

# TELSTRA NATSIAA

2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards

MUSEUM  
AND ART  
GALLERY  
NORTHERN  
TERRITORY

Principal Partner



## MEDIA RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

Friday, 15 May 2026

### Finalists Announced for 2026 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards

More than 60 exceptional artists have been named as finalists in the 2026 Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards (Telstra NATSIAA), highlighting the strength, diversity and innovation of contemporary Indigenous art across Australia.

Now in its 43rd year, Telstra NATSIAA continues to bring together artists from remote art centres to inner-city studios, with culture, storytelling and creative innovation converging to celebrate the very best of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art.

The 64 compelling works, selected from 221 entries, reflect themes of intergenerational storytelling, the continuation of cultures, connections to Country and the enduring impacts of Australia's colonial history on individuals and communities.

Presented by the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) in partnership with Telstra, the awards remain a vital platform for nurturing and celebrating Indigenous artists, providing a national and international stage to showcase their work.

As Principal Sponsor for the past 35 years, Telstra has played a significant role in the growth and legacy of NATSIAA, supporting what is recognised as Australia's longest-running and most prestigious Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art award.

This year we also mark 40 years of the Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award. This award commemorates Wandjuk Marika OBE (1927-1987), a Yolngu man, artist and leader.

The Awards have been curated, shortlisted and judged by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peers, Gail Mabo and Dean Greeno alongside 2026 Guest Curator Dr Shannon Brett, and include emerging artists together with some of the most respected and established names in contemporary Indigenous art.

With categories from bark painting and sculpture to multimedia and works on paper, Telstra NATSIAA captures the diversity and innovation of Indigenous art. Artists from across the country share in a total prize pool of \$190,000, including the prestigious \$100,000 Telstra Art Award.

The finalists are:

[See attached below full list of 2026 Telstra NATSIAA Finalist by State and Territory]



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Telstra NATSIAA is supported by the Australian and Northern Territory Governments through the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy.

The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) will open the 2026 Telstra NATSIAA exhibition on 27 June 2026, offering visitors a unique opportunity to experience the finalist's works ahead of the official announcement of winners.

The winners of the 2026 Telstra NATSIAA will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on Friday, 7 August 2026.

The award categories are:

- Telstra Art Award - \$100,000
- Telstra General Painting Award - \$15,000
- Telstra Bark Painting Award - \$15,000
- Telstra Work on Paper Award - \$15,000
- Wandjuk Marika 3D Memorial Award (sponsored by Telstra) - \$15,000
- Telstra Emerging Artist Award - \$15,000
- Telstra Multimedia Award - \$15,000

The Telstra People's Choice Award, is a non-monetary award, chosen by popular vote throughout the duration of the exhibition.

## ATTRIBUTABLE QUOTES

### **Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) Director Adam Worrall**

*"The Telstra NATSIAA remains Australia's longest running and most prestigious Indigenous art award and we are honoured to present the 2026 exhibition featuring this year's exceptional finalists."*

*"This year's selection highlights the remarkable breadth of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art practice, from emerging voices to highly regarded artists. We look forward to welcoming audiences from across Australia and around the world to experience these works in Darwin."*

### **2026 NATSIAA Guest Curator and Wakka Wakka, Butchulla, Gurang Gurang artist, photographer, designer, educator, researcher and curator Dr Shannon Brett.**

*"The wide range of materials, techniques and themes represented in this year's exhibition are beautifully expressed through a superb range of significant works that share Indigenous perspectives from across Australia."*



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*“Across all career stages, First Nations artists are sharing stories through their creative practice, with language, culture and truth at the forefront.”*

## **Telstra Representative - Lyndall Stoyles, Group Executive**

*“Telstra is proud to continue our longstanding partnership with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards, now spanning 35 years. These Awards provide an essential platform to celebrate the diversity and innovation of First Nations art and culture.”*

*“We are continually inspired by the artists whose works reflect compelling stories of Country, community and identity. Supporting NATSIAA is part of our commitment to amplifying Indigenous voices and contributing to a vibrant and sustainable arts sector for future generations.”*

## **ENDS**

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### **About 2026 Telstra NATSIAA:**

The Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards are presented annually by the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, celebrating excellence and innovation in contemporary Indigenous art since 1984.

