Finalists announced for the $25,000 Kate Challis RAKA Award 2013

Nine artists have been selected as finalists for the prestigious Kate Challis RAKA Award, to be exhibited at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, from August 10 until November 3, 2013.

The shortlisted artists are Teresa Baker (WA), Daniel Boyd (Qld/NSW), Hector Burton (WA), Timothy Cook (Tiwi/NT), Mabel Juli (WA), the late Kunmarnanya Mitchell (WA), Alick Tipoti (TSI/Qld), Garawan Wanambi (NT) and Regina Wilson (NT).

The annual Kate Challis RAKA Award has been instrumental in assisting the development of Indigenous writers, performers, film-makers, poets and visual artists. The previous visual arts winners are Gali Gurruwiwi (2009), Ricky Maynard (2003), Brook Andrew (1998) and Lin Onus (1993).

The award, for Indigenous creative artists, was established in 1988 by the late Professor Emeritus Bernard Smith, eminent art and cultural historian to honour the memory of his late wife, Kate Challis. Kate was known in her youth as Ruth Adeney (RAKA is an acronym for the Ruth Adeney Koori Award). The award is administered by the Australian Centre, School of Culture and Communication, Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne.

The prize, of approximately $25,000, is offered in a five-year cycle with various artistic disciplines rewarded each year - creative prose, drama, scriptwriting, poetry and in 2013, visual arts.

The judges of the 2013 award are: Dr Tony Birch, Lecturer, Creative Writing, School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne; Associate Professor Alison Inglis, Coordinator, MA Art Curatorship, University of Melbourne; Ms Elizabeth Heathcote, representative of the Challis family; Dr Jolanta Nowak, Project Officer, Australian Centre and Lecturer, Trinity College, University of Melbourne; Ms Bala Starr, Senior Curator, The Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne.

Co-curator of the exhibition, Suzette Wearne, said, 'Nine finalists were selected from a galaxy of Indigenous artists working right across Australia, some of whom have not previously shown in an art museum. Collectively, these finalists represent the excellence and the vitality that exists in contemporary Indigenous art today.'

The winner of the RAKA Award will be announced on Wednesday 14 August 2013 and the exhibition will be officially opened at 6.30pm that evening.

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Images are available upon request and interview[s] with the curators and winning artist to be arranged.