

1 September 2009

## People's Choice Award Voting Closing Soon

The public still have a couple of weeks to vote for their favourite entry in this year's 26<sup>th</sup> *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) in Darwin with voting set to close next Sunday, 13 September 2009 and the People's Choice Award winner to be announced the following week.

MAGNT Director Anna Malgorzewicz encouraged visitors to visit the gallery and make their vote count.

"Everyone has a favourite, and the People's Choice Award gives the public the opportunity to support a work by voting for it," Ms Malgorzewicz said.

"Attendance to the exhibition has been very strong with more than 15,000 people visiting MAGNT since the Telstra Art Award opened on 14 August 2009.

"To date we have more than 600 votes counted, and votes will continue to be collected until 5pm, Sunday 13 September."

Georgia Symmons, General Manager of Telstra's Indigenous Directorate, also encouraged members of the public to visit the exhibition and cast their vote.

"Telstra is proud of its long association in presenting this wonderful exhibition to the wider public and providing incredible exposure for Indigenous artists from all around Australia," Ms Symmons said.

To vote in the People's Choice Award, visit the Telstra Art Award exhibition at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT), Darwin, pick up a voting form and drop it in the ballot box within the gallery.

In 2008 the People's Choice Award went to Torres Strait Islander artist Alick Tipoti for his work on paper, *Adhikuyam*.

Mr Tipoti, who also won the \$4000 Telstra Works on Paper Award in 2003 and 2007, went on to hold his first international exhibition at the Rebecca Hossack Art Gallery, London in late 2008 following a national tour of Australia.

Ms Malgorzewicz also announced for the first time in the Award's history an online virtual vote has been created, for visitors worldwide who view the artworks in the virtual gallery.

"The online vote is an opportunity for virtual visitors who can't attend the gallery exhibition at MAGNT to have their say on what they felt was the best entry," Ms Malgorzewicz said.

Online voting will close on Sunday, 25 October 2009 and the Online virtual vote winner will be announced online the following Wednesday, 28 October 2009.

To view and vote in the online People's Choice Award go to [www.magnt.nt.gov.au/natsiaa](http://www.magnt.nt.gov.au/natsiaa)

The 26<sup>th</sup> *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* will be on display at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory until Sunday, 25 October 2009.

Ends

**Media Note – For interviews please phone Anne Marshall on 8999 4730**

**Image – Alick Tipoti, *Adhikuyam*, Handcoloured linocut on paper, h 119 x w 497 cm**

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The 26<sup>th</sup> *Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Award* is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments



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