



Gallipoli Memorial Club
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2020 GALLIPOLI ART PRIZE WINNER REFLECTS ON RFS BRAVERY



Gallipoli Art Prize 2020 Winner: Alison Mackay 'Breathe'

Alison Mackay, of St George's Basin on the NSW South Coast, has won the **2020 Gallipoli Art Prize** (\$20 000 acquisitive prize funded by the Gallipoli Memorial Club) with her powerful work 'Breathe' depicting nine different gas masks, mostly from WW1.

As a NSW south coast resident, Alison began thinking about breathing masks and respirators over the summer period when the bushfires were at their worst.

'We spent New Year's Eve dressed in masks and goggles to protect our eyes and lungs from smoke as we stayed to defend our home from potential ember attack. It was a scary time for everyone, but particularly it reminded me what an extraordinary job the RFS were doing day after day to keep us all safe. We owe them a great debt of thanks for their bravery. Their courage and comradeship reminded me of the ANZAC spirit.'

[Watch Alison Mackay's Acceptance speech here](#) (recorded via Zoom from her home)

'With the world now battling corona virus, the painting has a certain prescience although it was painted before the first case of COVID 19 was diagnosed in Australia,' said John Robertson, President of the Club and one of the judges of the prize. 'The title 'Breathe' is perhaps a timely reminder that, in these difficult days, we all need to take a moment to breathe.'

Alison Mackay has been a finalist in this major national prize for the last 7 years with a range of works reflecting the Gallipoli Club's creed of 'loyalty, courage, respect, comradeship and love of country'.

'I've explored different and often quite personal themes for this prize over the last 7 years,' she says, 'There's always a diverse and interesting range of paintings in the exhibition, so I'm really thrilled to have won this year.'

Alison Mackay's work has focused mainly on still life painting using oils over the last 15 years. She has exhibited throughout Australia, including seven solo shows and her work is held in private and public collections including Bundanon Collection and National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (as part of the Animalia print collection). She has been selected as a finalist in numerous art prizes including The Archibald, The Portia Geach Memorial Award for female portraiture, the National Still Life Award and NSW Parliament's Plein Air Painting Prize. Alison works mainly from her studio at St George's Basin (Jervis Bay) where she paints directly from life, however she also spends time working 'en plein air' in the landscape around her home and further afield.

The judges highly commended 'The Telegram' by Lori Pensini of Boyup Brook, WA for her painting of a woman receiving devastating news via telegram. In her accompanying statement Pensini talks of her grandmother and "the unrelenting trepidation clinging to her folds like the rolling dust clouds at her skirt hem, as she prepares for the 2 day horse ride to town. She tells of the foreboding waiting for a telegram to arrive, the angst of not knowing and the dread to come upon knowing. This painting is a tribute to the rural women that fought the loneliness of war and the ever lingering threat of an uncertain future on the land without their loved ones."

The judges also highly commended 'Major Smith's Petrichor' by Diedre Bean of Newcastle, NSW for her watercolour of L1A1 gas-operated semi-automatic rifle, the standard issue personal weapon for Australian soldiers during the Vietnam War. In the background are lightly sketched rubber trees which Bean invites the viewer to "imagine petrichor, the smell of the first drops of rain, warning of a tropical downpour." In her accompanying statement Bean says "*Major Smith's petrichor* is not intended to glorify weaponry or war, but to remind us of the courage and heroism our soldiers exemplified in the pursuit of peace."

Now in its 15th year, The Gallipoli Art Prize invites artists to respond to the broad themes of loyalty, respect, love of country, courage and comradeship as expressed in the Gallipoli Club's creed. The works do not need to depict warfare, nor do they need to relate, directly or indirectly, to any conflict.

THE GALLIPOLI MEMORIAL CLUB CREED: "We believe that within the community there exists an obligation for all to preserve the special qualities of loyalty, respect, love of country,

courage and comradeship which were personified by the heroes of the Gallipoli Campaign and bequeathed to all humanity as a foundation for perpetual peace and universal freedom”.

