

MEDIA ALERT: EMBARGOED UNTIL 8pm (AEST) OCTOBER 14

Finalists in the 2013 Nikon-Walkley Awards for Excellence in Photojournalism announced, along with the inaugural “Photo of the Year” Award-winner.



A poignant image of asylum seekers emerging from below decks to catch a breath of fresh air on a boat bound for Australia has been named the inaugural “Photo of the Year” in the 2013 Nikon-Walkley Awards for Excellence in Photojournalism.

The image, shot by Barat Ali Batoor and published in *The Global Mail*, is the first of five winners to be announced in the prestigious annual awards, along with the winners of the Nikon-Walkley Portrait Prize and Nikon-Walkley Community/Regional Prize.

All finalists detailed below were announced tonight at a cocktail event at the State Library of New South Wales and simultaneously at Gallery Eleven 40 in Melbourne.

To view a gallery of finalists’ work, visit www.flickr.com/photos/walkleyfoundation/sets

This year is the first time a “photo of the year” has been selected from all entrants to the awards to embody the year in news.

Walkley Advisory Board member Nick Moir, a photographer with *The Sydney Morning Herald*, said the new award was instigated to acknowledge a single image of standout quality and impact.

Moir said Batoor’s photo was a great example as it had captured a powerful moment as desperate people embarked on a desperate journey.

“He is a photographer who has put himself at great risk and come away with an image of thoughtful composition and of the terrible voyage which has killed hundreds,” Moir said.

“The image immediately stood out as it is an image of fear, hope and curiosity of a people held far back from the Australian media; the faces convey the anxiety as the viewer’s eye bounces from face to face.”

Batoor began documenting the displacement of his own Hazara people in 2005 as they fled from Afghanistan and Pakistan to safety abroad.



PLATINUM PARTNERS



GOLD PARTNERS



SILVER MEDIA PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS



SILVER PARTNERS



PARTNERS



In September 2012, he became part of the story, fleeing Kabul with his camera in hand. Travelling with 92 other passengers hidden below deck to escape detection by the Water Police, he shot a selection of images capturing the long route through Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and by sea to Australia.

"It is a journey of sudden midnight departures, long road trips, surreptitious transactions, treks through jungles, and terror at sea," Batoor said, of his essay.

"It is a journey that mixes fear, boredom and extreme loneliness. A journey that sometimes ends in joy, sometimes in despair and sometimes in death. Few people – except for the refugees themselves – ever get to see this reality."

Batoor's boat ran aground on the rocks and his camera was ruined but remarkably, his images survived. He was then detained and robbed by Indonesian authorities but escaped. Many of the other people he met on his arduous journey didn't survive.

"In the end, I was one of the lucky ones," he said. "Unlike most Hazaras, I was quickly found to be a refugee and resettled in Melbourne. In the meantime, I kept taking photos ... my hope is that, at the very least, these pictures can tell their story."

Moir said the judges had seen some great photo essays from a diverse range of subjects but the standard of international stories was particularly high this year, with huge effort and commitment shown to rarely covered events.

Nikon Australia brand marketing manager Kylie Dredge said this year's finalists reflected an amazing series of images from talented photographers around the country.

"Nikon are incredibly proud of our ongoing partnership with the Walkley Foundation, which continues to review photo competition categories in order to showcase and celebrate the expertise and commitment of Australian press photographers. Once again, entrants have produced newsworthy images that are both inspiring and of incredible quality," she said.

Finalists in the 2013 Nikon-Walkley Awards for Excellence in Photojournalism, all proudly sponsored by Nikon, are:

Nikon-Walkley Press Photographer of the Year

Brian Cassey, *The Weekend Australian*, *The Global Mail*, *The Courier-Mail* and AAP. A moving portrait of a grown-up victim of child abuse anchors Cassey's collection of freelance assignments for a range of media outlets. Politics, news, features and action are all captured with style, from Indigenous stockmen to a total eclipse.

Kate Geraghty, Fairfax Media. From world-exclusive images of Bali bomber Idris and Hamas leader Khalid Mishal, to Indigenous wrestlers and debutantes, Geraghty brings integrity, empathy and gravity to every story. She is a consummate visual storyteller.

Quinn Rooney, Getty Images. It takes a deep understanding of a sport to anticipate and capture those split-second peak moments – a punch landing, a motorbike crashing, a Socceroo celebrating or a synchronised swimmer tossed in the air. Rooney nails the emotion and energy of sport with technical skill and creativity.

