

Archibald Prize winner on Operation Art panel

MEDIA CALL – 10.30 am, Saturday 16 September
Armory Gallery, Sydney Olympic Park

13 September - More than 700 NSW school students will have their artwork exhibited at the Armory Gallery and overseen by an Archibald Prize winner as part of the 28th edition of Operation Art.

2022 Archibald Prize Winner, Blak Douglas, is joining this year's judging panel along with Uncle Danny Eastwood and representatives from the NSW Department of Education, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation, Office of the Children's Guardian and NSW Health.

The judges have the difficult task of selecting the 50 finalists who will have their artworks displayed in the permanent art collection at The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW).

The chosen artworks will be unveiled at the official opening of the annual Operation Art exhibition at the Armory Gallery on Saturday 16 September 2023, hung alongside the hundreds of submissions by students from Kindergarten to Year 10 to help cheer up sick kids in hospital.

Ivy Baddock, Art Curator at CHW, is also on the judging panel and said artworks completed through Operation Art are some of the most beloved at the hospital.

"I am blown away by the calibre of artworks that are submitted to Operation Art each year. Operation Art is one of the longest running arts initiatives in NSW and the extensive collection brings so much colour to our hospital's walls, offering our patients and families respite from the clinical environment," Ms Baddock said.

Heidi Windeisen, Operation Art Officer at the NSW Department of Education's Arts Unit, said the exhibition is a great way for students to find real purpose for their artmaking.

"Operation Art shows how art can help create a healing environment and encourages a spirit of generosity. It provides an opportunity for students to reflect on what brings them joy and use that as inspiration to help brighten the stay of those in hospital," Ms Windeisen said.

The selected artworks will also be displayed in regional galleries across the state next year as part of the Touring 50 Exhibition, with CHW their final destination.

The Operation Art exhibition will be on display at the Armory Gallery every weekend, from 16 September to 29 October 2023, and daily during the school holidays, from 25 September to 6 October 2023. It is open from 10am to 4pm and entry is free.

Operation Art is an initiative of The Children's Hospital at Westmead in association with the NSW Department of Education and in collaboration with the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

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