VICTORIAN INDIGENOUS ART AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Artist Glenda Nicholls has taken out Victoria’s richest Indigenous art prize, the Deadly Art Award, at the 2015 Victorian Indigenous Art Awards for her life-size textile works, *A Woman’s Rite of Passage*.

Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley was at the Art Gallery of Ballarat tonight where he named Ms Nicholls the winner of the $30,000 prize, selected from 41 finalist works. The award-winning works take the form of three woven cloaks created to represent Indigenous women and the role they play in Welcome to Country ceremonies.

Originally from Swan Hill, Ms Nicholls was taught to weave by her mother and grandmother. Now a grandmother herself, she is committed to passing on her skills and knowledge to the next generation.

Other award winners on the night included Peter Waples-Crowe of West Melbourne, Troy Firebrace of Long Gully, and Brendan Kennedy of Robinvale.

Doncaster East artist Raymond Young, who won the Award for Three Dimensional Works, first came to art through an Indigenous arts in prisons community program that inspired him to make art that connected him to his culture.

Celebrating their 10th anniversary in 2015, the Victorian Indigenous Art Awards were established by the former Bracks Labor Government in 2005 to raise the recognition of South-East Australian Indigenous art and to provide career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists throughout Victoria.

The 2015 finalists’ exhibition, hosted by the Art Gallery of Ballarat, showcases stunning traditional works alongside high-end contemporary art. The free exhibition runs until 20 September.

Members of the public can now vote for their favourite work as part of the $5,000 Creative Victoria People’s Choice Award. Votes can be cast in the Gallery or online via creative.vic.gov.au. Voting closes 7 September 2015.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley

“The Victorian Indigenous Art Awards are a celebration of the creativity of the world’s oldest continuing culture, which is also constantly renewing itself.”

“Congratulations to all winners and finalists. Their works have created a stunning exhibition that showcases deep pride, connection to culture and incredible artistry. It’s an exhibition that all Victorians should experience.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Natalie Hutchins

“These awards are an opportunity to celebrate the artistic contributions of Aboriginal people and to reflect on the important links between art, culture and identity.”

Quotes attributable to Director, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Gordon Morrison

“The Art Gallery of Ballarat is honored to have hosted the Victorian Indigenous Art Awards for the past three years. We are particularly proud that we are hosting the Awards during their tenth anniversary year, and are pleased to offer a special program of events to mark that occasion.”
2015 VICTORIAN INDIGENOUS ART AWARDS – AWARD WINNERS

Deadly Art Award
Supported by Creative Victoria

Winner: $30,000 – Glenda Nicholls A Woman’s Rite of Passage

Victorian Indigenous Art Award for Three Dimensional Works
Supported by Creative Victoria and Art Gallery of Ballarat

Winner: $5,000 – Raymond Young From the Ground Up
Highly Commended: $1,500 – Paola Balla Sticks and Stones

Victorian Indigenous Art Award for Works on Paper
Supported by Creative Victoria and Art Gallery of Ballarat

Winner: $5,000 – Peter Waples-Crowe My Dingo Spirit, SOS: They Kill My Kin(d)
Highly Commended: $1,500 – Kent Morris Cultural Reflections #2

Federation University Acquisitive Award for Work by a Victorian Regional Artist
Winner: $5,000 – Troy Firebrace Galaxy Swirl

Australian Catholic University Acquisitive Award for Work Based on Spirituality and Cultural Tradition
Winner: $5,000 – Brendan Kennedy Wangi Withinu Ngauwingi Walwa

Creative Victoria People’s Choice Award $5,000
Supported by Creative Victoria
Cast your vote at the Art Gallery of Ballarat or via www.creative.vic.gov.au.
Voting closes 5pm, Monday 7 September 2015.