



MEDIA RELEASE

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JUST ART EXHIBITION: WINNERS

Winners for the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's (the Society) annual arts advocacy event, Just Art, were announced as part of a special launch event with finalists and their loved ones at The Stables in North Melbourne last night.

The exhibition brought together the creative work of more than 350 people—aged six to 60—across the state of Victoria. St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria CEO, Ms Sue Cattermole, said the quality of all works was absolutely outstanding, but there were two particular pieces that stood out for the judges.

"The Just Art exhibition has two major awards, The Just Art Vincentian Award and The Just Art Ozanam Award. Both are a recognition of our charity's rich Vincentian heritage and a mark of respect for our Founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, and Patron, St Vincent de Paul," said Sue Cattermole.

"Our Founder is a key source of inspiration behind the Society's many and varied works of charity, which promote a keen interest in social advocacy, inclusion and equality – particularly among young people."

The 2017 Just Art Exhibition, now in its second year, explored the theme 'First Australians – stories of humanity', which challenged artists to explore and celebrate Australia's Indigenous heritage through a variety of creative mediums.

The Just Art Vincentian Award, which includes a \$1,000 prize, is awarded to an artist who brings to life the Society's call to serve the community, as embodied by the Society's patron, St Vincent de Paul. The winner is asked to produce a work that advocates on behalf of voices that are unheard and to reflect on the dignity of each human person – all with an underlying spirit of compassion.

For the second year running, the 2017 Just Art Vincentian Award winner is McKinnon Secondary College student and Lucia Roohizadegan, awarded for her stunning visual arts piece titled, "Crossing Bridges".

"I'm completely humbled by the award," said Lucia. "I spent many hours on the painting and I'm so happy to be standing here tonight with all the other wonderful participants."

The Just Art Ozanam Award, which also included a generous \$1000 prize, was awarded to an artist who reflected the youthful energy and commitment to justice of the Society's Founder Frederic Ozanam.

This year's winner, Oxley Christian College student Georgia Collins, moved the judges with a keen sense of hope and joy reflected in her bright depiction of an Aboriginal child in her visual arts piece titled, "My Stripes".

“I was really surprised that I’d won,” said Georgia. “But I loved painting this piece. The artwork was inspired by how a young Aboriginal child’s smile brightens a room.”

The Society would like to congratulate all entrants, finalists and prize winners for the 2017 Just Art Exhibition, and encourages young people from across Victoria to engage with this invaluable creative arts and advocacy initiative in 2018.

For more information and to keep up-to-date with announcements, visit www.vinnies.org.au/justart

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ABOUT THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:

The St Vincent de Paul Society and its wide network of members and volunteers provide practical frontline support, advocacy and friendship for the most vulnerable members of our community. Key services in Victoria include home visitation; Vinnies Shops; youth programs; Vinnies Soup Vans; assistance for asylum seekers and refugees; Compeer for people experiencing mental illness; education and tutoring; and professional accommodation and health services through VincentCare. The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia has more than 60,000 volunteers. Internationally, the Society operates in 149 countries and has over 950,000 volunteers. To find out more visit www.vinnies.org.au.