

12 August 2008

## 25<sup>th</sup> Silver Jubilee Telstra Art Award Judges Announced

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) Senior Curator of Aboriginal Art and Material Culture, Franchesca Cubillo today announced Hetti Perkins and Judy Watson as judges at this year's 25<sup>th</sup> *Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award*.

This year's Silver Jubilee Telstra Art Award opens at MAGNT in Darwin this Friday, 15 August 2008 with \$40,000 going to the Telstra Award winner and \$4,000 going to each of the four category winners.

"Ms Hetti Perkins, a member of the Eastern Arrernte and Kalkadoon Aboriginal communities, is the Senior Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art at the Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, and has worked with indigenous visual art for the past 20 years," Ms Cubillo said.

"Along with her fellow judge Judy Watson, who was one of eight Australian Indigenous artists commissioned for the permanent installation at the Quai Branly Museum, Paris, Ms Perkins co-curated the works along with Brenda L Croft.

"Her experience in Indigenous art spans from curatorial to producing numerous publications, and more recently Ms Perkins has initiated a film archive and been involved in the production of films focussed on indigenous art.

"Ms Judy Watson is a descendant of the Waanyi people from north-west Queensland, and has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally, with her work held in many collections including the National Gallery of Australia, the British Museum, London as well as private collections throughout the world.

"Trained as a printmaker, Ms Watson has undertaken major public art commissions including *Wurreka*, a 50m etched zinc wall for the Melbourne Museum and *Walama Forecourt*, a sculptural installation of woven steel screens and upturned bronze dilly bags at Sydney International Airport and *fire and water*, Reconciliation Place, Canberra just to name a few.

"In the 2006 Telstra Art Award, Ms Watson's etching/artist's book *a preponderance of aboriginal blood* won the Telstra Work on Paper Award.

"The task of selecting the winners will be extremely difficult because of the exceptional quality; diversity and substantial number of finalists in this our Silver Jubilee Award.

"On behalf of MAGNT and Telstra, I would like to thank Ms Perkins and Ms Watson for accepting our invitation to judge the award, and we are very fortunate to have them on board given their very high profile in the art world."

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.

The 25<sup>th</sup> *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.



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