

Dian Suci is the winner of the tenth edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women (2025-2027). She will embark on a six-month travelling residency in Italy.

Max Mara, Collezione Maramotti and Museum MACAN are pleased to announce, along with prize curator Cecilia Alemani, that **Dian Suci** has been named winner of the tenth edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women.

The award, which was established to support and promote emerging or mid-career artists at a crucial stage in their professional paths, will offer Dian Suci a six-month travelling residency in Italy, organized by **Collezione Maramotti** and specifically tailored to the development of the project Suci proposed to the jury. This experience will culminate in a solo show at **Museum MACAN** in Jakarta in the summer of 2027; it will be presented again that autumn in Reggio Emilia, Italy, at Collezione Maramotti, which will acquire the works.

The winner was announced by **Cecilia Alemani**, curator of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women and chair of the jury, along with **Sara Piccinini**, Director of Collezione Maramotti, **Venus Lau**, Director of Museum MACAN, and **Elia Maramotti**, representative of the family that founded Max Mara and Collezione Maramotti, on 7 May 2026, in conjunction with the opening of the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, titled *In Minor Keys* and curated by Koyo Kouoh.

Dian Suci, who was on a shortlist of five finalists that included **Betty Adii**, **Dzikra Afifah**, **Ipeh Nur** and **Mira Rizki**, was singled out by a jury selected and chaired by Cecilia Alemani, made up of MACAN Director **Venus Lau**, curator **Amanda Ariawan**, gallerist **Megan Arlin**, collector **Evelyn Halim** and artist **Melati Suryodarmo**.

Dian Suci (b. 1985 in Kebumen, Indonesia) lives and works in Yogyakarta. Her practice lies at the intersection of domestic narratives and state political power. Drawing on her everyday experiences as a single mother, her work addresses issues connected to the political domestication of women, authoritarianism and fascism, the patriarchy and capitalism. Acutely aware of spatial composition, Suci employs a variety of media, including installation, painting, sculpture and video.

The project proposal with which the artist won the tenth edition of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women is titled *Crafting Spirit: Cultural Dialogues in Heritage and Practice*. It springs from her desire to explore the fallout of the encounter between religious artisan traditions and the capitalist system, through a comparative study of Italy and Indonesia.

The handcrafting of votive objects and religious images will become the hub of Suci's enquiry into the commoditization and exploitation of belief in contemporary culture. Her research is intended to examine whether and how spirituality, even in

systems permeated by market dynamics, injustice and oppression, can endure as a form of cultural resilience.

This new body of work sets out to retrace the embodiment of faith, care and ritual in physical gestures and manual labour. Suci sees crafts as a living archive that testifies to the traditions and memory of a nation, a mirror and mouthpiece for its cultural, social and economic transformation and evolution. Deeply rooted in Indonesian culture, her vision extends the concept of spirituality beyond the purely religious sphere into a dimension where human beings, through careful repetitive actions grounded in the body, grant meaning to what remains unexpressed. *Crafting Spirit* will examine how belief and craft can be interwoven and, in particular, how the sacred is transformed into a material presence in a way that reflects the invasive forces of profit and globalization.

With the guidance of experts in specific fields and through research, site visits and work in the studio, Suci will explore the silent flow of spirituality moving through bodies, hands, and materials, even within the process of mass production and commoditization. The artist will dialogue with religious communities and congregations, with university professors, with artisans and other artists who will guide her in her research and her acquisition of the technical skills necessary to create these new works.

The first stage of Suci's residency will take her to **Assisi**, Umbria, where she will stay at the Monastery of San Masseo; this will give her the opportunity to learn about the monks' way of life and to meet artisans who produce Catholic handcrafts. After this, under the guidance of **Francesco Lampone**, an expert in local history, and the artist **Peter Bartlett**, Suci will examine the contradictions that divide religion and capitalism.

The artist will then move to **Rome**, Lazio, where she will be a guest of the **Istituto Svizzero**. This part of the residency will allow her to attend Mass at Saint Peter's, accompanied by an expert in liturgy who will help her explore and analyse the symbology and hidden meanings of the rite.

The next stop will be **Lecce**, Puglia, where Suci will learn more about regional religious celebrations and about the techniques and history of papier-mâché in the East and West. The programme in this city has been specifically developed for her by artist and artisan **Stella Ciardo**, curator **Gioele Melandri** and **P.I.A - Scuola Indipendente per le Arti Visive e gli Studi Curatoriali**.

The final period of her residency will centre on **Florence**, Tuscany. Here, Suci will take part in a workshop conceived by **Chiara Mignani**, a conservator and professor at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure and at Accademia di Belle Arti, Bologna, to learn the technique and historical evolution of egg tempera. Lastly, at **Fondazione Arte della Seta Lisio**, the artist will

acquire handweaving skills and expand her knowledge of its applications in the ecclesiastic sphere.