News Photography

Kate Geraghty, Fairfax Media, "Asylum". Simply by holding up their identification cards, a group of asylum seekers from Iran were no longer nameless and faceless. Geraghty captured that moment through the Manus Island airport's security fence to illustrate the debate about the PNG solution.

Chris McGrath, Getty Images, "King Norodom Sihanouk". The death of the Cambodian king sent the country into three months of mourning and people gathered in their thousands at the royal palace to pay tribute. McGrath documented the quiet beauty of the scenes.

Colin Murty, News Corp Australia, "Final journey". The image of a tiny coffin being loaded onto a plane on Christmas Island gave a gut-wrenching human touchpoint to the asylum seeker debate. It took research and skill for Murty to capture the drowned 10-week-old baby's final journey.

Feature/Photographic Essay

Barat Ali Batoor, *The Global Mail*, "Hazara exodus". In a courageous photo essay, Batoor documents the journey – his own journey – of displaced Hazara people from Afghanistan and Pakistan as they seek asylum in Australia. Batoor's camera was ruined when the boat ran aground, but his incredible images survived.

Ed Giles, Getty Images, "The overthrow of Egypt's President Morsi". There were photographers from all over the world documenting the protests and violence on Egypt's streets, but Giles delivers a uniquely intimate version of the deadly events from within the crowd.

Steve Tickner, The Irrawaddy News Group, "KIA under siege by the Burmese Army". Tickner put his life on the line to photograph incredible images of person-to-person warfare in a remote and barely reported conflict.

Sport Photography

Wolter Peeters, Fairfax Media, "2013 Sydney International Rowing Regatta". Making the most of an almost mystical pre-dawn glow, Peeters captures the focus and dedication of rowers preparing for a day of competition. The composition distils a moment of serenity from a frantic time of day.

Quinn Rooney, Getty Images, "Australian Swimming Championships". Shooting in black and white, Rooney brings a fresh perspective to one of our most-loved sports. The overhead angle and play of light warps surfacing swimmers into abstract works of art.

Cameron Spencer, Getty Images, "The World Athletics Championships". The cream of track and field athletes gathered in Moscow for the 14th World Athletic Championships. Spencer's series sings with their energy and emotion, from pole vaulters to sprinters.

Nikon-Walkley Portrait Prize

Winner – Brendan Esposito, Fairfax Media, "Dini Coral". Witchcraft and sorcery have long been practised in Papua New Guinea, but many now oppose the old traditions. Women accused of being witches are the target of brutal attacks. There have been cases of murder, torture, and rape. Some victims have even been burned alive. In Esposito's image, Dini Coral, from Kundiawa in Simbu province, stands with her husband. Accused of being a "sanguma" or witch, she shows her scars from a brutal attack.

Nikon-Walkley Community/Regional Prize

Winner – Marc McCormack, *The Cairns Post*, "Pictures from *The Cairns Post*". Marc McCormack showed creativity in covering the range of stories regional photographers are faced with every day. From illustrating a heat wave with an acrobatic dog, to sporting action at a rodeo and coaxing a tiny newborn turtle from his shell, McCormack brings the stories of his Cairns community to life.

Winners of remaining categories will be announced at the 58th annual Walkley Awards for Excellence in Journalism in Brisbane on November 28.

The 2013 Nikon-Walkley Press Photography Exhibition will be projected onto the walls of the AMP building at Circular Quay, corner of Young Street and Alfred Street from 8.00pm to 11.00pm over the weekend of October 18 to 20 as part of City of Sydney Art & About.

Finalists' work will also be toured around the nation in a series of free exhibitions open to the public:

- **Sydney: October 14, 2013 – December 15, 2013 at The State Library Of NSW**
- **Melbourne: October 14, 2013 – November 9, 2013 at Eleven40 Studio Gallery**
- **Adelaide: December 21, 2013 – February 16, 2014 at Adelaide Festival Hall**
- **Brisbane: January 14, 2014 – February 10, 2014 at The Brisbane Powerhouse**
- **Perth: February 18, 2014 – March 15, 2014 at the Epsom Gallery**
- **Newcastle: May 2014 at Lovett Gallery, Newcastle Region Library**

For media enquiries including requests for finalists' photos, contact Walkley Foundation communications and partnerships manager Flip Prior on (02) 9333 0956, 0409 912 955 or flip.prior@walkleys.com