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Seniors exhibition celebrates older Territorians

At today’s official opening of the 2002 Portrait of a Senior Territorian Art Award, Chief Minister and Minister for Arts and Museums, Clare Martin, announced Iain Campbell as the winner of the 2002 Portrait of a Senior Territorian $3,000 Government House Foundation Acquisitive Award.

The exhibition features all 35 portraits submitted into this year’s Portrait of a Senior Territorian Art Award.

Now in its fourth year, the Award is unique to the Territory in encouraging local visual artists to create works recognising and celebrating the contributions of seniors in our community.

"This year it’s particularly exciting to note the level of interest and participation by artists outside of Darwin, the increasing number of entries by Indigenous artists and those artists who have accepted the challenge of portraiture for the first time," Ms Martin said.

"Our Seniors give the community a depth of knowledge, experience and understanding that is invaluable and this Award recognises them for this contribution."

More than half of this year's paintings are from artists based outside of Darwin, such as Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Alice Springs.

Winning Alice Springs artist Iain Campbell has portrayed Beverley Dark, in a portrait, titled simply ‘Bev’.

His subject describes herself as "of senior age, seventy-two years." Ms Dark has worked as a nurse in both Katherine and Alice Springs and gained her pilot’s licence in 1974, continuing to fly to this day. She has recently gained a new interest as a student artist.

"Whilst the portraits are diverse in style, size and medium, many of the artists have chosen to portray family members or close friends and mentors; individuals who have had a significant and lasting impact on their life," Ms Martin said.

"In a place where extended families are often interstate, inter-generation friendships formed through activities such as the arts play an integral part in our community.

"Many of the works in the exhibition reflect family relationships either with a senior family member or a senior who has become a close family friend to the artist.

The major award, the $3,000 Acquisitive prize sponsored by the Government House Foundation of the NT, was judged by a panel comprising Jeanette Anictomatis, President, Government House Foundation, Dallas Gold, Director of Raft Artspace and Christian Clare Robertson a visual artist.
The judges also gave special commendation for their work to Robert Walter, for his portrait of Norma Fong Lim, Henry Smith for his portrait of Dick Kimber and Kate Podger for her portrait of Bessie Liddle.

Visitors to the exhibition are also invited to vote for the People’s Choice Award, which offers a prize of $1,000 for the most popular entry. The winner will be announced on the 12th of December with nominations closing on the 11th.

"I urge everyone to visit this wonderful exhibition and to vote for their favourite portrait," said Ms Martin.

The exhibition is open 9am – 6pm every day in the Main Hall of Parliament House from the 2nd to 11th December 2002.