



MEDIA RELEASE

21 June 2019

AUSSIE DRAG RACING LEGEND JOINS PORTRAIT SESSION AT PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Youth patients at Perth Children's Hospital (PCH) will be learning how to paint a portrait on Friday 21 June 2019 between 2.15pm – 3.15pm at Starlight Livewire. They will be sketching **Rosco McGlashan** OAM, Australia's drag racing legend who currently holds the Australian land speed record.

Rosco will be the celebrity subject as the youth patients learn to paint a portrait, guided by local portrait artist and The Lester Prize Alumni, Elle Campbell. This fun event is part of a series of workshops offered to patients at PCH, as part of The Lester Prize (formally the Black Swan Prize for Portraiture) – one of Australia's most prestigious art prizes.

The idea that creative expression can foster healing and mental wellbeing is widely accepted and The Lester Prize is proud of their long-term partnership with the Starlight Children's Foundation Livewire program offering seriously ill and hospitalised adolescents aged 12 to 19 a fun and interactive space to distract them from their illness.

This is the twelfth year of these joint portrait workshops, which encourages children and the broader community to engage with art, believe in its power to heal and provide opportunities to express themselves in a safe and nurturing environment.

Previous celebrity portrait subjects have included sportspeople Adam Gilchrist and Aaron Sandilands; media personalities Basil Zempalis, Narelda Jacobs, Dixie Marshall, Natalia Cooper and Angela Tsun; musician John Butler; and Oscar winning illustrator, Shaun Tan. Last year the subject was Olympic Gymnast and Ninja Warrior Finalist, Olivia Vivian.

At the end of The Lester Prize's community engagement program, youth patients at PCH would have been treated to four workshops run by local artist finalists of Prize in the last two months. Their works will be entered and displayed in the Youth Award Hospital Category and Young Children's Category. These portraits will be on display, along with school aged finalists works at Brookfield Place's Tower 2, 125 St Georges Terrace Perth from 28 October – 29 November 2019 as part of The Lester Prize Youth Exhibition.

Entries for The Lester Prize remain open with the Adult Prize closing on 19 July 2019 and Youth Prize closing 26 July 2019. The adult competition of The Lester Prize features 40 artists vying for over \$80,000, making it one of the richest prizes in Australia. Finalists will be announced for both Adult and Youth prizes on 16 August 2019.

These 40 adult finalists' works will be on public display in the historic Centenary Galleries at the Art Gallery of Western Australia (AGWA) from 9 November – 9 December 2019. The main winners will be announced on 8 November 2019. Youth winners will be announced on 13 November 2019.

The Lester Prize

The Lester Prize is brought to the WA public by The Lester, a not-for-profit organisation set up in 2007 to promote and support visual arts in Western Australia. Artists across the country were invited to submit portraits of an Australian, or Australians, that they respect or admire. Earlier this year, this prestigious portrait prize been renamed The Lester Prize in honour of the award's leading patron, Richard Lester AM.

John Langoulant, Chair of The Lester Board comments, "Portraiture is the most accessible form of visual art. No matter the style in which it is rendered, the human likeness is something we can all relate to. It's the one form of art we have all created at some point in our lives - there is something elemental in human nature that drives us to draw or paint the likenesses of people. We don't have to be experts to enjoy portraiture and we are proud to provide Western Australia with the opportunity to engage with the best of the artform each year in a format that puts the artists and community front-and-centre."

Hospital Program Manager for Starlight Children's Foundation Paul Grabovac who was at the session with Elle and the youth patients said "the kind of positive disruption that The Lester Prize is able to deliver means that young patients in hospital can have a unique and fulfilling experience in a place that people may typically be unwell. The portraits that are produced during these workshops allow us to see the hospital experience through the perspective of young artists and we can't wait to see them on display. We are proud of this collaboration and our ability to offer a wholly unique experience for our patients".

For more information please visit www.lesterprize.com

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