



LUMEN PRIZE 2017: WORLD'S TOP DIGITAL ARTWORKS REVEALED

21st September, London

A spectrum of political and social themes featured prominently as the winners of the sixth annual Lumen Prize were announced at an awards ceremony last night in London.

Known for his psychedelic cloud installations, Dutch artist Thijs Biersteker won over the jury and received the coveted 2017 Lumen Prize Gold Award for 'Plastic Reflectic', an interactive mirror installation that turns the spectator's reflection into a silhouette made from hundreds of pieces of plastic floating within a 'plastic soup'. Biersteker collaborated with the Netherlands' Plastic Soup Foundation, a charity dedicated to tackling plastic pollution.

Michael Takeo Magruder, a previous Lumen Prize winner and Jury Panel member commented: "Plastic Reflectic is an artistically and technically impressive work that focuses on an extremely important subject - plastic pollution in the oceans and food chain - in a way that is self-explanatory and very accessible. Perfect."

Now in its sixth year, The Lumen Prize is the world's pre-eminent award and global tour for digital art. The prize is backed by Lumen Projects, a Wales-based social enterprise dedicated to supporting and promoting artists whose work engages with technology. This year 12 winners shared in a total prize fund of \$US 11,750.

Biersteker was presented with the \$3,000 Gold Award at a ceremony held at London's Frontline Club, Paddington on Wednesday evening. "I'm really excited that the jury chose to reward a work that tackles important issues in the world," he said. "Interactive art is a powerful medium for making people feel and experience subjects such as pollution themselves, rather than just reading about them in the news."

A number of category winners also chose to tackle social and political issues. French artist and curator Isabelle Arvers took home the Moving Image Award for her machinima documentary 'Heroic Makers vs Heroic Land'. Set in the Calais Jungle, France, Arvers uses a game engine to capture interviews with residents as the camp was dismantled by the French government. The Founder's Award was presented to Nicole Ruggiero, Molly Soda, and Refrakt for their collaborative augmented reality project 'Slide to Expose', an exploration of digital intimacy and perception.

Carla Rapoport, Director and Founder of The Lumen Prize commented: "This year we've seen the scope of the categories broaden tremendously and this presented our Jury with the very difficult task of choosing an overall winner. With new ways of engaging with technology constantly emerging, the digital artist has an almost unimaginable palette of tools to work with."

Other works that received recognition included Zarah Hussain's 'Numina' which gives traditional Islamic patterns a digital overhaul and LA-based David Glicksman and Moses Journey's kinetic sculpture 'Ad infinitum'. They were awarded the People's Choice and Placemaking Special Commendation Award respectively. Meanwhile, the Still Image Award winner took inspiration from the world of fintech 'Block Bills' by Mathias Dorfelt consists of a series of 64 banknotes generated from the Bitcoin Blockchain.

With its largest ever prize fund and an 25% increase in submissions this year, covering 43 countries, the continued success of the Prize reflects the strength and depth of digital art today. There were also a record number of built-environment entries across all categories this year as artists find new and innovative ways to bring their works to a larger audience.

Winners were selected by a jury of six eminent members of the contemporary art scene, including Doug Dodds, Senior Curator, Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Weiwei Wang, Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai; and Bruce Wands (Chair Emeritus, School of Visual Arts, New York. This year's winners and shortlisted works will now embark on a global tour, beginning at [Brighton Digital Festival](#), the UK's largest celebration of digital culture. The show will be held at the University of Brighton's Edward Street Gallery from September 29 - October 13.

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FULL LIST OF 2017 PRIZE WINNERS

2017 Lumen Prize Gold Award

[Plastic Reflectic](#) by Thijs Biersteker in collaboration with Plastic Soup Foundation, Front404 and Better Future Factory (The Netherlands)

Plastic Reflectic is an interactive mirrored installation that brings the 'plastic soup' in our oceans alive. Provoking a new perspective on a pressing issue, the work addresses the heavy pollution of our waters and through interaction shows the audience that their own behaviour directly impacts our oceans.

2017 Lumen Prize Founders' Prize

[Slide to Expose](#) by Nicole Ruggiero, Molly Soda, and Refrakt (USA and Germany)

Slide To Expose is a collaborative augmented reality project by Nicole Ruggiero, Molly Soda, and Refrakt. The project explores digital intimacy, privacy, the concepts of life and death and asks how our devices aid, form, and reshape our perceptions of these experiences.

