

Hobart artist named major winner of *tidal.22* art prize

Embargoed until 7.30pm on Friday, 9 December 2022

Hobart artist Sara Maher has been awarded the \$20,000 *tidal. 22: City of Devonport Tasmanian Art Award*, at tonight's opening exhibition at the Devonport Regional Gallery.

Devonport City Council's Convention and Arts Centre Manager Geoff Dobson congratulated Maher for claiming one of Tasmania's most prestigious prizes for her artwork *Open Listening (Lunawanna-alonnah/Bruny Island)*.

Mr Dobson said the prize was awarded by a panel of three judges: Raymond Arnold, Artist, Ashley Bird, Senior Curator Visual Art and Design, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery and Michelle Boyde, Artistic Director, Design Tasmania.

Speaking on Behalf of the judges' Ashley Bird said: "Sara Maher's work is at odds with the majority of the artworks currently installed at the Devonport Regional Gallery. It's not 'blue' for a start and is tucked away in a far corner to avoid the reflection of light. What makes it a worthy winner, however, of *tidal.22* is its power. The work draws you into an emotional and liminal space - a location of the mind as well as the surface of something calm and wild in equal measure. The work is also relevant and sensitive to current Tasmanian experience, speaking to non-indigenous people's re-calibration of personal relationship to this place. The artist is successful in viscerally capturing a sense of the ever-changing, tidal sea – responding strongly to the set theme.

The judges also awarded *Highly Commended* to Forth based artist Anne Morrison for her painting *when starfields and oceans collide* and Launceston artist Sarah Rhodes for a pigment print titled *Colleen*.

The \$20,000 major acquisitive award is sponsored by the Devonport City Council and the Devonport Regional Gallery Friends Committee. The People's Choice Award will be announced at the close of the exhibition and the artist will receive \$1,000, courtesy of One Agency Collins Real Estate.

The award, now in its 10th instalment after the inaugural competition in 2004, attracted 141 entries by Tasmanian Artists. Of these, 49 works were preselected to be included in the finalists' exhibition by the judging panel.

Floor talk: 11am, Saturday, 10 December 2022 by Ashley Bird.

Exhibition dates: Saturday, 10 December 2022 until 28 January 2023.



Image detail: The winning work of *tidal*. 22 City of Devonport Tasmanian Art Award MAHER Sara, *Open Listening (Lunawanna-alonnah/Bruny Island)*, 2021, Ink on paper, 115 x 120 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Bett Gallery – Hobart.

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