

= K Foundation art award =

The 1994 K Foundation award was an award given by the K Foundation (Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty) to the " worst artist of the year " . The shortlist for the £ 40 @, @ 000 K Foundation award was identical to the shortlist for the well @-@ established but controversial £ 20 @, @ 000 Turner Prize for the best British contemporary artist . On the evening of 23 November 1993 , Rachel Whiteread was presented with the 1993 Turner Prize inside London 's Tate Gallery , and the 1994 K Foundation award on the street outside .

Prior to presenting their award , the K Foundation held a private exhibit of a collection of art works entitled Money - A Major Body of Cash . The award , the exhibition and the accompanying extravagant press junket were widely reported by the media .

= = Context = =

In June 1993 the newly formed K Foundation began taking out full page national press adverts . Initial advertisements were cryptic , referring to " K Time " and advising readers to " Kick out the clocks " . They mentioned five @-@ year journeys which included pop success and deep space travel and that " the sands of time are running in " . There was also an advert for the K Foundation 's single " K Cera Cera " which was " Available nowhere ... no formats " and which was not planned for release until world peace was established .

There was a change of direction with the fourth advert which appeared on 14 August 1993 , reading : " ABANDON ALL ART NOW . Major rethink in progress . Await further announcements . " The next ad (28 August 1993) read : " It has come to our attention that you did not abandon all art now . Further direct action is thus necessary . The K Foundation announce the ' mutha of all awards ' , the 1994 K Foundation award for the worst artist of the year . " It then went on to detail how a shortlist of four artists had been chosen , and that they would be exhibited in the Tate Gallery .

One of the first newspaper pieces about the K Foundation appeared in The Guardian the following Monday , correctly pointing out that the shortlist and exhibition were actually for the 1993 Turner Prize , the controversial £ 20 @, @ 000 annual award given by the UK art establishment to the best young contemporary artist , but assuming that the K Foundation prize was a hoax . " As for the K Foundation " , the newspaper wrote , " it stands unmasked as the current performing face of those cherished old friends of pop pranksterdom , Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty " , formerly known as The KLF . In September , the organisers of the Turner Prize responded publicly that " It proves the validity of our prize that somebody would take so much trouble to set up this award " .

The Foundation 's next advert invited the general public to vote for the worst artist , either by going to the exhibition and using their critical faculties or by letting their inherent prejudices come to the fore . The final advert summarised the whole campaign , asked some questions back to the people that had written to them , and explained that the winner of the K Foundation award would be announced in a TV advert during the live Turner Prize coverage on Channel 4 television .

On 20 November 1993 , The Economist reported on the K Foundation prize and placed it in context . " Every autumn for the past ten years , an increasingly bad @-@ tempered squabble has raged between , on the one hand , many of Britain 's art critics and its popular media , and on the other , its avant @-@ garde " establishment , " the small croterie of art historians , curators , and dealers who control the Turner prize . " Predicting that Rachel Whiteread , creator of the controversial sculpture , House , would win both awards , the magazine said that , if it were so , " the vast numbers of people who equate contemporary art with rubbish will , yet again , feel vindicated . "

The K Foundation 's television adverts on the evening of 23 November 1993 explained that the Foundation were currently " amending the history of art " at a secret location . No mention of the alternative award was made in the post @-@ Turner Prize studio discussion . The K Foundation reportedly pre @-@ announced Rachel Whiteread as their winner at 2pm or , at least , at some time before the Turner ; at 9.30pm , live on television , the Turner Prize was awarded to the same artist . Whiteread reluctantly collected her K Foundation winnings at just past 11pm , saying , " sarcastically , " What an honour . " "

Drummond claimed the advertising campaign cost £ 250 @,@ 000 . The television advertisements cost £ 20 @,@ 000 , an amount which Scotland on Sunday said was " carefully chosen to match the value of the Turner prize " , the newspaper adding that " Copies of the invoices were supplied as evidence . " Each press advert cost between £ 5 @,@ 000 and £ 15 @,@ 000 .

= = The Amending of Art History = =

25 witnesses - including art critics , journalists , music industry figures and artists - were invited to participate in the Foundation 's " Amending of art history " . They were driven in a convoy of white limousines , led by a gold limo , to Heston Service Station where they were handed a press release and £ 1650 in crisp new £ 50 notes . The accompanying press release stated that 25 x £ 1600 collectively made up the £ 40000 K Foundation prize , and that the extra £ 50 was for the witness to verify its authenticity by spending it . The witnesses were dressed in fluorescent orange hard hats and safety jackets .

