



MEDIA RELEASE



CHALLENGING ISSUES BROUGHT TO THE FORE THROUGH ARTEXPRESS 2021 EXHIBITION

Hazelhurst Arts Centre will feature over 50 outstanding works in ARTEXPRESS 2021, including works from 9 local schools. This year students explore issues of equality, the environment, references to film and pop culture, identity, technological advances, family and friendship, as well as the experiences of their life in 2020.

Sutherland Shire Mayor Steve Simpson said he was confident the exhibition would again prove popular with gallery goers, saying that the annual ARTEXPRESS exhibition was an enduring favourite with local art lovers.

“Each year Hazelhurst plays host to a stunning selection of works from local student artists as well as the best works drawn from students elsewhere around NSW,” Mayor Simpson said.

“I would like to congratulate the local students whose works feature in this year’s exhibition and I know the Hazelhurst staff look forward to sharing their artworks with the many visitors expected to flock to the gallery to see this exhibition.”



MEDIA RELEASE

Bronte Stark from De La Salle College Cronulla focuses on the female firefighters at the frontline of some of last year's bush fires in her work *High Vis*. As a Jannali resident, Stark has a personal connection to The Rural Fire Service as the area has a history of wildfire emergencies. Using thick layers of oil and acrylic paint, Stark paints the portraits of three female firefighters in hi-vis uniform standing behind a dry, brown bushland. Drawing inspiration from artists George Gittoes, Ahn Do and Ben Quilty, Stark aims to pay homage to the brave, courageous and selfless female heroes.

Jianhuan Jade Ma's work *A Walk Along Brick Street* captures the intricacies of built environments and explores the cultural diversity in Sydney. The St George Girls High School student has created a long black and white scroll drawing depicting local shop fronts and restaurants. The deliberate presentation of her drawing as a scroll is Ma's way of honouring her heritage. Mirroring traditional Chinese handscrolls, the viewer is encouraged to examine the intricate details of buildings as well as the impressive scale. The physical degradation of the buildings captures the passage of time.

Rosebank College student Jordon Cassaniti explores social issues of class and authority in the photomedia work *I Will Be Seen*. The work features a series of coloured photographs, featuring the protests that took place in 2020, and capture expressions of protestors, contrasting them with images of people who are oppressed. Cassaniti's work focuses on the idea of fighting to be seen, heard and to make a difference as well as questioning today's figures of authority and their misuse of power.

Sydney Technical High School Student Khoi Tuan Nguyen's work appropriates scenes from iconic Hollywood films by replacing the leading star with the faces of himself and his family in his paintings *Family Portrait*. Nguyen's inspiration for the work is his passion for feature films and how pop culture has substantially influenced our vision of peoples' personalities and identities. Nguyen's work consists of three family portraits, with the designated character based on their personality – his father is portrayed as Maverick from *Top Gun*, due to his confidence and playfulness and his mother is Maria from *The Sound of Music* based on her enthusiasm and kindness. For himself, Nguyen identifies with the character of John McLane from *Die Hard* who is self-conscious around other people.

Belinda Hanrahan, Director of Hazelhurst Arts Centre said the exhibition has been curated by the Gallery's Kate Milner and Samantha Relihan and this year it is as strong in ideas as ever and reveals extraordinary technical skills by young artists throughout NSW.

ARTEXPRESS is an exhibition of high achieving Visual Arts Bodies of Work from the previous year's Higher School Certificate examination.

CAPTION: Bronte Stark, De La Salle Catholic College, *High Vis*, painting

ARTEXPRESS

13 February – 5 April 2021 10am – 5pm daily
Hazelhurst Arts Centre



MEDIA RELEASE

782 Kingsway, Gymea.

For further information please contact Susanne Briggs 0412 268 320

ARTEXPRESS is a joint initiative of the NSW Department of Education and NSW Education Standards Authority in association with Hazelhurst Arts Centre.



Hazelhurst

**SUTHERLANDSHIRE
ARTS
CENTRE**