



The Arts Foundation Futures Awards

PRESS RELEASE
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The Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2022 for Materials Innovation: Finalists Announced

The Arts Foundation announce the four finalists of The Arts Foundation Futures Awards (AFFA) 2022 for Materials Innovation.

Elissa Brunato, Riccardo Cenedella, Guan Lee and Patrick Morris have been selected from a long list of nominated artists as finalists for the £10,000 Arts Foundation Futures Award 2022 in Materials Innovation.

The award brings together the extraordinary work of design, craft and creative practitioners defining new contexts for materials-related practice. This year's award sees creative practitioners working across the lifecycle of production - from the development of innovative raw material and construction, right the way through to finishing and reprocessing, with sustainability a key driver in their work.

The Materials Innovation Award was launched in 2014 by The Arts Foundation with a desire to highlight the development of designers working in the creation of new materials. Now, in its eighth year, the award continues to highlight imaginative and radical innovations, but also circular design solutions - from natural-based polymers to forestry waste by-products.

The AFFA 2022 Materials Innovation Judges are: British model, actress, environmentalist, and writer, Lily Luahana Cole; Architecture and Design critic of The Financial Times, Edwin Heathcote; and UCL Professor of Materials & Society and TV and Radio presenter, Mark Miodownik MBE, who says:

“It was great to see so many nominations connecting with scientists and engineers - cross-disciplinary research is the future of materials innovation.”

Elissa Brunato began her career in embroidery design and production, where she witnessed some of the global and environmental implications of distantly made design

choices. While overseeing production sites and artisanal workshops in India, China and Italy, she learnt that whilst design decisions are made primarily concerning aesthetic and economic values, the consequences often create unnecessary waste at multiple stages of manufacture. Her work has since responded to the tension between human wants and the increasingly urgent demands of environmental sustainability. Elissa explains, *“My work aims to find practical solutions and implement circular design thinking to tackle today’s material challenges. I conduct my research through hands-on making, experimentation, user research and expert collaboration.”* In 2019, Elissa commenced a collaboration with material scientists at RISE Research Institutes of Sweden to develop bio-iridescent sequins made from cellulose - the most abundant plant-based polymer. Most recently, Elissa founded Radiant Matter, a design-led material innovation start-up, developing and scaling sustainable and high performing colour and material solutions for the circular economy, particularly for the fashion and textile market.

Riccardo Cenedella started to work in an art-design studio after graduating from a BA in Product Design, which is where he learnt the craft of hand-made furniture; saying, *“I enjoyed the process, the feeling of dust on my hands and being able to say, ‘I made this!’”* Riccardo grew up in a small city near the industrial Turin, where he would see large amounts of industrial waste abandoned in the courtyard of local factories. As a maker with a sustainable ethos, Riccardo saw design as a tool to create awareness about overconsumption and waste production. Riccardo’s work now explores the ways in which we can transform thrown away material into functional objects and is particularly influenced by Enzo Mari’s Autoprogettazione, which advocated for small-scale and on-demand production with simple, yet functional, form. Some of his recent projects include Carpet Matter, a collection of furniture made using carpet waste as the primary resource, while the Urban Waste Project used household waste collected in the streets of Riccardo’s East London neighbourhood to create new, functional products such as speakers in order to demonstrate the potential in our bins.

Guan Lee is an architect, lecturer, founder of Grymsdyke Farm and co-director of UCL Bartlett’s Material Architecture Lab (M-A-L). He believes that *“material exploration is fundamental to material innovation”*. He thus explores digital fabrication in conjunction with hands-on building processes using a range of materials, including clay, concrete and plaster. Grymsdyke Farm, in Lacey Green, Buckinghamshire, was created to establish and explore the value of a collective living and working practice. That involves an intimate engagement with materials and processes of making in a specific place. Through the farm, in collaboration with M-A-L, Guan has created inventive uses of materials such as hempcrete – a hemp-based concrete alternative. These collaborations seek to expose, articulate, and demonstrate the essential connections between processes of design, making and place. For Guan, speculative and intuitive approaches to material manipulation for their own sake are as important as the demand for practicality and functionality.

Patrick Morris grew up in a pottery studio in New Zealand, and from an early age was actively involved in production. Fascinated by malleable materials, his own research into materials development began with atmospheric carbon absorbed by trees and removed as

a waste stream of the paper industry in volumes of millions of tons per year. Patrick resolved to address this; *“Here was an abundant resource of what is essentially atmospheric carbon and all of it going straight back into the atmosphere, either as methane released by cows when used in cattle feed, or directly as CO2 when burnt as low-cost fuel. I wanted to find a better use for it.”* With further research and experimentation, Patrick found that certain elements of this paper waste could be 3D printed and heat-treated, leaving him with a 3D Carbon article. In 2015 Patrick founded Carbon Forest Products, to develop a material using a new 3D Printed Carbon material manufactured from paper waste compositions to create new forms of thermal management, battery components and even regenerative biomedical implants such as bone scaffolds. Their raw materials are sourced from forestry feedstock and have significantly lower carbon impacts than the copper, aluminium and titanium materials they will displace.

The Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2022 supports and celebrates artists for both their work to date and future development. The recipient of the £10,000 award for Materials Innovation will be announced along with awards in four other artforms (Animation, Music for Change, Theatre-Makers and Visual Arts) at a celebration event in late January 2022 - with all finalists receiving £1,000 awards towards their artistic practice.

Mary Jane Edwards, Interim Director of The Arts Foundation says,

“The Arts Foundation is really pleased to provide unconditional financial support to creative practitioners working at the forefront of Materials Innovation at a pivotal moment in their career. We are greatly encouraged by the ingenuity, and collaborative and sustainability-focused practices of all four finalists. We have no doubt their respective work will have a significant impact, not only from a material design-research perspective, but also in the context of complex, long-term environmental change.”

To find out more about the artists and all AFFA 2022 finalists, please visit The Arts Foundation: www.artsfoundation.co.uk/affas/2022/

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INFORMATION

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PRESS PACK & IMAGES

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About The Arts Foundation

The Arts Foundation is a registered charity that supports individual artists and creatives in the UK with no strings attached financial support. Since 1993 the Arts Foundation has given nearly £2 million to creatives across the spectrum of the Arts.

The Arts Foundation Futures Awards (AFFA) gives out five £10,000 fellowships every year, with all finalists each receiving £1,000. These are awarded based on past work and enable future development. Each year the awards focus on both broad and innovative art forms, across Craft, Design, Film, Literature, Material Innovation, Music, New Media, Performing and Visual Arts, and aim to highlight lesser-known areas of creative practice and also include emerging multidisciplinary artists.

The contribution of the Arts Foundation Futures Awards to the Arts in the UK is demonstrated by its past Fellows, many of whom have become leaders in their respective art forms, including Wayne McGregor (1994), Alice Oswald (1996), Sarah Kane (1998), Asif Kapadia (2001), Ali Smith (2001), Rufus Norris (2002), Lynette Yiadom-Boakye (2006), and more recently, Simon Fujiwara (2009) Hollie McNish (2015), Evan Ifekoya (2017), Holly Hendry (2019), and Bethany Williams (2020).

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