

MEDIA RELEASE - Wednesday 15 October 2014 / For immediate release

Inaugural Rural & Regional Development Award Announced

- **Daylesford-based sculptor Aleks Danko awarded inaugural \$40,000 Rural & Regional Development Award 2014**
- **\$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 and Awards to be announced next month**
- **The annual Melbourne Prize celebrates its 10th anniversary this year**

Daylesford-based artist **Aleks Danko** has become the inaugural recipient of the \$40,000 Rural & Regional Development Award.

The Award recognises **Aleks'** portfolio of work, the proposal for new work to be presented in Victorian rural centres Bendigo and Ballarat and further career development. Aleks' work has been exhibited in Australia and overseas and is held in all State Collections, major Regional Art Galleries and selected University Collections in Australia.

The Rural & Regional Development Award, supported by The Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation, is offered as part of the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014, which focuses on the importance of sculpture, in all its forms, to inform public spaces and enrich public life. The Award recognises the important contribution of sculptors in rural and regional Victoria and provides career development opportunities.

Simon Warrender, Executive Director and Founder of the Melbourne Prize Trust, "Response to the inaugural award has been immensely strong and testament to the abundant talent in rural and regional Victoria.

"The annual Melbourne Prize enjoys and values strong regional and rural support and so, to mark our 10th anniversary, it is with great pleasure that we have introduced this new award to recognise and reward rural and regional artists through the generosity of The Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation, whose focus in supporting this Award is to provide opportunities to sculptors in rural and regional Victoria."

The Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Heidi Victoria MP also offered her congratulations. "This is a fantastic initiative that recognises the rich pool of creative talent in regional Victoria and extends the impact of the Melbourne Prize across the state. I congratulate the Melbourne Prize Trust, The Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation, and of course **Aleks Danko**, the inaugural recipient."

Hamilton-based philanthropist Dr Geoff Handbury AO, patron of the inaugural Rural & Regional Development Award 2014 emphasised the importance of supporting the arts in this important region. "There is great talent out in Rural and Regional Victoria and I am delighted to have this opportunity to support, acknowledge and reward their skills in the prestigious Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 and Awards," he said.

Former President of the Bendigo Art Gallery, John Higgs OAM, has also expressed his delight in seeing regional talent being recognised and nurtured through the Award. "The introduction of the Regional & Rural Award to the annual Melbourne Prize is a marvelous development for artists in regional Victoria.

"Public sculpture has great historical and contemporary importance to the Australian artistic landscape and the substantial reward offered by this accolade will offer significant opportunities for recognition and future development, as well as helping to place greater focus on the role sculpture plays in regional communities," he said.

The judges this year are **Tony Ellwood**, Director, National Gallery of Victoria, **Juliana Engberg**, Artistic Director, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, **Professor Callum Morton**, Head of Fine Art, MADA, Monash University Art Design & Architecture and Sculptor, **Professor Marie Sierra**, Artist & Deputy Dean and Head of School UNSW Australia Art & Design, **Simone Slee**, Artist & Head, Sculpture & Spatial Practice, School of Art, Victorian College of the Arts, Faculty of VCA and MCM, The University of Melbourne.

Information on **Aleks Danko**, the winner of the \$40,000 Rural & Regional Award 2014, will be available at the exhibition of the six (6) finalists in the \$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014, to be held at Federation Square between 10 - 24 November. The six finalists have been announced - please see over the page.

Fed Square reflects and cultivates Melbourne's pre-eminence as a centre for creativity and innovation. The team at Federation Square is dedicated to working with artists and creative practitioners to create provocative works that respond specifically to the unique physical and social environment that is Melbourne's meeting place.

Federation Square is the exhibition and events partner and 'home' of the annual Melbourne Prize. This long-term partnership makes it possible for the public, visiting the free public exhibition each November, to engage with abundant talent in literature, music and (urban) sculpture. It provides artists with public exposure in one of the country's most visited public spaces. At our 10th anniversary, the Melbourne Prize Trust appreciates Federation Square's generous support, which enhances our creative resources and provides opportunities to promote our abundant artistic talent through the annual Melbourne Prize.

- More -

The *Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014* focuses on the urban environment and the importance of sculpture, in all its forms, to inform public spaces and enrich public life. It is unique, in that it enables entrants to submit either a completed artwork, or a proposal for an artwork.

The *Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014* and Awards offer a range of opportunities to artists - including:

- **Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 - \$60,000 cash**, generously supported by The Vera Moore Foundation, The Tallis Foundation and the Melbourne Prize Trust. **An artist fee of \$4,000 each** is provided to the six finalists in the *Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014*, which is generously made available by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust.
- **Rural & Regional Development Award 2014 - \$40,000 cash**, generously supported by The Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation - recipient to be announced prior to the November exhibition.
- **Professional Development Award 2014 - \$10,000 cash** supported by the Professional Development Award Trust, **plus a \$2,500** Qantas international airfare credit and a professional practice opportunity provided by Sculpture & Spatial Practice, School of Art, VCA, The University of Melbourne.
- **Civic Choice Award 2014 - \$4,000 cash**, supported by Federation Square and Sofitel Melbourne On Collins. Awarded to the finalist in the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 exhibition with the highest number of public votes cast at the November Federation Square exhibition and online at www.melbourneprize.org - voting commences on 10 November at the opening of the Federation Square exhibition.

