

Gilbert
Bayes

AWARD

For early career **sculptors**

2023
Winners' Exhibition

About the Gilbert Bayes Award for Early Career Sculptors

The Gilbert Bayes Award is designed to recognise emerging talent and provide invaluable support on the journey from study to professional practice.

Vitality, it is open to any applicant working in three dimensions, regardless of age, nationality or background. The Royal Society of Sculptors is here to champion contemporary sculpture and the artists who create it. We support artists at all stages of their career and that includes nurturing the next generation.

The Gilbert Bayes Award bestows serious recognition, a platform for the winners' work and two public exhibitions. In addition, the winners have benefited from a year of development – a unique programme which prepares them for life in the professional sphere, including learning how to photograph sculpture and work with curators.

Supporting New Talent in Sculpture

Becoming an artist can feel like an impossibility when you are just starting out and sculpture, in particular, can be very demanding in terms of how much time, space, materials and equipment that it takes up. This is why an opportunity like the Gilbert Bayes Award can be so valuable.

It offers the opportunity to build networks with other artists, to gain technical knowledge, to acquire insights into other artists' professional practice and to share the experience of making, with all its highs and lows.

Artists learn the most from each other, even if our work and interests are very diverse. And so being in this kind of environment which builds confidence and develops conversations helps enable us to find ourselves and our language.

Laura Ford PRSS
President, Royal Society of Sculptors

About the Royal Society of Sculptors

The Royal Society of Sculptors champions contemporary sculpture and the artists who create it. We are an artist-led, membership organisation, supporting and connecting sculptors throughout their careers. And we lead the conversation about sculpture today through exhibitions and events for all.

We are based in London's South Kensington, a few minutes' walk from its great museums, in beautiful Dora House. Our recently restored, Grade II listed home sits at the heart of our community. It's a uniquely creative space, where sculptors, painters, photographers, architects and designers have lived and worked. Today it continues to be a place where the creative congregate.

Join us for exhibitions, artists' talks and creative workshops. We invite you to view the world from a different perspective, to dig deep into the practice of individual sculptors and to challenge the way you think.

For professionals, our membership opens up a supportive network of fellow artists. Our members share knowledge and expand connections as well as accessing expert advice, training, bursaries, residencies and awards.

SCULPTORS.ORG.UK

The Gilbert Bayes Award Winners 2023

Click a name to read about the work in the words of the individual artist:

- > [Alexandra Searle](#)
- > [Alice Sheppard Fidler](#)
- > [Erika Trotzig](#)
- > [Flora Bradwell](#)
- > [Kelly M O'Brien](#)
- > [Nathan Anthony](#)
- > [Louise Ward Morris](#)
- > [Ned Prizeman](#)
- > [Polam Chan](#)
- > [Sophie Cunningham](#)
- > [Srabani Ghosh](#)



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Alexandra Searle

GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Your Liquors Seep to Me, 2023

Dangling precariously from the ceiling, the glass recalls its former liquidity. Unnerving and seductive, it is spineless, fluid and, by its very nature, fragile. It seeps like honey over its clinical steel frame. The title refers to the Sylvia Plath poem *Poppies In July*, where Plath craves opiates during an illness, and recalls the 'nauseous' glass capsules they came in. Like much of my work, this piece is centred around my mental and mortal anxieties. The slumping of glass under extreme temperatures is a way to physically depict a failure to hold oneself upright, to fold under pressure and fail to be contained. The ambiguity of yellow is another focus in this piece; while often happy and positive in other contexts, it is also the colour of decay and illness. Hanging at head height, viewers are forced to look straight through the piece, giving it a sense of vulnerability and forced display. The viewer also sees the rest of the space through a pale-yellow all-consuming haze, tainting everything, like the maladies it is borne of.

Also exhibiting

Enveloped into the corner, *Lost In The Creases* clings to the architecture, a growth upon the space. Collapsing into itself in two heavy folds, it is ambiguous in its anatomical suggestions. Mottled and sitting precariously between beauty and malady, it inhabits the joints, bends and points of stress of the space.



Alice Sheppard Fidler

GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

The burden of eternal recurrence (1), 2023



Through this work, I am looking at how we value life and how we consider its worth. I reflect on the contradictory states of life, using a chain form to illustrate the broad, abstract nature of life's continuum, and the scale, weight and material of the links, to reference the individual. Chains repeat while links slip and slide and do their own thing.

