantics...”

20:07

“You go after them with sharp objects”

20:09

“Listen, listen, it's not an argument.”

20:10

“No, it's not an argument! Sorry, I don't mean my voice to sound-“

20:15

“No, it's an open discussion”

20:16

“I know. My voice sounds rowdy, but I don't feel rowdy in the slightest...”

20:18

[Song Plays]

20:48

Iwona Blazwick: I know that my fellow jurors would like to join me in expressing our congratulations to all the shortlisted artists for their tremendous achievement. Having served on this jury for over a decade, I'm still astonished at the innovation, the pioneering quality of artists working in the UK today, and how they're once expressions of a contemporary sensibility, and yet true to the legacy of Derek Jarman. after the announcement of the prize on the 24th of November, these remarkable works will be viewable online, on the Film London website. If you haven't seen them yet, please don't miss them. And now I will hand it over to Adrian.

21:20

Adrian Wootton: Thanks, Iwona, for those fascinating and generous insights.

Now, as the moment you've all been waiting for draws close, I'd like to introduce our very special guest and new Jarman Award Patron...

As a Director, his work includes *Bohemian Rhapsody* and *Rocket Man*.

.21:37

As an actor, his creative collaboration with Jarman, playing the key role in the iconic film Caravaggio, is so central to Jarman's work and legacy.

21:48

I am delighted to welcome Dexter Fletcher to say a few words and to announce this year's award.

21:57

Dexter Fletcher: Hello, I'm Dexter Fletcher. I'm very honoured to have been asked to be a patron of the Jarman Award.

The impact of this unique director on my own career, has always been integral to me striving to keep pushing my own creative boundaries. Derek opened the door for me into the world of art, and inspiration. And I'm eternally grateful to him for that.

22:21

Derek was an innovator, and a visionary. An Award in his name, and the opportunity it gives to support and promote a new generation of artists is wonderful, fitting and extremely exciting. Great artists should always have their legacy.

22:37

So, my sincere congratulations to all on the shortlist!

23:05

Dexter Fletcher: This extraordinary and exceptional year, the shortlisted artists have decided to share the prize. They felt given the turbulence and trauma of the current times, they needed and wanted to demonstrate solidarity. Wonderful! Fantastic! I would like to invite the Film London Jarman Award 2020 artists to say a few words...

23:31

Artists' Statement: [Subtitles on Screen]

26:31

Adrian Wootton: Thank you all for that eloquent statement and sentiment. As you can imagine, much consideration has gone into the decision this year to share the Award. But I'm sure you'll agree, it is fitting to the current climate, and reflects the solidarity of artists and organisations right across our cultural sector. Thank you all for joining us on this virtual platform. We are very hopeful that we can meet 'in person' next year for the Film London Jarman Award 2021. But in the meantime, please do head to our website to watch the wonderful work by the shortlist artists, which will be streamed there for next 2 days. We hope that you will all stay safe and well. This has been the Film London Jarman Award 2020. Thank you and Good Night.



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