



CHAPEL HILL

From 115 entries to 1:
Chapel Hill's inaugural Horizons Art Prize
awards \$5,000 prize to artist Stephanie Radok



Radok's "It's Morning!", 2025 Horizon Art Prize Winner

Photo Credit: Meaghan Coles

McLaren Vale winery Chapel Hill has unveiled the winning art and artist for its inaugural Horizons Art Prize. The \$5,000 acquisitive prize has been awarded to Stephanie Radok for her work "It's Morning!" which will now hang in the winery's iconic 1865 tasting chapel as part of its permanent collection. All finalist artwork will be exhibited at the Chapel Hill Tasting Room from Sunday, 3 August, for the duration of the South Australian Living Arts Festival.

The judging panel included respected local arts figures Adele Sliuzas, Visual Arts Curator at The Mill Adelaide, and Maria Zagala, Curator of Prints, Drawings and Photographs at the Art Gallery of South Australia. They were joined by Chapel Hill's Chief Winemaker, Michael Fragos, whose long standing passion for visual arts helped guide the selection.

Together, the panel reviewed more than 120 submissions from 86 entrants spanning painting, drawing, photography, and multimedia. The panel then selected 11 entries as finalists for the exhibition, with the winner selected on the opening day of the exhibition.

Judge Adele Sliuzas commented, "I love the evocative nature of Stephanie's painting, it makes me feel the frosty morning air on my fingertips. The painting looks amazing in the Chapel, the arbour of the tree mirroring the architecture of the building and referencing the landscape outside."

"It was an honour to be a Judge for the inaugural Chapel Hill Horizon's Art Prize. I was very impressed with the quality of entries. It was so fantastic to see such a broad range of interpretations of the McLaren Vale landscape, ranging from traditional paintings, to intricately woven works."

Judge Maria Zagala also commented on Radok's piece, "Subtle, poetic and evocative, Stephanie Radok's winning work "It's Morning!" depicts a large tree against a delicately rendered landscape. The three horizon bands suggest the ever present landscape experienced on a frosty morning. The artist's spontaneous mark-making distills the essence of the experience, the white paint on the unprimed canvas conveying the cold frost. Radok's humble and direct painting sings with a quiet intensity"

Stephanie Radok is an artist and writer based in South Australia. She trained at art schools in Canberra and Adelaide. Her artwork includes drawing, painting and printmaking. *The Sublingual Museum*, a survey exhibition of Radok's artwork shown alongside selected works from the Flinders University Art Museum collection, was shown there in 2011. Her recent one person exhibitions include *Tree Stories* (2023) at Urrbrae House Museum, and *Inside A Book* (2025) at the Institute Gallery, State Library of South Australia.

The judges also recognised a 'Highly Commended' entrant - Elisabeth Blomberg's "Where the Earth Kisses the Sky".

Zagala commented, "The judges were impressed with Elisabeth's weaving, for its technical mastery and ability to communicate a sense of vitality and the rhythms of the seasons. Its composition dramatically contrasts the earth and sky."

The prize theme, '*Horizons*' encouraged artists to '*explore the dual meaning of the word: both the physical line where the earth meets the sky and the symbolic concept of something that might be attained*'. All artworks were asked to include a distinct horizon line to be featured in the exhibition.

Art has long been part of Chapel Hill's identity. Chief Winemaker Michael Fragos, who this year is celebrating his 22nd vintage at Chapel Hill, is an avid visual art enthusiast and the walls of the winery's onsite chapel are adorned with artworks for visitors to enjoy.

"When we launched this inaugural award we had no idea that it would be embraced with such enthusiasm and provocative creativity," says Michael Fragos, Chief Winemaker at Chapel Hill.

"The level of passion, flair and skill exhibited in the submissions has been truly humbling. We are so proud to be able to showcase these amazing artists and their intimate creations, we now look forward with excitement as to the direction this competition will lead us in the future."

Radok's work "It's Morning!" will be on display as part of the permanent collection in Chapel Hill's tasting room. All finalists' work will be available for sale during the Horizons exhibition at Chapel Hill.

All artworks that were shortlisted as finalists are now on display at Chapel Hill's tasting room, Chapel Hill Rd & Chaffey's Rd, McLaren Vale SA 5171. The exhibition is on display from now until 6th September as part of this year's South Australian Living Arts Festival. The shortlisted works include:

- Stephanie Radok- It's Morning!
- Elisabeth Blomberg - Where the Earth Kisses the Sky
- Carolyn Corletto - Her Love Shines Over My Horizon, She's a Slice of Heaven
- Suzie Lockery - Beyond the Horizon
- John Lacey - Looking North
- Mark Judd - Chapel Hill Looking West
- Renata Rozenblds - The Source
- Christiane Niess - Road to Nowhere
- Bridget Uppill - Of Creatures Great and Small
- Harrison Vial - Night over the Vale
- Connor McPhail - Nicko's Couch

About the judges:

Adele Sliuzas

Adele Sliuzas is an arts writer, curator, and emerging textile artist based in Kaurua Yarta/Adelaide. As the Visual Arts Curator at The Mill, Adele leads the Visual Arts program and works closely with the local artist community. They are the Assistant Curator at JamFactory and previously worked as the Writer Coordinator for Neoterica 2024. Adele's writing has appeared in arts publications such as Artlink, Fine Print, Runway, Art and Australia, and Un. Since 2022, Adele has expanded their practice to include textile art, using materials to explore family history and the poetics of 'Australian' space. Their weaving, referencing traditional Lithuanian motifs, delves into themes of identity and family. In 2024, Adele's solo exhibition Catchment received nominations for two SALA awards, and their work Flows that Trouble Me was a finalist in the Heysen Prize. In 2025, they will present a solo exhibition titled All the Fires that Burn at the Pod Gallery.

Maria Zagala

Maria Zagala is Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs at the Art Gallery of South Australia, where she has worked since 2006. From 1996 to 2006, she was Assistant Curator of Prints & Drawings at the National Gallery of Victoria. Maria completed her Master of Fine Arts at La Trobe University. She has curated numerous works on historical and contemporary art including A Beautiful Life: Italian prints from Mantegna to Piranesi (2010), Tracey Moffatt: Narratives (with Stephen Zagala, 2011), Trent Parke: the Black Rose (with Julie Robinson, 2015) and Brent Harris: Surrender & Catch (2023-24). She was the editor of the monograph Ian North: art/work/words (2019). From 2006 to 2019, she was Affiliate Lecturer in the Art History Program, School of History & Politics at the University of Adelaide. She has served on the boards of the Australian Experimental Art Foundation (2009-2012), Artlink (2011), and The Nora Heysen Foundation (2022- continuing).

Michael Fragos

After 22 vintages on the tools, Chief Winemaker, Michael Fragos knows every vine and every stone that makes up Chapel Hill. Unsurprisingly, Michael's keen eye for detail has earned him a reputation for crafting wines of exceptional quality. Michael is one of only three winemakers to have been crowned McLaren Vale's Bushing Monarch three times: in 1997 and 1999, and with Chapel Hill in 2010. His affable manner has remained

unaffected by critical acclaim and success. Michael's connection to his team and network of long-term growers reflects the importance of community in regions like McLaren Vale. In his spare time, Michael loves to spin some vinyl. His love for music has amassed (at current count) 1596 records!

For more information about Chapel Hill, please visit:

www.chapelhillwine.com.au

[@chapelhillwine](https://www.instagram.com/chapelhillwine)

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