

## THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS ANNOUNCES THE WOLLASTON AWARD WINNER 2018

The prestigious £25,000 Charles Wollaston Award has been won by Royal Academician Mike Nelson for *Untitled (public sculpture for a redundant space)* in the Royal Academy's 250<sup>th</sup> Summer Exhibition. Established in 1978 and presented to the 'most distinguished work' in the exhibition, it is one of the most significant art prizes awarded in the UK.

*Untitled (public sculpture for a redundant space)*, 2016, is a prototype for a series of three works made on site for the High Line in New York. The High Line is a former elevated railway line that fed the industries of the western edge of Manhattan. Long defunct, along with most of the industries that thrived in the area, it is now a leafy, manicured walkway that overlooks the redevelopment of these former factories and warehouses. In New York, the rubble which fills the sleeping bags was taken from these sites; at the RA, the sculpture contains debris from a site local to Nelson's London studio.

Mike Nelson is a sculptor and installation artist, he is known for complex, site-specific constructions that disrupt and overwhelm their locations. Made from a wide range of objects and materials, they are full of cultural and subcultural references.

The judges for this year's award were Rebecca Warren RA, Richard Riley and Honorary Fellow, Marina Warner. Recent winners include: Isaac Julien (2017), David Nash RA (2016), Rose Wylie RA (2015), Wolfgang Tillmans RA (2014), Ei Anatsui Hon RA (2013), Anselm Kiefer Hon RA (2012), Alison Wilding RA (2011) and Yinka Shonibare RA (2010).

Over £50,000 is offered in awards and prizes for every category of work in the Summer Exhibition. Further awards and prizes for this year's exhibition will be announced in due course.

### Mike Nelson RA Biography

Mike Nelson's work has centred on the transformation of narrative structure to spatial structure, and on the objects placed within them, immersing the viewer and agitating their perception of these environments. The narratives employed by the artist are not teleological, but multi-layered, and often fractured to the extent that they could be described as a semblance of 'atmospheres', put together to give a sense of meaning. The more discrete sculptural works are informed by this practice, often relying on their ambiguity to fade in and out of focus, as a sculpture or thing of meaning, and back to the very objects or material from which they are made. By working in this way the more overtly political aspects of the early works have become less didactic, allowing for an ambiguity of meaning, both in the way that they are experienced and understood. This has led to the possibility of the viewer being coerced into a state where the understanding of the varied structures of their existence, both conscious and sub-conscious, are made tangible.

Born in Loughborough (UK) in 1967, Mike Nelson lives and works in London. His solo exhibitions and projects include: *Re-bar, wire-mesh, cross-hatch (Romanian heroes)*, Sandwich, Bucharest (2017); *A52, CAPRI*, Düsseldorf (2017); *Cloak of rags (Tale of a dismembered bank, rendered in blue)*, Galleria Franco Noero, Turin (2017); *tools that see (possessions of a thief) 1985-2005*, neugerriemschneider, Berlin (2016); *Cloak*, Nouveau Musee National de Monaco, Monaco (2016); *Imperfect geometry for a concrete quarry*, Kalkbrottet, Limhamn, Malmö, Sweden (2016); *Amnesiac Shrine or The Misplacement...* Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2016); *Gang of Seven*, 303 Gallery, New York (2015); *Studio apparatus for Kunsthalle Münster*, Kunsthalle Münster (2014); *Eighty Circles through Canada*, Tramway, Glasgow (2014); *Amnesiac Hide*, The Powerplant, Toronto (2014) *Mike Nelson*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2013); *More things (To the memory of Honoré de Balzac)*, Matt's Gallery, London (2013); *M6*, Eastside Projects, Birmingham, UK (2013); *space that saw (platform for a performance in two parts)* neugerriemschneider, Berlin (2012); *408 tons of imperfect geometry*, Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden (2012); *I, IMPOSTOR*, British Pavilion, 54th Biennale di Venezia (2011); *Quiver of Arrows*, 303 Gallery, New York (2010); *A Psychic Vacuum*, Creative Time, New York (2007); *AMNESIAC SHRINE or Double coop displacement*, Matt's Gallery, London (2006); *Triple Bluff Canyon*, Modern Art Oxford (2004); *Nothing is True. Everything is Permitted*. ICA, London (2001); *The Deliverance and The Patience*, a PEER Commission for the Venice Biennale (2001) and *The Coral Reef*, Matt's Gallery, London (2000).

His group shows include: *Wanderlust*, The Highline, New York (2016); *La Vie Moderne*, 13th Biennale de Lyon (2015); *INSIDE*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2014); *September 11*, MoMA PS1, New York (2011); Singapore Biennale (2011); *Altermodern*, Tate Britain (2009); *Psycho Buildings*, Hayward Gallery, London (2008); *Eclipse: Art in a Dark Age*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm Sweden (2008); *Reality Check*, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, Denmark (2008); Turner Prize, Tate Liverpool (2007); Frieze Projects, Frieze Art Fair, London (2006); and Turner Prize, Tate Britain, London (2001). Mike Nelson is represented by 303 Gallery, New York; Galleria Franco Noero, Turin; Matt's Gallery, London; and neugerriemschneider, Berlin.

**For public information, please print 020 7300 8090 or [www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)  
Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BD**

**For further press information, please contact Annabel Potter on 020 7300 5615 or [annabel.potter@royalacademy.org.uk](mailto:annabel.potter@royalacademy.org.uk)**

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