



20 June 2020

Dear Artists,

Very reluctantly and sadly, Wells Art Contemporary (WAC) is not able to host the exhibition in Wells Cathedral of the 2020 Competition shortlist. Last year 26,000 visitors came to the Exhibition. Today the Cathedral is hardly open. However, I am determined to do whatever we can to help and support art and artists in playing their essential part in post virus rebuilding. We have been working hard on your behalf to create a series of opportunities for you so we can make WAC 2020 a very special and unique year. These are just a few of our plans and there are more coming...

Firstly, we are delighted to announce that Arts Council England are not only endorsing WAC, but are supporting us financially to organise a Virtual Exhibition in the Autumn. Once the artwork has been chosen by our panel of selectors, the Exhibition will be curated by the WAC team. We are working on adding video clips from selectors and prize givers, a guided tour and even some Cathedral music to create a truly unique and special virtual experience. As well as showing the Exhibition online, we are hoping to display the Exhibition on a screen within the Cathedral so that when they are open to visitors, they too will be able to enjoy the shortlisted work.

In addition, we are creating a facility to sell all the artists' artwork online and we are building a network of supporters to help raise awareness and most importantly create sales. We will still be producing a fully illustrated catalogue, which will be sent to every artist in the Exhibition as well as to past and potential buyers through our networks. We understand the importance of this Catalogue to artists as a physical archive of your success in being selected.

I am delighted to say that all of our very generous prize givers are still supporting us and all of the Prizes that have been promised to the winning artists will still be awarded. These include JGM Gallery's London show, RK Harrisons' £2,000 Prize, Andelli Gallery's Young Artist Prize and we also hope to continue with a People's Prize. We have endeavoured to increase the Prizes this year and have so far raised an extra £2,000 in prize money to be divided equally amongst four winners, including two students, as well as more in kind, to extend the Prizes already available to artists. More details on these will be available soon. We plan to hold the Awards Ceremony online in line with the Exhibition and again we will share the details in due course.

Parker Harris have been developing a dedicated press and social media campaign and creating partnerships to raise awareness of the Virtual Exhibition when it goes live. It promises to be a very exciting event. This is our ninth year and, working with Parker Harris, we are determined to thrive.

I really hope that you will still want to be part of WAC 2020, but if you would rather defer your entry until 2021 then we can roll over your entry payment until then or you can miss the 2020 Competition and we will refund your entry fee. Since we must plan for the close of entries at the end of next month, we would be

grateful if you would reply by 30 June. If we do not hear from you before then, we will assume you wish to continue to be part of WAC 2020.

We are also strongly encouraging new entries for the Competition to enjoy the opportunity of being selected for the shortlist, displayed in the Virtual Exhibition and winning the Competition Prizes. In addition, do not forget the 20% discount available to entrants after the deadline on Cass Art orders. Entries close on 1 August 2020. You may never have a better chance than this year!

Keep safe and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Yours
Paddy O'Hagan
Chair, Wells Art Contemporary



WELLS ART CONTEMPORARY



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