

## FIVEX FOUNDATION TO ACTIVATE SCREENS AND BILLBOARDS ACROSS MELBOURNE'S CBD WITH NEW ARTWORKS THIS DECEMBER

- Announcement and exhibition of Australia's first digital billboard art award valued \$30,000 -
- Major new commission in Federation Square by celebrated Australian artist Gary Deirmendjian -



**Melbourne, Australia:** The Fivex Foundation will enliven Melbourne's CBD this December with a series of new screen and digital billboard artworks by leading and emerging artists from across Australia. The inaugural \$30,000 **Fivex Art Prize: Billboard Art Reimagined**, Australia's first award dedicated to digital billboard art, will present the winning and finalist works from **14 December 2020 – 31 January 2021** on two prominent billboards opposite Flinders St Railway Station, with the winner announced at the exhibition launch. From **7 December 2020 – 31 January 2021**, the Foundation's first major commission – by celebrated Australian artist **Gary Deirmendjian**, titled *pulse* – will set Melbourne's iconic Federation Square aglow.

**Joshua Berger, Director of The Fivex Foundation and Fivex Art Prize** said: *"The Fivex Art Prize offers extraordinary potential as a new artistic medium and, particularly in the wake of the global health crisis, an unparalleled opportunity for artists to exhibit in an easily accessible and safe way outside the conventional gallery setting. We've received a strong response to the inaugural Prize and are delighted to be able to support the cultural sector which has been severely impacted by the pandemic. We are proud to also be presenting the Foundation's first commission, by esteemed artist Gary Deirmendjian."*

**The Fivex Art Prize**, sponsored by Australia's leading premium digital billboard company, QMS Media, has been established for creative individuals of all disciplines to reimagine the dynamic relationship between art and contemporary street culture. **QMS Chief Marketing Officer Sara Lappage** commented, *"QMS is proud to provide media sponsorship for this inaugural billboard art award, particularly at a time when the city is re-awakening and Melbournians are embracing being in the great outdoors once again. We are excited to see the finalists showcase their work on such a powerful digital canvas, right in the heart of Melbourne."*

The Prize offers a Grand Prize of AU\$30,000 as well as \$1,000 for each of the shortlisted artists. Six artists and creatives were selected as finalists earlier this year from over 500 entries from around the country. The winner will be announced by Melbourne's **Lord Mayor Sally Capp** on Monday 14 December at the exhibition launch.

## MEDIA RELEASE

1 December 2020

The winning work will be presented alongside the five finalists on two large digital billboards prominently located at the corner of Flinders and Elizabeth Streets in the heart of Melbourne. The six finalist 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, surprising city-goers to re-engage and experience their built environment differently.

The 2020 Fivex Art Prize finalist works are:

- Multidisciplinary designer and Designer, photographer and poet **Magdalene Carmen's** (VIC) *Hello Sign / Hey Sign* celebrates urban Melbourne by combining the simple, distinct forms of road and construction signs with smartphone aesthetics.
- Artist **Catherine Clover's** (VIC) *Song Cycle* is centred on the phonetic words used by bird field guides to approximate the bird songs of the Indigenous Red Whattlebird and the introduced Common Starling, both local to Melbourne's CBD.
- Illustrator **Phi Do's** (VIC) *Move in All Directions* is a stylised tribute to the city's geometric layout and Flinders and Elizabeth street intersection, Melbourne's only diagonal crossing.
- Celebrated artist **Deborah Kelly's** (NSW) *Evolutionary Exuberance* captures the complex inter-species entanglement of city life whilst reminding viewers of the natural world's resilience and promise of harmony.
- Artist **Daniel Kotsimbos'** (VIC) *Peak Frequency* which presents a visualisation of the sonic patterns recorded at Melbourne Square Crossing to reflect on the public space and routine foundations of our public lives.
- Artist and curator **Kent Morris'** (VIC) photographic montage *City of the Future* includes Australia's native songbird the Magpie to highlight the Indigenous histories and stories that are central to Melbourne's landscape and its future.

**Gary Deirmendjian's** new digital work *pulse* is the Fivex Foundation's first major art commission and will take over the Digital Facade in Melbourne's iconic Federation Square for several hours most evenings from **7 December 2020 – 31 January 2021** with a rhythmically beating colour field of light. The artwork offers a tangible expression of the city's strengthening heartbeat after prolonged COVID lockdown, filling the public space with gentle pulsing light that spills out through the perforated facades and reflects on passers by and the surrounding buildings.

**Artist Gary Deirmendjian said,** *"It is the imagined heartbeat of the vernacular, pulsing silently with calm yet vital assurance. The City stirs..."*

Gary Deirmendjian's *pulse* is commissioned by the Fivex Foundation and presented in association with Federation Square.

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

*Ends*

Key dates & details:

- First Prize winning artist announced and artworks premiered Monday 14 December 2020
- First prize AU\$30,000
- Other finalists awarded AU\$1,000 each
- Artworks presented on the QMS Media billboards from 14 December 2020 – 31 January 2021

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

1 December 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](mailto:megan@articulatepr.com.au), 0452 214 611 or Sasha Haughan, [sasha@articulatepr.com.au](mailto:sasha@articulatepr.com.au), 0405 006 035

**IMAGES:** [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hn3vkufm8pysj6c/AAA6Uu-iE4Byerr86q\\_1ho38a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hn3vkufm8pysj6c/AAA6Uu-iE4Byerr86q_1ho38a?dl=0)

**IMAGE CAPTION:** Deborah Kelly, *Evolutionary Exuberance* (2020).

### **ABOUT THE FIVEX FOUNDATION**

The Fivex Foundation is a philanthropic enterprise dedicated to initiating and supporting a range of community and cultural programs.

### **ABOUT GARY DEIRMENDJIAN**

A sharp observer of the present. Gary Deirmendjian is a compelling and accomplished voice in Australian contemporary art. His unusual mode of practice has produced an extensive body of work that is often described as beguiling, thought-provoking and socially concerned. Deirmendjian's work involves shared space, existing in public as poised suggestions in direct friction with daily life. They also often challenge audiences with their scale and immersive qualities.

His practice encompasses sculpture, photography, video, installation and site-specific intervention. He has exhibited extensively and received numerous new work invitations and commissions for public and private artworks, as well as site-specific projects, realised broadly in Australia and several internationally.

The Fivex Art Prize is sponsored by QMS Media, Australia's leading digital billboard company.