

Press Release
14 February 2013

Max Mara Art Prize for Women: Laure Prouvost
20 March – 7 April 2013, Gallery 1

Laure Prouvost, winner of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, presents the two-part installation *Farfromwords: car mirrors eat raspberries when swimming through the sun, to swallow sweet smells* at the Whitechapel Gallery from **20 March – 7 April 2013**. The new commission is the culmination of the fourth edition of the prize.

Laure Prouvost's work opens new horizons of meaning by unhinging the connection between language and understanding. Her new video and installation in Gallery 1 is inspired by the aesthetic and sensuous pleasures of Italy and plays on the historic idea of visiting the Mediterranean for inspiration.

Farfromwords comprises a large-scale pavilion-like structure recalling a historical panorama. A circular space is interspersed with collaged elements, including photographic prints, paint and pairs of video monitors showing footage of moving heads and feet. This immersive environment leads to an idyllic inner space revealing a new film, *Swallow* (2013). The gentle rhythm of breathing accompanies surrealist imagery and shots of blue skies, ripe fruit and modern-day nymphs. By conveying visual and sensory pleasure through fragments of footage, the film alludes to events and encounters from the artist's Italian residency split between the city of Rome and rural Biella.

The exhibition will tour to the Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia, Italy from **4 May – 10 November 2013**, where the work will be acquired by the collection.

A book published by Whitechapel Gallery in collaboration with Collezione Maramotti will accompany the exhibition. Exploring the stages of the fourth edition of the Prize, the publication will include an interview with the artist and **Bina von Stauffenberg**, Guest Curator and essays by **Daniel F. Herrmann**, Whitechapel Gallery Eisler Curator and Head of Curatorial Studies and **Melissa Gronlund**, Editor at Afterall.

On **Thursday 4 April 2013** Prouvost discusses her recent work with curator Daniel F. Herrmann. The event will be accompanied by screenings of film works by the artist including extracts from *Abstractions Quotidiennes* (2005), *Stong Sorry* (2010) and *It Heat Hit* (2010).

The biannual Max Mara Art Prize for Women promotes and nurtures female artists based in the UK, enabling each winning artist to develop their potential by producing new works of art during a six-month residency in Italy. The judges for this fourth edition of the Prize included **Iwona Blazwick** [Chair]; artist **Lisa Milroy**; art collector **Muriel Salem**; gallerist **Amanda Wilkinson**, and writer and critic **Gilda Williams**.

Iwona Blazwick OBE, Director, Whitechapel Gallery said, 'The Whitechapel Gallery has a long tradition of premiering female artists. For the fourth edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women we're pleased to present a major new work by Laure Prouvost. Prouvost is an artist with an appetite for exploring different cultures and she seizes

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the artistic potential of her impressions to create gripping films and installations. It is fascinating to see how she has drawn from her Italian residency, bringing together the sensuous and surreal in her work.'

Luigi Maramotti, Chairman of Max Mara said, 'For the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, our aim has always been to champion and support female artists, and provide them with the gifts of time and freedom in order to create a body of work. We are delighted that the sights and sounds of Italy have so inspired Laure Prouvost in her ambitious new installation. It will be a pleasure to present her work in the Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia in the summer, following her exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery in London.'

Notes to editors

- Laure Prouvost was born in 1978 in Croix-Lille, France and lives and works in London. In 2011 she was awarded the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, chosen from a distinguished shortlist of artists which included Spartacus Chetwynd, Christina Mackie, Avis Newman and Emily Wardill. Laure Prouvost graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2002 and was part of the Lux Artist Associate Programme. Her work includes film, performance and installation. She has been part of group shows at Tate Britain, the ICA, Serpentine and BFI Galleries. She was awarded the EAST International Award in 2009 and a FLAMIN commission in 2011. Laure Prouvost is represented by MOTINTERNATIONAL.
- For over a century the Whitechapel Gallery has premiered world-class artists from modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Frida Kahlo to contemporaries such as Sophie Calle, Lucian Freud, Gilbert & George and Mark Wallinger. With beautiful galleries, exhibitions, artist commissions, collection displays, historic archives, education resources, inspiring art courses, dining room and bookshop, the Gallery is open all year round, so there is always something free to see. It is a touchstone for contemporary art internationally, plays a central role in London's cultural landscape and is pivotal to the continued growth of the world's most vibrant contemporary art quarter.
- The Max Mara Fashion Group was founded in 1951 by Achille Maramotti and is now run by the next generation. It is one of the largest women's ready-to-wear companies in the world, with 2334 stores in more than 100 different countries.
- On 29 September 2007 the Collezione Maramotti opened to the public in Reggio Emilia, Italy. For further information, please visit collezionemaramotti.org
- The 'In conversation' event with Laure Prouvost and Daniel F. Herrmann takes place on Thursday 4 April, 7pm in the Zilkha Auditorium, Whitechapel Gallery. Tickets are £8/6 concessions. To book email tickets@whitechapelgallery.org, visit whitechapelgallery.org or call +44 (0) 20 7522 7888

Visitor Information

Opening times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 6pm, Thursdays, 11am – 9pm.
Admission free. Whitechapel Gallery, 77 – 82 Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX. Nearest London Underground Station: Aldgate East, Liverpool Street, Tower Gateway DLR. T + 44 (0) 20 7522 7888 info@whitechapelgallery.org
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