Virtual Tour of 2020 Gallipoli Art Prize

Due to Covid19 restrictions the Gallipoli Art Prize will not be hung in a public exhibition at this time as has been done for the last fifteen years of Prize, rather people are invited to experience the works online at www.gallipoliartprize.org.au. In an innovative development for the Gallipoli Memorial Club, a virtual tour of the exhibition using 360 degree photography will also be available [via the website](#) from Tuesday 21 April, 2020. Developed by filmmaker Luke Banfield of Balderdash Films the virtual tour allows viewers to walk through the exhibition, zoom in on individual works and click for more information on each work. The Gallipoli Memorial Club is hopeful that a physical exhibition of this year’s prize can take place in Sydney later in the year.

www.gallipoliartprize.org.au

(end)

2020 Gallipoli Art Prize

Winner: Alison Mackay *Breathe*

Highly Commended: Lori Pensini *The Telegram*

Highly Commended: Diedre Bean *Major Smith’s petrichor*

Finalists:

Andrew Tomkins	Slaters Knoll, The Morning After the Night Before
Belle Raine	Vapor
Betina Fauvel-Ogden	In Memory of My Grandfather
David McKay	Silences
Elise Judd	The History Lesson
Elizabeth McCarthy	With Fixed Bayonets they went Straight up the Hill singing Tipperary
Emma Rebecca Liu	Thus Soldiers Jobs were Carried on
Errol Barnes	The Field
Fleur Stevenson	Heartland
Geoff Harvey	Gallipoli Narrative
Jessica Guthrie	Arlo's Bugle
Julianne Allcorn	Hidden Beauty
Kristin Hardiman	Postcards of War
Leigh Hooker	The Crucible
Margaret Hadfield	Weary
Mark Emerson	Lost Digger of Vignacourt
Mark Middleton	A Calm Moment
Maryanne Wick	Under a Blood Orange Sky
Michael John Lodge	Geese on the Somme WW1
Michael Miller	Here they Come Lads
Nick Howson	December 17 Shell Green
Nicola Wilson	Ode to Olly
Paul Gorjan	Flying Officer
Peter Smeeth	First Australian P.O.Ws
Philip Meatchem	Ivor Hele, War Artist
Raj Panda	Lest We Forget

Rodney Pople	Hopes and Dreams
Ross Townsend	Spirits of Hellfire Pass
Sally West	Troops Swimming at Anzac Cove
Sam Dabboussy	Prelude 1915
Shonah Trescott	Ode to Private Furguson
Sue Macleod-Beere	Private James Martin, 14 years old

Gallipoli Art Prize Previous Winners

2006 Margaret Hadfield	<i>Ataturk's legacy</i>
2007 Lianne Gough	<i>Glorus fallen</i>
2008 Tom Carment	<i>Max Carment, War Veteran (the last Portrait)</i>
2009 Euan Macleod	<i>Smoke/Pink landscape/Shovel</i>
2010 Raymond Arnold	<i>The dead march here today</i>
2011 Hadyn Wilson	<i>Sacrifice</i>
2012 Geoff Harvey	<i>Trench interment</i>
2013 Peter Wegner	<i>Dog with Gas Mask</i>
2014 Idris Murphy	<i>Gallipoli Evening 2013</i>
2015 Sally Robinson	<i>Boy Soldiers</i>
2016 Jiawei Shen	<i>Yeah, Mate!</i>
2017 Amanda Penrose Hart	<i>The Sphinx, Perpetual Peace</i>
2018 Steve Lopes	<i>Exposed Wood, Mont St Quentin</i>
2019 Martin King	<i>War Pigeon Diaries</i>

www.gallipoliartprize.org.au

MEDIA CONTACT

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MEDIA ASSETS

Please [click here](#) for media assets including image of winning and highly commended works and artist statement.

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/h9hkl0jhwzx4n7u/AACYujb2PE5XE8SwSd_hxt-xa?dl=0

Winner Alison Mackay: www.alisonmackay.net Instagram @alisonmackayartist