



MEDIA RELEASE

28 February 2022

ENTRIES ARE NOW OPEN FOR WA'S RICHEST PORTRAIT PRIZE

Submissions open today for WA's premier portrait prize – The Lester Prize. This award is one of the nations most recognised and prestigious art prizes and is now in its sixteenth year.

The prize pool available to professional, emerging and young artists is worth over \$100,000.

Last year there was record breaking artist submissions, surpassing the 750 record set the year before, despite the ongoing disruptions from COVID-19. There was also a 30% increase in visitors, with 9,500 people visiting the prize exhibition at the Art Gallery of Western Australia (AGWA) in the Centenary Galleries over the six-week season.

Submissions for The Lester Prize 2022 will close on 17 June 2022, with the finalists notified on 25 July 2022.

The main winners will be announced on 30 September 2022 and the exhibition season at AGWA will open the following day.

The \$100,000+ Prize pool consists of:

- The Richard Lester Prize for Portraiture (selected by a panel of judges; non-acquisitive) | \$50,000 cash
- Tony Fini Foundation Artist Prize (selected by artists' peers; non-acquisitive) | \$15,000 cash
- Minderoo Foundation Spirit Prize (selected by Minderoo Foundation; non-acquisitive) | \$10,000 cash
- Baldock Family People's Choice Prize (selected by the general public) | \$10,000 cash
- Ashurst Emerging Artist Prize (selected by a panel of judges; non-acquisitive) | \$5,000 cash
- Highly Commended (selected by a panel of judges) | up to \$6,000 value
- Barton Family Foundation Installers' Prize (selected by the Art Gallery of Western Australia installation team) | \$5,000 cash

New this year to The Lester Prize, the Youth Prize will be a separate competition in conjunction with the Propel Youth Arts WA. Entries will open on 4 July 2022 and close on 27 January 2023. This will allow for high school students to work with their respective art teachers to incorporate portraiture work into their school curriculum and plenty of time to complete a portrait. It will also allow the exhibition of these amazing works to be part of a stand-alone event, away from the spotlight of the main Lester Prize.

"This year we are lucky to have the repeat support of our sponsors and donors allowing the prize pool available to emerging and established artists remain at an impressive \$100,000. We have managed to grow participation in our event with artist and visitor numbers increasing, despite a number of barriers. We are hopeful that due to relaxed travel restrictions in 2022 that these numbers of participation, reach and engagement continue to climb", said Annie Silberstein, Executive Director from The Lester Prize.

"We are excited about the collaboration with Propel Youth Arts WA for our Youth prize that will finally give these talented younger artists the correct forum and accolades their deserve, whilst remaining under the professionalism and guidance of our team".

Artists from across Australia are invited to submit portraits of an Australian, or Australians, that they respect or admire, or a self-portrait. Full Terms & Conditions are available at www.lesterprize.com.

The Lester Prize

Artists are allowed to submit an unlimited number of portraits (instead of a maximum of two) and works can be created from a photograph instead of from “life” - as long as the photograph has been approved by the subject. These changes to entry requirements were brought in last year due to COVID-19 restrictions on travel and physical distancing.

ENDS

ABOUT THE LESTER PRIZE

The Lester Prize is managed by The Lester Inc, a not-for-profit organisation founded in 2007 to provide an avenue for artists to exhibit works of portraiture within Western Australia. With an annual prize pool worth over \$95,000, it is now one of the nation’s most recognised and prestigious art prizes.

Working with government, peak arts bodies and community groups, it plays a critical role in helping to diversify WA’s local economy, grow cultural tourism, and activate spaces through creative placemaking. The Lester Prize is proud to provide locals and visitors 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. The Lester Prize’s exhibitions and public events program is targeted at diverse groups in the community and includes artist floor talks, workshops, live art demonstrations and pop-up community activations across the city.

KEY DATES

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| Submissions Close | 17 June 2022 |
| Finalists Announced | 25 July 2022 |
| 2022 Exhibition Season at Art Gallery of WA | 1 October– 14 Nov 2022 |
| 2022 Adult Winners (Main Awards) announced | 30 September 2022 |
| 2022 People’s Choice Prize Winner & winning voter announced | 17 November 2022 |

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