



PRESS RELEASE

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Absolut Announces Winner Of Global Creative Competition From 7,500 Entrants

On May 15th, Absolut has announced its next creative collaboration and winning artist as part of Absolut's broadest art initiative in the history of the brand. Sarah Saroufim from Lebanon has been crowned the winner from 7,500 entrants with her design to reflect that "Everyone should be free to express themselves" and she hopes to inspire people to talk about the issues that matter.

Saroufim is a Graphic Designer and Illustrator, who graduated in 2018 as a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design from the American University of Beirut. Her minimalist and thought-provoking style is carried throughout her designs and her winning artwork is no different.

Saroufim was carefully selected by a jury panel consisting of some of the world's leading creative voices, including New York based artist, Mickalene Thomas, founding director of the London based Delfina Institute, Aaron Cezar, and Indian based, artist and curator, Bose Krishnamachari.

Creating a design showcasing her vision of a better tomorrow, Sarah has expressed her own personal message of a more open, equal and inclusive world with her winning artwork.

She states: "The more we talk about mental illness, the closer we get to overcoming it. I expressed this idea using the pun 'Don't keep things bottled up' and an overflow of expression symbolised by speech bubbles".

Sarah Saroufim said "I'm so honored to have won Absolut's Creative Competition. This message is so important to me as I'm not the easiest nut to crack. I don't open up so easily but when I do, it makes it so much easier to manage the every day. I hope everyone will learn from this message and see the power of expressing themselves."

Over the last four decades, Absolut has worked with over 550 of the world's boldest artists, resulting in over 800 art pieces being created. Now selected among local winners from 18 other countries around the globe, Sarah Saroufim will be following in the footsteps of iconic artists that Absolut has previously collaborated with, including Keith Haring, Romero Britto, Arman Armand and Maurizio Cattelan.



Artist and jury member, Mickalene Thomas, said “We’re pleased to announce the final winner, Sarah Saroufim from Lebanon, as Absolut’s new creative collaboration. This is an incredible achievement to be selected from so many entrants and to be chosen amongst 18 other country winners. Sarah’s artwork really stood out and the whole jury panel felt that her design reflected and brought to life the beliefs and values that channel Absolut through her artwork. We’re excited to see what the next chapter holds for Sarah and we will see her piece take pride of place in an iconic OOH location to share with people around the world.”

Artist and jury member, Aaron Cezar, said: “Sarah’s award-winning entry to the Absolut Creative Competition speaks to the urgencies of this time. In an era of post-truth, Saroufim reminds us of the power of having a voice to not only to express but to expose. In Sarah’s statement, she expresses her need to overcome mental illness but her work transcends this and demonstrates its strength visually.

While the text 'Don't Keep Things Bottled Up' can be seen as a warning - or be taken as good advice - it can also be read as a playful invitation to let loose and relieve stress and to enjoy sharing the company of others. This involves another kind of opening up, one of friendship, which is the only way in which we can overcome the complex realities, by remembering of Absolut's brand beliefs: No matter where we come from, We are all human.”

Artist and jury member, Bose Krishnamachari, said: “Saroufim’s work reminds me of one of my curatorial projects in China. The bottled up liquid and liberated bubbles forms the present, for now. We may fill up the bubble with our imagination, a participatory space created by Sarah and, ultimately liberated to Absolut freedom. Her work of simplicity, pressure and pleasure of human imagination, ‘For an Image, Faster than light’. Congratulations to all 19 national winners and the absolute, Absolut achiever for greater works and an inspirational world!”

With the aim to celebrate creativity and harness the power artists have to envision and create a better tomorrow, Absolut launched the global Creative Competition in November 2018 with the mission to find the next bold creative voice of the brand. Saroufim’s artwork will be displayed on a globally iconic OOH site and she will receive a €20,000 cash prize.

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