

Festival brings out the artistic side of doctors

arts issue

This year's Doc-Art Festival again showcased the artistic talents of doctors Australia wide.

Shannon McKenzie

IMPROVISED poetry, a Vivaldi "mash-up" and moving tales of love and loss all made their appearance at this year's Doc-Art Festival.

The annual event, hosted by the Creative Doctors Network (CDN), drew entrants from around the country, with finalists from South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania making the journey to Sydney to showcase their talents.

Doctors were able to submit work in five categories – writing, visual arts, photography, film and performance – with this year's theme being 'Life's journey'.

In the writing category, Julie Chevalier of the NSW Writers Centre judged Queensland GP Dr Genevieve Yates the winner. Her short story, *Life in Limbo, Destination Denied*, told of the anguished thoughts of a young woman whose multiple attempts to have a child had failed.

The People's Choice Award in this category went to Sydney GP Dr Jan Orman, who wrote the delightful *Roy*, a story about a friendship between a professor and an eccentric young man.

There were just two finalists in the visual arts category, and each walked away with an award. Dr Marc Grunseit's *Genesis* impressed judge Mary Brown, visual artist and lecturer at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Set in the frame of a beat-up television, the eye-catching work was made of pieces of coloured glass that Dr Grunseit had meticulously stretched and manipulated before firing into the shape of a television screen.

The piece, he explained, was a comment on an article in a lifestyle magazine that referred to an LCD TV as the last piece of "art" a person would need.

"I was outraged. Television has become such a focus of our lives – so many people now live their lives through it," he said.

Dr Anne Lourandos, a Sydney GP, won the People's Choice Award for two portraits.

Dr Bridgette Watts won the photography category with *Chickenman* and *Mother and Baby*. *Chickenman* was a powerful portrait of an older Nepalese



- 1 Dr Jan Orman reads her story, *Roy*, about a university professor and her eccentric young friend.
- 2 Is television art? Dr Marc Grunseit juxtaposes the two concepts with his sculpture, *Genesis*.
- 3 Dr McPhillips delves into the decaying mind of Shakespeare's Prospero.
- 4 If it ain't baroque, don't fix it... Dr Genevieve Yates plays a cheeky mash-up of Vivaldi and disco.
- 5 Dr Bridgette Watts eyes her *Chickenman*.

man whose daily task was to carry 50 chickens up a mountain, using a basket attached to his head. Dr Watts had photographed the man on a steep mountain path that led to his village, and Ms Brown commended the colours and composition of the unique shot.

Dr Jolita Theron won the People's Choice Award with *Faces*, a close-up portrait of herself and an Indigenous man.

The film category was won by Dr Grace Walpole, of the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne. *Tuesday* is a five-minute film

about an ordinary couple and their morning routine; however, it is told through a continuous, flowing dance. As well as writing and directing the piece, Dr Walpole was one of the dancers.

The intent of the film, she said, was about capturing those "moments which are invisible".

The performance category saw four doctors produce seven performances. Among them was Dr Dennis Lewis-Enright, who once again amazed the audience with his improvised poetry; and Dr Brendan McPhillips, who gave

a stirring performance about a fallen leader's descent into madness. His piece, *Death of Prospero*, picked up the story line of *The Tempest* where Shakespeare left it and gave a dark twist to the 'happily ever after' ending the Bard had originally devised.

After finishing as the runner-up last year, psychiatrist Dr Loyola McLean this year won the category with her original composition, *Surrender*. The song was about life's tribulations, and her passionate performance won much praise from judge Amelia

Tranter, a graduate of the Australian Academy of Dramatic Arts.

Dr Yates took out a second award when she was handed the People's Choice Award for her quirky composition, *Vivaldi Will Survive*, an inspired combination of the famous composer's *Concerto in A Minor* and Gloria Gaynor's disco anthem, *I Will Survive*.

CDN president Dr Tony Chu hailed the festival as another success and praised the high standards of entrants.