

**Press Release**

**Dominique White wins the 9th edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women 2022-2024**

**Max Mara, Whitechapel Gallery and Collezione Maramotti** are delighted to announce **Dominique White** (b. 1993) as the winner of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women.

The prize, set up to support and nurture women-identifying artists at a crucial stage in their career, uniquely awards White a six-month bespoke residency in Italy, tailored to fit, inform and develop her winning proposal. This will culminate in a major solo exhibition to be held in 2024, launching at Whitechapel Gallery and touring to Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy.

The winner was announced during a special ceremony held at Whitechapel Gallery on 28 March 2023, co-hosted by **Gilane Tawadros**, Director of the Whitechapel Gallery, and **Luigi Maramotti**, CEO of Max Mara Fashion Group Srl.

White was selected from a shortlist including **Rebecca Bellantoni, Bhajan Hunjan, Onyeka Igwe** and **Zinzi Minott**, by a panel of art-world experts comprising gallerist Rozsa Farkas, artist Claudette Johnson, writer Derica Shields and collector Maria Sukkar. The panel was chaired by the Prize's guest curator, Bina von Stauffenberg, in collaboration with Gilane Tawadros.

**Dominique White** lives and works between Marseille and Essex. A sculptor and installation artist, she is interested in creating new worlds for 'Blackness' and fascinated by the metaphoric potency and regenerative power of the sea. She produces ghostly, seemingly fragile, yet highly physical works, often employing discarded and potent nautical relics such as old sails, masts, burned mahogany, chains and rope, and materials such as Kaolin clay and untreated iron. Her practice weaves together theories of Black Subjectivity, Afro-pessimism and Hydrarchy from below (dismantling or overthrowing the ability for individuals to gain power over land through water) with nautical myths particularly relevant to the Black Diaspora. She redefines the term Shipwreck(ed) as a reflexive verb and state of being to embody the inherent abolition within her work. White's sculptures, or 'beacons', recall sea-bound, imagined worlds which prophesise the emergence of the Stateless: "a [Black] future that hasn't yet happened, but must."

White's winning proposal for the 9th edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women is for a new body of work entitled *Deadweight*, taking as its starting point the measure of 'deadweight tonnage', an official term used in the maritime industry that calculates how many units of weight a ship can take before it sinks. The project continues her

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artistic and political concerns, while engaging with additional narratives and cultural layers which will be researched and further developed during her 6-month residency in Italy.

Through dedicated research, mentoring, study, field trips and studio work, White will explore and interrogate the meaning and exploitation of 'deadweight tonnage', tracing its relevance to the historical slave trade and its contemporary forms in the Mediterranean. She will work with historians and journalists as well as visit key sites in southern Italy as part of her inquiry. The residency programme will also include visiting nautical museums, archives and collections; foraging ship (grave) yards for discarded materials; and working with traditional and contemporary metal workers to deepen the artist's understanding of the production processes, skills and techniques required to develop the work. As part of *Deadweight's* creative development, White intends to build and then submerge elements of the final work in the Tyrrhenian Sea off the west coast of Italy, which will then form the basis of the solo exhibition in 2024.

**Further details on the residency will be unveiled in the following months.**

**Dominique White said:**

*"It is truly an honour to be awarded this year's Max Mara Art Prize for Women and I'm thrilled to have been the recipient of an award that not only enables the development of seemingly unattainable skills and ambitious areas of research, but also (quite literally) supports the emergence of a new body of works. I'm so grateful to have shared this space of distinction with Rebecca Bellantoni, Bhajan Hunjan, Onyeka Igwe and Zinzi Minott and I would like to express my deepest gratitude again to the jury, Whitechapel Gallery, Max Mara and Collezione Maramotti for this once in a lifetime opportunity."*

**Gilane Tawadros said:**

*"On behalf of the jury and Whitechapel Gallery, I want to congratulate Dominique White on being awarded this year's Max Mara Art Prize for Women. The youngest of the shortlist, Dominique's winning proposal showed a maturity, rigour and consistency of creative approach that is entirely in keeping with the aims of the Prize, which is ultimately to enable women-identifying artists to develop and create projects that speak of and to the world around them."*

*The themes she explores in her work feel especially timely and relevant today, and we are delighted to be able to support her over the course of her residency and through a solo exhibition. At a time when the need for refuge and safe space is so acute and the passage of individuals and communities by sea poses such risks to lives and exposes so much injustice, the interrogation and exploration of both the historical and contemporary systems that control movement and identity seems especially urgent."*

**Luigi Maramotti said:**

*"I am delighted that the Max Mara Art Prize for Women continues to be such a special project for all partners and stakeholders, and that it is enthusiastically supported by Gilane Tawadros, the new director of Whitechapel Gallery. This award offers the winners a rather unique opportunity to focus on their artistic research, to develop an idea and create an ambitious project in relation to their long residency in Italy. I am confident that Dominique White will be able to make the most of this opportunity."*

The Max Mara Art Prize, the only visual art prize of its kind in the UK, has been awarded biennially since 2005, and is open to UK-based, emerging, women artists who have not previously had a solo exhibition. The partners of the prize are Max Mara, Whitechapel Gallery and Collezione Maramotti who work in collaboration on each phase of the prize.

#### **About Dominique White:**

Dominique White has a BA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths and a Foundation in Art and Design from Central Saint Martins. Recent solo exhibitions and presentations include: *May You Break Free and Outlive Your Enemy*, La Casa Encendida, *Statements*, Art Basel (Basel, Switzerland, 2022); *The Cinders of the Wreck*, Triangle (Astérides, Marseille, France, 2022); *Hydra Decapita*, VEDA (Florence, Italy, 2021-2022); and *Blackness in Democracy's Graveyard*, UKS (Oslo, Norway, 2021). Recent group exhibitions include *Afterimage* at MAXXI L'Aquila (Italy, L'Aquila, 2022-2023); *Love* at Bold Tendencies (London, UK, 2022); *Techno Worlds* at Art Quarter Budapest, commissioned by Goethe-Institut (Travelling) (2021-2025).

