

Central Desert Region artist shortlisted in 2010 Telstra Art Award

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Tiger Palpatja from Nyapari community, located 100kms south of Uluru is one of only 96 artists announced as a finalist in this year's 27th *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* for his painting, *Piltati Tjukurpa*, which depicts the creation story for Piltati, the country where Tiger lived as a boy.

Tiger was born sometime around 1920 at Piltati rock hole, in the far north west of South Australia and has lived a traditional nomadic life prior to moving to the mission at Ernabella where he worked as a shearer. He only began painting in 2004 but in that short time he has earned a reputation as a leading artist in the Pitjantjatjara Lands and his work is held in major public and private collections.

Tjunga Palya Artists Art Centre Manager, Amanda Dent said Tiger Palpatja, at over 90 years of age is a man from another world.

"He has within him the language of the desert and his paintings offer us a window into the soul of the earth – the Tjukurpa. He is one of the most extraordinary men and artists I've had the privilege of working with and I am continually enchanted by his works," Ms Dent said.

Telstra Art Award Curator, Kate Podger said there had been a diverse range of artworks submitted, from traditional works on paper, paintings, barks and three dimensional artworks to, for the first time, entries in the Telstra New Media Award.

"I congratulate all of the artists from across Australia who entered this year - the Telstra Art Award continues to evolve and grow to offer new opportunities for Indigenous artists to showcase their extraordinary talents," Ms Podger said.

Telstra Chief Marketing Officer, Kate McKenzie, said the Telstra Art Award provides an important national showcase for the work of Indigenous artists from all around the country.

"We're proud that Telstra's support of the Telstra Art Award for the last 19 years has helped Indigenous artists like Tiger Palpatja gain recognition, and enabled more Australians to see their outstanding work," Ms McKenzie said.

Now in its 27th year, the Telstra Art Award is the first and longest running art award dedicated to the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, and is an opportunity for Indigenous Australians to express and celebrate their culture, beliefs and society.

The Telstra Art Award comprises the \$40,000 Telstra Award and \$4,000 to other categories including; the Telstra General Painting Award, the Telstra Bark Painting Award, the Telstra Work on Paper Award and the Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (also sponsored by Telstra) in addition to the Telstra New Media Award (\$3,000).

The 27th *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* exhibition opens on Friday, 13 August 2010. For more information about the Telstra Art Award or to view the online gallery of works from previous Telstra Art Award exhibitions go to www.magnt.nt.gov.au/natsiaa. To follow the Telstra Art Award on Twitter go to www.twitter.com/natsiaa

Media note: To speak with a representative for Tiger Palpatja please call Anne Marshall on 08 8999 4730

Image: Tiger Palpatja courtesy of Tjunga Palya Artists

The 27th *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

