Media Release

8 July, 2014

Leading artists shine a spotlight on sport in $100,000 Basil Sellers Art Prize

Art and athleticism collide as sixteen leading Australian artists battle it out in the 4th biennial $100,000 Basil Sellers Art Prize. The works, which confront issues and themes in sport, will be exhibited at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, from 22 July.

From fandom to fanaticism, motivation to morality, and rules to racism, the finalists explore the many facets of sport and examine the parallels between the awe of art and the spectacle of sport.

Video has proved to be a popular medium in the prize this year with seven of the sixteen finalists utilizing video media. Other media includes oil painting, photography and collage, exploring themes of surfing, boxing, tennis, national identity, fandom, racism, and controversial media-attention-grabbing sporting events.

The prestigious $100,000 Prize is one of the most significant opportunities available to contemporary Australian artists and allows artists the freedom to explore sport as subject matter, from literal interpretations and celebrations of particular sporting passions to exploring complex social issues.


The Director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, Kelly Gellatly, says “The responses of the 16 finalists in the Basil Sellers Art Prize keep pushing the boundaries of how sport and art relate.

“The theme of sport allows for the exploration of endless issues and artistic possibilities and provides numerous opportunities to challenge existing preconceptions about both sport and art.

“We are expecting this 4th Basil Sellers Art Prize and exhibition will surprise, delight, perplex and entertain and that it will encourage us all to think differently about our national obsession and its connections to and relationship with the arts”, Ms Gellatly said.

The Basil Sellers Art Prize exhibition will open at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, 22 July 2014 until 26 October 2014, with the winner announced on Friday 25 July, 2014.

Judges include Elizabeth Ann Macgregor OBE, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Kelly Gellatly, Director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art; Robert Cook, curator of modern and contemporary photography and design at the Art Gallery of Western Australia; Michael Hawker AM, distinguished businessman and a veteran of 25 Australian rugby test matches and now Chairman of Australian Rugby Union; Dr Chris McAuliffe, consultant for the Basil Sellers Group; and Basil Sellers AM.

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Background

The Basil Sellers Art Prize encourages artists to take on the theme of sporting culture and interpret it through their chosen practice. The prize is supported by Basil Sellers AM, a businessman and philanthropist. Basil is a well known collector of art and a sports enthusiast who spends his time between Australia and Europe. The Basil Sellers Art Prize aims to encourage artists to engage with sporting culture and to develop their practice through reflection on sport and culture in Australia.

Over halfway through its ten year cycle, the Basil Sellers Art Prize has offered extensive support to some 65 Australian artists through not only the significant $100,000 prize, but also the $50,000 National Sports Museum Basil Sellers Creative Arts Fellowship, and the $5,000 People’s Choice Award.

Previous winners of the prestigious prize include Daniel Crooks in 2008, Tarryn Gill and Pilar Mata Dupont in 2010, and Jon Campbell in 2012, whilst previous recipients of the fellowship include Ponch Hawkes in 2012, Kate Daw and Stewart Russell in 2010.

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For further information: http://www.sellersartprize.com.au

Hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am - 5pm: Saturday and Sunday 12 - 5pm, Admission free.