

Galiwinku artist shortlisted in 2010 Telstra Art Award

3 August 2010

Mavis Warrngilna Ganambarr, from Galiwinku Community, Arnhem Land is one of 96 artists announced as a finalist in this year's 27th *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award*, 28 of which hail from Arnhem Land.

As one of Australia's leading fibre artists, Mavis' entry titled, *Mana (Shark)* is a three dimensional work made of pandanus, bush string and shark teeth, and reflects the artist's shark totem.

In her artist statement Mavis tells a story about when she was a baby, falling into the Arnhem Bay, where the *Mana (Shark)* lives and being rescued by her father. "When I was old enough to go to school I had grown a strip of grey hair at the back of my head, called Gut Gut. My hair went white because I swam down into the Wandangui, the underwater home of the shark," she recounts.

"People know I am connected to *Mana* because I have Gut Gut, all my brother's call me *Mana*."

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 Mavis Warrngilna Ganambarr 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: For media interviews contact Karlie Weinert on 08 8999 4730 to arrange.

Image: Senior Elcho Island fibre artist, Mavis Warrngilna Ganambarr. Photo courtesy Dion Teasdale, Elcho Island Arts.

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

