

Press release

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MALL GALLERIES INTRODUCE PUBLIC VOTE TO SELECT WINNER OF THE THREADNEEDLE FIGURATIVE PRIZE

Unlike the Turner Prize or the commission for Trafalgar Square's Fourth Plinth, the winner of the valuable new £25,000 Threadneedle Figurative Prize will be decided by a public vote. "*We have the courage to stand behind the public's choice*", states Lewis McNaught, Director of the Mall Galleries.

The Threadneedle Figurative Prize is a major new showcase for contemporary figurative art, conceived by the Mall Galleries after discussions with leading figurative artists.

The potential for one artist to win £35,000 in prize money makes the competition amongst the most valuable in today's art scene.

The organisers have adopted a refreshing new approach to the 'traditional' art competition:

- After a panel of selectors have shortlisted seven works from the open submission, the public - voting online and in the gallery - will decide which shortlisted artist wins the new £25,000 Threadneedle Figurative Prize.
- The selectors will decide the winner of the £10,000 Federation of British Artists Selectors' Choice. However, if the public vote coincides with the Selectors' Choice, the same artist could end up winning both prizes – a total of £35,000.
- Artists are encouraged to use this new competition to explore contemporary themes of importance to them: social, environmental or political. Submissions are also encouraged in a wide variety of different figurative media, including mixed media construction and other figurative installations.
- More than 500 artists have already signed up online at www.threadneedlefigurativeprize.com. After selection, all the exhibited works will be available to view on this website, where members of the public will also be able to vote online for their choice.

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- Around 60 works selected for the exhibition will be on display at the Mall Galleries, in Central London, between 20 August and 6 September 2008.
- A special 'Open Day' is being held at the Mall Galleries on Saturday 19 April 2008 (10:00 am to 3:00 pm) for artists to view the refurbished gallery space and to get more information about the Prize.

"Our goal is to make this Prize a major annual event in the British art calendar," says Lewis McNaught. "Its time figurative artists had a platform to express their views on contemporary and topical issues."

Empowering the public to decide the winner of the £25,000 Threadneedle Figurative Prize is a key departure from other competitions. *"We are confident the public will enjoy their opportunity to select the winning entry from a shortlist prepared by the panel of selectors,"* adds Lewis McNaught.

Simon Davies, Chairman of Threadneedle, said, *"We are very pleased to be encouraging innovation in figurative art through our sponsorship of this prize. We want the Threadneedle Figurative Prize to be inspirational and an enriching and rewarding experience for both artists and the public"*.

The Prize and exhibition has been made possible by sponsorship from Threadneedle Investments, a London-based investment manager, and a grant from Arts & Business, which provides the necessary support for the arts to work effectively with business.

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Notes to Editors

1. The competition is open to all artists aged 18 and over living or working in the UK. About 60 works, selected from a national open submission, will be exhibited in the Mall Galleries' newly modernised space between 20 August 2008 and 6 September 2008 (Press View: 19 August 2008).
2. Seven works, nominated by the selectors, will be shortlisted to win the £25,000 Threadneedle Figurative Prize. The artist who receives the largest share of public votes, cast online and throughout the exhibition, wins the Prize. All works selected for the exhibition are eligible to win the Federation of British Artists Selectors' Choice, worth £10,000, awarded by the selectors. The winners of both prizes will be announced at a special Awards Ceremony at the Mall Galleries on the evening of 3 September 2008.



3. Selectors include art critics Richard Cork (New Statesman) and William Packer (Financial Times), the mixed media sculptor Hew Locke and leading contemporary art dealer Angela Flowers (Chairman of Angela Flowers plc).

4. A dedicated website is available for online registration and for members of the public to view and vote online for their choice of artist to win the Prize – www.threadneedlefigurativeprize.com. Go to this website for up to date news and press information.

5. The Mall Galleries are run by the Federation of British Artists, a registered charity established in 1961. The Galleries benefited from an extensive refurbishment in the summer of 2007 as a result of generous sponsorship by Threadneedle. Its modern and inviting space offers a perfect contemporary venue for the new show.

6. Threadneedle Investments is a global asset management company with £67.7 billion of assets under management for both private and institutional clients. Its expertise extends to all asset classes, from equities and bonds, to property and alternative investments. It has built a global reputation for strong and consistent long-term performance, a broad and complementary range of products, and superb customer service.

7. Arts & Business brings the commercial and cultural worlds together to deliver an unrivalled range of programmes, services and expertise to both sectors. As well as offering consultancy services and brokerage to business, A&B is an advocate for the arts, identifying and fostering emerging cultural talent and providing the necessary support for the arts to work effectively with business.

Listings Information:

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