The finalists in this year's *Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014* are as follows - the recipient will be announced on November 13:

Kay Abude
Louise Paramor

John Nixon
Spiros Panigirakis

Scott Mitchell
Geoff Robinson

The **\$4,000 Civic Choice Award 2014** will be awarded to one of the six (6) finalists in the *Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014* with the highest number of public votes. Online voting for one of the above six (6) finalists will commence at the opening of the free public exhibition at Federation Square, our exhibition and event partner, on 10 November and concludes on 24 November. Voting will also be possible using the free finalist catalogue, which will be available at the exhibition.

– Ends –

Key dates

- 10 - 24 November 2014 - Finalist Exhibition at Federation Square / commencement of public voting for the Civic Choice Award 2014 / display of the recipient of the Rural & Regional Development Award 2014
- 13 November 2014 - Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 and Professional Development Award 2014 recipients announced
- 28 November 2014 - Civic Choice Award 2014 recipient announced

For more information or for interview opportunities please contact: **Richard Amos** or **Tony Faccenda** at Royce on (03) 8628 9362 or 0418 344 978 and 0411 231 433 respectively. Visit www.melbourneprize.org

Progress of the Prize can be followed via our social media platforms:

<https://www.facebook.com/MelbournePrize>

https://twitter.com/Melbourne_Prize

Notes to the Editor/reporter:

The annual Melbourne Prize is celebrating its 10th anniversary. It is one of the most valuable prizes of its kind in Australia and runs in a three-year cycle, which includes the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture (2014), the Melbourne Prize for Music (2015), and the Melbourne Prize for Literature (2016).

Since inception the annual Melbourne Prize has made available more than \$1 million in prizes and award, artist residencies, equipment/instrument grants and an annual public exhibition at Federation Square to Victorian writers, sculptors and musicians.

The *Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014* and Awards are made possible through the generous support of partners and patrons of the Melbourne Prize Trust, which can be seen at www.melbourneprize.org.

Government partners include the State Government through Arts Victoria and the City of Melbourne. The annual Melbourne Prize was conceived by Simon Warrender and is an initiative of Committee for Melbourne, who are a Founding Partners, along with Cornwell, who undertake all design and identity and Minter Ellison Lawyers and Ernst & Young. Federation Square is the founding Exhibition & Events Partner. Diana Gibson AO is Founding Patron.

Past recipients include:

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

The annual Melbourne Prize alumni
2005 to 2013



Melbourne Prize for Music 2010
David Jones

Outstanding Musicians Award 2010
Ben Northey

Development Award 2010
Natalie Bartsch



Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2011
Bianca Hester

Professional Development Award 2011
Isaac Greener & Lucas Maddock

Civic Choice Award 2011
Isaac Greener & Lucas Maddock



Melbourne Prize for Literature 2012
Alex Miller

Best Writing Award 2012
Craig Sherborne

Civic Choice Award 2012
Tony Birch



Melbourne Prize for Music 2013
Brett Dean

Outstanding Musicians Award 2013
Stephen Magnusson

Development Award 2013
Kate Kelsey-Sugg

Civic Choice Award 2013
Mick Harvey



Melbourne Prize for Literature 2009
Gerald Murnane

Best Writing Award 2009
Nam Le

Civic Choice Award 2009
Amra Pajalic



Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2008
Alexander Knox

Professional Development Award 2008
Tom Nicholson

VicUrban Award 2008
Louise Paramor

Civic Choice Award 2008
Elaine Miles



Melbourne Prize for Music 2007
Paul Grabowski

Outstanding Musicians Award 2007
Genevieve Lacey

Development Award 2007
Julian Langdon



Melbourne Prize for Literature 2006
Helen Garner

Best Writing Award 2006
Christos Tsiolkas

Civic Choice Award 2006
Henry von Doussa



Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2005
Open Spatial Workshop

Professional Development Award 2005
Karen Abernethy

Civic Choice Award 2005
Matthew de Moiser

Thank you to our 2014 partners and patrons.

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Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 Partners



Rural & Regional Development Award 2014 Patron

The Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation

Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture 2014 Finalist Artist Fees



Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

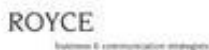
Professional Development Award 2014 Partner



Civic Choice Award 2014 Partner



Media Communications



Professional Services



Broadcast Partner



Exhibition Signage & AV



Trophies



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IT Services

THE MIGHTY WONTON
Names24.com.au

Exhibition Consultant

Coleby Consulting

Design by Cornwell

an initiative of the Committee for Melbourne