The work is full of productive contradictions. A chain is both restrictor and connector, it tethers, but the nature of a chain is to carry forward. Chain can be heavy when stationary, but when moving, especially from a pile to a stretch, can appear liquid. I am drawing attention to the endless and inevitable progression of life and at the same time saying stop the clock and notice each intimate moment.

I'm engaging these contradictions in the form I am making, and what I can do with it. Velvet speaks of quality and worth, it yields to pressure, echoing the softness and vulnerability of a body. This velvet, the familiar brown of living rooms of my lifetime, is recycled and full of its own embodied history, perhaps comfort or warmth. Its stuffing, in contradiction, is everyday rubble, hard and lumpy, unimportant, and can be tipped out and re-used.

The arrangement of this piece is variable, saying and doing different things in different spaces. There is a contradiction or tension between what this piece is, how it operates and what you can do with it. This variability alludes to a dream-like state, a space of potential or other logics that can coexist and contradict.

So, while the work is indicating something above and beyond itself, something metaphysical, it pulls in the opposite direction to draw attention to the now, highlighting simply 'doing and being'.

Erika Trotzig

GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

It's Futile No. III, 2023

It's Futile No. III is part of a series of works that reflect upon the relentless strife for progress that characterises late capitalism. Teetering under the weight of its burden, with the wheel suggesting some kind of function, the piece carries with it a sense of failure that can only be overcome with a laugh.

Also exhibiting

Creature, 2023 emerges from a place of strangeness, somewhere between thing and being. The juxtaposition of materials plays with ideas of gender and construction- Trotzig's sculptures are often anthropomorphic in character, implying a space between the human and the architectural, presenting tragicomic impressions in their futile struggle to hold themselves together.





Flora Bradwell GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Dinner, 2023

A stack of vibrantly painted limbs: *Dinner* is served. Be it shoved in a doorway, stacked in a corner or tumbling down stairs this giant movable feast invites you to imagine the soft creatures whose legs have been grossly collected and assembled. If this jostling pile of patterns that plays havoc with perspectival conviction is dinner, then who is eating it. Is there a chance that you might be next on the menu? Or would you rather sink your teeth into that calico flesh?

Kelly M O'Brien GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Protective Nature, 2023

Mycelium (fungal root systems) plays a protective role in nature through an underground network that entangles with and communicates dangers such as drought or infection with trees and other plant life. A lidded vessel offers privacy, secrecy, a place to hide – potential strategies of protection. Lined with wool, a possible enclosure of comfort and care.





Nathan Anthony GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Untitled, 2022

By colouring, marbling and extruding clay to resemble plasticine, I aimed to build something that dictated its own formal logic during its construction, and overall felt like the incidental byproduct of another process, rather than display sculptural intent.





Louise Ward Morris GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Spares and Repairs, 2022

A physical-digital sculpture fabricated from deconstructed, broken LED TVs. Bursting open, the innards of the TVs are pulled apart and arranged over two blue utilitarian shelves to illustrate the unrecognised richness of resources present in each device.

