

The Northern Star

Snappy decision leads to an award

Kate O'Neill | 11th June 2011 2:00 AM

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AN IMPROMPTU shot in an artist's studio has won Byron Bay photographer David Young a gong in the \$20,000 Olive Cotton Photographic Award.

Mr Young was awarded a highly commended in the Tweed River art Gallery's national competition for his portrait, "Tom".

The subject is Tom Guppy, son of Byron Bay artist James Guppy, with his artwork Buffalo Wings.

"It was one of those spur-of-the moment things," David said.

"I was in James' studio and he showed me the piece Tom was working on.

"It was really beautiful, so I decided to photograph him there in the studio with his work."

Judge and director of the Centre for Contemporary Photography in Melbourne, Naomi Cass, described it as a "fabulous portrait of a young artist, referencing the character of Icarus and the paintings of Breughel and Caravaggio".

The portrait was also selected for the director's choice purchase award, and will now become part of the gallery's permanent collection.

Mr Young, who has built a career on advertising and commercial photography, said he had been delving into portraiture in recent years and had found a passion for it.

He has taken portraits of Michael Parkinson, Jimeoin, Pete Murray, Eric Bibb and Olivia Newton John .

Recognition in the Olive Cotton Award is the latest in a string of achievements for the photographer.

His portrait of Bob Hawke was shown in this year's National Gallery of Australia annual portrait exhibition in Canberra; he was a finalist in the prestigious International Aperture Awards; and he won bronze in the Epson Pano awards.

He is joined by a strong contingent of Northern Rivers photographers in the Olive Cotton exhibition.

They include Ross Bray of Eureka, Jeff Dawson of Byron Bay, Sandra Heuston of Rosebank, David Hickson of South Golden Beach, Tambris Housen of South Golden Beach, Peter King of Billinudgel and Lisa Sharpe of Bangalow.

The overall winner was Sydney photographer Tamara Dean.

The Olive Cotton Award exhibition continues at the Tweed River Art Gallery, Murwillumbah, until July 31.



Local artist Tom Guppy in front of his artwork, Buffalo Wings.

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