



MEDIA RELEASE

16 August 2019

30 YOUTH FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR WA'S RICHEST PORTRAIT PRIZE WITH A NEW NAME

Thirty high school aged children from around Australia have been chosen as finalists in The Lester Prize for Portraiture's Youth competition – WA's premier portrait prize. Formally known as The Black Swan Prize for Portraiture, this award is one of the country's richest prizes for portraiture and is now in its thirteenth year. It was renamed in 2019 in honour of the award's leading patron, Richard Lester AM.

The Youth finalist works will be on display 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, with the winner announced on 13 November 2019.

More than 200 youth artists entered the prestigious portrait prize this year, with twenty-five of the finalists coming from a variety of schools in WA, and the remainder coming from Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and NSW. A total prize pool of over \$6,650 is up for grabs with students in years 7 – 12 awarded in three age group categories with winners receiving gift vouchers and the two runner ups receiving art packs from Oxlades Art Supplies. Schools are also eligible to win half or full day workshops with a professional artist, thanks to the generosity of the Squire Patton Boggs Youth Art Foundation.

The artists were invited to submit portraits of an Australian, or Australians, that they respect or admire, or a self-portrait. There was a high prevalence of self-portraits in this year's submissions. Other works featured family members, mentors, and friends who the artists admire revealing inspiring stories of hardships overcome and unique insights into the cultural diversity in Australia and our contemporary world today. Media such as oil, acrylic, watercolour, pastel, graphite, twine and collage will feature in this year's collection.

The experts who made up the Youth Pre-Selection Panel included Nathan Beard, Rachel Coad and Dr Nicole Slatter.

John Langoulant, Board Chair of The Lester Prize said 'the works submitted by these young and aspiring artists was of an impressive standard again this year. It's inspiring to see how they are dealing with life experiences, and using new skills and knowledge to make sense of their world in creative and innovative ways. We are looking forward to unveiling the thirty finalists to the WA public in October/November 2019. Also, on display will be artworks from youth workshop sessions as part our collaboration with the Perth Children's Hospital Starlight Livewire program'.

The adult competition of The Lester Prize features forty artists vying for a total prize pool of over \$77,000, making it the third richest prize in Australia after the Archibald and Doug Moran competitions. These forty finalists' works will be on public display at the Art Gallery of Western Australia (AGWA) from 9 November 2019 – 9 December 2019. Winners are announced on 8 November 2019.

www.lesterprize.com.

ENDS

The Lester Prize

ABOUT THE LESTER PRIZE

The Lester Prize is managed by The Lester, a not-for-profit organisation, founded in 2007 by Tina Wilson to provide an avenue for artists to exhibit works of portraiture within Western Australia. After successfully taking the Main Awards and Exhibition to its new home at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in 2016, Tina stepped down to return to her own artistic practice.

Tina Wilson was made Patron of the Prize in 2018 in recognition of her passionate and tireless work to ensure there was a prize of ever-increasing excellence and prestige.

Dick Lester was made Lifetime Patron of the Prize in 2018, in recognition of his passion for the Arts, his encouragement of Tina Wilson during her tenure as Executive Director, and his advice and financial assistance that, from modest beginnings, enables the Prize to flourish.

KEY DATES

2019 Exhibition Season at the Art Gallery of WA, Brookfield Place, Perth Cultural Centre, Yagan Square & various locations around Perth city	Sat 9 Nov – Mon 9 Dec 2019
Media Session – interviews with winners and their subjects (under embargo)	Fri 8 Nov 2019 (10am – 11.30am)
2019 Winners (Adult) announced at the Art Gallery of WA	Fri 8 Nov 2019 (6.30pm – 9.30pm)
2019 Winners (Youth) announced at Tower 2 Brookfield Place 125 St Georges Tce Perth	Wed 13 Nov 2019 (6pm)

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