

MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grace Cossington Smith Art Award 2018 Winners' Exhibition

7 November – 5 December 2019

Opening Event: Saturday 9 November 2-4pm with Dr Matt Cox, Curator Asian Art, Art Gallery New South Wales

Artists:

Catherine O'Donnell Winner of GCS art award (acquisitive)

Stephen Hall Winner Local Artist award

(Sponsored by Suzie Stathakis and Di Jones Real Estate Wahroonga)

Jane Théau Winner Emerging artist award

We proudly present an exhibition of the winners of the 2018 Grace Cossington Smith Art Award.

In 2018 we introduced a vibrant new vision for the Award - as a biennial event with two new award categories and the unique opportunity to share a three-week group exhibition in the following year.

In 2018 the Art Award winners were selected by Alison Clark and Dominik Mersch. In their statement they said of the winning works.

"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 winners' exhibition will enable the viewer to gain a deeper understanding of the broader practice of each artist.

Catherine O'Donnell will be exhibiting a suite of drawings based on the brutalist architecture of the Cite Spinoza, Paris and a wall drawing based on her research of the Sirius building in Sydney.

Jane Théau is presenting a series of drawings in thread in machine-made lace. Théau also has an accompanying video which was filmed with choreographer Sue Healey and dancer Michelle Heaven.

Stephen Hall will be exhibiting a series of large-scale drawings and 2030 floor based works that continue his ten-year inspiration from Merry Andrew the Limner.

ABOUT THE WINNERS

Catherine O'Donnell is known for her detailed renderings of streetscapes and urban dwellings. She says of her work, "My drawings are 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, 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, natural or recycled materials. Her thread drawings are made from next to nothing – thread and recycled tarlatan – but can populate large spaces as hanging installations. Théau is completing PhD research on textiles, tactility and contemporary art and facilitates a long-term community art project with refugees in Auburn. Awards received include artists residencies at Hill End, Bundanon and Textilsetur (Iceland). She 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.

SHORT STATEMENT (50 words)

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The **Grace Cossington Smith Gallery** is a not-for-profit gallery, run by Abbotsleigh, serving the public through free admission and a changing exhibition program.

The Gallery is open Monday to Friday from 10am – 5pm and Saturday 9am – 4pm.

Enter via Gate 7, 1666 Pacific Highway Wahroonga.

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High Resolution images are available.