



International Art Contest for Minority Artists

Second Edition 2023

Recognizing Minority Artists Working on Intersectionality Themes

ANNOUNCEMENT

On the occasion of the [Zero Discrimination Day](#) celebrated globally on 1 March 2023, and to launch the start of Racial Justice Month, part of OHCHR's year-long commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the [UN Human Rights Office](#) (OHCHR) joins with the non-governmental organizations [Minority Rights Group International](#) and [Freemuse](#) join forces to organize the Second Edition of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists. The 2023 edition invites applications from minority artists working on **intersectionality themes**.

The [First Edition of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists](#) was organized in 2022 and focused on the theme of statelessness. The catalogue and summary of winners is available [here](#).

The Second Edition will celebrate **minority artists who have exposed, explored, and/or addressed matters relating to intersectionality and intersectional forms of discrimination through their artwork**. It aims to raise awareness on the human rights of individuals and groups belonging to minorities and facing compounded forms of discrimination.

From 1 March 2023 to 15 May 2023, minority artists are invited to submit up to five works of art related to intersectionality and intersectional forms of discrimination. Applications should be submitted here by the end of 15 May 2023: <https://freemuse.org/events/international-art-contest-for-minority-artists/>

Applications will be assessed by a dedicated **Judges Panel** (see below). The Judges Panel will select three minority artists or art projects to receive non-hierarchical awards, as well as one minority artists or art project to receive the Minority Youth Artist Award.

The award-winners will be announced in November 2023 at a hybrid Ceremony organized in Geneva. On this occasion, a visual exhibition and a catalogue featuring the awarded artists and their art will be publicly launched.

Background

Intersectionality is a concept and theoretical framework that facilitates the recognition of the complex ways in which social identities overlap and create compounding experiences of discrimination and concurrent forms of oppression based on two or more grounds, such as gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, minority or indigenous status, caste or descent, age, class, disability, religion or belief, or health status. Intersectionality pays specific attention to the socio-structural nature of discrimination, marginalization and inequality; the diversity within each category, group or community (non-homogeneous experiences and needs); and the narratives, empowerment and agency of individuals and groups facing intersectional discrimination.

Throughout the world, minority communities are extremely diverse and include individuals and groups with differentiated positions, experiences and needs. Intersectionality highlights contrasting characteristics between the members of a given minority group based on other grounds. United Nations system entities and human rights mechanisms have thus reported that certain segments of racialized, ethnic, national, linguistic, religious or belief minorities, Afro-descendant or indigenous communities face exacerbated and intersectional discrimination in all areas of life. For instance, stateless persons belonging to racialized, ethnic, linguistic, national, religious or belief minorities and indigenous communities face disproportionate discrimination and compounded obstacles in accessing their right to a nationality, as noted in the [Outcome Document](#) of the [Virtual Roundtable on Equality and Non-discrimination in Nationality Matters to End Statelessness](#) organized jointly by OHCHR and UNCHR in October 2021.

In light of the relevance of intersectionality for understanding the multiple forms of discrimination facing some members of minority groups, the Intersectionality Pillar of the UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities launched its [Guidance Note on Intersectionality, Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities](#) in September 2022. The Guidance Note seeks to encourage an intersectionality perspective as a means for strengthening the UN system's efforts for the elimination racial discrimination and the strengthening the protection of minorities. In addition to offering insights into the origins of the concept of intersectionality and its grounding in the principle of equality and non-discrimination, the document puts forward a series of practical recommendations for applying an intersectionality perspective in the UN system's work.

Organizers

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights, www.ohchr.org) is the leading UN entity on human rights. We represent the world's commitment to the promotion and protection of the full range of human rights and freedoms set out in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

Freemuse (www.freemuse.org) is an independent international non-governmental organisation advocating for freedom of artistic expression and cultural diversity. Freemuse has United Nations Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC) and Consultative Status with UNESCO. Freemuse operates within an international human rights and legal framework which upholds the principles of accountability, participation, equality, non-discrimination and cultural diversity.

Minority Rights Group International (<https://minorityrights.org/>) campaigns worldwide with around 150 partners in over 50 countries to ensure that disadvantaged minorities and indigenous peoples, often the poorest of the poor, can make their voices heard. Through its programmes, publications, advocacy, legal cases, consultancies, training and education, and our action in the media, we support minorities and indigenous peoples as they strive to defend their rights – to the lands they live on, to the languages they speak, to the beliefs they practise, to the cultures they enjoy, to equal opportunities in education and employment, and to full participation in public life.

