

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, 15 November 2023

Winner of major Melbourne sculpture prize revealed

- The winner of the \$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2023 – one of the most valuable prizes of its kind in Australia, has been announced at Fed Square this evening.
- The winner, Maree Clarke, has been inspirational in helping to nurture and promote the diversity of contemporary south-east Aboriginal artists.
- The artistic calibre of all four finalists reflects the abundant and diverse talent in the state.
- Winner of the Civic Choice Award 2023 will be announced on 16 November.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which the Melbourne Prize Trust operates, the People of the Kulin Nation, and pay our respects to the elders, past, present and future.

Today, the winner of one of Australia's most valuable and prestigious sculpture prizes has been announced – the \$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2023.

Congratulations to MAREE CLARKE

Maree Clarke, a Mutti Mutti/Yorta Yorta and Boon Wurrung/Wemba Wemba woman from north-east Victoria, has been instrumental in the reclamation of southeast Australian Aboriginal art practices, reviving elements of Aboriginal culture that were lost – or lying dormant. A pivotal figure in the Victorian Indigenous art scene since the 1990s, Maree has emerged as a leader, helping to nurture and promote the diversity of contemporary south-east Aboriginal artists. Maree's public art, sculpture, painting, and multimedia installations of painting and photography explore the customary ceremonies, rituals and language of her ancestors.

We acknowledge and thank the three finalists **Kent Morris**, **Vipoo Srivilasa** and **Joy Zou**. For further information on the winner and finalists, please visit **Finalists - Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2023** Click here for the catalogue **MP23 Catalogue.pdf (melbourneprize.org)**

The 2023 judges include three esteemed arts sector professionals: **Emily Floyd** artist, **Kate Ten Buuren** Senior Curator, First Nations, Melbourne Arts Precinct and **Katharina Prugger** Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Supported by Major Patron, **The Vera Moore Foundation**, the **\$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2023** has been awarded to Maree Clarke to provide direct professional development opportunities. This year entrants were asked to provide information on how the Prize funds would be used on clearly defined initiative/s or project/s that will develop the entrant's practice, building on their previous professional work.

Supported by **Fed Square**, the sum of \$1,000 plus a \$1,000 Qantas voucher is awarded to the finalists who do not take out the major prize. Public voting closes today at 5pm at **www.melbourneprize.org** for a finalist to win the **\$2,000 Civic Choice Award 2023**.

An Augmented Reality Finalists' Exhibition showcasing the four finalists has been on show at Foundation Events Partner, Fed Square and closed at 9pm today. The AR exhibition and 2023 design identity is by **Playground**.

Now in its 19th year, the annual Melbourne Prize recognises and rewards excellence and talent among Victorian writers, musicians and sculptors. The Melbourne Prize for Literature will be offered in 2024.

Melbourne Prize Trust Chairman, Janine Kirk AO said, "the prize has been well received this year by the local artist community and I want to thank all entrants and congratulate the four esteemed finalists and the winner."

The Trust's Founder and Executive Director, Simon Warrender OAM said, "the judges had an extremely challenging task this year due to the impressive calibre of entries, and I appreciate their dedication and the support of all our partners, who have made it possible to offer the program this year."

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The annual Melbourne Prize current cycle includes this year's Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture, which will be followed by the Melbourne Prize for Literature (2024) and the Melbourne Prize for Music (2025).

Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp congratulated the winner of the 2023 Melbourne Prize.

“Our 2023 Melbourne Prize winner is a talented artist who has made a significant contribution to Melbourne’s vibrant art scene. I would also like to congratulate all the finalists.

“This important prize recognises exceptional skill and we look forward to seeing what they achieve in the future.”

Katrina Sedgwich, Director & CEO, Melbourne Arts Precinct said, MAP Co, through our work at Federation Square, is proud to be both a long-standing exhibition and events partner of the annual Melbourne Prize, and the home of this celebrated event for the past 19 years.

Our brand identity this year is the work of our Foundation Creative Partner www.playgroundstudio.com.au Please see the full 2023 Partner list below.

The Vera Moore Foundation is acknowledged and thanked for their most generous support as Major Patron and partner of the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2023.

Thank you to patrons **Diana Gibson AO**, [The Yulgilbar Foundation](#) and [The Scanlon Foundation](#).

The Melbourne Prize Trust is proud to have the **Victorian Government**, through [Creative Victoria](#) and the [City of Melbourne Awards - Arts Excellence Program](#), as Government Partners.

The visual identity and design for this year's Prize is the creation of leading Melbourne design studio and Foundation Partner, [Playground](#). Thank you to CEO Sally Dobell, Creative Director Adit Wardhana, Senior Account Director Libby Broadback, Studio & Operations Manager Kim Hankin and designer, Stanley Darmawan and the studio, one and all.

