



the **childr^{en}'s** hospital at Westmead
media release

Cnr Hawkesbury Rd & Hainsworth St
Locked Bag 4001
Westmead NSW 2145

2 September 2015

Children's art a powerful tool in aiding recovery

They may not be old enough to be doctors but hundreds of schools students across New South Wales are helping to make sick kids feel better through the power of their art.

Swapping scrubs for smocks, more than 900 students took to the canvas as part of Operation Art, in the hope that their artwork will be chosen to be hung in The Children's Hospital at Westmead to help cheer up young patients.

Of this year's 875 entered artworks, 50 will be selected to become part of The Children's Hospital at Westmead's permanent art collection, on display for thousands of sick children to enjoy during their time in hospital. An additional 150 artworks will also be chosen for display in various regional hospitals around the state.

The top 50 artworks will be officially revealed at the opening of the 21st annual Operation Art Exhibition at the Armory Gallery, Sydney Olympic Park on September 5.

Operation Art Coordinator, Lisa van den Dolder, said the artworks in this year's exhibition display an array of talent highlighting why the program is so successful.

"Research shows that bright, colourful, optimistic artwork can play a vital role in the healing process, giving children an outlet or distraction during long hospital stays and this year the students have really captured this concept," she said.

"As you walk around the exhibition, you will be overwhelmed with colour, positivity and creativity as it becomes quite clear how these artworks can help improve a child's mood."

"Each entry truly reflects what Operation Art is all about - cheering up children in hospital - and we are thrilled to see so many students helping their peers towards recovery," she said.

The Children's Hospital at Westmead's mascot, Bandaged Bear, will officially open the exhibition on Saturday, September 5, with the help of Mahum Tanauli and Lia Ison from Hambledon Public School. The event will also include family activities and performances by featured artists from this year's Schools Spectacular, the NSW Public Schools Millennium Marching Band and the PULSE Public Schools Big Band.

The exhibition will be open daily from September 5 to October 25 between 10am and 4pm. Entry is free.

Operation Art, which 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), is designed to give Kindergarten to Year 10 students the opportunity to create artworks for sick children in hospital.