

9 July 2008

Sneak Peek at artwork shortlisted in Silver Jubilee Telstra Art Award

A sneak peek at one of the artworks selected for this year's 25th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award reveals an installation by Danie Mellor, featuring a gilt framed blue and white landscape with an audience of native animals, including a gold mosaic kangaroo.

Artist Danie Mellor, an art lecturer from the University of Sydney who entered his first piece in 2000, said this was the sixth time he had entered the Telstra Art Award.

"I have a strong interest in material culture, and the way iconic objects are shown, so this year's entry - *Exotic Lies and Sacred ties* - is a mixed media installation that encompasses ideas of land, connection, presence, dislocation and the country when Australia was settled in the 18th and 19th Centuries," Mr Mellor said.

"The blue and white landscape refers directly to English Spode china, which were more often than not a collection of sketches with mixed metaphors and assembled into a jumble of culture, in the same way this work looks at the way people saw the landscape here, how it was framed with European eyes.

"The golden kangaroo and friends are the viewers of the large picture, but they are also the guardians, the guides."

Museum and Art Gallery (MAGNT) Acting Director, Apolline Kohen said the great diversity of Indigenous expression is reflected in the artworks submitted this year which range from 2D works on paper, bark and canvas to 3D works made from fibre, ironwood and fibreglass.

"The quality of the art works we have received for this year's Silver Jubilee is outstanding, and there is no doubt the judges will have a difficult time selecting the winners," Ms Kohen said.

Lawrie Mortimer, General Manager of the Telstra's Indigenous Directorate, said the Telstra Art Award provides incredible exposure for Indigenous artists from all around Australia.

"Telstra's support of 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," Mr Mortimer said.

The overall \$40,000 Telstra Award and further four media categories will again be non-acquisitive in 2008, which means the winning artists can retain or sell their works.

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

"Last year, over two thirds of finalists sold their works for a combined total of more than \$850,000."

Winners in the Telstra Art Award will be announced on Friday 15 August at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, and works will be on display until Sunday 26 October 2008.

The Telstra Art 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.

For further information contact:

Award Coordinator, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory
GPO Box 4646 Darwin NT 0801

Tel: 08 8999 8203

Fax: 08 8999 8148

Email: natsiaa@nt.gov.au

Media note: For more information contact Natalie Merida on 8999 8203 or Danie Mellor on 0408 645 885

Image Credit:

MAGNT Intern Chantal Henley gives us a preview of Danie Mellor's 25th Telstra Art Award entry *Exotic Lies and Sacred Ties*

The 25th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.



Australian Government
Visual Arts and Craft Strategy
Northern Territory