[Fed Square](#) is the Finalist Fee and Foundation Events Partner and ‘home’ of the annual Melbourne Prize. Their generous support from inception is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to Corporate Partners [Sofitel Melbourne On Collins](#), *the Hotel for the Arts* and [Grant Thornton](#) and [Jamison Alliot](#) for professional services.

The 2023 presentation trophy is hand-made by [Fundere Foundry Melbourne](#).

Thank you to [Committee for Melbourne](#) for providing the office for the [Melbourne Prize Trust](#), to our new catering partner [360Q](#) and to [Evan Evans](#) for our flags and banners.

Thanks for you're [the Board](#) of the Melbourne Prize Trust and to Cultural Advisor, [Kutcha Edwards](#).

Thank you to [The Mighty Wonton](#) for our IT support and website development and [Royce](#) for media services. Thank you to all our operations partners. **Please refer to all our 2023 partners and patrons below.**

Notes to the editor:

The [Melbourne Prize Trust](#) was established in 2004 to recognise and reward talent, excellence and inspire creative development. The Trust achieves this aim by running the annual Melbourne Prize, which is funded by private and public sector partnerships and patrons. The Melbourne Prize Trust and annual Melbourne Prize were founded by Executive Director, Simon Warrender.

In its 19th year and being one of the most valuable arts prizes of its kind in Australia, the annual Melbourne Prize operates in a three-year cycle, including the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture (2023), the Melbourne Prize for Literature (2024) and the Melbourne Prize for Music (2025).

Since inception, the annual Melbourne Prize has made available more than \$2 million in prizes, residencies, equipment grants and an annual public exhibition and presentation at Fed Square to showcase Victorian writers, sculptors and musicians.

The origins of the Melbourne Prize Trust date back to *The Magic Pudding* sculpture commission and children's garden concept at the [Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne](https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/) – an initiative of Simon Warrender implemented in 1998 through Committee for Melbourne's Future Focus Group. The limited-edition miniatures of this sculpture have now sold out.

All announcements and further information will be available at www.melbourneprize.org

Past recipients:

2020

Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2020 - six finalists shared the Prize - **Beth Arnold, Mikala Dwyer, Emily Floyd, Nicholas Mangan, Kathy Temin and Field Theory.**
Rural & Regional Development Award 2020 - **Laura Woodward**
Professional Development Award 2020 - **Isadora Vaughan**
Civic Choice Award 2020 - **Field Theory**

2017

Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2017 - **Daniel von Sturmer** - *Electric Light (facts/figures/federation square)*, 2017
Public Artwork Design Concept Award 2017 - **Emma Anna** - *The Elocwean Rainbow*, 2017
Professional Development Award 2017 - **Bridie Lunney** - *Fold*, 2017
Rural & Regional Development Award 2017 - **Fayen d'Evie**
Civic Choice Award 2017 - **Sarah crowEST**

2014

Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 – **Geoff Robinson** *15 locations/15 minutes/ 15days*, 2014
Professional Development Award 2014 – **Kay Abude** *Piecework (Federation Sqaure)*
Rural & Regional Development Award 2014 – **Aleks Danko**
Civic Choice Award 2014 – **Kay Abude** *Piecework (Federation Sqaure)*

2011

Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2011 - **Bianca Hester** *A world, fully accessible by no living being* 2011
Professional Development Award 2011 - **Lucas Maddock and Isaac Greener** *Apostle No.2* 2011
Civic Choice Award 2011 - **Lucas Maddock and Isaac Greener** *Apostle No.2* 2011

2008

Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2008 - **Alexander Knox** *maxims of behaviour* 2008
Professional Development Award 2008 - **Tom Nicholson** *Monument for the flooding of Royal Park* 2008
VicUrban Award 2008 - **Louise Paramor** *Tritonic Jam Session* 2008
Civic Choice Award 2008 - **Elaine Miles** *Reflections* 2007

2005

Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2005 - **OSW: Terri Bird, Bianca Hester, Natasha Johns-Messenger and Scott Mitchell** *groundings* 2005
Professional Development Award 2005 - **Karen Abernethy** *echophene* 2004
Fabrication Award 2005 - **Simon Perry** *Public Address* 2005
Civic Choice Award 2005 - **Matthew de Moiser** *Parasite* 2005

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Thank you to the 2023 partners and patrons for their generous support.

Design by **PLAYGROUND**

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Event Partner and Finalist/Judges Fees



Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2023 Partner



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Diana Gibson AO



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Media Communications



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Banners



Trophies

