



Marion Scrymgour
MINISTER FOR ARTS

14 FEBRUARY 2007

2007 TELSTRA AWARD OPEN

The Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) and Telstra are calling for entries for pre-selection in the 24th *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award*.

Arts Minister Marion Scrymgour said the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory had received almost 300 quality entries for pre-selection last year and 82 of these were short listed for the Award.

"The Telstra Art Award is not simply about competition but more so the celebration of Indigenous Australian art and culture," Ms Scrymgour said.

"I was delighted with the response from talented Indigenous artists last year and I am looking forward to viewing even more quality entries this year," Ms Scrymgour said.

This year's Telstra Award of \$40,000 and the four media category prizes of \$4,000 will again be non-acquisitive, meaning MAGNT will not automatically acquire winning entries.

"This initiative proved very successful in 2006 with the works of at least 25 finalists sold for a combined total of more than \$256,000, including Telstra Award winning Ngoia Napaltjarri Pollard's *Swamps West of Nyirripi* for \$21 960," she said.

The Telstra Award provides significant exposure for Indigenous artists from across Australia who in many cases come from remote and isolated communities.

"More than 65 000 art enthusiasts visited the Telstra Award exhibition in 2006, which ranged from the more traditional 2D works on paper, bark and canvas to works made from a variety of media including 3D works in glass, pandanus and grass fibre", Ms Scrymgour said.

Lawrie Mortimer, General Manager of the Telstra National Indigenous Directorate, said Telstra had a long history of supporting the arts and Indigenous artists in Australia.

"2007 marks the 15th year that Telstra has been the principal sponsor of this Award and we have identified and celebrated some incredible artists over this time.

"We are encouraging artists from across Australia to submit their works for pre-selection in the 2007 Telstra Award and look forward to uncovering even more talented Indigenous Australians," he said.

Entries for the 24th *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* close on 30 March 2007. The *Award* is open to all adult Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander artists and aims to showcase the very best Australian Indigenous art from around the country.

The *Award* was founded by the Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in 1984, and remains the nation's longest-running *Award* dedicated to Indigenous artists. Since 1992 Telstra has been the *Award's* major sponsor, and in 2005 renewed its sponsorship for a further five years.

The 24th *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* exhibition opens and *Award* presentations will be made on Friday 10 August 2007. The exhibition will be on display until Sunday 18 November 2007.

For further information and to request preselection entry forms contact:

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