

Last Tuesday, 4th December, Jude Law presented Elisabeth Price with the Turner Prize 2012 in the Tate Gallery of London in its twenty-eighth edition. A few months now since spotlights have been turned off we ask, who is Elisabeth and why has she been the winner of this prize?

Once again, the emblematic award which is given every year to a British artist under the age of 50 caused expectancy and controversy after the jury's decision. Since the beginning of 1984, the Turner Prize, which was named after the Romantic painter William Turner, promotes the United Kingdom's artistic scene. All along this international renown, works like the dead shark which is kept in formol by Damien Hirst or *My Bed*, by Tracy Emin, have not gone unnoticed for most of the critics and specialized media.

In its last edition, everything pointed at Paul Noble and his monuments drawings as a favourite, or at the well-known performer Spartacus Chetwynd for his media impact, originality and youth. Nevertheless, it was finally Elizabeth Price (Bradford, West Yorkshire, 1966) who could take the £25,000 prize home. Her piece of work, a high-definition video titled *The Woolworth's Choir of 1979*, convinced the judges in charge of the verdict. In order to have a general idea of its content, we can say that this work of video art tells the tragic fire which took place in a department store in Manchester in 1979. With the help of a thorough edition, she interweaves real recordings about the bitter event (in which ten people died), with images of Gothic religious architecture and sequences taken from the Internet. A feeling of growing tension and dramatic character is gradually achieved, as it is increased by the powerful sounds of the sound track.

If we could sum up the work of Elizabeth Price with only one word, we would have to say 'experimentation'. This is how she defines herself and her style when creating art, since those 1980's in which she was part of the indie pop band *Talulah Gosh*, and later *The Carousel*. It is precisely that restlessness of a girl about twenty, somehow still present, what personally has caught my attention about this artist, unknown for the great public until the last few months. The old and obsolete aspect that covers her video art is filled with surrealistic details and hidden messages related with narrative and science-fiction cinema. Special effects and a language typical of advertising campaigns are also to be emphasized, apart from many other sources of inspiration. Everything has been consciously created on the basis of a purely conceptual kind of art and an institutional and political critic. Each one of her audiovisual projects is carefully thought and carried out, and it is usual for her to invest as much as several months or even a year in the production process.

It sometimes happens that video art works lose followers in showrooms, the audience skips this type of works as a whole, or there are even switched off monitors without seeing some artist's works... What is the best setting for the exhibition of these works? What should be the maximum duration time? In what ways should the maintenance of these works be impeccable in order to keep the exhibition from being stopped? Elizabeth Price's videos' duration oscillates between 9 and 20 minutes, and they are settled in such a way that one may feel comfortable enough as to see the final credits successfully. From a more global point of view, considering video creation as an artistic genre and taking it as a reference, we could emphasize a written text by Jonathan Jones for the British newspaper *The Guardian* from 23rd January. The author lists here a series of reasons in defence of a kind of video art that reinvents itself by the minute, or which somehow is shown to the public sphere thanks to different headlines. Elizabeth is one of the names Jones mentions as an example of the resurgence of this genre, together with other artists such as Tony Oursler, due to her winning the Turner Prize. Oursler's collaboration with David Bowie for one of his video clips has been talked about, and it has meant an advance of his last project titled *The Influence Machine*, a piece of video art which was first exhibited in the Tate Modern in the month of February.

In art, as in life, there is always controversy. When a prizewinning artist is chosen not everyone agrees. We know that certain decisions are subjective, and in other cases there are unknown forces that play their part. But one thing we can be sure of is that the Turner Prize is characterized for being one of the most relevant internationally speaking. Among the prizewinning artists we find names such as Gilbert and George, Tony Cragg, Richard Long, Anish Kapoor, Rachel Whiteread and Wolfgang Tillmans. That is to say; icons of contemporary art of the 20th and 21st century.