

137TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE ART SOCIETY OF TASMANIA
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
LONG GALLERY, HOBART, THURSDAY 12 AUGUST 2021

Good evening. May I welcome you to the opening of the 137th Annual Exhibition of the Art Society of Tasmania.

May I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land — the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and who continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

And may I acknowledge among us:

- the Honourable Elise Archer MP, Minister for the Arts;
- Society Vice-Patrons, the Honourable Rob Valentine MLC and Anna Reynolds, Lord Mayor of Hobart;
- Alderman Beth Warren, Clarence Council; and
- Society President Zane Yasuda, Committee members, and Art Society sponsors.

As the Patron of the Art Society of Tasmania, I am honoured to be opening this exhibition in this Long Gallery in Salamanca Place, which has long been a cultural hub of our city.

This exhibition is the first of the Art Society's in the Long Gallery.

The Lady Franklin Gallery at Ancanthe Park will remain the home for the Art Society, but will no longer host the major highlight, the Annual Exhibition. The reason for the move is to accommodate your growing membership, now currently 280, with some 190 exhibiting artists across painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography, textiles, jewellery, calligraphy and more.

It was Lady Jane Franklin, who commissioned and built Ancanthe in 1842. Her determination to advance educational and cultural pursuits in Van Diemen's Land is well known.

Perhaps not quite so well known is that although her husband, Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Franklin, was credited as having inaugurated the first annual Hobart Regatta in 1838, the idea was in fact Jane's, an example of a woman's initiative and ideas having been neglected and unacknowledged.

Your increasing membership, I think, reflects both the emotional and intellectual power of the visual arts but also the honour of being a member of the Art Society of Tasmania.

May I commend this year's judges:

- Jan Peacock, artist and longtime "Images of Tasmania" coordinator;
- Jock Young, marine-inspired career landscape artist; and
- Leanne Halls, contemporary fine artist and designer and finalist in this year's Glover Prize. Her new exhibition is on display at the Colville Gallery.

Judging works of art is difficult and personal. In the spirit of art, every work on display here this evening and for the next ten days will be judged by us all individually.

In briefing us on the exhibition, Zane proposed that there is no theme; that the works are hung within groups of a colour thread rather than by subject or medium; and that the judges take into consideration concept, execution, design, presentation and impact across all media.

The works on display are an array of styles and subject matter. There are some 217 artworks on display – up from 45 that were displayed at each Annual Exhibition at the Lady Franklin Gallery.

There are landscapes, seascapes, abstracts, portraits, still lifes, miniatures, and more.

This is an exhibition of vibrant contemporary Tasmanian art to savour and to revisit to for a second look. We congratulate curators, Carol Sheppard and Vicki Chapman, and I invite our audience to acknowledge you.

And I congratulate the Committee of the Art Society of Tasmania for making this move to the Long Gallery.

Thank you also to the many volunteers who spent time and much care in hanging the works.

May I congratulate every artist represented in this 137th Annual Exhibition.

Now it is my pleasure to make the following announcements:

[HE announces prizewinners as advised by the Art Society of Tasmania]

On that happy note, I now have much pleasure in declaring open the 137th Annual Exhibition of the Art Society of Tasmania.

Thank you.

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