

January 17, 2020

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Russna Kaur wins Takao Tanabe prize for BC painters

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria announced today that the 4th Annual Tanabe Prize for British Columbia painters has been awarded to Russna Kaur.

The Tanabe Prize is an annual award given to artists whose primary medium is painting and who are residents of British Columbia. In addition to being painters, recipients must be emerging artists. Emerging is defined as an artist who is at the early stage of their artistic career having already completed their formal education.

Russna Kaur (b. 1991, Brampton, ON; lives and works in Vancouver) is a graduate of the Emily Carr University of Art + Design (2019) where she received an MFA and represented her peers as the Graduate Studies Valedictorian.

Kaur's work explores alternative ways of acknowledging her identity and heritage through an experimental painting practice. Through her playful use of surface, she creates work at a scale that looms over her viewer, thus Kaur's paintings become an investigation, a celebration and an empowering tool to explore self-expression through colour and texture.

Her most recent body of work was exhibited at TRAPP Projects in her first solo show, *Veil of Tears* (2019), curated by Patrik Andersson. From Jan. 8 - 26, 2020 she will be showing new works at the Emily Carr University of Art + Design alongside ECUAD faculty, visiting artists + physicists, post-doctoral researchers and graduate students working at TRIUMF particle accelerator in a group exhibition for the SSHRC funded project *Leaning Out of Windows: Art and Physics Collaborations Through Aesthetic Transformations*. Kaur is currently a sessional instructor at the Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

Artists are selected for the Tanabe Prize by contemporary art curators who are connected to art museums and galleries in British Columbia. Selection is based on exceptional creativity coupled with a promise of future achievements. Names of the selectors are kept confidential. There is no application process for either the curators or artists. The Tanabe Prize for BC Painters is a cash award in the amount of \$10,000 and is administered by the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

Takao Tanabe was born in Prince Rupert and currently lives on Vancouver Island. He studied at the Winnipeg School of Art and the Brooklyn Museum Art School with Hans Hoffmann, Central School of Art in London with Ikuo Hirayama and Yanagida Taiun in Tokyo. Tanabe's painting reflects his interest in abstraction and the landscape.