

## Staffordshire University graduate wins top art prize

A Staffordshire University graduate has scooped a prestigious art prize after showcasing her sculptures across the region.

Jade Simpson (pictured) is one of just 5 artists to have been awarded a £1000 cash prize by NewArt West Midlands, an initiative that supports emerging artists who have graduated from the region's fine art degree courses within the last three years.

Jade was amongst 30 artists - whose work ranges from painting, sculpture, photography, performance, installation and video works - chosen to have their artwork displayed across four galleries.

Her exhibits are on display at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts until May 17th.

Four fellow Staffordshire graduates - Lisa Marie Williams, Adam Grüning and Glenys Shirley - were also selected to exhibit their work.

Fine Art lecturer Anna Francis said: "We are thrilled to hear of Jade's success. She was an excellent student throughout her degree - producing really interesting work, exploring the preservation and presentation of animals in museum contexts."

"It is great to see one of our recent graduates making their important first steps out of University in such an impressive way."

Jade's large-scale animal hybrid sculptures made her stand out from the crowd and she follows in the footsteps of Ali Reed, a 2013 Staffordshire Fine Art graduate, who was one of last year's winners.

Jade was awarded her £1000 prize at a special ceremony at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts in Birmingham this month.

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Wolverhampton Art Gallery and the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum in Coventry, are working in partnership to present the exhibitions which together make up NewArt West Midlands, a Turning Point West Midlands initiative.

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