

TAP Contemporary Gallery to Launch Women in Art Prize National Tour

Exhibition: 17th–31st October

Opening Event: 17th October, 1pm–3pm

Admission: Free

This October, TAP Contemporary Gallery in Chelmsford will become the first gallery outside London to host the Women in Art Prize finalists' exhibition, as the prestigious Prize embarks on its first-ever national tour.

From the 17th–31st October, TAP Contemporary will present the work of the winners of the 9th Women in Art Prize, bringing together an exciting selection of contemporary artists working across painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, illustration, mixed media and more.

The exhibition marks an important moment not only for TAP Contemporary and its newly opened Chelmsford gallery, but for the Women in Art Prize itself. After nine years of recognising and supporting exceptional women artists, the Prize is taking its finalists' exhibition beyond London for the first time, creating opportunities to connect artists with new audiences, collectors and communities across the UK.

Celebrating 9 years of championing women artists

The Women in Art Prize is the UK's leading not-for-profit award dedicated to celebrating and championing women artists. Founded to help address the gender imbalance within the arts, the Prize has grown into an influential platform supporting both emerging and established artists at pivotal stages of their careers.

Over the past nine years, WIAP has provided artists with much more than recognition. Its programme offers financial awards, exhibitions, international opportunities, mentoring and professional development, helping artists develop their practices and build sustainable careers.

The 2026 edition is the Prize's most ambitious programme to date, with a wide-ranging collection of awards designed to support artists across different disciplines and stages of their careers.

From London to Chelmsford

The 2026 finalists' exhibition will be the first to travel nationally, opening at TAP Contemporary before continuing its journey to audiences elsewhere in the UK.

For TAP Contemporary, being selected as the opening venue of the national tour is a particularly significant milestone.

Our new Chelmsford space was created as a destination for contemporary art in Essex, bringing together original work by established and emerging artists and introducing audiences to artists from across the UK and internationally.

Hosting the Women in Art Prize provides an opportunity to bring an entirely new group of artists to the region, while giving local audiences the chance to experience work that has been recognised on a national stage.

For Gallery Owner, Soo Turner, who has worked in the art world for more than 30 years, supporting the exhibition is particularly meaningful.

"As a woman who has worked in the art industry for more than 30 years, I know how important it is to create opportunities that celebrate and champion female artists. That's why I'm incredibly proud that TAP Contemporary has been chosen as the first gallery outside London to host the finalists of the Women in Art Prize as the exhibition begins its national tour. It's an honour to bring such an inspiring collection of work to Chelmsford, giving our community the chance to experience some of the UK's most exciting artistic talent while supporting a platform that continues to elevate the voices of women in the arts." – Soo Turner, Founder, TAP Contemporary.

Meet the 2026 Winners

The exhibition will bring together the winners from this year's Women in Art Prize, offering visitors the opportunity to discover a diverse range of contemporary practices and perspectives.

The winners have been selected by an expert judging panel chaired by Gabrielle du Plooy, Director of the Women in Art Prize, and featuring respected figures from across the international art world, including curators, gallery directors, collectors, museum professionals and artists.

The 2026 panel includes representatives connected with organisations including Mall Galleries, Saatchi Yates Gallery, Photo London, Chanel, Synonym Gallery in Mexico City, The Art Academy London, Hampstead School of Art and Spinocchia Freund.

Whether you're already familiar with the Women in Art Prize or discovering it for the first time, the exhibition offers an opportunity to encounter a new generation of artists and see first-hand the breadth and ambition of contemporary work being created by women today.



Visit the exhibition

The exhibition will officially launch with a special opening event on Saturday 17th October, from 1–3pm.

As the first stop on the Women in Art Prize's inaugural national tour, it promises to be a significant exhibition for both TAP Contemporary and Chelmsford, bringing together 25 exceptional artists and celebrating the continuing contribution of women to the contemporary art world.

Location: TAP Contemporary Gallery, Chelmsford

Date: 17–31st October 2026

Admission: Free entry

Opening Event: Saturday 17th October 1–3pm