FLYING ARTS

PRESS RELEASE

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Andy Harwood wins the 2026 Queensland Regional Art Awards



The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education and the Arts, with Queensland Regional Art Awards Winner Andy Harwood. Image: Masimba Sasa

Ipswich artist Andy Harwood has been named the winner of the 2026 Queensland Regional Art Awards (QRAA) for his work *Light Consideration (Green)*, announced at the Gala on the evening of Thursday 26 November at 300 George Street, Brisbane.

Chosen from more than 300 entries and 30 finalist artworks from across Queensland, Harwood receives a $25,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, a two-week solo exhibition at Jan Manton Gallery (22 March - 3 April 2027), a residency in Bundaberg, a print editorial feature in Artist Profile, a Meet by Flying Arts Featured Host spot in March and an online marketing and PR package through Flying Arts.

The Queensland Regional Art Awards (QRAA), established in 2011, celebrate the creativity of artists living across regional Queensland. As Australia's largest regional art awards program, the QRAA showcases outstanding new work while offering cash prizes, professional development, solo exhibitions and artist residencies, with a total prize pool of $340,800.

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek, Minister for Education and the Arts, said the Queensland Regional Art Awards are an important platform for showcasing and celebrating the work of talented artists from across regional Queensland.

“Additional government funding is expanding the impact of Queensland Regional Art Awards’ statewide touring exhibition to include Cairns, Longreach, Winton, Mackay, Townsville and St George,” Minister Langbroek said.

“In 2026, the awards exhibition also featured in the Brisbane Festival and the North Australian Festival of Arts program in Townsville, providing even more opportunities to showcase our creative talent to broader audiences.

“Flying Arts and the Queensland Regional Art Awards support the priorities of our Queensland’s Time to Shine 10-year arts strategy by celebrating our storytellers, supporting creative careers and growing access to the arts for all Queenslanders.”

Flying Arts CEO Toni Palmer said Flying Arts’ 55th year is a chance to celebrate the organisation's heritage while continuing to build real opportunities for the next generation of regional artists.

“For 55 years, Flying Arts has been proud to put the spotlight on the extraordinary talent of artists living and working in regional and remote Queensland. The QRAA remains the cornerstone of that commitment, and every year we’re proud to see it grow.”

“We’re grateful for the continued support of the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, whose partnership makes an awards program of this scale possible for artists right across the state.”

Winners were chosen in person on Saturday 21 November 2026 by Lead Judge Simon Wright, Assistant Director, Learning and Public Engagement at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA).

The finalists were selected by the Finalist Selection Panel:

- **Kate O’Hara,** Director, Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts, Townsville
- **Tracey Heathwood,** Director, Artspace Mackay
- **Brian Robinson,** contemporary artist and curator, Cairns
- **Beck Davis,** Director (Head of School), Queensland College of Art and Design, Griffith University

Queensland Regional Art Awards Winner Andy Harwood said: “I am overwhelmed to have received the overall prize at the Queensland Regional Art Awards. This award plays a crucial role in showcasing artists from diverse backgrounds across the state, giving us an invaluable platform to share our stories. It is a tremendous honour to be recognised by the judges for *Light Consideration (Green)* - a mathematically derived composition that interrogates the mechanics of vision.”

The 2026 QRAA also recognised a winner and a Highly Commended artist in each of five categories: The Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award, the First Nations Artist Award, the Remote Artist Award, the Emerging Artist Award and the Young Artist Award. Two People’s Choice Awards, Adult Artist and Young Artist, were decided by public vote.

2026 Winners and Highly Commended Artists

Award	Winner	Highly Commended
Queensland Regional Art Awards Winner	**Andy Harwood** *Light Consideration (Green)* Eastern Heights	-
The Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award	**Ron McBurnie** *She was swallowed by the sky or by the sea like me she had a dream to fly J.M 76* Townsville	**Dian Darmansjah** *Debris 1* Freshwater
First Nations Artist Award	**Marisa Ballinger** *Equilibrium* Toowoomba	**Edna Wangallay Ambrym** *Edible Shells* Yarrabah
Remote Artist Award	**Karen Stephens** *Blue Sky Mirror* Winton	**moo (Sam Matthews)** *The Finding of Light (Pieces of Me series)* Mossman Gorge
Emerging Artist Award	**Denis Harrold** *Clearing the Runway for the RFDS Emergency Landing* Brassall	**Catherine Dinkelmann** *Holding it together* Mountain Creek
Young Artist Award	**Teddy Horton** *Bitten* Maroochydore	**Seth Green** *The Peace Between Places* Albany Creek
People's Choice Award - Adult Artist	**Catherine Dinkelmann** *Holding it together* Mountain Creek	-
People's Choice Award - Young Artist	**Benjamin Scott** *A Change of Scenery* Rockhampton	-

What the winners receive:

- **Queensland Regional Art Awards Winner:** $25,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, a two-week solo exhibition at Jan Manton Gallery (22 March - 3 April 2027), a residency in Bundaberg, a print editorial feature in Artist Profile, a Meet by Flying Arts Featured Host spot in March and an online marketing and PR package.
- **The Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award:** $10,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, a residency in Cairns, a two-week solo exhibition and reception at Fireworks Gallery, a Meet by Flying Arts Featured Host spot in June and an online marketing and PR package.
- **First Nations Artist Award:** $10,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, a four-week solo exhibition and reception at Flying Arts Gallery and an online marketing and PR package.
- **Remote Artist Award:** $5,000 non-acquisitive cash prize, a four-week solo exhibition and reception at Flying Arts Gallery and an online marketing and PR package.
- **Emerging Artist Award and Young Artist Award:** $5,000 non-acquisitive cash prize each, a creative consultation session with Simon Wright, a four-week solo exhibition and reception at Flying Arts Gallery and an online marketing and PR package.
- **People's Choice Award - Adult Artist:** $1,500, supported by TAFE Queensland, and an online marketing and PR package through Flying Arts channels.

