

NATIONAL PHOTO-GRAPHIC PORTRAIT PRIZE 2022

Let's look closely at the National Photographic Portrait Prize 2022 together! Now in its fifteenth year, the National Photographic Portrait Prize reflects the exciting vision of Australia's aspiring and professional portrait photographers and their subjects.

Portraits offer insights into their subjects through the creative lens of the artist, and each of the works selected for the 2022 Prize give us, the audience, a fascinating opportunity to glean a unique understanding of the people we are viewing.

We observe, we explore; we recognise, learn and wonder: a good portrait will ensure that in some way, we connect with it.



The winner

This exhibition was a competition. It was judged by three important people, and they had to choose these 50 finalists out of 2500 entries! But there is only one winner. Find the winner in the gallery.

This is Eric Yunkaporta, from Aurukun, photographed by Wayne Quilliam. Wayne photographs many Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people, celebrating culture and identity.

What do you think Eric is feeling? What might he be dressed for? Look for other people dressed for ceremony in the exhibition?



Process

All of the artworks in the room are photographs. But, not all of them are made in the same way. One of the photos in this exhibition is made from metal! Look out for it. How does the metal affect the finished product?

Reading the label tells us how each work was made. How many different ways of making a photo can you find?

Concentrate on colour and try and find every colour in the rainbow. Now look at the black and white photographs. What difference does colour make in a portrait?

Themes

Some photographs in this exhibition are hung near each other because they have something in common. This can suggest a story. What stories can you find in this exhibition?

Further tasks for students or family groups

- In pairs, look at the photographs and choose your preferred winner. Why is it your favourite? Why do you like it more than the others? Share with your partner. Find the artwork that you both can agree on. Share with the group.
- There are many portraits of families in this exhibition, and every family is different (*The Zammitt Family, Together We Stand, Last Day of Lockdown, Lauren and Poppy*). How would your family choose to present themselves in a portrait, what unique style do you have?
- Have a search for some of the fantastic pets in these portraits. How many pooches, pups or pussy cats can you find? Do you have a furry friend of your own? Think of an interesting way to include them in a portrait.

Drawing activities – pencil and paper

- Pick a portrait which reminds you of you. Take a deep breath, slow down and draw this artwork, looking closely at the details and composition.
- Up for a challenge? Find a portrait and try and draw it, without taking your pencil off the page! Want even more of a challenge? Don't look at your paper while drawing!
- There are many self portraits in this exhibition. Have a close look and think about what makes them unique. What makes you special? Draw a self-portrait.
- Find the portrait *Unmasked – Bob Gordon* by Brett Canet-Gibson. This man is wearing a painted mask. Is he a clown? Is he a performer? Why is he wearing a mask? Draw your own mask, thinking about what you want to express, and maybe what you want to hide!
- Find the portrait *The Shuttle* by Andrew Rovenko. Mia here is off to outer space, and she's taking the bus there. How would you like to travel to space? Be creative and draw how you'll get there!

For older students and groups

- There are some portraits in this show in which the sitter is nude. What effect does this have on the power and gravity of the work? What would change if the sitter was clothed?
- Find the work *Paradise Lost* by Liz Ham. The poses in this group portrait tell stories of self-expression and identity. Consider the group, and then the individual figures, how are they related to one another, how are they different? How is the relationship conveyed? What community is represented here?
- There's something in the shadows of the portrait of *David Menadue* by Ivan Gaal. Why might the pill case be slightly hidden? Research the work of David Menadue on your device, then reconsider the medicine. What story does it tell?
- Look into the eyes of the sitter in *Flora and Fauna, Giara: White Cockatoo*. There is a lot of pride in this woman's face. Read the caption and consider the questions posed by the photographer. Does this change what emotions we can see in her face? How else might she be feeling?
- In *Carlos Soyos, 34, A Migrant From Guatemala City, Guatemala And His Son, Enderson Soyos, 8, Take A Self Portrait At El Buen Samaritano Migrants Shelter, Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico* the photographer has handed over the moment of capture to the sitter, using a shutter release cable. Have a think about photographic ownership. Who really 'took' this photo? What implications does that have for agency, power, and representation of marginalised groups? Why do you think Carlos picked this moment to press the shutter?

Silent Strength 2021 by Wayne Quilliam
inkjet print on paper
National Photographic Portrait Prize
2023 winner

Goldheart 2021 by Scott Anthony Andrews
digital print (from original tintype,
wet plate collodion process)

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY