



## Kimberley song man a finalist at this year's Telstra Art Award

A former West Australian stockman who only began painting four years ago is set to have one of his paintings installed at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory early next week.

The installation is part of the lead up to the prestigious 24<sup>th</sup> *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, which opens in Darwin on 10 August 2007.

Omborin, who was born in the northern Kimberley region of Western Australia more than 80 years ago, said he was pleased with his third nomination to be a finalist at the *Award* from four attempts overall.

"I am proud to have this work chosen and to be alongside many of the people who have known me for a long time since my cattle station days," Omborin said.

"I have worked hard with my entry *Nullumbore - the Ulumara Amanguladji Morlyi Wandjina Story* and am pleased the pre-selection panel has liked what I have done.

"My painting is about my country, which I think of all the time but rarely get to visit."

Omborin said that through painting he is able to tell the world about his country, how he used to live there and all the different stories he has about the Kimberley.

"I want to tell these stories in a proper way so that it leaves a good story behind for lots of people to see and for them to know me and how others like me once lived," he said.

"I am one of the last Kimberley song men and I take seriously the role to tell as much as I can to others through art."

Omborin is expected to arrive in Darwin on 7 August and attend the Awards opening on 10 August. It will be Omborin's first visit to Darwin.

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) Director Anna Malgorzewicz said entries had been submitted by artists from across the country and the calibre of entries was extremely high.

The *Award* was founded by MAGNT in 1984, and remains the nation's longest-running *Award* dedicated to Indigenous artists. The *Telstra Award* attracts a \$40,000 prize and the four media category prizes attract an additional \$4,000 each.

The *Award* is non-acquisitive, meaning MAGNT will not automatically acquire winning entries. Last year, Ngoia Napaltjarri Pollard won the *Telstra Award* with her artwork *Swamps West of Nyirripi*. This piece later sold for \$21 960.

"We're expecting many of the works to be in great demand following the announcement of this year's winners," Ms Malgorzewicz said.

"Last year, 25 finalists sold their works for a combined total of more than \$250 000."

Lawrie Mortimer, General Manager of the Telstra National Indigenous Directorate, said the *Telstra Award* provides incredible exposure for Indigenous artists from across Australia who in many cases, come from remote and isolated communities.

“Telstra’s support for this *Award* helps ensure the continued development of Indigenous art in Australia by identifying and recognising the country’s most talented artists no matter where they live,” he said.

The *Award* is open to all adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and aims to showcase the very best Australian Indigenous art from around the country.

The 24<sup>th</sup> *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.

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