



DUBBO
CITY COUNCIL

Media Release

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3 July 2009

WPCC to host prestigious Archibald Prize

Local residents have the opportunity to see one of Australia's most recognised portraiture prizes as the Western Plains Cultural Centre hosts the Archibald Prize from Saturday, 25 July until 13 September 2009.

2009 Archibald Prize winner Guy Maestri and host of ABC's The Art Life Andrew Frost will be special guests at an official launch of the Archibald Prize exhibition in Dubbo, from 6pm to 8pm on Thursday, 30 July.

WPCC Manager Brigette Leece today announced the opening of the exhibition.

"The Archibald is Australia's most recognised portraiture prize and is now in its 88th year," Ms Leece said.

"There were 708 entries this year which were narrowed down to 35 finalists whose works are included in the exhibition.

"This year the Archibald prize was awarded to Guy Maestri for his portrait of indigenous singer Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu. Maestri chose Gurrumul as his subject after seeing a performance of the singer last year. Maestri had only 40 minutes to meet the singer, yet captured the quiet and strong presence of Gurrumul and his music."

The Archibald prize is awarded each year to the best portrait of a man or woman 'distinguished in art, letters, science or politics'.

In accordance with the bequest of Jules F Archibald, all works are judged by the Trustees of the Art Gallery of NSW with the winner receiving a prize of \$50,000."

Ms Leece said this year's collection contains portraits of several well known Australians. "There is a great diversity in the 2009 exhibition with subjects ranging from Dame Elisabeth Murdoch and Margaret Whitlam, to Jimmy Barnes and John Safran," she said.

Since its first award in 1921, the Archibald Prize has often been the centre of controversy and debate. Each year the prize unearths the tension in portraiture between precise representation and character revelation.

"We are proud to host such a major exhibition and we really encourage people to come and see it," Ms Leece said.

The Archibald Prize will be at the Western Plains Cultural Centre until 13 September. General admission is \$8 and \$5 for concession holders.

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