The 2026 Telstra NATSIAA marks 35 years of Telstra’s sponsorship of NATSIAA. In 1992, then known as Telecom, they began their sponsorship of the First Prize Award. In 1993, the partnership grew into what it remains today, with Telstra as Principal Sponsor supporting all awards categories.

The 2026 Telstra NATSIAA marks 40 years of the Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award. This award commemorates Wandjuk Marika OBE (1927-1987), a Yolngu man, artist and leader. This was first awarded in 1987 after his passing that same year and was then known as the Memorial Award for Mawalan’s Eldest Son. This was in line with cultural protocols to not use his name in the years immediately following his passing. It became the Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (sponsored by Telstra) in 1993 when Telstra became the sponsor for all Award categories.

## 2026 Finalists: State/Territory Representation

### Australian Capital Territory (ACT)



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## Jennifer Kemarre Martiniello OAM

Lower Southern Arrernte. Lives in Canberra

Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

## New South Wales (NSW)

### Kevin 'Sooty' Welsh

Wayilwan. Lives in Wayilwan Coonamble

Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

## Northern Territory (NT)

### Adrian Jangala Robertson

Warlpiri. Lives in Mparntwe, Alice Springs

Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Anniebell Marrngamarrnga

Kuninjku, Gun-nartpa. Lives Maningrida community / Ji-balbal outstation

Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Arnhem Land Collaborative (26 artists)

Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Artists of Ampilatwatja: Elizabeth Ngwarraye Bonney, Nancy Pitjara Frank, Rita Pitjara Beasley, Valerie Kemarre Lewis

Alyawarre. Live in Ampilatwatja

Telstra Work on Paper Award

### Barayuwa Mununggurr

Miwatj. Lives in Rurrangala

Telstra Bark Painting Award

### Billy Tjampitjinpa Kenda

Luritja, Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Mparntwe (Alice Springs)

Telstra General Painting Award

### Binygurr Wirrpanda

Yolŋu Matha. Lives in Yirrkala

Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Cameron Kawurlkku

Ndjébbana, Kuninjku. Lives in Manayingkarirra (Maningrida)

Telstra Bark Painting Award

### Carol Puruntatameri



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Tiwi. Lives in Pirlangimpi Community, Tiwi Islands  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Colin Heenan-Puruntatameri

Tiwi. Lives in Milikapiti  
Telstra Multimedia Award

### Graham Tipungwuti

Tiwi. Lives on Wurrumiyanga (Bathurst Island)  
Telstra Bark Painting Award

### Gunybi Ganambarr

Yolŋu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Gäŋgan  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Guruwuy Murrinyina

Yolŋu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Gäŋgan  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Gutiŋarra Yunupingu

Yolŋu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Yirrkala  
Telstra Bark Painting Award

### Ishmael Marika

Yolŋu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Yirrkala  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Janet Marawarr

Kuninjku. Lives in Maningrida  
Telstra Work on Paper Award & Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

### Joe Guymala

Kunwinjku. Lives in Gunbalanya  
Telstra Work on Paper Award

### Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr

Ganalbingu. Lives in Gapuwiyak  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Julie Nangala Robertson

Warlpiri. Lives in Yuendumu  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Justine Anderson

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Finke  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)



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## Karen Rogers

Ngalakan. Lives in Ngukurr  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Ken Wayne Kantilla

Tiwi. Lives in Wurrumiyanga  
Telstra Bark Painting Award

## Kenan Namunjaja

Kuninjku. Lives in Maningrida Community  
Telstra Bark Painting Award

## Louise Robertson

Warlpiri. Lives in Alice Springs  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

