



Fries award gives space to create



THREE Aboriginal artists – Betty Muffler, Beyula Napanangka

Puntungka and Rachel Mipantjiti Lionel – are among the 12 finalists for the John Fries award.

The award, which is supported by the Copyright Agency, recognises the talents of early-career visual artists from Australia and New Zealand.

The \$10,000 prize is now in its ninth year, and the finalists' work will be exhibited at the UNSW Galleries from September 29 until November 3.

Rachel Mipantjiti Lionel is from the Ernabella community in South Australia's Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands, and said she's never been to Sydney so it's exciting to know that her artwork will be on display there.

"I'll be happy to go and see my artwork and other people's paintings there," the Pitjantjatjara woman said. "I look forward to seeing them. I love painting.

I keep my paintings in my heart."

Ms Lionel said she's excited to be selected as a finalist for the John Fries Award, and it will mean a lot to her if she wins.

"I'm very happy and excited," she said. "If I win, I will tell my girls – tell my daughters – I will say my painting has been picked. I look forward to finding out who wins."

Copyright Agency chief executive Adam Suckling said the John Fries Award ensures that emerging talent is validated and supported to enrich Australia's cultural life and community.

"Awards such as this provide pivotal support to artists, giving them the time and space to create," he said. "This year's finalists were drawn from close to 600 applications and represent a cross-section of early career artists."

The award will be judged by curator Consuelo Cavaniglia, Parramatta Arts co-ordinator Sophia Kouyoumdjian, John Fries Award chair Kath Fries and artists Mikala Tai and

Shannon Te Ao.

Consuelo Cavaniglia said this year's finalists offer a glimpse into the themes that concern

contemporary artists.

"This award is so exciting because it offers early career artists the opportunity to showcase

their vision, and provides audiences an insight into the incredible and diverse talent we have in Australia and New Zealand's

emerging art scene," he said.

The award winner will be announced at UNSW Galleries on September 29.



Rachael Mipantjiti Lionel.