



NEWS RELEASE

BLACK DOG INSTITUTE PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

29 July, 2010

If a picture tells a thousand stories, the Black Dog Institute has unearthed nearly half a million from a photographic competition - *Snapping the Black Dog* that looked at capturing hope and resilience through the eye of the lens.

The competition, conducted with sponsorship from Nikon Australia, attracted around 450 entries from all over Australia and overseas.

While recognising the seriousness of mood disorders and their impact on the lives of thousands of people, the Institute's Executive Director, Professor Gordon Parker, said the competition was about finding images as a way of providing hope and inspiration to show there is light at the end of the tunnel.

The Institute, he said, had already successfully unearthed powerful descriptions from a series of writing and poetry competitions over the past six years that have resulted in books on subjects ranging from teenage depression to bipolar disorder and addressing their impact, as undertaken in the soon to be released publication on tackling mood disorders in the workplace.

In addition, we have seen illustrations so cleverly used by Matthew Johnstone to tell the story *I Had a Black Dog*. Similarly, artwork, such as the Cunningham Dax Collection, has sought to destigmatise and inspire.

Photography had been the "missing link".

The three independent Judges in the photographic competition were well-known photographers Paul Blackmore and John Bader and Nikon Australia Assistant General Manager, Robert Lindsay.

Winner of the first prize, a Nikon D5000 SLR twin lens kit (valued at \$1699) was Nicolette Quittner from Mosman NSW. Nicolette described her photograph as the "confrontation of what is seemingly negative with something positive, vibrant and hopeful."

Nicolette asks the question of what is the instigating factor that marks the difference between a good day and a bad day. In her mind, it is resilience, strength and attitude – and, which on that particular day, says 'no' to negative thinking.

Second prize of a Nikon COOLPIX P100 digital camera (valued at \$599) was awarded to Ebony Bejah from Grindelwald in Tasmania while third placegetter, Richard Bartlett from Marylands, NSW, received a Nikon COOLPIX S4000 digital camera (valued at \$299).

A Black Dog Institute staff award for a Nikon S3000 digital camera (valued at \$199) was awarded to Maja and Freya Baska from Darlinghurst in NSW.

Their photo, titled "Bed of Stars", was a joint entry from the two sisters. Their imaginative photograph depicts a young person in a boat with their dog. "We turned our bed into an exploration boat. A boat that takes you places rather than holds you down," said the sisters.

Judges also awarded Highly Commended certificates to a number of the participants, including a 13-year-old schoolgirl from Tingha in country NSW. Kelly McMartin provided the following description of her photograph (shown on the Black Dog Institute website www.blackdoginstitute.org.au)

"My photograph is of two girls (who are actually the same girl), showing that with love and hope you can come out of the darkness into the bright and wonderful world of happiness.

"My entry symbolizes being in the darks of depression, and with help, coming into a brighter and happier world. It shows that with love you can hold on even when you feel like letting go. There is always a brighter side, a way out. Love is the key to happiness."

The top 30 photographs chosen by the Judges are shown on the Black Dog Institute website (www.blackdoginstitute.org.au) and include the winners as well as entrants who received Highly Commended awards.

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