Statement by Dian Suci, tenth winner of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women: “I am deeply honored to be selected as the recipient of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women. My proposal, *Crafting Spirit: Cultural Dialogues in Heritage and Practice*, emerges from stories of the body and memory within the lives and gestures of women artisans, whose work often exists between devotion and survival. This recognition offers me the opportunity to expand my research between Indonesia and Italy, and to learn from traditions and rituals that hold spirituality within the bodies that create. I receive this opportunity with gratitude and a commitment to listen, to learn, and to translate these encounters into forms that honor the intimacy of human labor and the depth of cultural continuity.”

Luigi Maramotti, president of Max Mara Fashion Group: “Dian Suci’s promising project, *Crafting Spirit. Cultural Dialogues in Heritage and Practice*, explores the realms of ritual and gesture, intertwining them with ancient craft techniques and their history, in an ongoing dialogue between East and West. The rich tradition of Italian craftsmanship, in all its many facets, lies at the very heart of the Max Mara Art Prize, which also aims to bring together two distinct yet complementary worlds, such as art and craftsmanship. I am delighted to see that the first jury appointed for this new global iteration of the Prize has courageously upheld and indeed reaffirmed one of its founding values through this choice. It will be interesting to see the outcomes of this exploration and the dialogue between these worlds.”

Sara Piccinini, director of Collezione Maramotti: “We extend our deepest thanks to the entire jury of the tenth Max Mara Art Prize for Women for their fundamental work in selecting the finalists and the winner, Dian Suci. This residency, which was designed in concert with the artist herself, will offer a special space of discovery, experimentation and dialogue in which to develop her complex and fascinating project. Alongside her stays in Lecce and Florence, which will primarily focus on the acquisition of technical skills, I am convinced that her time in Assisi during celebrations for the 800th anniversary of Saint Francis’s death and her visit to Rome in the year after a Jubilee will offer a unique opportunity to analyse the contemporary dynamics linking craft, religion and globalization.”

Venus Lau, director of Museum MACAN: “Dian Suci’s practice is most notably defined by her fluid navigation between diverse media and cultural disciplines. Transitioning from a background in architectural studies to becoming a self-taught artist, she has remained independent of traditional art institutions. This autonomy affords her work a distinctive sensibility and a notable conceptual agility. Furthermore, Suci’s oeuvre effectively articulates feminine strength, manifesting an impactful presence by exploring the nuanced vulnerabilities of

domestic life. She possesses a remarkable capacity to transmute resilience into creative energy. I believe a residency in Italy would provide a vital framework for her to expand this artistic voice—one that aligns with a long-standing tradition of technical mastery and material consciousness. Such an opportunity would undoubtedly refine the articulation of her subject matter and catalyse new, transformative directions in her practice.”

Cecilia Alemani, curator of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women: “Dian Suci’s work impressed me with its extraordinary capacity to transform the realm of everyday domestic life into a realm of political resistance. Her practice is perfectly aligned with the core concept of this prize, whose tenth edition has chosen to explore the artistic landscape of Indonesia. The unique nature of Dian’s project lies in the analytic gaze it turns on spirituality: not as an escape from reality, but as resilient response to the invasive influences of capitalism and mass production. Her residency in Italy will be a true cultural dialogue. The contrasts and similarities between Umbrian religious art, the papier-mâché tradition in Lecce, and the expert skills found in Florence will provide Dian with new tools for mapping how the work of the hands can still serve as a stronghold of collective memory, and of a belief system that resists the commoditization of life and art.”

MAX MARA ART PRIZE FOR WOMEN

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Max Mara Art Prize for Women

The Max Mara Art Prize for Women is the only award of its kind. Established in 2005 by Max Mara, it was the **first visual arts prize for emerging and mid-career** female-identifying artists, aimed at spotlighting and supporting them at a crucial stage in their careers by offering time and space for the creation of an ambitious new project. After its fruitful collaboration with Whitechapel Gallery in London, the Max Mara Art Prize for Women will now expand its geographic reach and become a **travelling event**, starting with its tenth edition (2025 – 2027). The nomadic prize will move to a different country with each edition, under the guidance and curation of Cecilia Alemani, Director and Head Curator of High Line Art in New York. Each winning artist, chosen by a jury chaired by the curator and made up of women active on the contemporary art scene in that country (a gallerist, art critic, artist and collector), is given the opportunity to spend a **six-month residency in Italy**, organized by Collezione Maramotti and tailored to her personal and professional needs. The purpose of this residency is to provide the winner with the time and space to focus on the creation of a new artistic project, which will then be exhibited in two solo shows: one at the partner institution for that edition, and the other at Collezione Maramotti, which will acquire the works.

For the twentieth anniversary of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, the anthological exhibition ***Time for Women! Empowering Visions in Twenty Years of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women*** was presented in Florence in collaboration with Palazzo Strozzi at La Strozziina, the institution's space for experimental contemporary art.

