



## MEDIA RELEASE

25 August 2020

### 30 YOUTH FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR WA'S RICHEST PORTRAIT PRIZE

Thirty high school-aged children from around Australia have been chosen as finalists in The Lester Prize's Youth competition – WA's premier fine art prize. Formally known as the Black Swan Prize for Portraiture, this award is now in its fourteenth 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, 123-125 St Georges Terrace Perth from 2-27 November 2020 as part of The Lester Prize Youth Awards Exhibition, with the winners announced on 12 November 2020.

"More than 200 young and aspiring artists from across Australia entered this popular portrait prize this year. A total prize pool of over \$6,000 is up for grabs with students in years 7 – 12 awarded in three age group categories thanks to the generosity of the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, Oxlades Art Supplies Perth and Lions Club City of Perth. Winners and runners-up will receive cash, gift vouchers and art supplies to help them further their art practice. Schools are also eligible to win half or full day workshops valued at \$1,500 with an award-winning professional artist. These prizes will be of great benefit as these artists continue to build their skills in the art world", said Annie Silberstein, The Lester Prize's Executive Director.

The experts who made up the 2020 Youth Pre-Selection Panel included freelance curator, arts writer and consultant Paola Anselmi; Bruno Booth, emerging artist with a physical disability who works across the mediums of painting, social engagement, sculpture, video and installation; and Lori Pensini, nationally renowned artist and winner of The Lester Prize Main Awards Tony Fini Foundation Artist Prize in 2019. The panel commented: "It was great to see students extend their thinking, understanding and use of perceptual and conceptual skills in their artwork. There was a high prevalence of self-portraits in this year's submissions—some pensive, a few fragmented. Many undertook to examine their own life, friends, family and culture—showing the development of a deeper understanding of their practice as an artist with individual views about the world and global issues."

These young and aspiring artists were invited to submit portraits of an Australian, or Australians, that they respect or admire, or a self-portrait. Media such as pencil, oil, acrylic, watercolour and charcoal will feature in this year's collection.

John Langoulant, Chair of The Lester Prize Board said "We are proud to present The Lester Prize Youth Award each year, giving young and aspiring artists from across Australia a platform to showcase their talents. It's a real testament to the teachers, students and their families who are fostering their creativity in this way—helping them share their stories with the wider community. It's always exciting to see the high standard of Finalists' works selected by our independent Pre-Selection Panel."

The main competition of The Lester Prize features forty artists vying for a total prize pool of over \$85,000, making one of the richest prizes 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 31 October – 29 November 2020. The Main Awards Winners are announced on 30 October 2020.

# The Lester Prize

## 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 \$85,000, it is now one of the nation's most recognised and prestigious fine 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. The Prize advocates for Australian art and artists through a full month-long exhibition season which includes:

- Main Exhibition of original artworks at AGWA
- Youth Exhibition of original artworks at Brookfield Place Tower 2
- Outdoor Salon des Refusés and Community Exhibitions at Perth Cultural Centre and Brookfield Place
- Big Screen Displays at various locations around Perth.

### KEY DATES

2020 Exhibition Season at Art Gallery WA, Perth Cultural Centre, Yagan Square, Northbridge Piazza & various locations around the Perth CBD	Sat 31 Oct – Sun 29 Nov 2020
2020 Semi-Finalists / Salon Outdoor Exhibition at Brookfield Place	Mon 2 – 27 Nov 2020
2020 Main Awards Winners announced	Fri 30 Oct 2020
2020 Youth Awards Winners announced	Wed 12 Nov 2020
2020 People's Choice Prize Winner & winning voter announced	Wed 2 Dec 2020 (5pm AWST)

For more information, visit: [www.lesterprize.com](http://www.lesterprize.com)

### CONTACTS

Naomi Quinlivan  
Publicist | The Lester Prize  
Email | [naomi@candystripepr.com.au](mailto:naomi@candystripepr.com.au)  
Mobile | 0408 598 977