



Winners of 2010 Young Commonwealth Competitions announced

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) has been running international creative competitions for young people for more than one hundred years. For the very first time in 2010, these competitions were brought together as one exciting awards scheme, including writing, film and photography categories. All three competitions took the theme 'Science, technology and Society'.

* **The Commonwealth Essay Competition** is the world's oldest and largest youth writing competition attracting more than 50,000 entries from around the Commonwealth each year.

In 2010, for the first time in more than 25 years, the top prize was awarded to a UK-based entrant, Lars Gladhaug, whilst 12 year old Sri Lankan, Samm Pecht, triumphed in the Junior category.

Essay Competition prizes were awarded to:

Senior Prize	Lars Gladhaug, UK, age 18
Senior Runner- Up	Jia Ying Lim, Singapore, age 15
Junior Prize	Samm Pecht, Sri Lanka, age 12
Junior Runner- Up	Sharuka Wikramanayake, Sri Lanka, age 14

Eight further commendations were made for a range of writing skills including humour, use of language, insight and creative writing to entrants from Canada, Singapore, Malaysia, India and Bangladesh.

Thanks must go to the many thousands of young people who entered this year's competition; to the fantastic team of volunteers who assessed the entries, ably led by Charles Kemp; and to award-winning children's science author, Nicola Davies who took on the unenviable task of making the final judgment.

* **The Commonwealth Photographic Awards** have been running since the 1990s, but 2010 marked the first year that they were administered by the RCS. With more than 200 entries from 36 countries around the world, competition was fierce.

Photo Competition prizes were awarded to:

Class A (age 18-30)	Gold: Madhabi Das Bhattacharyya, India, age 22 Silver: Zoey Heath, Canada, age 24
Class B (under 18)	Gold: Kimberley Sue, Trinidad & Tobago, age 16 Silver: Tom Niu, Canada, age 16

Bronze awards went to young photographers from India, Canada, Australia and Pakistan.

Thanks go to the 200 talented young photographers, representing 36 countries, who entered this year's competition; and to the judges, photographer Michael Hallet, journalist Helen Perry, Commonwealth Scholar and artist Johan Thom, and Robert Wooding of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

* **The Commonwealth Vision Awards** celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2010. This competition promotes excellence in film-making and enables aspiring young directors to showcase their work on an international platform.

Seven entrants have been nominated for Vision Awards in this year's competition. The winners will be announced at the Commonwealth Gala Awards Ceremony to be held at the RCS on 14 October 2010.

The Vision Awards nominees are:

Class A (age 18-30)

Max Edkins, South Africa
Mbia Mballa Victorine Ghislaine, Cameroon
Sheng Wang Lee, Malaysia
Liz Wanjiku, Kenya

Class B (under 18)

Makena Binker-Cosen and Andres Binker-Cosen, Canada
Adil Butt, Canada
Elena Harris, UK

Thanks must go to the many gifted young film-makers who entered this year's competition; and to the distinguished panel of judges, including Chair, Keshini Navaratnam, a former BBC news anchor, Michael MacMillan, founder of Academy Award-winning Atlantis Films, Charlotte George, an independent Australian filmmaker, Jennifer Sobol, who runs creative programmes at the Commonwealth Foundation, and Melanie Tankard, representing the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

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