

News Release

71st TEXACO CHILDREN'S ART COMPETITION WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Mayo artist is overall 2025 Competition winner

Dublin, 15th April 2025 — Young Mayo artist, Daniel Walsh — an 18-year old from Claremorris — has been chosen overall winner of this year's 71st Texaco Children's Art Competition, taking first prize in the senior 16-18 years age category.

His winning work, for which he receives a prize of €1,500, is entitled 'Colm' and is a painstakingly detailed portrait study in graphite pencil.

In choosing it as the overall prize winner in the Competition, Final Adjudicator and Chairperson of the judging panel — Irish visual artist, curator and educator — Pauline O'Connell described Daniel's artwork as "an exceptionally accomplished and delicately rendered portrait of an aged man in pencil. A quiet, contemplative and deeply human artwork that is worthy of the top prize in this year's Texaco Children's Art Competition.

"The subtle pale skin tones and grey facial hair fade into the distance as we are drawn to Colm's clear, averted eyes — deliberately darker in tone, they focus our gaze. The artist's ability—his instinct to observe, interpret, and create such a technically accurate portrait draws the viewer into a shared space with the subject," she added.

Completely self-taught, Daniel discovered his hidden talent for art on foot of receiving graphite pencils and an art easel as a gift last Christmas.

The inspiration, and person, in his prize-winning portrait is a local family friend, Colm. "I felt the expression and detail in Colm's face would make for an interesting portrait challenge to attempt," Daniel explains.

In winning the prestigious overall prize and first place in the Category A age group, Daniel and his fellow winners fought off the challenge from the young artists across Ireland who took part in the Competition. Amongst them are the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners and the fifteen Special Merit awards recipients in each of seven categories for which prizes are presented, including a category reserved for children with additional needs.

In **Category A** (16-18 years), other top winners were Waterford student, Megan Hogan (age 17), a pupil at Gaelcholáiste Phort Láirge, Ballygunner, who won second prize (€1,000) for her work entitled 'Tommy'. A multiple previous winner, Megan won first and second prize in in the 14-15 years age category in 2022 and 2023 respectively. Third prize (€750) went to Wicklow student, Amélie McAndrew (age 17), a pupil at Temple Carrig School, Greystones for her work entitled 'Beach Day'.

In **Category B** (14-15 years), first prize (€450) was won by Longford student, Abigail McCarthy (age 14), from Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon for her work entitled "'I'm Fine'. Second prize (€350) went to Kildare student, Mae Cowper Gray (age 15), from Cross & Passion College, Kilcullen for her work entitled 'Della's Resolve (My Determined Sister)'. A previous winner, Mae won first prize in the 9-11 years age category in 2021. Third prize (€250) was won by Galway student, Aibhlinn Faulkner (age 14), a pupil at Coláiste Éinde, Salthill for her work entitled 'My Grandad'. Aibhlinn won a Special Merit Award last year.

In **Category C** (12-13 years), first prize (€350) went to Dublin student, Layla Baker (age 12), from Dalkey School Project, Glenageary for her artwork entitled 'Grandad's Retirement Year'. No stranger to the Competition, Layla won a Special Merit Award last year. Second prize (€250) was won by 12-years old Clare student Emily Coffey, from C.B.S. Primary School, Ennis for her work entitled 'Warmth'. A previous winner, Emily won first prize in the 9-11 years age category last year. Third prize (€200) went to Meath student, Karile Packeviciute (age 12), from Clarke Art Studio, Ratoath for a work entitled 'My Reflection'.

In **Category D** (9-11 years), first prize (€250) has been won by 9-years old Dublin student, Anna Solenova, a pupil at St. Raphaela's Primary School, Stillorgan for her work entitled 'Got Caught! '. Anna won a Special Merit Award last year. Second prize (€200) was won by Meath student, Julian Zaman (age 11), from Clarke Art Studio, Ratoath for his work entitled 'The Machine In Me'. Last year, Julian won a Special Merit Award. Third prize (€150) went to Meath student, Charlotte Fitzpatrick (age 10) from Clarke Art Studio, Ratoath for her work entitled 'My Shiner'. Charlotte won a Special Merit Award in 2023.

In **Category E** (7-8 years), first prize (€200) was won by 8-years old Cavan student, Pierre Gaultier Swords, from Corlurgan National School, for his work entitled 'My Bro, My Bun'. A previous winner, Pierre won third prize in the 6 years and younger age category in 2022. Second prize (€150) was won by Cork student, Hazel O'Brien (age 8) from Ovens National School, for her work entitled 'Me, My Selfie and I'. Third prize (€125) went to Clare student, Fiadh Skerritt (age 8), from Ennis Art School for a work entitled 'Self Portrait — Dreaming'.

In **Category F** (6 years and younger) — the youngest age group in the Competition — first prize (€150) was won by 6-years old Clare student, Amelia Murray, from Ennis Art School, for her work entitled 'Best Friends'. Second prize (€125) went to Cork student, Donnacha Buckley Moloney (age 5), a pupil at Dromleigh National School, Kilmichael for his work entitled 'The Titanic'. Third prize (€100) was won by Dublin student, Hannah Daly (age 6), a pupil at St. Marnock's National School, Portmarnock for her work entitled 'Mrs. Cow'. Last year, Hannah won a Special Merit award in the 6 years and under age category.

