

# MEDIA RELEASE



1 Art Gallery Way  
Mosman NSW 2088 AUSTRALIA  
02 9978 4178 [mosmanartgallery.org.au](http://mosmanartgallery.org.au)

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 8.00pm – Tuesday 10 September 2019**

## Paul Kelleher wins 2019 Mosman Art Prize

The 2019 Mosman Art Prize – Australia’s oldest and most recognised local government art award – has been awarded to NSW artist Paul Kelleher.

Paul Kelleher has won the **\$50,000** acquisitive main prize for *The party is over*, 2019, an oil and mixed media painting which now enters the celebrated Mosman Art Collection, a valuable and historic collection that surveys Australian painting since 1947. Kelleher’s winning entry portrays a series of intricate depictions of tiny figures, Australian wildlife and farm animals, snippets of the Australian bush and farm life, and paintbrushes and other curious objects superimposed over a large Australian \$100 banknote.

Kelleher says: *“Australia is under construction, socially, economically and environmentally. The windmill has gone and balloons are not far behind. We are riding a wave of discontent but no longer riding the sheep’s back...To the Chinese the rooster means high fidelity and honesty which to me is also on its way out. “The party is over”. Where do we go from here?”*

Kelleher is currently based in Austinmer in the Illawarra area of NSW. After initially studying at Alexander Mackie College/City Art Institute (now UNSW Art & Design) in Sydney, Kelleher’s career took him away from art. However, after many years, he has now returned to painting.

Kelleher was presented with the first prize of \$50,000 by 2019 judge, artist and former Prize winner, **Guan Wei**, at the official launch event on the evening of Tuesday 10 September at Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney.

**Commenting on the winning work, Guan Wei says:** *“The new ideas presented in this intriguing painting caught my eye. I was impressed by the use of imagery and the fresh composition. The painstaking level of detail within the painting reminded me of the work of Dutch artist M.C Escher and clearly demonstrates the artist’s outstanding technical ability. The painting captures a feeling of change, and perhaps a feeling of uncertainty.”*

NSW Minister for the Arts, Don Harwin attended the launch event and officially opened the exhibition.

**Commenting on the Prize, Minister Harwin says:** *“The Mosman Art Prize never fails to impress and I’m delighted our Government has been able to continue our long standing support for the Mosman Art Gallery. This award has been synonymous with excellence in visual arts since 1947 and I congratulate all winners and finalists recognised this year.”*

**Commenting on the exhibition this year, Katrina Cashman, Acting Director, Mosman Art Gallery says:** *“In an era where artists have a multitude of art media or platforms available to express their ideas, the Mosman Art Prize continues to act as a barometer for contemporary painting practices nationwide, showcasing the strengths of some of Australia’s best artists, and this year is no exception.”*

Further awards presented on the night included the **Margaret Olley Commendation Award** (\$6,000) given to Karlee Rawkins (Glennifer, NSW), the **Allan Gamble Award** (for built environment) valued at \$3,000 won by Zengping Lai (Sydney), and the **Guy Warren Emerging Artists' Award** (\$2,000) presented to Lachlan Gromek (Shellharbour, NSW).

The 2019 Mosman Art Prize attracted 670 entries from across Australia with 88 paintings selected for the finalist exhibition.

**Mosman Mayor, Councillor Carolyn says:** *“Mosman Council congratulates all finalists in the 2019 Mosman Art Prize. Established in 1947 and presented annually, the Prize is recognised as the oldest and most prestigious municipal art award in Australia. Two years ago Council increased its support and the major prize now stands at \$50,000 attracting some of the best artists in Australia.”*

A total of \$61,000 in prize money was awarded to artists across four categories:

**Major Prize (acquisitive) \$50,000** – Supported by Mosman Council

**Winner: Paul Kelleher (Austinmer)**

for *The party is over*, 2019, mixed media on canvas, 102 x 152.5 cm

**Margaret Olley Commendation Award \$6,000** – Supported by Gillian and the late Brian Jones

**Winner: Karlee Rawkins (Glennifer)**

for *Tiger tribe*, 2019, acrylic and charcoal on cotton, 121 x 137 cm

**Allan Gamble Award \$3,000** – Supported by Christine and the late Hugh Fraser

**Winner: Zengping Lai (Sydney)**

for *Backyards*, 2019, oil on canvas, 143 x 55 cm

**Guy Warren Emerging Artists' Award \$2,000** – Supported by Fourth Village Providore

**Winner: Lachlan Gromek (Shellharbour)**

for *Ian Connors' revenge*, 2019, oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm

#### **2019 Mosman Art Prize Details**

- Mosman Art Prize – 72 years in 2019
- On show **Wednesday 11 September to Sunday 27 October 2019**
- Presented at Mosman Art Gallery, 1 Art Gallery Way, Mosman NSW 2088
- Exhibition is free to the public
- Gallery is open 7 days, 10am – 5pm (Wednesdays: 10am – 8pm). Closed public holidays.
- Reception: 02 9978 4178
- [www.mosmanartgallery.org.au](http://www.mosmanartgallery.org.au)
- Public programs including an artist talks event, tours and a life drawing workshop will accompany the exhibition
- Visitors to the exhibition can vote in the Viewers' Choice Award which will be announced prior to closing



#### **Media contact**

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**COUNCIL**