

Fivex Art Prize reveals finalists for \$30,000 inaugural digital billboard art award

*- Six finalists have been selected for Australia's first digital billboard art prize -
- AU\$30,000 Grand Prize announced 30 March with month long exhibition in Melbourne CBD -*



Melbourne, Australia: Six artists and creatives have been selected as finalists for the inaugural Fivex Art Prize from over 500 entries from around the country. The winning work will be announced on 30 March and presented alongside the finalists until 3 May on two large digital billboards prominently located at the corner of Flinders and Elizabeth streets in the heart of Melbourne. The six works explore themes including city life and the natural world and will be on view at intervals throughout the day, interspersed with, and surrounded by, commercial advertising content, prompting city-goers to engage with their built environment and the new media that dominates it in a different way.

Conceived and presented by the Fivex Foundation, Australia's first prize for innovative digital billboard art also offers a **Grand Prize of AU\$30,000** as well as \$1,000 for each of the shortlisted artists. This unique annual award, sponsored by Australia's leading premium digital billboard company, QMS Media, has been established for creative individuals of all disciplines to explore this new medium and examine the dynamic relationship between art and contemporary street culture.

Joshua Berger, Founder/Director, Fivex Art Prize commented: *"Digital billboards have extraordinary potential as a new artistic medium by providing an unparalleled opportunity for artists to engage with the public outside of the conventional gallery setting. The overwhelmingly positive response to our call for entries for the inaugural Fivex Art Prize speaks to the growing energy and enthusiasm that creatives from all disciplines have for exploring the new opportunities that digital billboard art has to offer."*

2020 Judge, artist Gary Deirmendjian said, *"Unrestricted by theme or source media, the finalist works vary greatly in style and content but all rose to the challenge of this new medium with dynamic responses to the physical context and nature of the electronic boards themselves - as a source of emanating light and colour, and potential for public engagement. Although we judges were challenged by the inherent diversity between the entries, we relished the opportunity to consider work from such a vast spectrum of image-makers - including contemporary art, photomedia, graphic design and street art."*

The 2020 Fivex Art Prize finalist artists are:

- Magdalene Carmen (VIC)
- Catherine Clover (VIC)
- Phi Do (VIC)
- Deborah Kelly (NSW)
- Daniel Kotsimbos (VIC)
- Kent Morris (VIC)

Some of the shortlisted works are site-specific, such as new-media artist **Daniel Kotsimbos'** *Peak Frequency* which presents sonic patterns recorded at Melbourne Square Crossing as a beautiful data visualisation, and multidisciplinary designer and

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illustrator **Phi Do's** *Move in All Directions*, a stylised tribute to the city's geometric layout and its only diagonal crossing. Designer, photographer and poet **Magdalene Carmen's** *Hello Sign / Hey Sign* celebrates urban Melbourne by combining the simple, distinct forms of road and construction signs with smart phone aesthetics.

The finalists also explore nature's presence within the city, in particular Australia's native bird life. Artist **Catherine Clover's** *Song Cycle* is centred on the phonetic words used by bird field guides to approximate the bird songs of the Red Whattlebird and the Common Starling, and artist and curator **Kent Morris** includes Australia's native songbird the Magpie in *City of the Future* to highlight the Indigenous history of Melbourne's landscape and its future. Artist **Deborah Kelly's** *Evolutionary Exuberance* captures the complex inter-species entanglement of city life whilst reminding viewers of the natural world's resilience and promise of harmony.

The shortlisted submissions were selected by a judging panel of artists, curators and outdoor media specialists:

- Alessio Cavallaro, Creative Producer, Fivex Art Prize, and media art curator
- Jane Devery, Curator, Contemporary Art, National Gallery of Victoria
- Gary Deirmendjian, Artist
- Liss Fenwick, Public Art Project Lead, Melbourne City Council
- Charmaine Moldrich, CEO, Outdoor Media Association

2020 Judge Charmaine Moldrich, CEO, Outdoor Media Association added: *"It was so wonderful to be part of this project because it was a meeting of two worlds I love – art and city signage. Both shape our cities and our consciousness by interpreting the world we inhabit. Each finalist has tapped into this reality through different lenses to create work that is deeply relevant today."*

The First Prize winning work and other finalists' works will be on view, free to the public, from 30 March until 3 May.

For more information please see: <https://www.fivexartprize.com.au/>

Ends

Key dates & details:

- Entries closed on Sunday 16 February 2020
- First Prize winning artwork announced **Monday 30 March 2020**
- First prize AU\$30,000
- Other finalists awarded AU\$1,000 each
- Artworks presented on the QMS Media billboards from 30 March – 3 May 2020

MEDIA CONTACT: To request interviews, artist statements, imagery and information in relation to the Prize, please contact Articulate: Megan Bentley, megan@articulatepr.com.au, 0452 214 611 or Francesca Hughes, francesca@articulatepr.com.au, 0411 111 929

IMAGES: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hn3vkufm8pysi6c/AAA6Uu-iE4Byerr86g_1ho38a?dl=0

IMAGE CAPTION: Phi Do, *Move in All Directions* 2020