

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: 15 AUGUST 2008

SILVER JUBILEE TELSTRA ART AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Makinti Napanangka from Kintore in the Northern Territory has been awarded Australia's premier Indigenous art prize at the **25th Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award**.

Her untitled art work, in synthetic polymer paint on linen, was tonight awarded the coveted **\$40,000 Telstra Award** by Northern Territory Government Deputy Chief Minister Marion Scrymgour and Mr Geoff Booth, General Managing Director, Telstra Country Wide, at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) in Darwin.

The winning painting depicts designs associated with the site of Lupulnga, a rockhole situated south of the Kintore Community. The Peewee (small bird) Dreaming is associated with this site, as well as the Kungka Kutjarra or Two Travelling Women Dreaming.

Makinti was born at Lupul rockhole, south of Kintore circa 1930, and began painting for Papunya Tula Artists in 1996. Named among the Top 50 of Australia's Most Collectable Artists in Australian Art Collector in 2003, 2004, 2005 and again in 2006, Makinti has held extensive group as well as solo exhibitions around the country in recent years.

In addition to the Telstra Award, prizes were awarded in four other categories:

The \$4,000 Telstra General Painting Award was awarded to Doreen Reid Nakamarra, originally from the Warburton Ranges, Western Australia for her untitled work. Doreen's painting depicts designs associated with the rockhole site of Marrapinti, west of the Pollock Hills in Western Australia.

The \$4,000 Telstra Bark Painting Award was awarded to Terry Ngamandara Wilson from Gochan Jiny-jirra in the Northern Territory, for his work *Gulach – Spike Rush*. A senior custodian of the Gun-gulol Gu-rrenyinga group of clans Terry's work depicts a key emblem of the clans. It is a design for gulach, the spike rush that dominates the Barlparrarra swamp country.

The \$4,000 Telstra Works on Paper, was awarded to Dennis Nona from Badu Island, Torres Strait, Queensland, for his etching on paper, *Dugam*. Winner of last year's \$40,000 *Telstra Award* for his 3.5m bronze crocodile *Ubirikubiri*, Dennis is widely acknowledged as an important Torres Strait Islander artist. His entry in this year's award is named after the star that is visible in the early morning sky for about two weeks during August and September. Its presence tells the Torres Strait Islanders that it is the time to harvest the wild yams, kutai, gabau and saurr.

The \$4,000 Wandjuk Marika Three-Dimensional Memorial Award, sponsored by Telstra, was awarded to Yolgnu artist Nyapanyapa Yunupingu from Yirrkala in the Northern Territory, for her work *Incident at Mutpi (1975)*. This installation consists of a bark painting and the artist's narrative of the event Gatapangawuy Dhawu – Buffalo Story filmed by The Mulka Project. The bark painting and accompanying film are based on an incident from the 1970's when Nyapanyapa was badly gored by a buffalo.

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts (NRETA) Chief Executive Jim Grant thanked everyone involved in making this Silver Jubilee year such a success including Telstra for its continued sponsorship of the Award.

"The Award is identifying new talents every year and the artworks presented this year are reflecting the diversity and high quality of Indigenous artistic expressions," Mr Grant said.

"I congratulate the winners on their success as well as all the finalists who have contributed to this wonderful exhibition."

Mr Booth congratulated the prize winners in the 2008 Telstra Art Award and said that Telstra remains committed to supporting Indigenous artists and their communities to ensure they receive the on-going recognition they deserve.

“Telstra is also committed to developing opportunities for Indigenous Australians wherever they reside, and Telstra’s work with the Northern Territory Government, in particular, has enabled the extension of broadband access into a number of Indigenous communities, providing artists new avenues with which to market their art and communicate with buyers,” Mr Booth continued.

The Award judges were Ms Judy Watson, Indigenous artist and Ms Hetti Perkins, Senior Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts, Art Gallery of New South Wales.

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 25th *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* will be on display at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Darwin from 15 August until 26 October 2008.

For media inquiries or to arrange interviews/photographs please contact:

Anne Marshall
Department of Natural Resources, Environment and The Arts
0437 915 366

Katarina Farrell
Telstra Public Affairs
0439 496 400

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

