



Media release

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Diana Georgetti is awarded the \$30,000 Geelong contemporary art prize

Announced on Monday 31 May at 5.00pm



Diana Georgetti
AMPERSAND 2020
synthetic polymer paint on canvas, custom frame
Geelong contemporary art prize (winner), 2021
Reproduced courtesy of the artist and
The Commercial, Sydney

Melbourne-based artist **Diana Georgetti** has been awarded the *2021 Geelong contemporary art prize* for her painting *AMPERSAND 2020*.

The selection panel included eminent art historians and curators, **Jenepher Duncan** and **Grazia Gunn** and Geelong Gallery Director & CEO, **Jason Smith**, who were drawn to *AMPERSAND* for its conceptual poise and eloquent formal composition.

The painting extends Diana Georgetti's idiosyncratic approach to picture-making as she assembles and juxtaposes abstract images and references to art historical precedents, along with modernist aesthetics, including design and fashion. These reference points are drawn from books, archives and the internet, and function as Georgetti's eclectic image-bank, but her sources remain elusive. It is a creative process of sampling that reworks real and archival fragments in the spirit of historical collage while exploring the literal and metaphorical ways in which images are framed for the viewer.

AMPERSAND is an enigmatic and compelling work, melding formal painterly references to both analytical and synthetic Cubism, with a fugitive figuration that recalls the Classical nude pose and the enfolding pathos of Henry Moore's sculpture and drawing. The central configuration of this painting reflects the inward twist and turn of its title *AMPERSAND*, that archaic sign for notating the endless possibilities of the word 'and' to a thought or narrative. Above all, the judges agreed that a relevant contemporary humanism pervades *AMPERSAND*, opening-up this precisely constructed but poetic image to many readings and interpretations.

The judges also wish to acknowledge the contemporary relevance and excellent quality of the works of the twenty-eight finalists who were selected from an Australia-wide field of over 600 entries, and who are among the country's finest established and emerging artists.

The announcement of the Prize will be made by Geelong Gallery on Monday 31 May at 5.00pm. Follow @GeelongGallery on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter for more.

Geelong Gallery wishes to thank the Dimmick Charitable Trust for generously sponsoring this signature event. The Prize is acquisitive and assists the ongoing growth of the Gallery's collection, while also promoting Australian painting and contemporary artists.

Due to Government and health authority advice, Geelong Gallery is temporarily closed until at least Friday 4 June. The Gallery will re-open when government health authorities deem it reasonable to do so, with the *2021 Geelong contemporary art prize* on display until Sunday 22 August.

About the artist

Diana Georgetti was born in Alice Springs and currently lives in Melbourne. She completed a Diploma of Art from the Queensland College of Art in Brisbane and has had solo exhibitions at The Commercial, Sydney, Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington and Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney, amongst others. Diana has recently been awarded the *Sunshine Coast Art Prize, 2019* and the *Redland Konica Minolta Art Prize, 2017*. Her work is included in many national collections including the Art Gallery of South Australia, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Buxton Contemporary and Heide Museum of Modern Art.





Diena Georgetti
AMPERSAND (detail) 2020
synthetic polymer paint on canvas, custom frame
Geelong contemporary art prize (winner), 2021
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The Commercial, Sydney

Artist's statement

INTRODUCE ME AMPERSAND
to the reduplicated SOUL to SOUL of you
fold me within the hidden alone of you
so that I may operate within the
unevolved evolution within you

CONNECT ME AMPERSAND
toward an optional possibility of me
a less non-exposing single double
number one of me
so that I may fortify the overemotional
non-motion within me

STRENGTHEN ME AMPERSAND
amid the world-shattered weakened
world of us
formed by a past and future tense with
us
so that we may rate the return of an
unending life of time within us

*AND used to 'introduce' another
comment or interjection

*AND used to 'connect' words of the
same part of speech

*AND used to 'strengthen' by repeating a
word in conjunction

*The very first AMPERSAND was a
ligature—that is, a character consisting
of two or more letters joined together.
Its creator joined the letters e and t, of
the Latin word et, meaning 'and' ... 'and
per se, and' eventually evolved into
AMPERSAND.

Geelong contemporary art prize

The *2021 Geelong contemporary art prize* continues a long tradition of prize exhibitions staged by the Geelong Gallery. From the late-1930s, the Gallery has awarded acquisitive prizes variously for paintings, watercolours and prints, sponsored by a variety of individuals and corporate supporters.

In the mid-1990s, the Geelong Art Gallery Foundation established a contemporary painting prize—the *Geelong contemporary art prize*—with the aim of showcasing the work of contemporary Australian practitioners and enriching the Gallery's collection of contemporary Australian art through the acquisition of a winning work.

From 2004–10 the prize was restyled as the *Fletcher Jones art prize* in acknowledgement of the sponsorship of Fletcher Jones. In 2012, with the generous support of the Dimmick Charitable Trust, the award returned to *Geelong contemporary art prize*.

Over the past 17 years, works by **Andrew Browne** (2018), **Kate Beynon** (2016), **Rob McHaffie** (2014), **Paul Ryan** (2012), **Tim McMonagle** (2010), **Nadine Christensen** (2008), **Sam Leach** (2006) and **Juan Ford** (2004) have been acquired through this nationally significant painting prize.

2021 Geelong contemporary art prize

Exhibition partner

Dimmick Charitable Trust