

STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

8 May 2024

National Photographic Portrait Prize at State Library

The National Portrait Gallery's National Photographic Portrait Prize 2023 will be on display at State Library of Queensland from 11 May until 7 July 2024.

The prize was established in 2007 by the National Portrait Gallery to support and celebrate photographic portraiture in Australia.

It offers substantial cash and equipment prizes and the opportunity for photographers to have their work shown in a national gallery — and on tour — alongside their mentors, idols and peers.

Judges selected 47 finalists from almost 2,400 entries. The finalists include an artist who captured flooding in Graceville (Brisbane) and a Queenslander who captured the transcultural identity of an Iranian migrant and mother.

Shea Kirk's portrait of friend and fellow-artist Emma Armstrong-Porter, titled *Ruby (left view)*, won the 2023 National Photographic Portrait Prize. Shea won \$50,000 in prizes: \$30,000 cash from the National Portrait Gallery and \$20,000 worth of Canon equipment thanks to Imaging Partner Canon Australia.

Renaë Saxby was awarded the Highly Commended prize, for her work *Bangardidjan 2022*, a photo of proud Kine, Rembarrnga, and Dalabon women Cindy Rostron on the road in remote Central Arnhem Land. Renaë's prize won a ColorEdge CG2700S 27" monitor valued at almost \$4,000 courtesy of EIZO.

The Art Handlers' award recipient was David Cossini, who received \$2,000 cash from IAS Fine Art Logistics for his portrait of Ugandan man Godfrey Baguma, titled *Ugandan Ssebabi*.

The \$10,000 People's Choice Award, supported by the Calvert-Jones Foundation, went to Bruce Agnew for his portrait *KAHA, 2022*.

This exhibition is supported by the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program, an Australian Government program aiming to improve access to the national collections for all Australians. The National Photographic Portrait Prize is a National Portrait Gallery touring exhibition.

Quotes from State Librarian and CEO Vicki McDonald AM:

"State Library is passionate about storytelling that showcases our shared humanity.

"The 2023 National Photographic Portrait Prize provides Queensland audiences with the chance to connect and reflect on the lives captured in each mesmerising image.

"As custodian of Queensland memory, State Library holds a significant collection of photographs — from glass plate negatives to digital photography — from the state's past and present.

"We also recognise the work of social history photographers like William Yang in the James C. Sourris AM collection of artist interviews and through our exhibitions and events."



Media enquiries
State Library Communications team
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(07) 3840 7897

Interviews are available upon request.

Quotes from Director of the National Portrait Gallery Bree Pickering:

“The NPPP is a beloved national prize that supports the Australian photographic community and enlarges our collective experience of the Australian people, from the well-known and celebrated, to local heroes and identities.

“It is a pillar of the gallery’s travelling exhibition program, which sees many rich and varied examples of photographic portraiture shared with audiences across the country.”

Quotes from National Portrait Gallery Senior Curator Joanna Gilmour:

“In its purest form, portraiture captures the real time encounter between artists and subjects. Many of the 47 finalists in 2023 succeeded in revealing the quirks or flaws or vulnerabilities of their subjects and have gently yet uncompromisingly allowed their sitters to be themselves.”

National Photographic Portrait Prize 2023

11 May – 7 July 2024

Open daily 10am–5pm | Free entry

slq Gallery, level 2 | State Library of Queensland, Cultural Centre, South Bank

slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on | [media kit](#)



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