## Napuarri Marawili

Yolŋu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Yilpara  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

## Reginald Sultan

Kaytetye. Lives in Darwin  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Rena Ngalinggama Guyula

Djambarrpuyngu. Lives in Gapuwiyak  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

## Robert Namarnyilk

Kunwingku. Lives in Jabiru  
Telstra Work on Paper Award

## Russell Ngadiyali Wanapuyngu

Wagilak. Lives in Gapuwiyak  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Sabrina Nangala Robertson

Warlpiri. Lives in Yuendumu  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Sally M Nangala Mulda

Luritja, Pitjanjatjara, Arrernte, Yunkunytjatjara. Lives in Mparntwe/Alice Springs  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Semeria Wurrkidj

Kuninjku. Lives in Maningrida  
Telstra Bark Painting Award



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**Steven Jupurrurla Nelson**

Warlpiri. Lives in Yuendumu  
Telstra General Painting Award

**Ursula Napangardi Marks**

Warlpiri. Lives in Lajamanu  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

**Vanessa Inkamala**

Western Aranda. Lives in Alice Springs  
Telstra General Painting Award

**Walter Brooks**

Tiwi. Lives in Milikapiti  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

**Wanapati Yunupingu**

Yolngu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Yirrkala  
Telstra Bark Painting Award

**Warren Garrawitja**

Yolngu. Lives in Darwin  
Telstra General Painting Award

**William Mareko**

Torres Strait Creole / Kalaw Lagaw Ya. Lives in Darwin  
Telstra General Painting Award

**Wulu Marawili**

Yolngu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Yirrkala  
Telstra General Painting Award

**Yalmakany Marawili**

Yolngu Matha / Miwatj Region. Lives in Yirrkala  
Telstra General Painting Award

**Zora Mukumiri**

Kuninjku. Lives between Mankorlod Outstation and Maningrida  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

Queensland (QLD)



*This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.*

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## Ryan Presley

Marri Ngarr. Lives in Logan City  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Teho Ropeyarn

Angkamuthi/Yadhaykana. Lives in Cairns  
Telstra Work on Paper Award

## South Australia (SA)

### Betty Muffler

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Indulkana,  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Fiona Pompey

Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara. Lives in Fregon  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Frank Young

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Amata  
Telstra General Painting Award

### George Cooley

Yanyuwa. Lives in Coober Pedy  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Harriette Bryant

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Mimili  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Iluwanti Ken

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Amata  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Leshaye Swan

Yankunytjara. Lives in Adelaide  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)

## NGARLAA, NGAYAN AND NGINTAKA DONOVAN (THE DONOVAN SISTER'S)

Adnyamathanha, Luritja, Lower Southern Arrernte and Gumbaynggirr. Live in Port Augusta  
Telstra Multimedia Award

## Tiarnie Rose Edwards

Ngarrindjeri. Lives in Kurna Yarta  
Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Award (Sponsored by Telstra)



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## Zaachariaha Fielding

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Adelaide  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Victoria (VIC)

### Jenna Mayilema Lee

Larrakia, KarraJarri, Wardaman. Lives in Melbourne  
Telstra Work on Paper Award

### Marlene Gilson

Wadawurrung. Lives in Gordon  
Telstra General Painting Award

## Western Australia (WA)

### Allery Sandy

Yindjibarndi. Lives in Mingullutharndo Community (5 mile)  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Darryl Dempster

Noongar. Lives in Perth  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Ian Rictor

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Tjuntjuntjara Community  
Telstra General Painting Award

### Michelle Anderson

Pitjantjatjara. Lives in Tjuntjuntjara Community  
Telstra General Painting Award

### River Bali

Gija/Kija. Lives in Byford  
Telstra Work on Paper Award

### Sylvia Wilson

Martu. Lives in Parnpajinya (Newman)  
Telstra General Painting Award

