

PRESS RELEASE

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Line of Beauty

Young Masters People's Choice Award Winners Exhibition

15 January – April 2026

The Exhibitionist Hotel, South Kensington, London

A Young Masters not-for-profit project



Left: *Cristina Schek, Fiat Lux 2.0, 2025. Archival pigment print, 94 x 69 cm*

Right: *Alexandra Baraitser, Design of Our Time, 2022. Oil on canvas, 140 x 115 cm*

The Cynthia Corbett Gallery and Young Masters are delighted to announce ***Line of Beauty***, a not-for-profit Young Masters initiative celebrating the **2025 People's Choice Award winners, First Prize winner Cristina Schek** and **Second Prize winner Alexandra Baraitser**. The People's Choice Award, **generously sponsored by The Brownhill Insurance Group**, is a particularly meaningful distinction, reflecting the direct support and admiration of the public. The exhibition will be held at **The Exhibitionist Hotel, South Kensington**, from **15 January to April 2026**, with an opening reception on **Thursday, 15 January, 6:30-9:00 PM**.

Set within the preserved Georgian architecture of The Exhibitionist Hotel, *Line of Beauty* brings two contemporary artists into dialogue across a space shaped by classical ideals. The Georgian period's devotion to symmetry, proportion, and the serpentine "line of beauty" becomes both setting and silent collaborator. The exhibition title draws on this graceful curve, rooted in Renaissance concepts of harmony and later formalised by William Hogarth, while also nodding to Paul Klee's notion of "taking a line for a walk" a gesture of creative exploration reflected in both artists' practices.

In this charged architectural backdrop, the surreal, conceptual portraiture of **Cristina Schek**, a Transylvanian Surrealist working in digital montage, meets the chromatic, quietly heightened interiors and architectural paintings of **Alexandra Baraitser**, a Cambridge and London-based painter known for transforming designed objects into liminal, dreamlike still lifes. Their distinct modes of image-making, one rooted in digital myth-making, the other in transformed still-life painting, unfold against a hotel steeped in cultural memory. Echoes of Oscar Wilde, and the refined sensibilities of Sargent and Whistler, subtly permeate the space, shaping an atmosphere of elegance and quiet decadence. Here, beauty curves, bends and returns: a conversation between past and present, identity and desire, form and the imagined world.

About the Artists

Cristina Schek (b. Transylvania)

Cristina Schek is the photosensitive kind: she thinks in pictures, her imagination always in focus. She crafts conceptual digital works that explore identity, illusion and the shifting nature of representation, where the self becomes both subject and symbol. Drawing on literature, cinema and art history, her surreal portraiture unfolds as layered visual narratives, revealing psychological

and symbolic complexity beneath a seemingly playful surface. Art critic Estelle Lovatt FRSA has described Schek's practice as a powerful departure from the traditional female muse, praising her assertive, bold visual language and the way her images invite viewers to see themselves reflected within them. Schek is the recipient of multiple Young Masters Awards, including First Prize in the 2025 People's Choice Award, Highly Commended in the Rudolph Blume Foundation Acquisition Award, and the 2021 *Focus on the Female* Award. Schek won the 2023 W4th Plinth Award for her monumental 4x4m artwork *The Ceiling In The Sky*, unveiled by Dame Siân Phillips, succeeding Sir Peter Blake's inaugural display in the rolling public art programme curated by Abundance London. Her work has been exhibited internationally at major art fairs and museums and is held in prestigious private collections across the UK, Europe and the USA.

Alexandra Baraitser (b. Cape Town, South Africa)

Alexandra Baraitser elevates the dramaturgy of everyday objects through saturated colour, flattened space and meticulous observation. Her paintings sit on the edge of abstraction, charged with memory, emotion and the uncanny. Chairs, lamps, living-room furniture, bridges and train-station seating become her protagonists: contemporary still lifes of intensely designed forms, lifted out of their everyday roles and placed on quietly theatrical stages. Through her measured compositions and precise use of colour, Baraitser frees these objects from function, allowing them to hover in a state of subtle unreality where the familiar turns slightly strange and interior worlds begin to surface. Baraitser is the 2025 Young Masters Women's Art Award People's Choice Winner and Highly Commended artist. Her extensive exhibition history includes Flowers Gallery, the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition (2024–2025), and Kettle's Yard. Her early career was shaped by the Abbey Scholarship at the British School at Rome and finalist positions in both the John Moores Painting Prize and NatWest Art Prize. Her work is held in public and private collections internationally, including Clare Hall (University of Cambridge), Design Tasmania and J Sainsbury PLC, and has been featured in *Bouyant Art*, *The Independent on Sunday*, *The Observer* and *The Arts Desk*.

Exhibition Details

Venue:

The Exhibitionist Hotel

8–10 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London SW7 2EA

Open **7 days a week, 24 hours a day**

Private View:

Thursday, 15 January 2026

6:30 – 9:00 PM

Special Fundraising Event:

Valentine's Young Masters Fundraising Jazz Concert

Thursday, **12 February 2026**

6:30 – 9:00 PM

Press & Sales Enquiries

Cynthia Corbett Gallery

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Artwork credits:

Cristina Schek, Fiat Lux 2.0, 2025. Archival pigment print. © Cristina Schek. Courtesy Cynthia Corbett Gallery.

Alexandra Baraitser, Design Of Our Time, 2022. Oil on canvas. © Alexandra Baraitser. Courtesy Cynthia Corbett Gallery.

About Young Masters

Founded in 2009 by gallerist **Cynthia Valianti Corbett**, **Young Masters Art Prize** is a **not-for-profit initiative** dedicated to supporting emerging and mid-career artists who draw inspiration from art history. Through exhibitions, awards, mentoring, and international opportunities, Young Masters nurtures diverse talent and connects creative voices across generations and geographies.

If you'd like to support our mission and become a **Young Masters Patron**, please [click here](#); your contribution helps us continue empowering artists worldwide.

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