In **Category G**, first prize of €1,500 was won by 17-years old Dublin student Ryan Duffy, from Sutton Park School, for his work entitled 'Trepidation'. No stranger to the Competition, Ryan won a Special Merit award in Category G last year. Second prize (€1,000) went to Cork artist, Brian Daly (age 18), a pupil at Skibbereen Community School, for his work entitled 'Still Life With Fruit'. Third prize (€200) was won by Louth student, Subinoy Bhakta (age 13), from The Arthouse, Drogheda, for a work entitled 'The Pigeon'. A previous winner, Subinoy won a Special Merit award in Category G in 2020.

Comment — James Twohig

Addressing prizewinners, parents and teachers present at a reception held in the Herbert Park Hotel, Dublin today (Tuesday, 15th April 2025), James Twohig, Director of Ireland Operations at Valero Energy (Ireland) Limited — the company that markets fuel in Ireland under the Texaco brand — praised all of the winners for their skill and enthusiasm and thanked the many teachers from schools throughout Ireland who have given their support to the Competition throughout its 71 year history.

"Once again, from the large volume of entries received and the incredible prize-winning artworks on display today, it is encouraging to see that young people in Ireland continue to view art as a preferred medium through which to exercise their imagination and express their creativity, despite the many other attractions that vie for their attention," Mr. Twohig said.

Judging

Final judging was carried out by the Chairperson of the judging panel, Pauline OConnell, Irish visual artist, curator and educator. Supporting her in the adjudication process was a group of preliminary judges, each one a distinguished figure in the world of art in Ireland. They are: Dr. Denise Ferran (artist, art historian, and former President of the Royal Ulster Academy); Eoin Butler (artist and lecturer in visual arts); Marie Connole (artist, teacher and previous Texaco Children's Art Competition winner); Noelle McAlinden (artist, curator and creative adviser) and Tara Butler-Frey (art teacher and ceramic artist).

Ireland's longest-running Sponsorship

The Texaco Children's Art Competition is popularly regarded as the longest-running sponsorship in the history of arts sponsoring in Ireland, with an unbroken history that dates back to the very first Competition held in 1955. This year, as has been the case throughout its life, it has been a platform on which young artists have had their talents recognised and a springboard on which many have risen to national prominence. Aside from giving students the space to give expression to their talent and skill, the Competition has focused a spotlight on the quality of art teaching in Irish schools and the importance that the educational establishment attaches to the subject of art education.

Past winners whose early interest in art and the arts may well have been encouraged by their participation in the Competition include artists, Robert Ballagh, Bernadette Madden, Dorothy Cross, and the late Graham Knuttel, fashion designer Paul Costelloe, and artist and former broadcaster Thelma Mansfield. Other notable past winners include former Minister, Ruairi Quinn (a four-times winner), communications consultant and broadcaster Terry Prone, former ICTU Secretary and Chairman of the Pension Authority David Begg, actress Jean Anne Crowley, musician Ethna Tinney, Trinity College Professor of Contemporary Irish History Eunan O'Halpin and the late novelist Clare Boylan.

ENDS.

Editor's Notes:

1. The Texaco Children's Art Competition is celebrating its 71st anniversary this year. For further information about the Competition, contact Ashley Hall at Hall PR on 01-660 9377 (office) or email pr@hall.ie. For more information on Valero Energy (Ireland) Limited, contact Bronagh Carron on (+353) 01 6258208 or email bronagh.carron@valero.com
2. Valero Energy (Ireland) Limited, a subsidiary of Valero Energy Corporation, markets fuel in Ireland under the Texaco brand. There are over 150 Texaco-branded service stations in Ireland and around 830 in the UK. Valero Energy (Ireland) Limited also provides aviation refueling services at Dublin and Shannon Airports, has an extensive commercial and industrial fuels business and holds an equity stake in one fuel storage facility in the Republic of Ireland. For more information, visit www.texaco.ie
3. Valero Energy Corporation, through its subsidiaries, is an international manufacturer and marketer of transportation fuels and petrochemical products. Valero is a Fortune 50 company based in San Antonio, Texas, United States and operates 15 petroleum refineries with a combined throughput capacity of approximately 3.2 million barrels per day, and 14 ethanol plants with a combined production capacity of 1.73 billion gallons per year. The petroleum refineries are located in the US, Canada and the UK, and the ethanol plants are located in the Mid-Continent region of the US. Valero also is a joint venture partner in Diamond Green Diesel, which operates a renewable diesel plant in Norco, Louisiana. Diamond Green Diesel is North America's largest biomass-based diesel plant. Valero sells its products in the wholesale rack or bulk markets in the US, Canada, the UK, Ireland and Latin America. Approximately 7,000 outlets carry Valero's brand names. Please visit www.valero.com for more information.