

A story of immense courage and sacrifice wins Bowness Photography Prize

Canberra photographer Lee Grant has won this year's prestigious **\$25 000 William and Winifred Bowness Photography Prize** at Monash Gallery of Art in Melbourne.

Lee Grant's family portrait **Mary with her daughters Aja and Adau, and her granddaughter Nankir** is a formal portrait of a Sudanese migrant family set in their home in Canberra.

The work forms part of a series that looks at the lives of the Sudanese diaspora after settling in their new homes in the outer-suburbs of various Australian towns and cities.

The work has had a profound impact on the Canberra photographer: "In making this portrait of my new neighbours, I hope to find some measure of understanding that transcends culture and language and that I can share with my fellow Australians for the present and into the future."

Grant continues: "Throughout the process of photographing, I heard many stories as to how and why they'd arrived here. As a mother with my own family, I find it impossible not to be moved. Stories of immense courage and sacrifice but also of hope for a brighter future in Australia."

According to figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Sudanese community is currently one of the fastest growing groups in Australia. Grant says: "In the last few years many Sudanese migrants have moved into the area where I live and I've watched their integration into our (largely Anglo) community with interest."

Grant recently completed a Masters degree at the ANU School of Art and was short-listed for 2010 *National Photographic Portrait Prize*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra.

Shaune Lakin, Director of MGA and one of the judges, said of Grant's photograph: "This is such a sophisticated portrait. It seems a simple study of an African family in their living room. But then the picture starts to unwind: you start to note its extraordinary details and complex interplay of textures and patterning. So it is a commanding photograph. But the judges were equally taken by the way that in this picture, the particular becomes something much bigger. This is a portrait of a Sudanese woman and her three children now living in suburban Canberra; but it also a portrait of contemporary Australia."

Grant's photograph was selected from 2,000 photographs submitted by 473 entrants. The judging panel short listed 34 photographs for this year's prize.

Works by Philip Quirk, Clare Rae and Darren Sylvester received Adobe Honourable Mentions

Media enquiries: Mark Hislop (Communications Coordinator)
t: 03 8544 0503 | m: 0411 964 382 | e:
markh@monash.vic.gov.au



Lee GRANT
Mary with her daughters Aja and Adau, and her granddaughter Nankir from the series *New Australians: Sudanese migrants in suburbia* 2009
pigment ink-jet print
60 x 60 cm
courtesy of the artist