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Geelong chooses its People's choice

Announcement: Wednesday 21 November 2018 at 11am

Geelong Gallery is delighted to announce the **ANZ People's Choice award** for the Art Gallery of New South Wales' *Archibald Prize 2018* is Anne Middleton's portrait of Geelong raised actor, Guy Pearce.

With an overwhelming response of over 19,600 valid votes cast, the Middleton portrait commanded 14% of the total vote. With an incredibly even field, second place in the Victorian voting poll was given to Kathrin Longhurst's self-portrait with 11% of the vote.

The ANZ People's Choice award was first awarded in 1988 and is voted for by members of the public visiting the Archibald Prize exhibition at each venue.

Find out more about each of this year's Archibald finalists here www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/prizes/archibald/2018.

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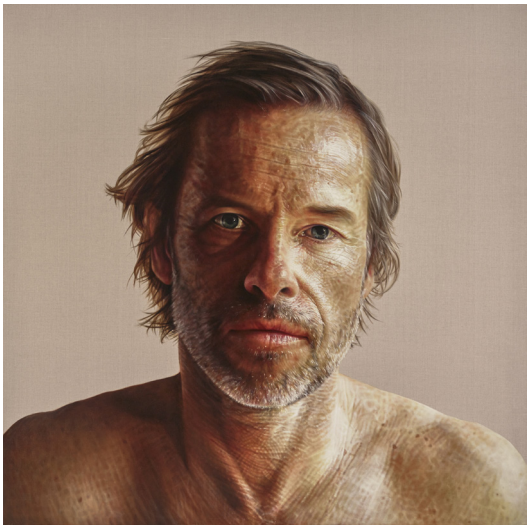

ANZ People's Choice Award Winner, Geelong—
Archibald Prize 2018
Anne Middleton
'Guy'
© the artist
Photo: AGNSW

About the portrait

Anne Middleton has long been fascinated by Guy Pearce's gaze. 'I see profound depth of emotion and some sadness in Guy's eyes, however, his gaze is direct and bold. It was this curious melding of uncompromising determination and a certain boyish sweetness that led me to ask if I could paint his portrait,' she says.

'In person, Guy is disarmingly approachable. Born in the same year (1967), and with a shared love of living in Melbourne, we chatted about all manner of things. My portrait of Guy was inspired by early photographic portraits of Indigenous people using tintype photography, the otherworldly translucency of skin it imparts and the compelling directness of an unselfconscious gaze,' says Middleton.

'I painted Guy in the natural light of my studio. One side of his face is in deep shadow. Obscure and mysterious, it speaks of hidden, difficult times. The other side is brilliantly lit. It is an uncompromising light, honest and unflinching. This extreme tonality enabled me to explore Guy's chameleon nature and his personal awareness of the light and dark within that makes him both an extraordinary actor and a kind, funny and unassuming bloke.'

Middleton is the daughter of artist Max Middleton, who himself had works in the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prize exhibitions multiple times between 1954 and 1962. In this, her first appearance in the Archibald Prize, she has won the ANZ People's Choice award in both Sydney and Geelong.

Archibald Prize 2018
The Archibald Prize 2018 is an Art Gallery of New South Wales touring exhibition

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