2017 Lumen Prize 3D/Sculpture Award

[Reading Plan](#) by Lien-cheng Wang (Taiwan)

Reading Plan is an interactive artwork composed of twenty three 'book flipping' machines. When members of the audience enter, the machines start to turn pages automatically and read the book at the same time.

2017 Lumen Prize Moving Image Award

[*Heroic Makers vs Heroic Land*](#) by Isabelle Arvers (France)

Heroic Makers vs Heroic Land is a machinima documentary set in the Calais Jungle, France. Using a game engine, Arvers has captured interviews with residents as the camp was dismantled by the French government.

2017 Lumen Prize Interactive Award

[*The Unfettered Language of Machines*](#) by Zheng Da (China)

The Unfettered Language of Machines is a five metre squared hypercube that captures your heartbeat. The participant's heartbeat is visualised by the installation through 240m of customised LEDs, creating a fantastic light display that reflects the visitors vital signs.

2017 Lumen Prize VR/AR Award

[*Nothing Happens*](#) by Michelle & Uri Kranot (Denmark)

A film and virtual reality project by animation directors Michelle and Uri Kranot, Nothing Happens invites you inside a singular calming universe filled with snow, black birds and poetry.

2017 Lumen Prize Still Image Award

[*Block Bills*](#) by Mathias Dorfelt (USA)

Block Bills is a series of 64 banknotes generated from the Bitcoin Blockchain. Each bill has been generated randomly and is based on the unique hash that identifies each 'block' on the Blockchain database. The value of each bill represents the approximate transfer volume of bitcoins of the corresponding block.

2017 Lumen Prize Web Based Award

[*The Desire to Stay in the Sun*](#) by Fabio Dartizio (UK)

Mapping out our solar system. The Desire to Stay in the Sun allows connections to be made between two different planets. As the planets orbit the sun, the maximum distance is maintained while their only connection is revealed through the spirographs.

2017 Lumen Prize People's Choice Award

[*Numina*](#) by Zarah Hussain (UK)

Numina gives traditional Islamic patterns a digital overhaul. Bringing to life a usually static artform, Hussain maps animated geometric patterns onto a sculpture composed of tessellating pyramids arranged on a hexagonal grid.

2017 Lumen Prize Student Award

[CAPILLARIES CAPILLARIES](#) by Tadej Droljc (UK)

Capillaries Capillaries is an audiovisual work inspired by the creative and destructive forces of suppressed emotions. In the piece the suppressed emotion is represented by the algorithm that can never be heard or seen.

2017 Placemaking Special Commendation Award

[Ad infinitum](#) by David Glicksman and Moses Journey (USA)

Ad Infinitum is a kinetic sculpture that explores the relationship between discrete points. Using a row of steel ball bearings, with no visible support system, the work attempts to express pure, abstracted animation using as few elements as possible.

2017 BCS Artificial Intelligence Award

[FRANK - ARTificial intelligence](#) by Cecilie Waagner Falkenstrøm (Denmark)

FRANK is a super intelligent post-human being – a contemporary oracle that gives personal guidance regarding existential dilemmas. Using artificial intelligence the audience can have a direct dialogue with FRANK who answers with a humanised voice.

Notes to editors

- The full list of winners can be found here: <http://lumenprize.com/page/winners-2017-lumen-prize-announced>
- Founded in Wales in 2012, The Lumen Prize is dedicated to supporting and promoting artists whose work engages with technology. Since its first show in London's Cork Street in January 2013, Lumen has staged over 30 exhibitions and events across the globe that have showcased digitally created art, culture and enterprise. Lumen's interactive and immersive digital art installations blend art, music and technology and previous winners include the artists Andy Lomas, Gibson/Martelli and Michael Takeo Magruder.
- The winners of each category were announced on September 20th at The Frontline Club, London. Each category winner is awarded \$1000; the 2017 Lumen Prize (\$3000), Founder's Prize (\$750), Meural Student Prize (\$500), People's Choice Award (\$250) and Placemaking Special Commendation (\$250) were also presented on the night. All the artists listed above will be shown in an exhibition that travels from London to Brighton, Shanghai and St Petersburg as part of the Lumen Prize 2017/18 Global Tour.

- The Long List (70 works) was selected from over 800 entries that came from 40+ countries including Mexico, Abu Dhabi, Canada, Israel and India.

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