

SCULPTURES OUT BACK

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Sculptures Out Back opens to huge acclaim

Toowoomba based artist Rod Buckland has claimed the major prize in the 2023 Sculptures Out Back Acquisitive Competition with his stunning scrap metal echidna, 'The Fossicker'.

Mr Buckland was awarded the \$20,000 Australia Pacific LNG and Origin Energy Acquisitive Open prize following the judging and exhibition opening in Roma on Saturday.

The opening drew hundreds of art lovers to the growing Sculpture Park on the banks of the Bungil Creek with all keen to view the 20 outdoor sculptures in this year's exhibition.

Other major prize winners included Mitchell's Kyle Mansfield who took home the \$10,000 Maranoa Regional Council Acquisitive Local Prize and the \$2000 Roma on Bungil Gallery People's Choice prize for 'Real Steel'.

Real Steel was inspired by two local saddle bronc riders, Greg Hamilton and Damien Brennan who've achieved national and international success in the rodeo ring in recent years .

It was the second year in a row that Mr Mansfield has been awarded the People's Choice Award.

The \$5000 Hall Chadwick Emerging Artist Prize was awarded to another very popular submission, 'Armadilla Waratah' by Morven artists Michael and Kylee Tindale-Smith.

The eye-catching piece was made mostly from old roofing iron from Armadilla Station at Morven with some of the material believed to be well over 100 years old.

Bymount graziers and artists Donna and Danny Sutton were awarded the \$2000 Roma Wire and Steel Acquisitive Garden Seat Prize for their gorgeous scrap metal seat, 'In Another Life'.

The Sutton's seat, along with the major winner, 'The Fossicker' and "Real Steel' will now stay in the Sculpture Park beyond the close of the exhibition on September 16.

The exhibition was judged by Goondiwindi artist Angus Wilson, Brisbane art curator and writer Beth Jackson and Roma local and Origin Energy employee, Matt Harland.

Sculptures Out Back committee member Sandy Macdonald said the event was now a major highlight on the western Queensland cultural calendar.

"A real highlight of the day for me was seeing the joy and dilemma on the faces of community members as they walked through the sculptures trying to decide which sculpture they wanted to vote for as the People's Choice," she said.

"We are seeing many more local young artists entering the exhibition and there was so much talent within the Shop Front Competition entries.

"We would love to see this confidence grow within the Maranoa and therefore more people feeling happy to have a go at creating a sculpture.

“Already there is a steady stream of tourists stopping at the park to view the exhibition. No doubt these crowds will grow as the school holidays start, creating a really positive flow on for Roma and surrounding towns.

“Our vision is that through working with Maranoa Regional Council there will soon be a plan developed to integrate the Sculpture Park area into the Big Rig plan which will involve landscaping, complete with paths and lighting.”

This year the committee also invited local businesses to get into the spirit of the event by building and displaying their own sculpture for the event.

The Cameron family from Roma Concrete Products took out the \$2000 first prize with their mosaic metal flower while the \$1000 Most Original prize went to Hannah Dillon for her piece, Stunning News.

Sculptures from Jo Moore Barber and Roma Wire and Steel were also awarded highly commended in the Shop Front Display competition.

Media inquiries and further comment:

Anne Galloway Mobile: 0427763507 Email: duarran2@bigpond.com Or secretary: sculpture@romaonbungil.com