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Tracey Emin and Arctic Monkeys win South Bank awards

By Michael Osborn Arts and Entertainment reporter, BBC News



Emin collected her award from Frank Skinner

Artist Tracey Emin has been honoured with the South Bank Sky Arts Awards outstanding achievement prize.

Emin, who collected her award from Frank Skinner at the London ceremony, said she was "really overwhelmed".

Arctic Monkeys beat David Bowie to win the pop music prize, while acclaimed ITV crime series *Broadchurch* triumphed over the BBC's *Top of the Lake* and *The Fall* to win TV drama.

British film *The Selfish Giant* won the film award.

It beat Hanif Kureishi's *Le Week-End*, starring Jim Broadbent and Lindsay Duncan, and Steve Coogan's Oscar-nominated *Philomena*.

JAMES COHAN GALLERY

Coogan was also nominated in the comedy category for Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa, alongside Sky Arts' series Psychobitches.

But both lost out to surprise winner Bridget Christie, who won the prize for her stand-up show A Bic for Her.

Backstage at London's Dorchester Hotel, Christie was genuinely surprised, and said she would place her award - designed by Sir Peter Blake - "on a little windowsill behind a mannequin".

"They put all the cameras on Psychobitches and everyone on my table said 'oh never mind, it doesn't matter'.

"I dealt with not winning and then I quickly had to deal with winning," said the comedian.

She added that the success of her show came after a lull in her work when it "hadn't been going so well".

Emin, 50, is no stranger to collecting accolades after a prominent art career spanning more than two decades.

"It's not about me, it's about art, it's about culture," she said after receiving her achievement award.



Bridget Christie was the unexpected winner of the comedy award, presented by Lenny Henry

JAMES COHAN GALLERY



Broadchurch's cast and crew turned out in force to collect their TV drama award

"I'm totally focused on what I'm doing at the moment and am very happy," said the artist, who has recently bought a home in Miami.

Emin revealed that her new objectives are to pass her driving test in the US and learn how to speak French, joking that the second ambition is "never going to happen".

Artist Katie Pearson is less of a household name, but walked away with the visual art prize for her work Kettle's Yard in Cambridge and Tipping Point at Wolverhampton Art Gallery.

As well as her Blake trophy, she was given a small conker by artist Gavin Turk, who presented her with her gong.

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Tracey Emin

"It's fantastic! I can't believe it. Winning it is a huge triumph," said Pearson, who graduated from art school in 2007.

"This is not a normal Monday for me. I'm not usually around celebrities. It's a roomful of the most amazing talent".

Episodes star Stephen Mangan presented the breakthrough award to comedian Nick Helm, who stars in BBC Three series Uncle, beating hopefuls from each of the awards categories.

Helm, who has been working the stand-up comedy circuit for more than a decade, said: "Clearly I hadn't broken through yet!"

Asked whether the award would boost his career or provide an inspiration for future projects, Helm joked: "I don't know, I haven't even talked to my mum yet."

JAMES COHAN GALLERY

Known for his brash comic delivery, he added: "If I can do more work on TV and radio, hopefully it'll mean I won't have to go door to door shouting at people."



Winners Katie Paterson, Nick Helm and Kate Atkinson all collected trophies, designed by Sir Peter Blake



Darcey Bussell, Daniel May and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa were at the awards gala

Life After Life author Kate Atkinson was honoured in the book category, beating *The Kills* by Richard House and Sathnam Sanghera's *Marriage Material*.

The National Theatre of Scotland's production of *Let The Right One In* beat *Othello* and *Chimerica* to win the theatre award, presented by Simon Russell Beale.

Winning the opera award was *Written on Skin* by the Royal Opera House, while the dance category was won by *Dracula* from the Mark Bruce Company.

JAMES COHAN GALLERY

The Southbank Centre's *The Rest is Noise* won the classical music category.

This year's judges included The Observer's Arts Editor Sarah Donaldson, Heat Magazine's Boyd Hilton, The Times Arts Editor Alex O'Connell and the Daily Mail columnist Baz Bamigboye.

The South Bank Sky Arts Awards will be broadcast on 30 January on Sky Arts 1 at 21:30 GMT. The new series of The South Bank Show will begin on the channel in the spring.