



the children's hospital at Westmead  
**media release**

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### Art exhibition a dream come true for student artists

The chance to have an artwork exhibited in the Art Gallery of NSW is a dream that is sort by many inspiring artists. This month though, that dream will become a reality for 50 NSW school students whose artworks have been chosen to feature in the prestigious 2017 Operation Art Touring Exhibition.

Sharing space with some of Australia's most renowned artists, the featured pieces were hand selected for the exhibition from the 850 artworks entered into last year's Operation Art program, a program that encourages school students to create art for sick children in hospital.

The exhibition will feature 15-year-old autistic artist, Will Hazzard from Dubbo School of Distance Education, who was awarded the Senior ANSTO award for his artwork, titled Lizard Trio (Our Home).

Using art as a form of therapy and inspired by the blue-tongue lizards in his backyard, Will created the detailed, textured and intricate dot painting with the aim of not only making a connection with animals and the environment but also with the aim of making sick kids feel better.

The exhibition will be officially opened **Wednesday, 12 April** at **3.30pm** by popular children's author and illustrator, Stephen Michael King.

Operation Art Coordinator, Lisa van den Dolder, said the exhibition is to not just a chance to showcase the array of talent in NSW schools but also to highlight the effort children make to create artwork for sick kids.

"It is so wonderful for our artists to be recognised in this way but what is even more exciting is that these artworks will soon get to be enjoyed by sick kids, helping to distract them from their time in hospital," Ms van den Dolder said.

Following the exhibition, the featured artworks will commence a year-round tour of the regional art galleries in NSW before becoming part of the permanent art collection at The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

The exhibition will be open daily, with free entry, from April 12 to April 23 between 10am and 5pm.

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*Operation Art is an initiative of The Children's Hospital at Westmead in association with The Department of Education and proudly sponsored by ANSTO (Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation).*

**Media are invited to attend the official opening of the Operation Art Exhibition.**