

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Creative Industries



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ARTIST SELECTED FOR ARCHIE ROACH AND RUBY HUNTER STATUE

A public statue honouring the lives and legacies of music legends Uncle Archie Roach AM AC and Aunty Ruby Hunter is a step closer, with Melbourne artist Darien Pullen commissioned to create the artwork.

Minister for Creative Industries Steve Dimopoulos today announced Pullen's appointment following a competitive EOI process, led in collaboration with Uncle Archie and Aunty Ruby's family, the Wurunderji Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Yarra City Council.

Pullen, who works primarily in bronze sculptures, most recently created the sculpture of Australian music icon Michael Gudinski which is located outside Rod Laver Arena.

He will now work with family members to design the sculpture celebrating Hunter and Roach and will work with Fitzroy-based foundry Meridian Sculpture to bring the artwork to life. It will be installed in Fitzroy later this year.

Fitzroy loomed large in the lives of Uncle Archie and Aunty Ruby and the artwork will be a landmark for music fans to pay tribute to the legendary Australian musicians.

Uncle Archie, who passed away in July last year, was posthumously appointed a companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for his services to the performing arts, to Indigenous rights and for supporting First Nations artists.

Aunty Ruby, who passed away in 2010, was a trailblazer who was the inaugural First Peoples female artist to release a solo album, the 1994 ARIA award-nominated *Thoughts Within*. In 2020, she was inducted into the National Indigenous Music Awards Hall of Fame.

The Archie Roach Foundation which launched in 2014, has supported many First Peoples artists and young people, including establishing the Ruby Hunter Award to support emerging First Peoples female artists.

The creation of the statue is supported by the Andrews Labor Government through its Creative Activation Fund.

Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Steve Dimopoulos

"Uncle Archie and Aunty Ruby were two groundbreaking artists and activists who had a huge impact on Australia's music landscape and on their community – this statue will ensure that their legacy will last into the future."

Quote attributable to Yarra City Council Mayor Claudia Nguyen

"This artwork reflects the significance of Archie and Ruby's contribution to the Australian music scene, as well as their strong connection to Yarra's local Aboriginal community."

Quote attributable to Wurundjeri Elder Colin Hunter

"Mob from all over Australia came to Fitzroy in search of family and community. Uncle Archie and Aunty Ruby will forever be memorialised here in Fitzroy, watching over their community from the cradle of Aboriginal activism and the birthplace of the Aboriginal rights movement."

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Quote attributable to Amos Roach

“Our family and the First Nations community are very proud of the achievements of my parents, Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter. We are very pleased that their life and work are being honoured with a statue of them. Congratulations to Darien Pullen who will create the statues which will be a beacon for inspiration.”

Quote attributable to artist Darien Pullen

“I am truly honoured to have been selected to create a memorial to these two giants of Australian music, of the Aboriginal community and of Fitzroy.”