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'Hair Again' Gives Cancer Journey Meaning

His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester awards global oncology art competition winner from among more than 2,000 entries

LONDON, Nov. 3 /PRNewswire/ -- "Medicine alone is not enough to get you through cancer," comments Linda Dibblee, breast cancer survivor and winner of the 2006 Lilly Oncology on Canvas International Art Competition and Exhibition. "You have to stay strong and positive through even the darkest times. Having a channel through which you can release your feelings can help you find strength that you never knew you had. For me, painting became my way of expressing all my thoughts, hopes and frustrations, and I truly believe it played a part in helping me beat cancer."

Mother of three, Dibblee, from Illinois in the United States, was diagnosed with breast cancer in October 2004. She has been in remission since early 2005. Two years to the day that she was diagnosed with cancer, she found out that she had won the 2006 Lilly Oncology on Canvas global art competition. Her bold and inspiring acrylic titled "Hair Again" was selected by an independent judging panel from among more than 2,000 works of art submitted from 43 countries.

The judges' selections were based on artwork and narratives that best depict what gives the cancer journey meaning. Dibblee was presented with her award and a 10,000 Euro donation to the charity of her choice by HRH The Duke of Gloucester at a finale event at London's Royal College of Art.

"When I first found out that I'd won I couldn't actually believe it," continues Dibblee. "Lilly Oncology on Canvas is so important because it gives people affected by cancer hope and a way to express everything they've been going through. 'Hair Again' captures the end of my cancer treatment and the hope and joy that follows. The flowers on my head in the painting also symbolise all the flowers, cards and good wishes I received from my friends, family and healthcare providers during my treatment. I truly hope 'Hair Again' provides hope to others beginning their cancer journey."

The judging panel awarded second place in the competition to Bobbie Redemer from Berkshire, England, for her acrylic titled "Contemplation." Redemer was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 1999.

"To be able to capture everything I was going through in a piece of artwork was very cathartic," said Redemer, who is now fully recovered from her cancer. "I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer seven and a half years ago. The news was overwhelming. The painting depicts how I began: absorbing the shock and then going through the feelings of loss, bewilderment and fear of the unknown. The world beyond the window in my painting is the everyday life that seemed unreachable at one time. Now that I am back there the colours seem brighter and the focus is sharper. Surviving cancer has given me a greater appreciation for things that we easily take for granted."

Third place was awarded to Consuelo Ardila Orjuela from Bogota, Colombia, for her artwork titled "Why Me?" Consuelo was diagnosed with papillary thyroid cancer 21 years ago.

"My painting expresses my most profound feelings of grief, impotence and desperation before the shocking cancer diagnosis I received 21 years ago," says Consuelo. "The colours in the background go from cold to warm tones reflecting the path crossed in all the different stages of my disease, from the dark beginning to the achievement of my well being."

Lilly Oncology on Canvas: Expressions of a Cancer Journey is a biennial, international art competition and exhibition open to any person diagnosed with cancer; their family members, friends and carers; healthcare professionals; plus artists and art students. Entrants were asked to express, through art and in narrative, the life-affirming changes that gave their cancer journey meaning. The programme, created by Eli Lilly and Company, was initiated in 2004 and received nearly 500 entries. The 2004 Lilly Oncology on Canvas collection toured the world in 2005 and 2006 and has been exhibited in several countries and more than 50 cities.

The 2006 competition saw a staggering 2,000 entries from 43 countries in the categories of oil; watercolour; acrylic; photography; pastel and "other," which includes one-dimensional mixed media. Lined from end-to-end, the art and narratives span the length of 14 rugby fields.

HRH The Duke of Gloucester officially opened the finale and exhibition today and presented awards to the three winners of the

competition as part of a press briefing hosted by Abbas Hussain, president of European operations for Lilly.

"We are absolutely delighted by the number of entries to Lilly Oncology on Canvas 2006," said Hussain. "As a company, Lilly is committed to delivering more than just life-saving medications. We believe in treating the whole patient by going beyond traditional medicine and addressing the emotional impact of cancer. The huge number of entries to this year's competition by people from across the world demonstrates how important support programmes such as art can be to the healing process."

Michele Wood, senior art therapist at Marie Curie Hospice, spoke at the awards ceremony and explained, "Recent research into art therapy through quantitative controlled trials and qualitative studies back up what has been known in clinical practice for years. Participating in art therapy can positively increase self-efficacy and self-esteem, and can promote the development of coping resources and coping strategies in people with cancer. Using art as an outlet through opportunities such as Lilly Oncology on Canvas helps to address body image issues and promotes readjustment in a person's sense of self after illness."

Public Exhibition

All artwork from the Lilly Oncology on Canvas competition will be showcased at a free public exhibition at the Royal College of Art:

- 1.00pm - 5.30pm on Friday 3 November
- 10.00am - 5.30pm on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 November
- 10.00am - 5.00pm on Monday 6 November

Visitors will be able to nominate their favourite artwork for a special "People's Choice" Award. There will also be "Paint in Wall" where members of the public are invited to express their journeys in art form.

2006 - Lilly Oncology on Canvas US Finale, Metropolitan Pavilion, New York

The finale of the US competition will take place at an invitation-only event at the Metropolitan Pavilion, New York, on Tuesday 5 December at 6.30pm. The winners of the US competition will be announced alongside the nearly 500 US and Puerto Rican entries into the competition that will be on display. Lilly President and COO John Lechleiter will speak at the awards presentation, as will contestant judges and the first-prize winner of the US competition. The exhibition will then be open to the public free of charge from Wednesday 6 - Friday 8 December 2006 from 10.00am - 7.00pm.

2007 - The Next Phase

Lilly Oncology on Canvas is a biennial competition and exhibition with a world tour of the art beginning in the off year. In 2007 and 2008, the art entries from the 2006 Lilly Oncology on Canvas competition will tour the world, inspiring the hearts and minds of those affected by cancer through their journeys of art and narrative.

Notes for editors:

The Charities Chosen by the Winners

Eli Lilly and Company, creators of Lilly Oncology on Canvas, will be making the following contributions on behalf of the competition winners:

- 5,000 Euro to the Pediatric Oncology Treasure Chest Foundation (US) and 5,000 Euro to the Jennifer S. Fallick Cancer Support Center (US)
- 5,000 Euro to The Thames Hospicecare (UK)
- 2,500 Euro to Liga Colombiana Contra El Cancer (Columbia)

About the Royal College of Art

The Royal College of Art is the world's only wholly postgraduate university of art and design -- fine art, applied art, design and communications -- offering the degrees of MA, MPhil and PhD. There are nine hundred masters and doctoral students and more than one hundred professionals interacting with them -- including scholars, leading practitioners of art and design and innumerable specialists, advisors and distinguished visitors.

Lilly Oncology, a Division of Eli Lilly and Company

For more than four decades, Lilly Oncology has been collaborating with cancer researchers to deliver innovative treatment choices and valuable programmes to patients and physicians worldwide. Inspired by the courageous patients living with cancer,

Lilly Oncology is providing treatments that are considered global standards of care and developing a broad portfolio of novel targeted therapies to accelerate the pace and progress of cancer care.

About Eli Lilly and Company

Lilly, a leading innovation-driven corporation, is developing a growing portfolio of first-in-class and best-in-class pharmaceutical products by applying the latest research from its own worldwide laboratories and from collaborations with eminent scientific organisations. Headquartered in Indianapolis, Ind., Lilly provides answers -- through medicines and information -- for some of the world's most urgent medical needs. O-LLY

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