The Blake Prize: Exploring the Spiritual and Religious in Art

The Blake Prize: Exploring the Spiritual and Religious in Art will be on display at Grafton Regional Gallery from Wednesday 25 May until Sunday 3 July 2011.

The exhibition explores religious awareness and spirituality, emphasising an open, personal and idiosyncratic response which often earns the ire or the applause of critics and the public alike. The Blake Prize does more than assert whether an artist is technically proficient. It provides an opportunity for artists to be a catalyst for social debate.

The Blake Prize was established in 1951 by the Blake Society which aims to encourage contemporary artists to explore the spiritual in art. It is the oldest national prize in Australia dedicated to spirituality, religion and cultural diversity.

The Prize has helped to ignite and enhance the careers of well-known Australian artists such as Stanislaus Rapotec, John Coburn, Rod Milgate, Hilton McCormack, Rosemary Valadon and James Powditch.

Rev Dr Rod Pattenden the Chair of the Blake Society will be travelling to Grafton to celebrate the opening of this prestigious cultural prize. On Friday 27 May he will conduct educational tours for local school students before giving a public floortalk at 2.30pm. The Reverend will officially open the exhibition later that evening from 5.30pm. The floortalk and opening are free to attend, RSVPs are requested on 6642 3177 for catering purposes. A bar will be in operation on the evening.

To coincide with The Blake Prize the Grafton Regional presents *The Spirit in Art: Edna Garran- Brown & Joanne Thew*. The exhibition celebrates the colourful and spiritual art created by mother and daughter by displaying a selection of work donated to the gallery between 2000 and 2006.

Also on display at the Grafton Regional Gallery until 3 July 2011; Lyndall Adams & Fiona Fell Reload: one night stack, Colours from the Country II, and Grafton Art Club.

For general inquiries phone the Gallery on 6642 3177. The Gallery is located at 158 Fitzroy Street, Grafton and is open 10am - 4pm Tuesday to Sunday. Admission by donation.

Release Ends

Further information / images: Contact Jude McBean, Director Grafton Regional Gallery on 02 6642 3177

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