

Martin Boyce wins Turner prize 2011 ...

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## Martin Boyce wins Turner prize 2011

Martin Boyce receives £25,000 award, confirming Glasgow's indelible importance to Britain's art world

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**Charlotte Higgins**, chief arts writer  
[guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk), Monday 5 December 2011 21.49 GMT

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Martin Boyce's installation *Do Words Have Voices* is displayed at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead. Photograph: EPA

With his quietly atmospheric, lyrically autumnal sculptural installation recalling a melancholy urban park with its metallic trees and scattered paper leaves, [Martin Boyce](#) has been announced as the winner of the £25,000 Turner prize.

His acceptance of the award at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead, from fashion photographer Mario Testino, was briefly delayed when a stalker, clad seemingly in only a pink tutu and with the words "study this" scrawled on his chest, invaded the stage before being tackled to the ground and removed by security guards.

Boyce was narrowly the bookies' favourite for the prize, ahead of painter George Shaw, who chronicles the scrubby, dilapidated suburban streets of his native Midlands.

# Johnen Galerie

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Boyce thanked his "mum and dad, brilliant wife and gorgeous children" and paid tribute to his art school, saying: "When education is going through the wringer, it is important to acknowledge the value of teachers."

Boyce, 44, is the third Turner-prize winner in succession either brought up or educated in Glasgow, after Susan Philipsz last year and Richard Wright in 2009, a fact that confirms the now indelible importance of the city to [Britain's art world](#). On the shortlist was another Glasgow School of Art graduate, sculptor Karla Black.

Born in Hamilton, South Lanarkshire, Boyce was among the first graduates from the Glasgow School of Art's now famous environmental art course. His peers include Douglas Gordon, who won the prize in 1996, and Nathan Coley, who was shortlisted in 2007.

After the ceremony, he talked of a group of artists – "not 'Scottish artists', just artists" – who form a "small and close community" in Glasgow. "But we don't talk about art a lot. All that happens elsewhere."

He added that because of education cuts, he was not sure that if he were young now, he would be able to go to art school. "The idea that art school will become a privileged place to be is incredibly depressing," he said.

Boyce created an installation for the exhibition in Gateshead – the first time the Turner prize has been based outside the Tate family of galleries, and only the second time outside London – that has the feel of an interior space and a mournful municipal park.

Trees (in fact, the pillars that support the gallery ceiling) loom, their geometric aluminium leaves dappling the light that is cast over the space. On the ground, more leaves are scattered, this time cut from paper, each of them the same rebarbative, angular shape. There is a madly angular park bin, too. But there is also a desk, based on a library table by French modernist designer Jean Prouvé, with letters scratched into it as if by a child.

Much of the artistic vocabulary for Boyce's installation derives from a modernist garden, complete with concrete trees, created by designers Joel and Jan Martel in Paris in 1925.

The judges praised his "opening up of a new sense of poetry", while Nicholas Serota, director of Tate, who is not part of the jury, said: "He is an extraordinarily strong artist who has been steadily maturing over the past seven or eight years.

"He has consistently reinvented the language of early modern art and he is deeply engaged in that. But he makes work that does not depend on an understanding of early modern art: it is beautiful and arresting in its own right."

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Boyce said that the £25,000 cheque would allow him to break even on costs for putting together the Turner prize exhibition show, with the money going straight back into his studio. Winning was "a nice ending to the narrative," he said, "but there's life after it."

The judges for the 2011 Turner prize were Godfrey Worsdale, director of Baltic, and curators Katrina Brown, Vasif Kortun and Nadia Schneider. They were chaired by the director of Tate Britain, Penelope Curtis.

The Turner prize returns to London and Tate Britain next year. It will be based in Derry in 2013, with the intention that it should travel to cities outside London in alternate years.

The Turner prize was founded in 1984, and is awarded to a British or Britain-based artist under 50 for an outstanding exhibition in the preceding year. Previous winners include Rachel Whiteread (1994), Damien Hirst (1995), and Grayson Perry (2003). The Turner prize exhibition, which has already been seen by 120,000 visitors, continues until 8 January.

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