- **People's Choice Award - Young Artist:** $1,000, supported by TAFE Queensland, and an online marketing and PR package through Flying Arts channels.

The 2026 finalists and winners are on display at 300 George Street, Brisbane, 22 November - 18 December 2026, open to the public.

Supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, the additional funding has been awarded to support regional touring. The 2027 Touring Exhibition: Bundaberg, Gladstone, Toowoomba, Roma, and Rockhampton.

An additional selection of works from The Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award will also tour regionally, and a selection of Emerging Artist Award works will be exhibited at Flying Arts Gallery in Brisbane.

We celebrate and continue our great relationships with the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, Qantas, Queensland Tourism Industry Council, Griffith University, TAFE Queensland, Today News Group and Artist Profile.

We welcome new partners, Shayher Group and The Clem Jones Foundation.

In October, Flying Arts launched *For Schools*, an innovative 'press play' program designed to transform Visual Arts education in primary schools. Taking children on an extraordinary outback adventure, *For Schools* brings Queensland's acclaimed artists directly into classrooms through beautifully filmed, engaging lessons developed by teachers for teachers. Bringing a touch of magic to the learning experience is Merv, a delightful 3D animated character inspired by Flying Arts founder and pioneering arts educator Mervyn Moriarty OAM. Designed to inspire young minds, ignite creativity and empower teachers, *For Schools* is underpinned by a simple but powerful belief: **every child deserves access to a first-class arts education, regardless of their postcode.**

ABOUT FLYING ARTS

Flying Arts is one of Queensland's leading arts organisations, connecting regional, rural and remote communities through the visual arts for more than 55 years. Founded in 1971 by celebrated artist and aviator **Mervyn Moriarty OAM**, Flying Arts was born from Mervyn's vision to bring art to every corner of Queensland. After winning an art prize, Mervyn used the prize money to learn to fly, enabling him to take art classes to some of the state's most remote communities. That pioneering spirit continues to inspire Flying Arts today as it delivers transformative arts experiences, professional development and education that connects Queenslanders through the arts.

Flying Arts is proudly supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

Flying Arts is honoured to acknowledge Mr Tim Fairfax AC and Mrs Gina Fairfax AC as joint Cultural Patrons.

2026 FINALISTS

The Mervyn Moriarty Landscape Award

- **Winner:** Ron McBurnie, *She was swallowed by the sky or by the sea like me she had a dream to fly J.M 76* (Townsville)
- **Highly Commended:** Dian Darmansjah, *Debris 1* (Freshwater)
- **Finalist:** Amy Clarke, *Time Without End* (Eumundi)
- **Finalist:** Kim Nolan, *Where have I been, where am I going now?* (Newtown)
- **Finalist:** Steven Lippis, *Nothing and Everything* (West Gladstone)

First Nations Artist Award

- **Winner:** Marisa Ballinger, *Equilibrium* (Toowoomba)
- **Highly Commended:** Edna Wangallay Ambrym, *Edible Shells* (Yarrabah)
- **Finalist:** Fiona Omeenyo, *Pama* (Cairns)

- **Finalist:** Kevin Edmonstone, *Plain Turkey* (Yarrabah)
- **Finalist:** Robert Tommy Pau, *Parrotician* (Cairns)

Remote Artist Award

- **Winner:** Karen Stephens, *Blue Sky Mirror* (Winton)
- **Highly Commended:** moo (Sam Matthews), *The Finding of Light (Pieces of Me series)* (Mossman Gorge)
- **Finalist:** Charlene Attard, *The Distance Water Holds* (Netherdale)
- **Finalist:** Donna Glass, *Voices* (Crownthorpe)
- **Finalist:** Jooyun Lim, *No end* (Greenlands)

Emerging Artist Award

- **Winner:** Denis Harrold, *Clearing the Runway for the RFDS Emergency Landing* (Brassall)
- **Highly Commended and People's Choice Award - Adult Artist:** Catherine Dinkelmann, *Holding it together* (Mountain Creek)
- **Finalist:** Amy Middleton, *Infinite Feed* (Kuluin)
- **Finalist:** Kylie Harries with Lindsay Harries, *Infinite Vague and Yearning Thoughts* (Laceys Creek)
- **Finalist:** Ro Clark, *Grounded I: Banksia Robur* (Alexandra Headland)

Young Artist Award

- **Winner:** Teddy Horton, *Bitten* (Maroochydore)
- **Highly Commended:** Seth Green, *The Peace Between Places* (Albany Creek)
- **People's Choice Award - Young Artist:** Benjamin Scott, *A Change of Scenery* (Rockhampton)
- **Finalist:** Giorgia Gregson, *A Touch of Music* (Toowoomba)
- **Finalist:** Kathryn Neilsen, *IAMASYOUARE no.05* (Ipswich)

Open Category

- **Queensland Regional Art Awards Winner:** Andy Harwood, *Light Consideration (Green)* (Eastern Heights)
- **Finalist:** Donna Davis, *IMplant Incubator 001* (Raceview)
- **Finalist:** Fiona Cuthbert O'Meara with Cholena Drew Hughes, *Relic of Care* (Doonan, Kabi Kabi Country)
- **Finalist:** Lana de Jager, *Second Spring* (Closeburn)
- **Finalist:** Nicola Hooper, *Tigers on Turbot St.* (Shailer Park)

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For all media and PR enquiries, please contact:

Harris Wakeling, Marketing and Development Manager
harris.wakeling@flyingarts.org.au
0479 007 268

Artwork images and details can be provided by contacting Harris Wakeling. Interview opportunities are also available upon request.