The convoy proceeded to a field patrolled by two orange @-@ painted K Foundation Saracen armoured cars , driven by Drummond and Cauty , broadcasting the K Foundation 's K Cera Cera and ABBA 's " Money Money Money " . Silver @-@ bearded " Mr Ball " , the K Foundation 's compere , directed the witnesses to nail their wad of money to a board inside a gilt frame , to assemble the K Foundation 's prize . Some of the witnesses pocketed all or some of their wad , and the prize money was , according to Danny Kelly , some £ 9000 short . Mr Ball also directed the witnesses to " view the art " : One million pounds in £ 50 notes , nailed to a large framed board . This was the K Foundation 's first art work , Nailed To A Wall , " the first of a series of K Foundation art installations that will also include one million pounds in a skip , one million pounds on a table and several variants on the theme of Tremendous Amounts Of Folding " .

Collectively , the K Foundation 's money @-@ as @-@ art works were titled Money : A Major Body Of Cash , " seven pieces , all involving various amounts of cash nailed to , tied to or simply standing on inanimate objects " . Nailed To A Wall had a reserve price of £ 500 @,@ 000 , half the face value of the cash used in its construction , which Scotland on Sunday 's reporter Robert Dawson Scott was " fairly confident ... really was £ 1 million [in cash] " . The catalogue entry for the artwork stated : " Over the years the face value will be eroded by inflation , while the artistic value will rise and rise . The precise point at which the artistic value will overtake the face value is unknown . Deconstruct the work now and you double your money . Hang it on a wall and watch the face value erode , the market value fluctuate , and the artistic value soar . The choice is yours . "

Rachel Whiteread had already been notified of her " victory " but had refused to accept the prize or allow the K Foundation to use her name . The motorcade left the site of the amending of art @-@ history and headed back to London , for a showdown with Whiteread on the steps of the Tate . When she again refused to accept the money , the K Foundation explained that it would be burnt . With the crowd of now very drunk witnesses looking on , a masked K Foundation operative (Gimpo) fumbled with matches and lighter fluid . At the last moment Rachel Whiteread emerged from the Tate and accepted the money , stating that she would give it as grants to needy artists .

The next day , the K Foundation 's publicist , Mick Houghton , claimed that the voting for the K Foundation 's award was supposed to produce a tie , to illustrate the hypocrisy of the Turner award committee , but that strangely the result had been a huge margin of victory for Whiteread . He speculated that the few thousand voters had just liked or rather disliked the sound of her name .

Defending Whiteread , Lord Palumbo told The Guardian that : " Talent at the highest level attracts derision . We must let the artist fail . "

Whiteread 's sculpture , House , was demolished , as had been planned from its inception , on 11 January 1994 .

= = Media and art @-@ world reaction = =

A huge amount of press publicity ensued , with all the major newspapers and press organisations reporting that Whiteread had won both awards . Media reaction to the K Foundation award was

mixed . David Mills wrote in The Times that The K Foundation 's campaign was " tiresome " , and he asked " Doesn 't it strike anyone as odd that a group of people who made their money with such artistic endeavours as a disco @-@ version of the Dr Who theme should be suggesting that contemporary art was somehow more fatuous than that ? "

Rachel Whiteread had an advertisement printed in the British magazine , Art Monthly , in which she outlined her plan to donate £ 10 @,@ 000 to Shelter and distribute the remainder in grants to 10 needy artists . In the advertisement she stated that she " does not agree with the K Foundation 's aims or methods " . Displaying perhaps a little humour , Whiteread 's advertisement was in a similar style to the K Foundation ads , with stark white text on a black background .

Scottish sculptor David Mach opined to Scotland on Sunday that " They 're just a bunch of silly buggers . It 's good to see money going from a bunch of silly buggers to an artist who is going to make good use of it . What 's that saying about a fool and his money ... ? " John Bellany , on the other hand , said that " The emotional , artistic side of [his] nature ... admire [d] the audacity and imagination , challenging art and the art manipulators . The rational side of me asks , is this the most expensive art publicity stunt this century , and for whom ? "

Whiteread 's agent Karsten Schubert said , " The whole affair was a non @-@ event . They achieved nothing and they were left looking like real prats . " Peter Chater , a director of Schubert 's agency concurred ; he called Drummond and Cauty " cowards " . " It was obviously a publicity stunt . What sort of statement they were trying to make I don 't know . If it was anything to do with the relationship between art and money it was pretty crass . The KLF made a fortune from a couple of successful singles . Artists aren 't in that position . Threatening to set light to £ 40 @,@ 000 is pretty obscene . " Former Factory Records boss Tony Wilson applauded the group , however . " The K Foundation is a very peculiar avant garde group whose ideas are as valid anything the Turner people do , " he told NME . " Since when has there been laws governing what constitutes art , or an artistic statement ? OK , so a lot of people don 't understand what Bill and Jimmy are trying to say , but how many people know exactly what Rachel Whiteread 's trying to say with her art ? "

Modern Review art critic John O 'Reilly , another of the K Foundation 's witnesses , said : " The whole point of the K Foundation is its anonymity . There 's no origin , just a Circulation of data and concepts . There is no master plan , no grand narrative . " O 'Reilly also " [enjoyed the] sense of waste and sacrifice involved " .

