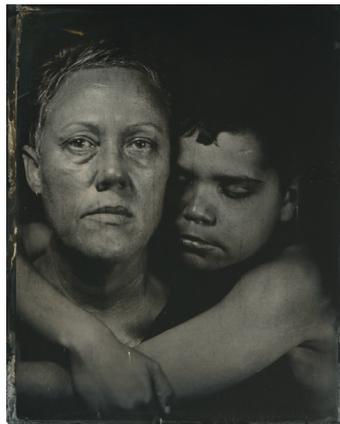


NATIONAL PHOTO-GRAPHIC PORTRAIT PRIZE 2023

The National Photographic Portrait Prize 2023 provides a rich, diverse and insightful glimpse of the past year through the lens of Australia's professional and aspiring photographers. All artworks were created between 1 December 2021 and 1 February 2023.

Celebrating its 16th year, the NPPP 2023 invites you on an amazing journey across Australia and beyond. We encourage you to look, to feel, to think, to question and most importantly, to identify and connect.



The winner

The winning photograph, Shea Kirk's portrait of Ruby, was chosen by three judges in a three-stage process. First, each judge looked at all the entries online (there were about 2400!) and selected their long list of 200 works. Second, the three judges met and looked at these works on a large screen. They had access to the artists' names, how the works were made, and their size. From this, the judges selected 47 finalist works. Finally, the artists were invited to send their works to the Gallery, and the judges looked at the framed photographs and chose the winner.

In making their decision, the judging panel – Australian photographer Tamara Dean; Director of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Photography Daniel Boetker-Smith; and the National Portrait Gallery's Senior Curator Joanna Gilmour – said the work was a celebration of photography. 'While Shea makes the portrait look effortless, this is a masterful and technically complex work where the sitter has no self-consciousness. It is as if the artist and sitter are participating equally in the transaction.'

What do you think of the winning work and why?

Ruby (left view) 2022 by Shea Kirk

blood/memory: Brenda & Christopher I (Gurindji/Malngin/Mudburra; Mara/Nandi/Njarrindjerrri/Ritharrngu; Anglo-Australian/Chinese/German/Irish/Scot) 2021 2022 by Brenda L Croft, Prue Hazelgrove (Photographic Assistant)

Process

Not all photographs are made the same way. Artists use different techniques to create a particular effect or achieve a level of clarity or texture. Look at the labels and find three photographs that have been made using different processes. Can you see similarities and differences between the images?

Who are you hanging with?

A lot of time goes into designing the placement of the photographs in the NPPP exhibition. Some photographs have been placed together because they tell a similar story, sometimes it's about the process or the mood conveyed. Choose two photographs you like and think about what connects them. Identify why you like them side by side – are they similar in colour, story or the process?

Tasks for students or family groups

- Find the portrait *Mum helping with canvas* by Sarah Enticknap. Photographs of friends and family help us to remember special moments. Think of a memory captured in a photograph. Write a short story about your memory.
- Find the portrait *Self portrait with my mother and sister* by Anne Moffatt. A tree was planted as a seedling in the artist's backyard and grew up alongside her. Do you have a pet or tree or sibling that is growing up with you? Design some photographs of you together.
- Some NPPP photographs were not taken in Australia. Let's travel to Ethiopia in Africa to meet Abraham Admasu, a year 11 student. Look at Abraham's stance. What does this convey? How would you pose in a portrait? What would you like people to see when looking at your portrait? Experiment with different poses and consider what they communicate.

Drawing activities – pencil and paper

- More than one! Let's look at *Marawa the Amazing* by Jo Duck. Sometimes stories are better told with more than one photograph – in photography, we call this a photo essay. Take a pencil and lots of small pieces of paper. Think of a simple subject like a ball bouncing and draw the object on each piece of paper, each time changing its position slightly. Then staple it together to create a little animation flipbook.

- Look closely at the diversity of portraits in the NPPP, what makes them unique? Think about what makes you, you and draw a self portrait.
- There are lots of black and white artworks in the NPPP. Do you think some images are stronger than others? Consider the artists' choice of black and white or colour. Draw two images the same, add colour to one and leave the other black and white, then compare and contrast.

For older students and groups

There are many different themes and approaches in NPPP 2023.

- In creating *Serenity*, Forough Yavari was influenced by a poem by Langston Hughes. Think about what influences you and talk to your group to see if you have similar or different thoughts.
- Téa-Anna Parvathy Murrin questions cultural identity in Australia, asking 'what does it mean to be an Australian?' Discuss in a group how Australian identity is evolving and what roles we might play.
- Jimmy Widders Hunt's *Our First Lesson* encourages us all to learn from our First Nations Elders. Traditionally possum skin cloaks were given at birth and added to as the owner grew. In this photograph, we can see Peter Peckham's possum skin cloak is of great importance to him. How has the artist captured this?
- Read the label on Nathan Dyer's *Anne* and compare this photograph to *Our First Lesson* by Jimmy Widders Hunt. Discuss the similarities and differences. Consider the cultural influences and the impact they have on you.
- Choose a photograph and write your own statement without reading the label. Compare your statement with the artist's and discuss.

Unable to make it in to the National Portrait Gallery to see the NPPP?

Don't worry, you can join us on our Online/VEx Photographic Exhibitions program for years 10–12. Learn about the artworks and explore the different aspects of the exhibition process with our staff.

- [More information and bookings](#)

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY