



Grace Cossington Smith art award 2018

National art award supporting
contemporary Australian artists

Media Release, 3 November 2018



Grace Cossington Smith art award announces 2018 winners

Wahroonga, Sydney:

Selected from a shortlist of 37 artists, the winners of the Grace Cossington Smith art awards have been announced with the launch of the 2018 exhibition.

The winning artists were selected by Alison Clark and Dominik Mersch with Mary Faith

Grace Cossington Smith art award \$15,000 acquisitive CATHERINE O'DONNELL

Yates Court, pencil on paper, 46 x 65 cm
courtesy the artist and MAY SPACE



Grace Cossington Smith local artist award \$2,500 non acquisitive STEPHEN HALL

(Sponsored by Susie Stathakis and Di Jones Real estate Wahroonga)

Asking Answers Revealing Questions Punctuating with Sighs
(suite of 10 etchings), etching, aquatint, 37 x 30 cm each



Grace Cossington Smith early career artist award \$2,500 non acquisitive JANE THEAU

In Touch (Screens 1), thread and tarlatan, 100 x 80 cm



Congratulations to all 37 finalists and the many artists who submitted their work for consideration for the exhibition.

Statement from the GCS art award judges Alison Clark and Dominik Mersch

It is wonderful to see the works come to life in the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery. Congratulations to all the artists for the impressive standard of work that made selection of the three awards so challenging. We admired Catherine O'Donnell for her confident, careful attention to detail and precise pencil work in her small intimate drawing. Catherine's representation of her subject creates a universal connection to the urban environment that is humanised and layered with mystery through her rendering of the curtains and window spaces. Stephen Hall's series of etchings are powerful with a strong narrative that is personal, yet speaks to us all through his expressive line. The format of Stephen's entry enables a connection through touch and feel as we turn the pages. Jane Theau has engaged in an innovative use of materials with her drawing in space. She has observed the interesting connection of contemporary society and their mobile devices.

The exhibition of the finalists' work will be on display until 24 November at the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery. Entry is free and the gallery is open from Monday to Friday 10 am–5 pm and Saturday 9 am–4 pm.

Available for interview:

Mary Faith, Director of the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, and Lisa Jones, Gallery Coordinator 9473 7878

ABOUT THE WINNERS

Catherine O'Donnell is known for her detailed renderings of streetscapes and urban dwellings. She says of her work "My drawings an exploration of the architecture, culture and history in the everyday-ness of the urban environment. I see the suburbs as full of connection and disconnection, sameness and difference; in short, my drawings examine suburban living as a site of complexity." O'Donnell graduated with a Master of Fine Arts from the National Art School in Sydney in 2014 and in the same year she was awarded a residency at the British School of Rome. She exhibits widely and is represented in both public and private collections in Australia and Internationally. She has won many awards and numerous commendations. Catherine lectures at the National art school and is represented by MAY SPACE Sydney.

Stephen Hall focuses mainly on drawing, printmaking and mixed media painting. He states - "In my art practice I produce thematically based bodies of work that evolve from reading & thought, each body of work usually results in sixty to seventy finished works of various media, supported by numerous sketchbooks where the ideas are developed. Hall's awards include The North Sydney Art Prize Drawing Award 2013, The Kedumba Drawing Award 2011, The UNSW Alumni Art Prize 2007 and UNSW Paris Residency 2003. In 2004 he was awarded an MFA from the UNSW. His work is in many public and private collections.

Jane Théau works in a variety of media but returns repeatedly to textiles. She aims to make work that is as sustainable as possible, using minimal and natural materials, or recycled ones. Her thread drawings are made from next to nothing – thread and recycled tarlatan – but can populate large spaces as hanging installations. Jane is a PhD candidate at ANU researching textiles and tactility and is creating a series of new sculptural and performance works with horsehair as the primary ingredient as part of this research. Awards Jane has received include artists residencies at Hill End, Bundanon and Textilsetur (Iceland). Jane has a Master of Art from UNSW Art & Design, a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Applied Science from UTS.

ABOUT THE JUDGES

Alison Clark has more than 25 years' experience in the local government, regional and commercial gallery sector in curatorial and arts management roles. She has worked extensively as a curator and project manager and is currently the Team Leader Arts & Culture at North Sydney Council. In this role, Alison is responsible for overseeing a range of creative initiatives including the Council's Artist Studio, Residency & Creative Spaces programs, Public Art program and the biennial North Sydney Art Prize.

Dominik Mersch has a PhD in Mechanical Engineering and worked in Biomedical Engineering before turning his passion into his occupation as owner and director of the Dominik Mersch Gallery in Rushcutters Bay. His gallery presents the finest artists at the forefront of contemporary art practice and focuses on exhibiting artists from Australia and Europe. Mersch has a strong commitment to the further development of Australian and International artists and to emerging artists. In 2014 he realised a unique gallery swap, with a Berlin-based gallery, exposing his artists to international audiences and curators. The Dominik Mersch Award was developed in collaboration with the Sydney College of the Arts, to give emerging artists and curators the rare opportunity to show in a commercial gallery space.

THE FINALISTS

Lyndall Beck
Yvonne Boag
Julie Brooke
Penelope Cain
Tony Carlon
Tom Carment
Penny Coss
Julia Davis
John Edwards
David Fairbairn
Kylie Fogarty
Louise Fowler-Smith

Hayley Megan French
Amanda Fuller
Jacinta Giles
Stephen Hall
Yvette Hamilton
Amaya Iturri
Donald Kenner
Waratah Lahy
Melinda Le Guay
Genevieve Loy
Deborah Marks
Helen Mueller

Ro Murray
Adam Norton
Catherine O'Donnell
Janet Parker-Smith
Wendy Sharpe
Sally Stokes
Janet Tavener
Jane Theau
Annabelle Wass
Nicole Welch
JP Willis
Lisa Woolfe
Tian li Zu

Short Statement 50 Words

Grace Cossington Smith art award exhibition 3-24 November. A biennial award for two-dimensional works responding to concept of making connections. Works by 37 artists from across Australia. Art Award winner Catherine O'Donnell, Local artist winner Stephen Hall, Emerging artist winner Jane Théau. Selected by Alison Clark and Dominik Mersch.

ABOUT THE GALLERY

The **Grace Cossington Smith Gallery** is a not-for-profit gallery, run by Abbotsleigh, serving the public through free admission and connections to education. The Gallery is open Monday to Friday from 10 am-5 pm and Saturday from 9 am-4 pm. Enter via Gate 7, 1666 Pacific Highway Wahroonga. Phone: 02 9473 7878

High resolution images available