

Brisbane Arts and Culture: News and events of the Brisbane Arts scene

Phil Brown, The Courier-Mail
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BRISBANE artist Monica Rohan is in the running for the prestigious Archibald Prize for portraiture after becoming a finalist with her portrait of fashion icons Easton Pearson.

It's a fitting tribute to Pam Easton and Lydia Pearson who recently announced their retirement from the business.

Rohan, 26, who lives at Kelvin Grove and is a graduate of the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, is the only resident Queensland artist to make the cut this year and she will fly to Sydney on Thursday to be on hand for Friday's announcement of the winner at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, home to the Archibald, Australia's most celebrated and often controversial art prize.



Monica Rohan's Archibald Prize finalist based on fashion icons Easton Pearson.

Rohan's colourful painting *Easton Pearson* shows the fashion duo swathed in fabric, their own fabric as it happens. "They gave me access to their archive and let me go through all their material," Rohan says. "All the textiles in the painting are from their collections."

Rohan, 26, is one of Queensland's hottest new talents. Her shows sell out quickly and she has already featured in a landmark survey exhibition of Queensland art at the Gallery of Modern Art in Brisbane. As talented as she is she is a bit shy so she got her Brisbane art dealer Jan Murphy to approach Pam Easton and Lydia Pearson.

“They are well known as advocates of the arts and luckily they agreed and they were every generous with their time,” Rohan says, “I went and did sketches first and then worked on the painting in my studio at home.”



Lydia Pearson and Pamela Easton, designers behind iconic Brisbane label Easton Pearson.

Rohan often paints fabric in her works but mostly they are self-portraits and this is the first time she has focused on someone else.

Whether she wins or not (she says another Queensland win is overdue) Rohan’s painting will be seen by everyone who sees the Archibald finalists exhibition which is on at the Art Gallery of New South Wales from this Saturday (July 16) until October 9 and regional tour of the show will follow. The Wynne and Sulman Prizes are also announced on Friday and some Queenslanders and former Queenslanders are in the running including talented Brisbane painter Arryn Snowball, who shows with Heiser Gallery in Fortitude Valley, Snowball is a finalist in the Sulman for his painting. *House of breath no 7.*