First Edition of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists

The [First Edition of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists](#) was launched in 2022 by OHCHR, UNHCR, Freemuse and MRG with a focus on minority artists working on statelessness themes. On 3 November 2022, at a [gala hybrid event in Geneva and online](#), on the basis of decisions by the Judges Panel, awards were provided to three minority artists working on statelessness themes: Zahra Hassan Marwan (artist and author); Jean Philippe Moiseau (plastic and recycling artist); Abdullah (photographer and videographer). Four further minority artists received honourable mention: Brang Li (painter and visual artist); Amin Taasha (painter and visual artist); Naser Moradi (painter); Mawa Rannahr (painter).

The Award Ceremony also marked the launch of an exhibition and [catalogue](#) featuring the artwork of the 7 laureates, biographies of the 5 members of the Judges Panel, information on minority statelessness and the right to nationality, and details of global action to end statelessness. Partners decided to continue joint efforts in 2023 to shed light on the plight facing minority communities in all areas of life, by organizing the Second Edition of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists Working on Intersectionality Themes.

Objectives of the Second Edition of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists

The human impact of intersectional forms of discrimination is of utmost concern. While the enjoyment of most human rights should not be dependent upon one's identity, individuals facing intersectional forms of discrimination are often deprived of their most basic rights. This is particularly true for women and girls, older persons and children, persons with disabilities, stateless persons, migrants, forcibly displaced individuals, and LGBTIQ+ people from minority groups. Intersectional discrimination affects civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights such as education, employment, social welfare, housing, healthcare, participation in cultural life, freedom of expression and assembly, freedom from arbitrary detention, and political participation.

Intersectionality has been commonly considered in the context of the principle of non-discrimination and equality. UN Human Rights Mechanisms have identified and emphasized numerous grounds of discrimination that can intersect, including, among other things, age;

albinism; birth; civil, family or career status; colour; descent; disability; economic status; ethnicity; gender expression; gender identity; genetic or other predisposition towards illness; health status; indigenous origin; language; marital status; maternity or paternity status; migrant status; minority status; national origin; nationality; place of residence; political or other opinion; pregnancy; property; race; refugee or asylum status; religion or belief; sex; sex characteristics; sexual orientation; social origin; and social situation.

Recent UN publications have shown that intersectionality is key to advance the elimination of all forms of discrimination and to better protect minority rights. For many minority individuals, intersecting factors such as gender, indigenous or minority origin, stateless status, rural and peri-urban residence, sexual orientation, or age perpetuate and aggravate the discrimination and marginalization they already face in every aspect of their life. Such intersections need more visibility, and the International Art Contest 2023 aims to advance this objective.

The Second Edition of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists aligns with the recommendations of the [Guidance Note on Intersectionality, Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities](#) launched by the Network in September 2022. In particular, the Guidance Note highlights the importance of advancing the participation of minority individuals facing intersectional discrimination, including by creating spaces in which the voices of individuals affected by intersectional discrimination can be heard and amplified. It also recommends participating in and supporting awareness-raising and other relevant public campaigns by groups experiencing discrimination and their advocates with a view to bringing about structural change and shifting public narratives, societal perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours, including in public discourse, the mainstream media, social media and pop culture. The 2023 International Art Contest aims at opening such spaces for participation of minority artists, while raising awareness on the specific challenges and situations of minority individuals and groups facing intersectional discrimination among a wide audience.

The Guidance Note further insists on the relevance of advancing joint work among UN Agencies, with the objective of deepening the understanding and mainstreaming of intersectionality. such recommendations. The Minority Artists Awards are thus part of OHCHR and the UN system's interest in deepening their engagement with art and artists as powerful actors in discourse and action on human rights.

The International Art Contest 2023 also aligns with the celebration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as well as previous efforts by OHCHR to advance joint work with Freemuse and UNHCR in areas relating to minority rights. Strengthened cooperation among UN Agencies and Entities can accelerate progress to address all forms of discrimination and the inclusion of minorities. Subsequently, the Second Edition of the International Art Contest for Minorities Working on Intersectionality Themes aims at empowering individuals who belong to minority groups and have committed to address intersectional forms of discrimination. In addition to making them aware of their human rights and procedures available to them, OHCHR and partners hope to help shed light on the need to combat intersectional discrimination and marginalization, including in relation with discriminatory laws, policies and practice that exist in many States.

