

2012 Winners

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List of all 2012 Ossie Awards winners.

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There were 115 entries into the 2012 Ossie Awards.

Best Print News Story (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Matt Deighton, Editor-in-chief, Messenger Newspapers, Adelaide

Winners: Edward Tavanavanua and Parijata Gurdayal, University of the South Pacific

['Pageant scrutiny'](#)

'Pageant scrutiny' was the standout entry. It was the sole story which actually broke news and generated a strong outcome. It was a genuine scoop, revealing a host of flaws with the Miss Fiji pageant, including exposing the lack of credibility in the judging process and the fact the winner was underage. According to the entry statement, she ended up forfeiting her crown and the story was picked up across the region.

Highly commended: Emma Kennedy, James Cook University

'Fight for centre starts again'

Emma succeeded where several other entries did not - she captured the essence of the people actually affected by an issue, rather than relying on umbrella comments from polities or faceless spokespeople.

Highly commended: Brendan Lucas, La Trobe University

'Camel racing's Aussie sheik up'

Brendan's was simply a great get; a quirky human interest piece and a terrific tabloid Page 3.

Best Broadcast News Story (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Alan Atkinson, Day Editor, ABC News, Adelaide

Winner: Susan Cheong, University of Technology, Sydney

'Online dating scams'

Good little story. Great start. Straight to the point. An emotional hook. Good vision. Well told. The ACCC talent gives the story a strong foundation, as did the police interview. Susan should be commended for digging out the victim and all the relevant the information – though I would have liked a little more about the conman – where he said he lived etc (if he did). The story is well shot and well edited. The PTC has useful information – in fact the size and cost of the problem could perhaps have been stressed more. One question: we hear at the start that she lost \$100,000, then hear later she invested \$10,000. We don't hear how and why and over what period she lost the other \$90,000. That would have been helpful, but it does not mar the story.

Highly commended: Isabel Roe, Queensland University of Technology

'Parliament sits'

A nice imaginative start to an otherwise predictable story of the first day of Parliament. The story was well shot and well edited with a good voice over. The grabs from Parliament were ok – but threatened to take the story towards another issue. However, the PTC brought the yarn back to the theme. Good grab at the end. She shows promise with tight scripting and an ability to think differently.

Best Broadcast Current Affairs or Issues Based Story (\$200) by an Undergraduate or a Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Nance Haxton, ABC Radio current affairs, Brisbane

Winner: Carl Smith, University of Queensland

['Humans, robots and the future'](#)

Carl's radio documentary on robotics and how robots play an increasingly pivotal role in all our lives was impressive on a number of levels. He made a difficult and complex subject accessible to listeners such as myself who had no previous interest or expertise in this topic, with excellent scripting, story construction and choice of interviewees. The story angles regarding human beings' surprising involvement and attachment to their robot "friends" and behaviour versus appearance were fascinating and well explored. There was a good mix of interviews and music to give the documentary light and shade and keep the listener involved in the topic. Carl has a strong voice and professional presentation for his young years which was engaging to the listener. The face to face interviews were particularly strong and brought the listener into this world in a much more involved way. That it was broadcast on Radio National's Future Tense program is further proof of the quality of Carl's story.

Highly commended: Alex Burgess, RMIT University

['Students escape modern life in the Aussie bush'](#)

Alex's excellent production values and scripting have combined to make a seamless and involving radio piece. The editing was excellent with no jarring changes of pace, and excellent use of face to face interviews and atmosphere from Mittagundi. Alex's voice is strong and engaging to the listener, with good pace and expression. Her use of music was great and provided much needed light and shade for the radio current affairs package. I can imagine this story being broadcast on ABC Radio without any changes. Great ending and also good segues. Lovely fades between interviews, vox and atmos.

Highly commended: 'Noongar Dandjoo', Curtin University students

This collaboration which produced four one hour episodes of current affairs television was impressive on a number of levels. The production values were very high and the presentation was relaxed yet authoritative. The news packages featured as part of the extended program were excellent, particularly the story which featured an interview with WA's Chief Justice Wayne Martin. To gain access to such a high profile interviewee is a credit to the production team and his views balanced what could otherwise have become a one-sided piece. The Noongar Radio story was also excellent and showed with sensitivity the reality of life inside prison. The panel was a good idea although perhaps a bit long and drawn out in parts to keep the audience involved. Overall an impressive effort that was broadcast on National Indigenous TV – quite an achievement for a group of students and testament to the quality of their work.

