



MEDIA RELEASE

14 November 2019

LOCAL SCHOOL STUDENTS SCOOP PRIZES IN PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL PORTRAIT PRIZE

Seventeen-year-old high school student, Eloise Levy, from John XXIII College in Perth has taken out the 1st Prize in the Years 11 – 12 category of The Lester Prize Youth Awards with her portrait titled *Returning to your roots*. Taking the 2nd and 3rd prizes in the Years 11 – 12 category were Ruchida Saenmuang from Melville Senior High School with a self-portrait titled *Ra Warnng Glarng (in-between)*, and Jing Quan Ma who is a student attending Du FN Academy of Fine Art and Christchurch Grammar School with his work titled *Justin*.

The 1st prize winners in the remaining aged categories were:

- Qinzhe (Elle) Chentang from Perth Modern School (Years 9 – 10)
- Taylor Meyn from John Curtin College of the Arts (Years 7 – 8).

A total prize pool of over \$6,650 was awarded to students in Years 7 – 12 across three age group categories, with winners receiving gift vouchers and the two runner-ups receiving art packs from Oxlades Art Supplies. Schools were also eligible to win workshops with a professional The Lester Prize Adult Finalist, thanks to the generosity of the Squire Patton Boggs Youth Art Foundation. This year, there were awarded to Balcatta Senior High School and Santa Maria College.

These winning students and schools were announced at an awards ceremony at Brookfield Place in Perth CBD last night where the Youth works are currently on display until 29 November 2019. Over 200 youth artists entered the prestigious national portrait prize that is now in its thirteenth year. The artists were invited to submit portraits of an Australian, or Australians, that they respect or admire, or a self-portrait.

Also part of The Lester Prize Youth Awards are the hospital workshops at Perth Children's Hospital. These four art workshops are collaboration between The Lester Prize and the Starlight Children's Foundation Livewire program. The works created by high school aged patients are displayed in addition to the high school students' work, and there are winners in age categories.

The judges commented that they were very impressed with the standard of this year's entries. "These young artists have explored some big ideas and provided unique insights about personal, social and cultural identity, overcoming hardships, and the importance of the connection between people and place. Their works were conceptually interesting, featured sophisticated compositions, and revealed strong technical competency with confident, expressive and varied skills."

In the adult competition of The Lester Prize, Liam Nunan from NSW with his portrait of fellow actor entitled *Jonny Hawkins* is the 2019 winner, receiving \$50,000 cash donated by founding sponsor the Lester Group, and two economy class return tickets to any Singapore Airlines destination valued at \$3,660. The winner was announced last week at an awards ceremony at the Art Gallery of WA (AGWA), where the 40 finalists' works will remain on public display until 9 December 2019 in the Centenary Galleries.

The Lester Prize

Formally known as the Black Swan Prize for Portraiture, this award was renamed in 2019 in honour of the award's leading patron Richard Lester AM. The Lester Prize total prize pool available to emerging and professional artists is now valued at over \$77,000, making it one of Australia's most prestigious art competitions.

The month-long Exhibition Season has something for everyone from budding artists to professional artists—and includes portraiture workshops, artist floor talks and live portraiture demonstrations with The Lester Prize Finalists, AGWA guided tours, and outdoor art pop ups around the city. For more details about these fun, free and ticketed events, please visit the website www.lesterprize.com.

Winners of the 2019 The Lester Prize Youth Competition:

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT CATEGORY		
Yrs 11-12 1st Prize	Eloise Levy	Age: 17 years School Year: 12 John XXIII College WA
Yrs 11-12 2nd Prize	Ruchida Saenmuang	Age: 17 years School Year: 12 Melville Senior High School WA
Yrs 11-12 3rd Prize	Jing Quan Ma	Age: 17 years School Year: 11 Du FN Academy of Fine Art Also attends Christchurch Grammar School WA
Yrs 9-10 1st Prize	Qinzhe (Elle) Chentang	Age: 15 years School Year: 10 Perth Modern School WA
Yrs 9-10 2nd Prize	Kuan (Michael) Yu	Age: 15 years School Year: 10 Du FN Academy of Fine Art Also attends Scotch College WA
Yrs 9-10 3rd Prize	Brandon Loi	Age: 16 years School Year: 10 Du FN Academy of Fine Art Also attends Servite College WA
Yrs 7-8 1st Prize	Taylor Meyn	Age: 13 years School Year: 8 John Curtin College of the Arts WA
Yrs 7-8 2nd Prize	Sarah Choo	Age: 13 years School Year: 7 Methodist Ladies College WA
Yrs 7-8 3rd Prize	Zilu Zhao	Age: 13 years School Year: 8 Du FN Academy of Fine Art Also attends Shenton College WA

SCHOOL CATEGORY		
Yrs 10-12 1st Prize	Balcatta Senior High School WA	
Yrs 7-9 1st Prize	Santa Maria College WA	
HOSPITAL CATEGORY		
Ages 16-18 1st Prize	Kiana Andrews	School Year Level 10 Age 16 years
Ages 16-18 2nd Prize	Chloe Burrill	School Year Level 11 Age 16 years
Ages 16-18 3rd Prize	Jeremiah Edmonds	School Year Level 11 Age 16 years
Highly Commended	Imogen O'Connor	School Year Level 11 Age 16 years
Ages 12-15 1st Prize	Angelique Pinto	School Year Level 9 Age 14 years
Ages 12-15 2nd Prize	Felicity Morley	School Year Level 7 Age 12 years
Ages 12-15 3rd Prize	Luke Newman	School Year Level 8 Age 13 years
Highly Commended	Ruby Billi	School Year Level 9 Age 14 years

ENDS

CONTACTS

Naomi Quinlivan
 Publicist | The Lester Prize
 Email | naomi@candystripepr.com.au
 Mobile | 0408 598 977

Yvette Canét-Gibson
 Marketing, Communications & Media Manager | The Lester Prize
 Email | marketing@lesterprize.com
 Mobile | 0428 883 002