

Press Release

Leeds student claims renowned Yorkshire Graduate Award for 2023 which recognises region's most promising artistic talents

Yorkshire Sculpture Park is delighted to announce artist Astrid Butt as the recipient of its 2023 Yorkshire Graduate Award.



Astrid Butt. Courtesy of the artist.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park is delighted to announce up and coming artist Astrid Butt as the recipient of its 2023 Yorkshire Graduate Award.

Leeds-based Butt intrigued the YSP judges with her use of animal-human hybrid characters to explore womanhood and domestication. She is currently studying for her Master's degree in Fine Art at University of Leeds and her work utilises the grotesque and surreal to express female anxieties, with a particular focus on generational trauma and the terrors of the body.

Butt's work takes on a feminist perspective, which she uses to discuss sensitive topics, such as motherhood, domestic abuse and sexual assault. She also recently produced a 10-minute short film "*Bird Diaries*" where the central hybrid woman-bird character laments over her relationships with men, women and her own body. The surreal film taps into the Lynchian horror genre, complete with disturbing archive footage and eerie voice-over narration.

The Yorkshire Graduate Award is an annual award that offers a unique residency opportunity for a Yorkshire-based graduate artist to develop and showcase their talent. For over 45 years, residencies have been at the heart of YSP offering opportunities for emerging artists to reflect and move forward with their practice. Set up in 2018, the YGA is specifically aimed at helping to nurture artistic talent across the region.

Butt will now have a residency for up to two weeks at the Park, access to facilities including metal and wood workshops, time with the YSP technical and curatorial teams, as well as receiving a £750 fee and a further £250 for materials to develop new ideas.

"We are delighted to offer the Graduate Award to Astrid and are really looking forward to working with her over the coming months" said Louise Lohr, YSP's Deputy Curator. *"We're keen to support artists at all stages of their career and acknowledge the particularly challenging transition for new and recent graduates."*

Astrid agreed: *"This award means everything to me, to have something I've created be recognised and appreciated. It's extremely validating and I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to create more work in such a gorgeous environment. Me, and so many talented artists I know, have great ideas for work, but don't have the money, the resources, the time, or the space to bring those ideas to fruition. I couldn't be more thankful to Yorkshire Sculpture Park for the opportunity to bring some of my ideas to life."*

She added: *"During this residency, my goal is to create my second film. YSP has so much potential and could make a great setting for a film. The huge works that cover the grounds make the setting feel unsettling and almost dystopian. It's my ultimate goal to create surreal horror films, and I want to use this time to hone my skills as a filmmaker."*

Astrid is inspired by the works of Cecelia Condit and Marianna Simnett, both film and performance artists who work with themes of womanhood and the body. Books by Ottessa Moshfegh have also been a huge inspiration, best known for her grotesque and unlikable female characters.

Butt was also the recipient of the FUAM* Graduate Prize in 2022. <https://astridbutt.co.uk/>

*FUAM – Friends of University Arts & Music

-ENDS-

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Book tickets at ysp.org.uk

Social media

Instagram and Twitter: @YSPsculpture

Facebook: @YorkshireSculpturePark

LinkedIn: Yorkshire Sculpture Park

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About Yorkshire Sculpture Park

About Yorkshire Sculpture Park Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is the leading international centre for modern and contemporary sculpture. It was named Art Fund Museum of the Year in 2014 and awarded VisitEngland's gold accolade in 2021-22 for an outstanding visitor attraction.

Founded in 1977 by Sir Peter Murray CBE and since 2022 led by Clare Lilley, YSP is the largest sculpture park of its kind in Europe. It is the only place in Europe to see Barbara Hepworth's The Family of Man in its entirety, alongside a significant collection of sculpture, including bronzes by Henry Moore, important pieces by Phyllida Barlow, Roger Hiorns, Damien Hirst, Studio Morison, Hemali Bhuta and Ai Weiwei, and site-related works by Katrina Palmer, Andy Goldsworthy, Alfredo Jaar, David Nash, Sean Scully and James Turrell.

YSP mounts a year-round temporary exhibitions programme including some of the world's leading artists across four indoor galleries and the open air. Recent highlights include exhibitions by Fiona Banner, Anthony Caro, Tony Cragg, Robert Indiana, Amar Kanwar, KAWS, Joan Miró, Henry Moore, Annie Morris, Giuseppe Penone, Jaume Plensa, Ursula von Rydingsvard, Sean Scully, Yinka Shonibare CBE, Chiharu Shiota, David Smith, Joana Vasconcelos, and Bill Viola.

Across its 45-year history, YSP has worked with over 1,000 artists from more than 40 countries, on varied projects from short-term residencies to major surveys. YSP supports artists at vital stages in their careers and is rare in having the accommodation, workshops and expertise to enable open-ended and risk-taking practice, giving artists space, time and support to think and to develop new ideas. Over this time, YSP has sought to ignite, nurture and sustain interest in and debate around contemporary art and sculpture, especially with those for whom art participation is not habitual or familiar. It enables open access to art, situations and ideas, and continues to re-evaluate and expand the approach to considering art's role and relevance in society. Supporting 40,000 people each year through YSP's learning programme, this innovative work develops ability, confidence and life aspiration in participants.

YSP's core work is made possible by investment from Arts Council England, Wakefield Council, the Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation and Sakurako and William Fisher through the Sakana Foundation.

Creative Case for Diversity

Yorkshire Sculpture Park was founded in 1977 to enable fairer cultural access and opportunity and we are committed to being part of the change towards a fairer world. We do not tolerate discrimination in any form and are proactive in our programme, policies and behaviours to address inequalities locally, nationally and internationally. We recognise that economic, social and cultural disadvantage is complex and intersectional

and shape our activity accordingly. Diversity and equality are crucial to the arts because they release the true potential of our nation's artistic talent – from every background. At YSP, we support Arts Council England's mission – great art and culture for everyone. We share ACE's commitment to promote and embed diversity in our workforce and cultural programme.



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