MACAN – Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara

The Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara (Museum MACAN) is located in Jakarta. It provides public access to a significant and growing collection of modern and contemporary art from Indonesia and around the world. The museum, which opened in 2017, has an active program of exhibitions and events in a 5,000-square-meter facility that includes spaces for education and conservation. museummacan.org

Max Mara

Founded in 1951 by the visionary Achille Maramotti, Max Mara embodies the quintessence of Italian style and luxury. It is a contemporary collection of prêt-à-porter and accessories made for extraordinary women. Renowned for their timeless designs and fine fabrics, Max Mara's consummately sophisticated outerwear, impeccable suits and contemporary accessories have made it a symbol of elegance. The Max Mara Fashion Group has more than 2,500 shops in over one hundred countries around the world, and nine brands in its portfolio, yet remains a private company owned and managed by the Maramotti family. www.maxmara.com

Collezione Maramotti

Collezione Maramotti is a private contemporary art collection which opened to visitors in 2007 at the historic former headquarters of the Max Mara company in Reggio Emilia. In addition to a permanent collection of more than 200 works from 1950 to 2019, it regularly presents new projects and commissioned pieces by international mid-career and emerging artists. collezionemaramotti.org

Previous winners and projects in the Max Mara Art Prize for Women:

Dominique White (2022–2024). *Deadweight* is a thought-provoking exploration of rebellion and transformation. The title comes from a nautical term (“deadweight tonnage”) for the total weight a vessel can carry while preserving its capacity to float and function as usual. White (b. 1993) intentionally reverses this meaning, challenging the canonical notion of stability and pointing to the possibility of emancipation and liberation through rebellion and destruction. Made up of four sculptural works, the project envisions an Afro future situated outside of traditional utopian science fiction, in an oceanic realm with the potential to offer fluid, rebellious realities, liberated from capitalist and colonial influence.

Emma Talbot (2019–2022). The installation by Talbot (b. 1969), *The Age / L'Età*, is made up of animations, free-hanging painted silk panels, a three-dimensional work and drawings. This work explores themes of representation and aging, power and governance, and attitudes towards nature. For the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Talbot imagined a future environment where humankind encounters the disastrous consequences of late capitalism and must look to more ancient and holistic ways of crafting and belonging – rethinking old power structures to reconnect with the natural world – in order to survive. Talbot took part in *The Milk of Dreams* (2002), the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Cecilia Alemani.

Helen Cammock (2017–2019). For her exhibition *Che si può fare*, Cammock (b. 1970) presented a film, a series of vinyl cut prints, a screenprinted frieze and an artist's book interweaving women's stories of loss and resilience with seventeenth-century Baroque music by female composers, exploring the concept of lament in women's lives across different lands and eras. After winning the Max Mara Art Prize for Women in 2019, she was co-winner of the Turner Prize. In 2023 she received the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Visual Artists.

Emma Hart (2015–2017). Hart (b. 1974) created the large-scale installation *Mamma Mia!*, made up of a family of massive ceramic heads; the space inside them is filled with vivid motifs conceived and hand-painted by the artist after researching the traditional designs and methods of Italian maiolica. This project marks the culmination of her investigation into visual models and into patterns of psychological behaviour within family relationships. After winning the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Hart went on to win the Henry Moore Foundation Artist Award in 2022.

Corin Sworn (2013–2015). Sworn (b. 1976) created a work inspired by commedia dell'arte, an improvisation-based form of theatre that developed in the sixteenth century in Italy, where it continues to be a significant cultural influence. Her installation, *Silent Sticks*, is a stage set complete with props, costumes, and sound and video elements. In 2015, Sworn received the Leverhulme Prize, which recognizes extraordinary experimental work by artists who have already had an international impact and whose career seems extremely promising.

Laure Prouvost (2011–2013). For the Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Prouvost (b. 1978) created the ambitious large-scale installation *Farfromwords*: a tribute to the aesthetic and sensuous pleasures of Italy and to the historical idea of visiting the Mediterranean for inspiration. In 2013 she received the Turner Prize. In 2019 she presented the project *Deep See Blue Surrounding You* in the French Pavilion at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.

Andrea Büttner (2009–2011). *The Poverty of Riches*, the work that Büttner (b. 1972) presented for the prize, explores the intersection of religion, art and the role of the artist in today's world. Using prints, textiles, photographs and everyday objects, she transformed the exhibition space into a place of contemplation. Part of her project was included in the Whitechapel Gallery's landmark exhibition *Adventures of the Black Square* in 2015. She was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 2017 and has recently had solo shows at the Kunstmuseum Basel and at K21-Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf.

Hannah Rickards (2007–2009). The Max Mara Art Prize for Women gave Rickards (b. 1979) the opportunity to create *No, there was no red.*, an ambitious split-screen video built around the subjective differences, similarities and echoes in eyewitness accounts of a distant city seen floating over Lake Michigan, as the effect of a rare natural phenomenon, the superior mirage. In 2015 she was awarded the Leverhulme Prize and she has had exhibitions at Modern Art Oxford, the Walker Art Center and Palais de Tokyo.

Margaret Salmon (2005–2007). Salmon (b. 1975) travelled to Italy and created *Ninna Nanna*, a triptych of black and white films exploring the themes of motherhood and the isolation that comes with it. Salmon participated in *Think with the Senses, Feel with the Mind: Art in the Present Tense*, the 52th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, curated by Robert Storr.

For more information about previous editions of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women: collezionemaramotti.org/max-mara-art-prize-for-women