

A Heads up for the Head On Portrait prize and Festival

Arts

NATIONAL

The Head On Portrait Prize, worth over \$50,000, is regarded as the most critically acclaimed photographic portrait prize in the country.

Now in its seventh year, and a celebrated part of the Arts year's calendar. Head On Portrait Prize is the nation's major showcase for Australian portrait photography, reflecting a vibrant, diverse cross-section of new and traditional photographic practices.

The three winners and the recipient of the Critic's Prize, will be announced by Hon Peter Garret! AM, MP, Minister for Environment Protection, Heritage and the Arts, at the official launch of the Head On Photo Festival on April 30.

The Head On Photo Festival, the first of its kind in Sydney, involves 67 venues exhibiting over 80 shows and events. Featuring over 300 Australian and international photographers, the Festival brings together a raft of inspiring and exciting photographic events of all genres for anyone interested in photography.

Exhibitions can be seen at public galleries such as the Museum of Sydney and Manly Art Gallery, commercial galleries, cafes, restaurants, and at Centennial Park - where indoor and outdoor exhibitions will be held, as well as photography workshops.

Other Festival highlights include: a series of retro-style posters by artist Anne Zahalka exhibiting in four pubs around Newtown;

an exhibition by Afghani photographers' collective AINA showcasing images of their country; a retrospective of Oculi, one of Australia's top photojournalists' collectives; Walklcy's slideshow; a retrospective of legendary 1970s photographer, the late Rennie Ellis; and 'Head Off' - showcasing Australian landscapes on large canvases at the new art venue, Paddington Water Reservoir.

Special ticketed events at the National Art School include a two-day seminar and mini-trade show (the 2009 seminar was booked out within an hour) with the participation of Griffith University and AIPP (Australian Institute of Professional Photographers). Topics range from the technical to the controversial photographing children. Also showing is a series of multi-media slideshow screenings of work by some of the best Australian and international photographers.

"As with the Head On Portrait Prize, our aim with the Festival was to attract a wide range of excellent photography from Australia and overseas that speaks for itself regardless of whether or not the photographer is well known," says Festival Director Moshe Rosenzveig.

The Festival is also supported by many industry leaders including Canon, Adobe and Epson.

"We are thrilled with the response and enthusiasm of the arts community and photographic industry. Clearly, they are craving more of these types of events. With the expansion into a festival, even more

interest will be generated."

The 40 finalists for the 2010 Portrait Prize were selected out of over 2,200 entries which were judged anonymously to ensure that each was judged solely on merit. A further 200 entries will be short-listed for presentation as a slide show at the Portrait Prize Exhibition.

Head On Portrait Prize selection criteria are the quality and impact of the image rather than the celebrity of the photographer or subject.

"Selection of images for Head On was and will continue to be based on the power of the photograph rather than the celebrity of either the sitter or photographer," says Moshe Rosenzveig, Head On Festival director and one of the judges.

Other judges were National Gallery of Victoria senior curator - photography Dr Isobel Crombie, prize-winning photographer Anthony Browell. Australian agent for international photo agency Vu Isabelle Rouvillois. The Sydney Morning Herald photography critic and

Top: Scar tree, Nookamka Lake 2008

Left: Portrait Prize finalist "Uncle Kev" by David Kelly

Bottom: Nookamka - Lake 2010

writer Robert McFarlane will award the Critic's Prize.

Head On Portrait Prize was founded by Moshe Rosenzveig in 2004 as an independent national photographic portrait competition and has since grown to the point where a large-scale festival has been developed around it.

Past judges include such art world luminaries as Magnum photographer Trent Parke, Good Weekend Picture Editor Judith Love, multi award-winning photographer Stephen Dupont, former Co-director of Stills Gallery and current freelance curator Sandy Edwards, Sherman Galleries Director Dr Gene Sherman, The Sydney Morning Herald photography critic Robert McFarlane and Russell Storer, Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art at the time (now Contemporary Asian Art Curator. Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane).

Head On has been running on a very limited budget raised through entry fees and the goodwill of many people. It has been supported by Canon, Adobe, Momento, Epson, Sandisk, Focal Press, ACDSee, MailChimp, Gekko Images, Pixel Perfect Prolab, Arthere, Agileware, Frankel Lawyers, Lowepro, Dragon Image, Kayell, ColourProc-css, Le Bukhara, Griffith University - The Centre for Documentary Practice, National Art School, Buy-n-Shoot.com, Shaw Vineyard Estate, Arts Hotel, Australian Centre for Photography and The Australian Institute of Professional Photography.

Head On Photo Festival: 29 April to 5 June. Head On Photo Festival and Portrait Prize opening, April 30 at the Australian Centre for Photography in Paddington. Details of other shows and venues at www.headon.com.au