Eligibility for and Application to the Minority Artists Awards

Artists who self-identify as belonging to a minority are welcome to apply to the Minority Artists Awards on Intersectionality Themes. All artworks focusing on intersectional experiences by minorities as a theme are eligible, including but not limited to photography, painting, video, installation, drawing, sculpture, etc. Due to practical reasons, it is however required that a virtual presentation of the artwork(s) be submitted to OHCHR in a digital format.

OHCHR does not request the rights to the artwork(s). However, it will ask for (1) explicit affirmation from the artist that OHCHR is enabled to profile the artists and use the virtual presentation of the artwork(s) in public specifically in connection with the contest and its promotion; and (2) that OHCHR will not return copies of any works submitted.

When applying to the award, entrants will submit a short biography (including on their minority background), a paragraph describing their approach to intersectionality in relation with minority matters, and a selection of up to 5 pieces of their artwork that relate to such topic.

Four awards of \$1,000 each will be offered by the Judging Panel; among these awards, one Minority Youth Artist Award will be reserved for artists aged between 18-35. The award-winners will be publicly announced in early November 2023.

Judges Panel

The Judges Panel for the Second Edition of the International Art Contest comprises the following people:



Yvonne Apiyo Brändle-Amolo

Former OHCHR Person of African Descent fellow, Switzerland, is best known for her femme-activism which involves using mixed media like Swiss yodel, sculpture, video and visual arts to challenge societal identity politics. Between 2014 to 2019, her short film “[Not Swiss Made](#)” about racism in Switzerland won 18 prizes globally, starting with the Arte Laguna Video Art and Performance price in Venice, Italy. In 2015, she was an artist in residence at the [Art Olympics Biennale - Kenyan Pavillion](#) in Venice, Italy. Her [One Family – human blood sculptures](#) caused a buzz in 2017, as did her [Swiss traditional folks' dance](#) intervention, which taught traditional Swiss dance to refugees and Swiss people. Later that year she collaborated with Ernesto Netos' on his Gaia Mother tree exhibition curating a food [The way to an enemy's heart](#) intervention. Ms Brändle-Amolo has since worked on a series of social-

political [Feminist Salon](#) lounges which consisted of film, discussions and performances. She also started a VLOG [African Descent](#) after launching the United Nations initiative the [International Decade for People of African Descent](#) in Switzerland. Last year she co-curated an art projection [Fraumunster21](#), commemorating the 50th anniversary of women's federal right to vote in Switzerland. Currently working on an opera and jodel concert for her Atelier Vivant Art residency in Thusis, Ms Brändle-Amolo is also an elected member of the Swiss parliament for the Social Democratic Party.



Carine Durand, Director of the Museum of Ethnography of Geneva

Carine Durant is a social anthropologist who completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge (2010) after a MPhil in Ethnology and a MA in International Negotiation at the University of Aix-en-Provence (France). She has worked for over twenty years in various curatorial and research capacities at the Musée des Confluences (Lyon, France, 2000-2004), the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (UK, 2004-2006), and the Nordiska Museet (Stockholm, Sweden, 2007). She has curated several public exhibitions about contemporary indigenous art and political movement for the Musée des Confluences (Inuit 2002-2003), the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Northern Skies, Southern Stars 2006, Sápmi 2010) and the Nordiska Museet (Sápmi 2007). She acted as Cultural Heritage consultant in Barcelona, Spain between February 2011 and August 2015. After being Chief Curator at the Ethnographic Museum of Geneva (MEG) between October 2015 and June 2022, she was appointed Director of MEG on 1st July 2022. Since 1998, she has conducted long-term anthropological field research crossing the boundaries of disciplines between social anthropology, education, performance studies, and art. Her research method is based on a transnational approach which has led her to conduct research in a wide variety of settings including anthropological museums in Italy, France, the UK, Norway and Sweden, theatres in Brazil, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland. Concurrently with her professional activity, she explores how anthropologists cross the boundaries of their disciplines in practice. She adopts alternative literary genres such as storytelling and playwriting to "rediscover" anthropological concerns such as cultural identity, memory and the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next.



