

Gore,Charlotte, *'Energetic and unexpected'* painting wins 2024 Darling Portrait Prize, **ABC News**, 21 June 2024

**ABC NEWS**

## 'Energetic and unexpected' painting wins 2024 Darling Portrait Prize

By [Charlotte Gore](#)

Artist Noel McKenna has taken home the \$75,000 Darling Portrait Prize for his painting William Nuttall with horses in field.

The Darling Portrait Prize, awarded every two years to a painted portrait, was established to honour NPG founding patron L Gordon Darling AC CMG by celebrating art that explores the evolving notion of Australian identity.

McKenna's winning work depicts his long-time gallerist William 'Bill' Nuttall in what Ms Parker Philip described as an "energetic and unexpected portrait".

"The subject shares the work with the animals and the landscape," she said.

*"It is joyous in its execution and demonstrates the skill of an established Australian artist whose practice is assured in every way."*

McKenna has previously won the Sulman Prize in 1994, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales Trustees' prize for watercolour five times.

Several of his paintings from The Popular Pet Show featured at the NPG in 2016.

Ms Parker Philip said all of this year's prize winners cultivate "not a logic, but a sense of atmosphere and ambience".

*"What's emerged as the recurring beat in both of the prizes this year is a sense of the intimate, and the introspective," she said.*

"There's a pensiveness to many of the works on show, they're tender and thoughtful in who they depict – many of them mentors, fellow creatives, as well as close family members, and the self."



2024 Darling Portrait Prize winner William Nuttall with horses in field, 2023, by Noel McKenna. (Supplied: National Portrait Gallery.)



Noel McKenna's winning painting depicts his long-time gallerist William 'Bill' Nuttall. (Supplied: National Portrait Gallery)