Miranda Sawyer , who attended the presentation , found special interest in a subsidiary incident during the evening of the prize ceremonies : the theft of money by several of the other invited witnesses : " All the feelings of power and powerlessness that money can bring were fairly summarised with these thefts - it must have turned out better than the K Foundation could have hoped if the examination of cash , art and associated feelings was their point . " Sawyer named " Britart " figure Carl Freedman as one of those who had taken the money , and reported that " He found the event funny , not offensive (you would too if you walked off with £ 1 @,@ 600 !) , but thought the point had been made before . "

Writer and " underground art historian " Stewart Home was viciously supportive of the K Foundation . " The avant @-@ garde wasn 't to be seen at the Turner Prize gathering , it was to be found among that select band of individuals who 'd organised the K Foundation 's attack on the smug complacency of the arts establishment ' dignitaries ' such as Lord Pumbo were revealed as buffoons . While Pumbo ranted about the dunces who attack cultural innovations , his rhetoric showed him to be a complete idiot ? several people immediately pointed out that he was unable to correctly name Van Gogh 's art dealer brother . Likewise , Pumbo claimed that there are no monuments erected to critics and presented himself as a champion of progressive culture , while ignoring the fact that it was critics who picked the winner of the prize he was awarding . It is the K Foundation , rather than Whiteread , who represent a vital and innovative strand within contemporary culture . Their work is simultaneously a critique and a celebration of ' consumer capitalism ' . "

A New Musical Express piece on 20 November 1993 was also highly supportive of the K Foundation . " The nearest parallel to the K Foundation donation would be The Beatles ' grandiose plans for Apple Corps " , they said . " But where Apple handed out money willy @-@ nilly to little end

and failed to achieve anything more than get some hippies stoned and put up some nice posters about war being over if you want it , Drummond and Cauty have found a specific target - the relationship between art , money and the critical establishment- and attacked it . By actually offering £ 40 @,@ 000 to the artist who produces the duffest piece of work , they 've simultaneously sent up the whole thing and proved their integrity the hard way . "

The Face magazine 's witness wrote that " The accusation that this is a tiresome Situationist gag with a whoopee cushion pay @-@ off belittles the K Foundation 's distracted message . They are not mocking any of the artists involved in the Turner or their work so much as the whole tired institution of awards themselves By telling us to " use our critical faculties or our innate prejudice " to vote , the Ks are asking : " Who decides who decides ? " "

The Independent 's witness , David Lister , was less impressed . " Last night 's highly eccentric mystery tour by the K Foundation probably said more about the wealth that can be accumulated from two number one hit records than it did about any resurgence of Dadaism " , he said .

The Guardian said that Jimmy Cauty , " [as the artist] responsible for a best @-@ selling Athena poster of the Hobbit ... can justly say he has adorned more walls than any of the Turner nominees " ; and added : " A grand deflation of the pretensions of the wealthy art elite is an aim that has drawn approval from sections of the art world and philistines who find ' installations ' of knotted rope or beds covered in rice curiously unmoving The joke may yet prove to be at the expense of the Turner . " In a separate piece , the newspaper implied that the K Foundation had hit their perceived target with some success :

= = Later analysis = =

In a piece published in 2006 , The Sunday Times quoted author James F. English 's description of The K Foundation 's Art Award as " hostile philanthropy " . Sunday Times writer Bryan Appleyard added that the " K Foundation 's witty exploitations of artistic greed ... are essential aspects of the prize itself . They promote the prize , reassure the organisers that , culturally speaking , they are in the thick of it and console the artists with evidence that their work provokes strong reactions . More importantly , for English , such conflicts demonstrate the autonomous nature of the event . These prizes should not be seen as any real or lasting judgment about art , but rather as things in themselves . "

Some years after the award , Bill Drummond attempted to explain the K Foundation 's motives , as he now saw them :

= = Burning = =

The K Foundation 's art campaign , Money : A Major Body Of Cash , failed to attract major gallery interest so , on 23 August 1994 , Drummond and Cauty disposed of their one million pounds in an alternate fashion : they burnt it on the Scottish island of Jura . (See : K Foundation Burn a Million Quid) . In an interview with Drummond , Cauty and Gimpo , Gimpo admitted to harbouring guilt about the million pounds burning ; that if he 'd burnt Whiteread 's £ 40 @,@ 000 the million pounds burning would never have happened . " I should have burnt it . I had petrol all over the £ 40 @,@ 000 ... We were due to wait until eleven o 'clock until she came out , but we were told to wait another two minutes ... [then] Rachel Whiteread came running out . She just grabbed the money and dragged it over the fence . " Carl Freedman also wished they 'd burnt Whiteread 's money . " It would have been brilliant It would have been just totally outrageous . People would have been falling out of their @-@ chairs , saying . ' I can 't believe they just burned £ 40 @,@ 000 ' " .