

Committee on the Jean F Watson Bequest

2.00pm, Thursday 2 February 2023

Approval of 'The City of Edinburgh' prize at the inaugural Scottish Landscape Awards exhibition.

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the offer of 'The City of Edinburgh' prize at the inaugural Scottish Landscape Awards exhibition at the City Art Centre.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

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Report

Approval of ‘The City of Edinburgh’ Prize at the inaugural Scottish Landscape Awards exhibition.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Committee is asked to approve the offer of ‘The City of Edinburgh’ prize at the inaugural Scottish Landscape Awards exhibition at the City Art Centre.

3. Background

- 3.1 The City Art Centre’s fine art collection traces the development of Scottish art from the 17th century until the present day. Art works which depict the topography of Edinburgh form a large component of the art collection. The Inaugural Scottish Landscape Awards exhibition takes place at the City Art Centre from November 2023 to March 2024.

4. Main report

- 4.1 This Autumn (2023) the City Art Centre is hosting the inaugural Scottish Landscape Awards. Organised in partnership with the team behind the successful Scottish Portrait Awards, it will span three gallery floors and run from 4 November 2023 to 3 March 2024. The exhibition sets out to redefine the boundaries of Scottish landscape art, and will include not only paintings, drawings and prints, but also sculpture, textiles, multi-media, installation and animation.
- 4.2 The exhibition takes the form of a competition and is open to anyone aged 16 or over who has been born in or is studying or living in Scotland. Works entered may be surreal, imaginary, abstract, documentary, ecological, reflective, dynamic, realistic – anything is acceptable as long as it has a strong sense of place or context. The organisers are seeking works that reflect all dimensions of natural and/or man-made environments – rural, urban, industrial, suburban, forest, mountain and sea.
- 4.3 The Scottish Landscape Awards exhibition will be curated by staff at the City Art Centre and the prize-winners chosen by a distinguished panel of judges including Dame Barbara Rae (chair), David Mach, Jane and Louise Wilson, Ade Adesina and Marian Leven.

- 4.4 Entries open on 1 March 2023. It is hoped that it will draw a lot of media attention, not least because the first prize being offered is £10,000, making it a very attractive proposition for artists of all ages and experience. There are also a range of smaller prizes available, including a special prize for younger artists.
- 4.5 In discussions with the organisers, the suggestion was made of having a '**City of Edinburgh**' prize in recognition of this inaugural event which would go to the artist who created the most outstanding view of the city in any media. The proposed maximum value of the award was set at £5,000, with funds coming from the Jean F Watson Bequest. The intention would be that the successful work, chosen by the Bequest Committee, would also be acquired for the City's art collection.
- 4.6 In recognition of the significance of the exhibition, the Friends of the City Art Centre and Museums have agreed to sponsor a separate prize of £1,000 specifically for a photographic work.
- 4.7 Approval is sought from the Committee to award **The City of Edinburgh** prize at the inaugural exhibition. A form of wording shall be agreed with the organisers for inclusion on the exhibition website and in print but might appear as follows: *The City of Edinburgh prize will be awarded to the artist who creates the most outstanding view of the city in any media. The award is up to a value of £5,000 and the winning artwork will be acquired by the City of Edinburgh for its fine art collection.*

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If approval of the prize is given, then it will be announced later in February as part of the advance promotion for the exhibition. The work selected for the prize in due course would be eligible for grant aid, and it is intended that an application will be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The prize would be up to a maximum value of £5,000. Funds for the prize would come from the Jean F. Watson Bequest, and it is intended that an application for grant aid would be submitted to the National Fund for Acquisitions.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Not Applicable.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 The Scottish Landscape Awards website:
<https://www.scottishartstrust.org/landscape>

9. Appendices

9.1 None.