



MEDIA RELEASE

30 SEPTEMBER 2022
EMBARGOED UNTIL 9:30PM WST

SOUTH HEDLAND INDIGENOUS ARTIST WINS 2022 LESTER PRIZE

Sophia Alone from Port Hedland WA has won the 2022 Richard Lester Prize for Portraiture for her portrait of her grandfather entitled *Respect Grandfather Kutri Makanykarra*. The winners of The Lester Prize – WA's premier portrait prize were announced tonight at the Art Gallery of WA (AGWA) where the forty finalist's works are on public display for seven weeks from Saturday 1 October to Sunday 20 November 2022.

The Indigenous artist's work is an acrylic on canvas sized 44.5 x 44.5 cm which won her the \$50,000 main prize as well as the \$10,000 Minderoo Foundation Spirit Prize. Sophia has been a previous finalist of The Lester Prize however this is her first win.

Other prize winners announced this evening were :

- \$15,000 Tony Fini Foundation Artist Prize (selected by the forty finalists) – Greg Creek, Alphington VIC : *Diecast speech painting of David Sequeira*
- \$5,000 Ashurst Emerging Artist : Julia Donney, Sylvania NSW : *Smoko*
- Oxlades Highly Commended : Mark Chu, Toorak VIC: *Here in Spirit*
- Oxlades Highly Commended : Nicholas Hopwood, Wattle Grove TAS : *Quest*

The Barton Family Foundation Installers' Prize of \$10,000 for Adrian Lazzaro for his self-portrait work was announced on 27 September 2022.

The works were judged by Colin Walker, Penelope Grist and Jessyca Hutchens who noted that "all of us were immediately drawn to the intimacy of this work. The work draws you in close but opens out into a wider world and context of family and Country. The way the details of the face were sensitively captured give a sense of her grandfather's character, personality, and close relationship with the artist. The vibrant contrasting colours and brushwork create a unique energy that brings the portrait to life."

Upon submitting her work, Sophia said that "my Grandfather is a Ngarla Elder. In this painting Grandfather is standing at Losers Hole. We were visiting a gravesite at De-Grey Station where his family is resting. Grandfather's Father is at Blue-Bar. Grandfather expresses how much bush fruits were around De-Grey because him and his mate, spotted a fruit called Jababi. Then they started talking about the people and places around De-Grey, like Diesela and Marlu."

The Lester Prize is one of the nation's most recognised and prestigious art prizes and is now in its sixteenth year. More than 700 artists from across Australia entered this year's prize. The Lester Prize prize pool is now valued over \$105,000.

The Lester Prize

The Baldock Family People's Choice Prize and the winning voter will be announced on 17 November 2022.

Amongst the 2022 Finalists were 13 artists from Victoria, 11 from WA, 10 from NSW, three from QLD, 2 from Tasmania and one from South Australia.

"New next year is a separate standalone competition for the Lester Prize Youth Awards that were traditionally held during the main adult prize exhibition season" said Annie Silberstein Executive Director of The Lester Prize. "The Youth Prize will be held in conjunction with the Propel Youth Arts WA and is open to all high school students in Australia with entries closing in January 2023".

"Again we were thrilled with the level of engagement with The Lester Prize through submissions of works by artists throughout Australia, the judge's enthusiasm and sponsor support. I encourage everyone to come and view the forty finalists on display at AGWA for the next seven weeks and cast their vote for the Baldock Family People's Choice award".

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.

Click on the link below for the forty finalists and low-resolution images of their works. High-resolution images available upon request.

<https://www.lesterprize.com/gallery-the-lester-prize-for-portraiture/the-lester-prize-for-portraiture/2022-2/>

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ABOUT THE LESTER PRIZE

The Lester Prize is managed by The Lester Inc. Founded in 2007, it is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to provide an avenue for artists to exhibit works of portraiture within Western Australia. With an annual prize pool worth over \$105,000, it is now one of the nations 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, and live art demonstrations.

KEY DATES

2022 Exhibition Season at Art Gallery of WA	1 October – 20 November 2022
2022 Adult Winners (Main Awards) announced	30 September 2022
2022 People's Choice Prize Winner & winning voter announced	17 November 2022
Youth Prize entries close	27 January 2023
Youth Prize Finalists announced	13 February 2023
Youth Prize award winners announced	7 April 2023

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