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Media Release

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Fake art exposure wins journalism prize

A television program exposing the fraudsters who faked the provenance of Australian paintings has won the Melbourne Press Club/ Trawalla Foundation Arts Journalism Scholarship for 2009.

The \$7500 prize was won by Quentin McDermott and colleagues at the ABC's Four Corners program. Their broadcast also identified art dealers whose deceptive practices artificially ramped up prices.

The prize, in its second year, was presented in Melbourne today by the director of the Trawalla Foundation, Carol Schwartz.

The judges said the program had helped make Australian art a fairer business and was a courageous expose of fraud and malpractice.

Highly commended was Andrew Stephens, of The Age, for an excellent portfolio of work, particularly his article *Healing Spirit*, which dealt with living art of healing ceremonies by Arnhem Land dancers at St Andrews in Victoria, in the aftermath of Black Saturday. Also highly commended was Jacqui Durrant, of Art Monthly Australia, for her thoughtful writing and willingness to embrace difficult topics like death and sexuality.

The winner of the scholarship receives \$7500 to visit an international arts festival, event or facility.

Carol Schwarz said the scholarship was aimed at broadening the perspective of Victorian arts journalism by exposing arts writers and broadcasters to international arts communities, exhibitions and institutions.

The Trawalla Foundation invests in ideas, innovation and scholarship in the arts, education and the environment.

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