Best Feature Article (Print) (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Max Anderson, Editor Adelaide Hills Magazine

Winner: Karen Abplanalp, AUT University

['Blood money'](#)

Abplanalp's piece demonstrates investigative savvy and a command of the feature writer's art. Incredibly assured and perfectly metered, it allows the facts and interviewees to do the hard lifting without confounding narrative or surrendering pace. Any editor serving educated readers would be delighted to receive it.

Best Feature Article (Online) (\$200) by an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Steve Larkin, AAP Adelaide bureau chief

Winner: Kate Horowitz, University of Technology, Sydney

['Stolen lives'](#)

Kate delved into a significant topic of Aboriginal suicide rates and did so in a manner which left the reader with a broader understanding of a difficult issue. Kate incorporated terrific research, which was well supported by interviews with family members and society figures. The interviews offered human and personal elements which added great depth to the story, which was written in an engaging style.

Best Online Story (\$200) by an undergraduate or Postgraduate Student

Judged by: Andrew McGarry, ABC Online

Winner: Paul Farrell, University of Technology, Sydney

['Our contract with Serco'](#)

A well written story that reveals new information about a highly controversial subject – Australia's management of asylum seekers. A model example of the use of FoI, good use of the medium by allowing readers instant access to an important contract between the government and a key private contractor, and good use of contacts to source a non-redacted copy to reveal the full details. A genuine scoop which was widely reported by major news organisations.

Highly commended: Susan Cheong, University of Technology, Sydney

['Korean-Australian woman finds she was falsely adopted'](#)

Excellent researched story on the little-known area of Korean adoption. Strong, personal, affecting writing brings out one woman's story and her journey to find her birth family. Gives an excellent perspective on Korea and the human side of adoption.

Highly commended: Melanie Barrie, Monash University

['Controversial rates hike to quash development of Highbury'](#)

A hyperlocal story, but an important issue pointing to poor decisions by council, the holes in their argument and the impact on development and consumers. Strong use of the medium with pictures, infographics, lots of hyperlinks, and a well-cut video interview.

Best Story by an International Student (\$200)

Judged by: Rebecca DiGirolamo, senior reporter, The Southern Cross

Winner: Gulseren Olcum, University of Technology, Sydney

['Iranians the black sheep of detention'](#)

Gulseren's story on the death of Iranian asylum seeker Ali Rahimi in Villawood earlier this year gives a face to the many refugees awaiting an outcome in Australia detention facilities. Her interviews with a fellow Villawood asylum seeker of Rahimi and a doctor who assessed him prior to his death in detention paints a sad picture and one rarely seen, nor accessed by the wider public. The story personalises the number of people who die in detention and questions the issue of cultural integration of asylum seekers. Her nose for news led to her further investigation after reading a notice of Rahimi's death in detention (one of three in a short period of time). Her writing was clear and concise. Gulseren's second submission – a radio story on the impact the robbery of two Chinese students in Sydney had on the local university's international student body – was also of commendable quality.

Best use of Convergent Media (\$200)

Judged by: Chris Campbell, Director, Our World Today

Winner: Dangerous Grounds Project, Monash University

The team at Monash have collaborated in a highly professional manner to create an interactive online blog exploring the Victorian EPA's contaminated sites. They have provided the reader with an informing and diverse range of information, but kept such content in line with their vision. The platform gave a good level of interactivity, providing audio, video, and images to accompany stories, as well as a 'documents' section to share their resources with the reader. Generally, the content was of a high editorial standard, and the research and investigations were highly commendable. The exploration into the subject was deep and thorough, giving a true reflection of investigative journalism content. There was an inclusion of social media, but the link was not prominent enough. Links to other social media including direct the Youtube channel and even image galleries, such as Pinterest, would have further increased traffic to their site. Great collaboration and a very informative online publication.

Highly commended: Alex Perrottet, AUT University

'Not eccentric at all'

Engaging and personal choice of story – Great Interview.

Highly commended: Yasmin Noone, University of Technology, Sydney

Yasmin created a niche and well developed online personality and presented a conversational and engaging tone with her content.