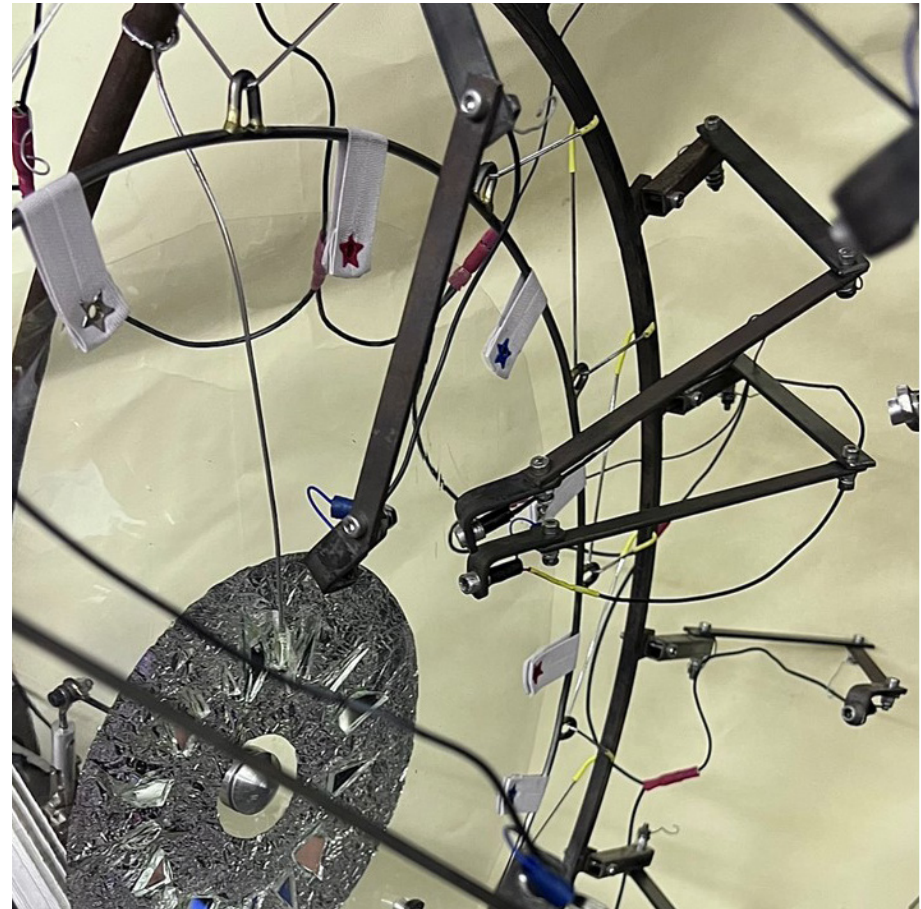
In a new role as an art object, what was originally considered unwatchable waste now becomes desirable viewing. New screens placed inside the reclaimed TVs play videos of the faces and hands of those involved in the manufacturing and consumer processes, intertwining people with their products.

The sculpture illustrates concepts of changing notions of value, the aesthetics of damage and consumer culture and engenders questions about the UK's E-Waste crisis.

Ned Prizeman GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Laser Trampoline, 2023

I was interested in oscilloscope, taking apart CRT TVs and putting a sound signal straight in to the back of it. It made a magical constant changing analogue pattern. I thought because the way that TVs are just a single electron moving really quickly about that then curates an image. I wanted to stop messing around with the heavy led, mercury filled 24000 volt TVs, so I thought maybe lasers could project this dynamic image, sure enough there's laser projectors with little oscillating mirrors that draw any computerized image your heart desires. Also there are lots of D.I.Y projects all over the internet when shards of mirrors are stuck onto speaker drivers. So I experimented, it resulted using the hard drive needle mover instead of speaker driver for they have a rotary motion that can be utilized also the tinnny rattle noise is reduced. I also added a secondary mirror so there is more control of where the projection is. My friend Maddy Cardona developed a track through experimenting what sample excites the lasers.



Polam Chan GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Invisible Familiarity, 2023

Invisible Familiarity is a work that employs the lens to portray portals and the human viewpoint within ruins and building debris. It is inspired by the conflicts and destruction occurring in the world today. We constantly consume media reporting on war and oppression, but due to the overwhelming amount of data and information, it has become difficult, if not impossible, to grasp the full scope of these situations. These photos are from Israel–Palestine, Syria, and Ukraine in 2023.





Sophie Cunningham GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Mementoes for the Supply Chain, 2023

Cunningham creates absurd, tongue-in-cheek sculptural arrangements made from fast-fashion items ordered online, which live as long as a specific retailer's return policies. She sends back these items with a memento to act as a provocation, entering the artwork directly into the supply chain before the cycle of consumption begins again. By leveraging the opacity of these capitalist systems that feel so far removed from conventional artistic practice, Cunningham repurposes them as conduits for her own acts of resistance and rebellion.

Srabani Ghosh GILBERT BAYES AWARD WINNER 2023

Astha Faith Indomitable - Theirs & Mine (Dptych), 2023

ASTHA means faith in my native languages of Hindi and Bengali. As a body of work this diptych visualises an individual's faith as a two-point perspective: the faith of others in oneself and one's own faith in oneself. Both crucial and life sustaining, they stand alongside us as we traverse the vagaries of life.

The faith of those around oneself is like a flask one would carry whilst travelling across inhospitable terrains, much like the harsh realities of the world we face today. Water sustains life in the harshest of environments. The form of the travel flask alludes to the journey of life. As the journey unfolds the people and their faith in us morph, often breaking and being remade by deed, word and thought. The cracks refer to this unerring process.

One's own faith in oneself has been depicted as a domestic water tank, the kind one would find in a humble home. The form alludes to the incalculable reserves of strength and hope we hold within each of ourselves. This tank of faith with no bottom, is a metaphor for the reserves of our faith residing in the house of our heart.





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