

The Arts

Usual suspects up for Jerwood

EXHIBITION

Jerwood Painting Prize
Jerwood Space, SE1

Nick Hackworth

SET up six years ago to reward "excellence and originality in painting", the Jerwood Painting Prize is, at £30,000, the largest single award given to an artist in this country for painting. Admirable in ideal but not in practice, the prize tends to be a beauty parade of the usual suspects. Previous winners include Craigie Aitchison, Patrick Caulfield, Maggi Hambling, Gary Hume and Prunella Clough, and they will be joined by one of the six short-listed artists, all of whom are well known in the art world.

This petty concern with art-world politics would not matter

if the exhibition of short-listed work at the Jerwood Space were indeed a revelation of excellence and originality. Of the six short-listed artists, though, only the abstract painter Callum Innes makes work of memorable beauty and none could claim originality as their forte. Innes's beauty is one of a quiet interaction between minimal blocks of muted colours and shades, and between surface and depth within the painting.

In the works here, areas of deep darkness, built up with layers of dark brown and blue, sit beside passages of vine and ivory pigment drawn lightly across the canvas combining to create an aesthetic of a mild and tempered minimalism. To a far greater degree than any of the other artists on show here, Innes displays an affinity with the specific qualities of painting.

Elsewhere, figuration rules but to dismal effect. Graham

Crowley, no less a figure than the professor of painting at the Royal College of Art, paints Irish landscapes loosely and lightly on bright, artificial-coloured backgrounds. Pamela Golden's tiny miniatures, each measuring about three inches square, depict Sixties suburban American scenes and are carefully built up with layers of thin paint.

Nicky Hoberman describes distorted children with swollen heads who stare straight at you and float in fields of flat colour. While none of these painters particularly deserves condemnation (and nor do the final two on the short list, Lisa Milroy and Paul Morrison) their inclusion on a short list of the best British painters stands as either a condemnation of British painting or of the Jerwood's judges.

● Until 7 July.
Tel: 020 7654 0171.



Nicky Hoberman: distorted children with swollen heads who stare at you from fields of flat colour

Play of light and shadow



Richard Goode: exquisite tact and dry wit

CLASSICAL

Richard Goode
Barbican
Pierre-Laurent Aimard
Festival Hall
Nick Kimberley

IF THE programmes chosen by the American Richard Goode and Frenchman Pierre-Laurent Aimard looked similar on paper, performance revealed Goode the Apollonian, Aimard the Dionysiac.

In Mozart's Sonata No. 15, Goode at first seemed too eager, rushing the Allegro's articulation and even blurring parts of the more

ruminative Andante. But the phrases of the closing Rondo were shaped with exquisite tact. Then, in four of Debussy's Preludes, Goode displayed a free sense of rhythm and colour — even a dry wit in the portrait of General Lavine: Eccentric.

We were on a more exalted plane with Beethoven, whose music established Goode's reputation. In Les Adieux, he toyed with the right-hand rhythm in the opening movement, but lacked nothing in controlled élan at the work's climax.

Schubert's massive Sonata No. 20 followed, Goode bestowing an unforced sense of space and time on music that often sounds congested.

Like Goode, Aimard opened with Mozart, but he played the Adagio K540 with an enervating lugubriousness that overworked the pre-Romantic colourings. The style better fitted Beethoven's Appassionata Sonata, Aimard's tempestuousness doing full justice to the title. His left hand showed no mercy while his right spun strings of flashing trills; if the result approached exaggeration, it was also thrilling.

The remainder of the programme was French. In three of Debussy's Images, like Goode, Aimard presented a composer of bold rhythms and ringing sonorities, far removed from the washed-out impressionist he sometimes seems. Then came Olivier Messiaen, in whose sensuous piano music Aimard reigns supreme. He brought exhilarating propulsiveness to two Rhythm Studies.

Aimard's flamboyance has undoubted charms, but Goode seemed the more complete performer; perhaps most importantly, the contrasts made for a captivating compendium of high-powered pianism.

LAST WEEK'S OPENINGS — WHAT THE CRITICS SAID

FILM	KEY											
	Good	OK	Awful		No review							
	Evening Standard	Daily Mail	The Times	Daily Telegraph	The Guardian	The Independent	Financial Times	Daily Express	Sunday Times	Sunday Telegraph	The Observer	Independent on Sunday
I am Sam	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Dark Blue World	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Dog Soldiers	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Slackers	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Sex and Lucia	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
THEATRE												
This is Our Youth	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
The Distance From Here	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
The Tempest	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Much Ado (Stratford)	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
OPERA												
La Rondine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

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IT'S THE LINE UP OF THE YEAR!

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