White was awarded the Foundwork Artist Prize of 2022 (US), has received awards from Artangel (UK), the Henry Moore Foundation (UK) in 2020 and the Roger Pailhas Prize (Art-O-Rama, FR) in conjunction with her solo presentation with VEDA in 2019. White was in residency at Sagrada Mercancía (Chile), Triangle France – Astérides (France) and La Becque (Switzerland) in 2020 and 2021.

#### **About the Max Mara Art Prize for Women:**

Now in its 9th edition, the **Max Mara Art Prize for Women**, is a biennial award, originated by Iwona Blazwick, former Director of Whitechapel Gallery and established in 2005 with the Max Mara Fashion Group and from 2007, with the further participation of Collezione Maramotti. It is the only visual art prize of its kind for UK based emerging women-identifying artists with the aim to promote and nurture them at a crucial stage in their careers, through increased visibility, and the resources to develop an ambitious new work by offering essential time, space, creative and professional support. The prize is open to women-identifying artists of any age, living and working in the United Kingdom, who have not previously had a major solo survey

exhibition. For each edition a jury, comprising a gallerist, critic, artist and collector, and chaired by the Whitechapel Gallery Director, submits a longlist of women-identifying artists, from which a final shortlist of five is agreed. The winner, selected on the strength of their proposal for the prize, is awarded a six-month Italian residency, organised by Collezione Maramotti, as well as a dedicated exhibition. The residency is uniquely tailored to fit the particular needs and focus of the artist and their winning proposal. Crucially it provides the artist with resources and space to realise a new work, which then forms the basis of a major solo exhibition presented at the Whitechapel Gallery, London and Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy, the following year. Collezione Maramotti then acquire the commission for their world-class art collection, ensuring that the artist is supported and acknowledged beyond the two-year prize cycle. The Max Mara Art Prize for Women is both distinct and exceptional in recognising and supporting the creative process and was awarded the British Council Arts & Business International Award in 2007.

Founded in 1951 by the late visionary Achille Maramotti, **Max Mara** is the embodiment of Italian luxury and style. A contemporary collection of ready-to-wear and accessories designed for today's powerful woman. Recognized for its timeless designs and luxurious fabrics, Max Mara is the epitome of elegance, known for its chic coats, sharp suiting and modern accessories. Max Mara is distributed in 2,500 locations in more than 100 countries worldwide. The Max Mara Fashion Group counts nine brands within its portfolio. The company remains privately held and managed by the Maramotti family. [www.maxmara.com](http://www.maxmara.com)

**Collezione Maramotti** is a private contemporary art collection which opened to visitors in 2007; located in the historical headquarters of the Max Mara company in Reggio Emilia. It includes a permanent collection of more than 200 works from 1950 to 2019, while regularly presenting new projects and commissions from international mid-career and emergent artists. [www.collezionemaramotti.org](http://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](http://www.whitechapelgallery.org)

#### **Previous winners of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women are:**

**Emma Talbot (2019 – 22)** – Talbot's (b. 1969) installation *The Age / L'Età* comprised animation, free-hanging painted silk panels, three-dimensional work and drawings. The work explores themes of representation and ageing, power and governance, and attitudes towards nature. For the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Talbot imagined a future environment where humankind encounters the disastrous consequences of late capitalism and must look towards more ancient and holistic ways of crafting and belonging – that rethink ancient power structures and celebrate the natural world – in order to survive. Her work has participated to *The Milk of Dreams* at the 59th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Cecilia Alemani.

**Helen Cammock (2017 – 19)** – Cammock (b. 1970) presented a film, a series of vinyl cut prints, a screenprinted frieze and an artist's book interweaving women's stories of loss and resilience with seventeenth-century Baroque music by female composers, exploring the concept 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 was awarded the Turner Prize 2019 together with Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Oscar Murillo and Tai Shani.

**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, where they continue to be of great cultural importance. Her installation titled *Silent Sticks* consists in a dramatic stage set with props, costumes, sound and video elements. She 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)** – Prouvost (b. 1978) created an ambitious large-scale installation for her Max Mara Art Prize exhibition *Farfromwords*, inspired by the aesthetic and sensuous pleasures of Italy and plays on the historic idea of visiting the Mediterranean for inspiration. In 2013 she was awarded the Turner Prize. Her project *Deep See Blue Surrounding You* was presented in the French pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennale.

**Andrea Büttner (2009 – 11)** – Büttner (b. 1972) *The Poverty of Riches* explored the intersection of religion, art and the condition of the artist in the contemporary world. Including woodcuts, cloths, photographs and objects she transformed the exhibition space into a space of contemplation. Part of her project was included in the Whitechapel Gallery's landmark exhibition *Adventures of the Black Square* in 2015.

**Hannah Rickards (2007 – 09)** – The prize enabled Rickards (b. 1979) to realise *No, there was no red.*, an ambitious two-screen film she had been researching before winning the Prize. She was also awarded the Leverhulme Prize in 2015 and had a major exhibition at Modern Art Oxford in 2014.

**Margaret Salmon (2005 – 07)** – Salmon (b. 1975) travelled to Italy and created *Ninna Nanna*, a triptych of black and white films exploring themes of motherhood. She went on to exhibit at the Venice Biennale in 2007.