

INAUGURAL WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Taking first place in the inaugural *By George!* Biennial International Art Prize with the theme “Independence. What is it good for?” was “Wonnarua” (2020), a video diptych by conceptual artist and cinematographer Ryan Andrew Lee from Northern Rivers, NSW. The work is a contemplative moving image installation that aims to provoke discussion around themes of Indigenous ways of living in juxtaposition with western settler-state system's unsustainable, damaging ways of using stolen lands; the video diptych contrasts living portraits of 5 Aboriginal people from the Wonnarua Nation with drone shots of Muswellbrook's vast coal mines, sculpture, drawings, and digital collage. The **First Prize** of \$5,000 was sponsored by X-Convenience.

The judges commented that the “wonderful moving image artwork aimed to provoke discussion around themes of Indigenous ways of living in juxtaposition with western settler-state system's unsustainable ways of using stolen lands”.

Ryan stated, “I am absolutely delighted to hear that Wonnarua has taken out first prize in the 2021 By George Biennial Art Prize. I was happy to hear (the judges’) feedback and am just pleased that I am able to get the work out there more to spark further insight and discussion into the portrayed themes of the work.”

At the opening of the *By George!* Exhibition on Thursday, 28 October 2021, the Foundation for Hellenic Studies announced the prize-winners, from a pool of over 50 submissions received from as far as Greece, Brazil, and South Africa and around Australia.

Second Prize was awarded to artist NOT, from Sydney, who used recycled television screen and lead crystal glass to create “Syntagma Square” (2021), a sculpture that represents the “freedom fist” of the choreographed march of the Hellenic Presidential Guard. The \$3,000 prize was sponsored by Guardian Financial Services. **Says NOT, “I’m thrilled and honoured to receive this inaugural award, and I’m so glad the work resonated with the judges which carries a theme that has personal meaning for me.”**

Third Prize was awarded to local artist Helen Kari whose print on giclee entitled “Greek National Day” (2021), was inspired by postcards sent home from soldiers fighting in the War of Independence. Third prize, values at \$1,000 was sponsored by Patsouris and Associates | Lawyers.

The judges for 2021 were art industry leaders: Jason Karas, Fotis Kapetopoulos, and award-winning designers and artists Connie Augoustinos, Diana Jaquillard, and Niki Sperou.

Diana Jaquillard in presenting the prizes commented, “Because there were quite a number of outstanding works, it was difficult arrive at the final decisions that it felt we may have had to employ similar computational skills that the famous Ancient Greeks, Pythagoras or Eratosthenes must have used to devise their algorithms. We had to assess each artwork against the criteria of relevance to the theme, as well as creativity, skill, concept, and ability to evoke emotion.”

Opened by the Hon Greg Crafter AO, chair of the Foundation for Hellenic Studies, the exhibition can be viewed every Friday evening between 6:00pm and 8:00pm throughout November, at the popup Gallery 108 in the new Kyren Group development at 108 Wakefield Street Adelaide, and online at <https://bit.ly/3DHRsoC> The Democratic People’s Choice Award will be awarded at the Foundation’s next public event on 21 November and the public is encouraged to vote by visiting the gallery on Wakefield Street or online prior to 14 November 2021. Proceeds from art sales are going to the artists and the Foundation, which is a not-for-profit entity that promotes Hellenic culture, language, and experiences.



The “*By George*” art prize, with a prize pool of \$11,000 was launched in 2021 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Greek War of Independence, and was sponsored by Kyren Group, X-Convenience, Maras Group, Guardian Financial Services, Patsouris and Associates, Penfolds and Coopers.

Images, photography, and interviews are available. Contact co-ordinator Connie Kosti, 0428190800, connie.kosti@gmail.com



Above: First Prize: Ryan Andrew Lee / Australia
First Prize *Wonnarua* / 2020 / Moving image.
View at www.ryanandrewlee.com/art/wonnarua



Left: Second Prize: NOT / Australia / *Syntagma Square - Πλατεία Συντάγματος* / 2021 / Recycled television screen and lead crystal glass

Below: Third prize: Helen Kari / Australia / *Greek National Day* / 2021 / Giclee