Best Photojournalism (\$200) (Undergraduate or Postgraduate) (judged on the merit of both the photographs and accompanying text)

Judged by: Sally Harding, freelance photographer

Winner: Anette Moen, La Trobe University

'Burlesque'

This entry is the clear winner with image consistency, depth and detail. Each photograph is bold and interesting, taking the viewer on a rollercoaster ride of drama, humour and excitement before suddenly skidding to a halt in the still of night. The accompanying caption is the perfect introduction, proving that less is often more, and allows the picture story to unfold at its own pace. Well done on a committed and revealing project (no pun intended) that displays exceptional discipline, intuition and interpretation of a subject.

Highly Commended: Lucien Alperstein, University of Technology, Sydney

['Dumpster Diving'](#)

As media needs change and become more demanding it is encouraging to see a top-notch story and quality images produced by the same operator. The subject matter is edgy and the writing style is slick, intelligent and enjoyable, greatly supported by photographs that draw attention and make for a colourful layout design. I'd like to see this entrant out of a dumpster and back out on the street to bring more of the same (please). A thought-provoking and well-constructed picture story.

Dr Charles Stuart Prize for best student publication (for publications in any medium)

Judged by: Paul Starick, Head of News, Advertiser Newspapers, Adelaide

Winner: Wansolwara, University of the South Pacific

This entry stood out because the journalists produced highly relevant and interesting stories in the public interest. The front-page expose on the rigging of the Miss World Fiji beauty pageant was a great example of investigative journalism, both in the research and writing. Similarly, another front-page story about untreated forest timber leading to termite infestation in numerous homes was agenda-setting journalism of direct relevance to a large amount of readers.

Not only did the stories in this publication stand out from the crowd, the journalists worked under trying circumstances. *Wansolwara* was subject to censorship under martial law. Yet it campaigned for press freedom in numerous articles - surely something that must test the courage of any journalist.

Mindframe for Journalism Education Prize for mental health reporting (\$200)

(Formerly the "Hunter Institute Response Ability Prize")

Judged by: Marc Bryant, Mindframe National Media Initiative Acting Program Manager (Hunter Institute of Mental Health), and Jenyfer Locke, Senior Project Officer (Mindframe)

Winner: Lucie Robson, University of Technology, Sydney

'Antenatal depression'

Lucie has put together a well-researched factual story regarding the issue of antenatal depression. Lucie used reputable expert comment and lived experience to emphasize understanding of the underlying causes of the illness. Importantly, Lucie's story encouraged the benefit of seeking professional help early for recovery and the importance of antenatal screening for the condition. Lucie also highlighted a recent NSW campaign to support perinatal and women's health and provided detailed background, context and facts, warning signs, symptomatology and help-seeking information. Lucie's responsible approach was even more important given that the article was published on an online parenting website, with the need for extra caution with accuracy and Mindframe guidelines due to the potential audience impact if inaccurate.

Highly Commended: Stephanie Capper, Griffith University

'Anxious for change: finding a pathway through anxiety and depression'

Stephanie used her own initiative to write an article for World Mental Health Week highlighting the illnesses of anxiety and depression. Stephanie took the opportunity to contact a reputable mental health organisation and talk to one of their national ambassadors with lived experience. The story provided accurate information on the illness and offered facts and information to audiences to improve community understanding.

The Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma Prize for reporting on violence, disaster or trauma in society (\$200)

Judged by: Cait McMahon

Winner: Alison Rae, University of Queensland

Alison's photographs of the protest of the Palestinian people of Bi' lin village allows the audience to experience something of the humanity of those involved in this struggle. Two photos in particular were poignant in doing this – the close up shot of the man sitting on the rock with a handkerchief to his face was sensitive and unobtrusive, yet displayed the personal nature of the struggle of his people. As was the shot of the man walking unarmed, over the hill past the tear gas towards the separation wall and potential military presence. The sequence of shots in total depicted a story of hope for justice and the struggle of the Palestinian people in an ethical and humane manner, without sentimentality.

Sally A. White Prize for Investigative Journalism (\$200) (Any medium)

Judged by: Sharon Mascall-Dare, freelance journalist

Winner: Karen Abplanalp, AUT University 'Blood Money'

Karen Abplanalp's investigation into human rights abuses at a copper and gold mine in West Papua is an outstanding piece of journalism. Her methodology is robust; her presentation compelling. Her work was

responsible for a national debate that, ultimately, persuaded the New Zealand Superannuation Fund to end its investment in the mine: her work held the Fund's "ethical" investment policies to account. "Blood Money" is exemplary in demonstrating investigative journalism as a medium for change, in the public interest.