New public artwork inspired by Windrush Generation unveiled in London

OPDC's Annual Art Commission photo-tapestries celebrate London's largest and most vibrant industrial area, Park Royal

OLD OAK and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) has unveiled the winning entry of its Annual Art Commission, *The Park Royals* by visual artist and Harlesden-based barber Faisal Abdu'Allah.

In the form of two large jacquard woven photo-tapestries, reworked from a series of photographs of 22 residents and workers from Park Royal, the artwork intricately weaves together the lives, stories and struggles of two generations who make up the area's industrial heart.

Park Royal, located in north-west London, is today home to a thriving community of makers and creators, supporting around 43,000 jobs and supplying one third of all food consumed in the capital.

Born and bred in Park Royal, Abdu'Allahl is a descendant of the Windrush Generation. He studied art at Central St Martins and the Royal College of Art, and his work has been exhibited internationally.

Now officially on display at Brent Civic Centre, *The Park Royals*, produced by Create London and created in collaboration with the local community, pays homage to London's diversity as we mark Black History Month and paves the way for Brent's year as London Borough of Culture in 2020.

Commenting on the unveiling of his artwork, Abdu'Allah said: "It's an honour to be chosen for the OPDC Annual Art Commission. My aim with The Park Royals was to pay homage to the Windrush generation, who were integral to creating the community where I grew up and making it the great place it is today.

"Working with local people was really important to me and helped with the process of creating the artwork, making sure that it was their stories that were embodied in the work.

ARTIST: Faisal Abdu'Allah

"I'd like to thank everyone who has been involved in The Park Royals and for the support of OPDC and hope that Londoners come to see the community's work for themselves."

Loleta Cameron, pictured in The Park Royals, added: "Faisal embodies the talent and creativity of young people in Brent and continues to champion and support the success of local people. I am incredibly proud to be both a part of this project and the community of Harlesden and Park Royal."

Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE, commented: "Faisal Abdu'Allah's work is a real celebration of Park Royal and a fitting winner of OPDC's art commission. London's diversity is our strength and this artwork tells our story brilliantly. I'm delighted that it's on display ahead of Brent's year as our London Borough of Culture."

The Annual Art Commission is a flagship project of OPDC's Great Place Scheme, an ambitious three-year cultural programme being delivered with local people, businesses and organisations in Old Oak and Park Royal. The programme aims to uncover, connect and showcase the culture, creativity and heritage of London's largest and most vibrant industrial area, Park Royal.

Funded by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Great Place Scheme is delivering £1.5 million worth of community-led art, culture and heritage activities across Old Oak and Park Royal.

Faisal's artwork will be on public display at Brent Civic Centre from today until the new year.

For more information about the Annual Art Commission, visit OPDC's website.