

Winning art reveals joys and tensions of family

An evocative triple portrait of a migrant family has won the 2020 Clancy Prize for religious art.

Laurah Tapas, a Year 12 student from De La Salle Cronulla, won the \$2,000 prize, leading a hat trick for her school, which also produced the top art teacher and the runner-up.

Laurah, whose family migrated from Papua New Guinea in 2003, said the work, simply entitled *The Family*, celebrated the simple pleasures of family life and the importance of family support in migrant communities.

“Like many migrant communities in Australia, the family plays an important role as a support group. This is especially true of our Papua New Guinea community which is small in numbers. It is always refreshing but also a startling contrast when we go and visit our extended family in their villages in Lae and Manus. In the village, the Church is the centre of our community life and the glue that binds us - another contrast to life in secular Australia,” she said.

De La Salle art teacher Byron Clancy won the \$2,000 prize for best art teacher. The runner-up prize of \$1,000 went to De La Salle Year 12 student Jessica Gledhill, for *Dora Maar*, a pensive portrait set among fantastical creatures.

The Monsignor Tony Doherty Award of \$500 was won by Matthew Vassilieff of Marist Eastwood for his portrait of a boy playing a video game entitled *Dementia, determined, distracted*.

The annual Clancy Prize Exhibition is a celebration of students’ creativity and spirituality, expressed through visual arts, inspired by Cardinal Edward Clancy. It is open to all Sydney Catholic Schools secondary students.

Each year the prize sets a theme to inspire students. This year’s theme was *Family love: A vocation and a path to holiness*, the theme Pope Francis has set for the 2021 World Meeting of Families.

The prize is run by the Australian Catholic University and the Diocese of Sydney and judged by ACU’s Dr Lachlan Warner, Victoria Carruthers and Diane Merrilees.

Dr Warner said the winning works showed “powerful visions of the joys and tensions of the family, the base of our lives and spirituality”.

“Judging the Clancy Prize was an extraordinary experience of walking into the forests of students’ lives. There was the difficult and the uplifting as students negotiated the theme of Family Love,” he said.

The Clancy Prize exhibition is on display at the McGlade Gallery on the Strathfield Campus of Australian Catholic University until 27 March.

Full list of winners:

The Clancy Prize for students (\$2000) Laurah Tapas, Year 12, De La Salle, Cronulla

The Clancy Prize for art teachers (\$2000) Byron Hurst, De La Salle, Cronulla

Brian Jordan Award (\$1000) Jessica Gledhill, Year 12 De La Salle, Cronulla

Msg Tony Doherty Award (\$500) Matthew Vassilieff, Year 12, Marist Eastwood

The Packers Prize (\$250) Calista Camarda, Year 12, Bethlehem College, Ashfield

ACU School of Education Awards (3 x \$100)

Monique Frasca, Year 11, Clancy Catholic College, West Hoxton

Ashley Bokser, Year 12, Domremy College, Five Dock

Milana Tomic, Year 12, Freeman Catholic College, Bonnyrigg Heights.

Images are available on request.

Judges are available for interview.

To interview students, please contact the relevant school

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