Abdullah Habib, Rohingya Photographer based in Bangladesh and Award-Winner of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists 2022

Abdullah Habib is a Rohingya artist undertaking photography, videography and poetry. He is a former school teacher from Maungdaw, Rakhine State in Myanmar. Forced to flee his home, he arrived in Bangladesh in early September 2017 and started working with the Rollywood Rohingya film team making videos re-enacting Rohingya life. He has produced several photo-essays and poetry books on different topics. In 2019, his photographs were published by the Asia Time and many other. In August 2020, he received third prize in the photo series category from the Rohingya Photo Competition. In 2021, his work was published by Westword in Today, Tomorrow, Forever: Being Rohingya in Australia. His photographs have been exhibited at the Human Rights Research and Education Centre in Ottawa and the Oxford Human Rights Festival. In 2022, He and his fellow photographers have published a photo magazine on Identity of Rohingya with their collective photos and story. Moreover, he was awarded for his photography and poetry in the International Art Contest on Statelessness organised by Minority Rights Group International, OHCHR, UN and UNHCR in Geneva. Recently, He represented the stories of his community with his poetry in the 10th edition of Litfest in Dhaka with other two Rohingya female artists.



Zahra Hassan Marwan, illustrator, drawer Award-Winner of the International Art Contest for Minority Artists 2022

Working as a traditional artist with watercolor and ink, Zahra creates work that reflects her cultural roots in Kuwait as well as her life now in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She loves poetry and independent cinema and how quiet and mysterious the night can be. She is deeply fond of the sea. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of New Mexico in Languages and Literature, with a minor in Flamenco Dance and History as well as a minor in Philosophy. She has loved working with museums, non-profits, theater companies, cultural centers and has found making picture books to be dreamier than she had dreamed them to be! Her debut picture book, *Where Butterflies Fill the Sky*, was published by Bloomsbury Books in 2022 and was named one of the New York Times and New York Public Library Best Illustrated Children's Books and named one of NPR's Best Books of 2022. In 2022, Zahra also received one of the three awards of the first International Art Contest for Minority Artists working on Statelessness Themes.



Alexandra Xanthaki, United Nations Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights

Alexandra Xanthaki was appointed UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights in October 2021. A leading expert on cultural rights, Alexandra Xanthaki (LLB Athens; LLM Queens, Belfast; PhD Keele) is Professor of Law at Brunel University London, UK and the

Research Director of the Brunel Law School. A prolific author on minority and indigenous rights, Alexandra has over 50 publications varying from cultural rights of minorities and indigenous peoples to cultural diversity, cultural heritage, balancing cultural rights with other rights and interests, and multicultural aspects of international human rights law. More information:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/CulturalRights/Pages/AlexandraXanthaki.aspx>

Award Criteria

When reviewing the entrant artists and their artwork, criteria to be discussed by the Judging Panel may include, but are not limited to:

- Artistic merit
- Elements in the artist's work giving insights on minority issues, identity and/or experience, and intersectionality
- Relevance of the artist's views and work to the topic of the contest
- Creativity and innovation
- Effective reach and impact of more established works or perceived potential of increasing visibility of less known ones
- Bravery and/or originality in addressing difficult themes or issues
- Dedication

The above-mentioned criteria are not exhaustive, and award-winners may not meet all of these criteria. The decision of the Judging Panel will be taken on a consensual basis. It is final and not subject to appeal.

Communications

Hashtags for the contest are:

[#AllInForMinorityRights](#)

[#IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness](#)

[#FightRacism](#)

On-line Application Form for Minority Artists

All artists who self-define as belonging to a minority are invited to submit an application to the Minority Artists Awards digitally. Artists must complete the entry form and upload files or internet links (URL) of up to 5 artworks of their choice.

Artists are expected to submit electronic copies of their arts or links to their on-line arts. However, artists will not lose their intellectual property and usage rights on the submitted materials. Files uploaded to the contest website should be solely images of the artwork and not contain photographic images of the contestant nor other individuals.

1. Eligibility criteria

- Applicants must identify themselves as belonging to a national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minority, in accordance with the 1992 UN Minorities Declaration.

- Applicants can be of any nationality or stateless.
- All art formats are eligible, there are no limitations on style or medium. Submissions must however be in electronic format.
- The artwork speaks to the issue of intersectionality, and provides insight on minority issues, identity or experience in relation with intersectionality
- Application to the contest is free-of charge; there is no application and no facilitation fee. Efforts to impose charges for application should please be reported to: ohchr-minorities@un.org
- Submissions of collaborative works by multiple minority artists are welcome.
- The work submitted must have been made by the applicant(s) or must be the result of collaborative efforts in which the applicant is included.
- The artwork must be submitted in digital format.

2. Application Form (APPLY HERE!): <https://freemuse.org/events/international-art-contest-for-minority-artists/>