



MEDIA RELEASE

27 February 2023

ENTRIES ARE NOW OPEN FOR ONE OF THE RICHEST PORTRAIT PRIZES IN AUSTRALIA

Submissions open today for WA's premier portrait prize – The Lester Prize. Now in its seventeenth year, this award is one of the nation's most recognised and prestigious art prizes. With a prize pool totalling over \$105,000, the competition is open to artists of all experience levels – emerging, midcareer and professional.

Last year The Lester Prize received over 730 entries from across Australia. With a 65% increase in visitors, nearly 16,000 people made their way to the Art Gallery of Western Australia (AGWA) to see the exquisite work of the 2022 Finalists. 2022 also saw interstate Finalists able to attend the exhibition in person for the first time since COVID-19 border closures.

Submissions for The Lester Prize 2023 will close on Sunday 9 July 2023 5pm AWST.

The main winners will be announced on 22 September 2023 and the exhibition season at AGWA will be open to the public the next day.

The \$105,000+ 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
- Baldock Family People's Choice Prize (selected by the general public) | \$15,000 cash
- Minderoo Foundation Spirit Prize (selected by Minderoo Foundation; non-acquisitive) | \$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

The Lester Prize Youth Awards will be relaunched at the WA Museum Boola Bardip in April of this year. Entries have now closed for the Youth Awards, and finalists will be announced on Monday 13 March. Showing at WAM for the first time, the Youth Awards steps into the spotlight at Boola Bardip from Friday 7 April until Sunday 16 July 2023.

"This year we are delighted to have the continued support of our sponsors and donors allowing the prize pool available to emerging and established artists to grow to an impressive \$105,000. We were impressed with the variety of work and enthusiasm from visitors last year, and look ahead to what 2023 will bring", said Annie Silberstein, Executive Director from The Lester Prize.

"We are very excited about the collaboration with the WA Museum Boola Bardip for our Youth Awards that will give these talented younger artists the correct forum and accolades they deserve.

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.

Artists can submit an unlimited number of portraits and works can be created from a photograph instead of from a live sitting - as long as the artist is (or has the permission of) the photographer. These changes to entry rules were brought in two years ago due to COVID-19 restrictions on travel and physical distancing. Remaining in place for 2023, these rules will be reassessed ahead of the 2024 Prize.

ENDS

The Lester Prize

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 \$105,000, 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 of portraiture each year in a format that puts the artists and community front-and-centre. The Lester Prize's public events program includes artist floor talks, workshops, live art demonstrations and pop-up community activations across the city during exhibition season.

KEY DATES

Submissions Close	Sunday 9 July 2023, 5pm AWST
2023 Exhibition Season at Art Gallery of WA	23 September – 26 November 2023
2023 Adult Winners (Main Awards) announced	22 September 2023
2023 People's Choice Prize Winner & winning voter announced	Wednesday 29 November 2023

CONTACTS

Sam Beard
Marketing & Communications Manager | The Lester Prize
Email | marketing@lesterprize.com
Mobile | 0456 777 286