



TOP THREE KINETIC ART FINALISTS REVEALED

As a proud Tubba-Gah-Wiradjuri man, Lewis Burns is keen to explore the way Wambuul (Macquarie River) connects the community with country, if selected as the artist to develop a kinetic artwork for the Old Dubbo Gaol Heritage Plaza. Lewis is one of three Indigenous artists named as a finalist for the kinetic art competition, which aims to find an Indigenous artist from anywhere in Australia to create a concept for one of regional Australia's largest kinetic art pieces. Lewis' proposed concept will feature shimmering tiles to represent the surface of water, and tells the story of Daroo – a local dreamtime story.

“Daroo is a dreamtime story which originated in the region around Dubbo, describing the discovery of the first platypus. This is a story of resilience, survival and metamorphosis. The story of Daroo invites contemplation on the themes of resilience and survival, as well as the idea that a community will metamorphose over time into the place where its people want to live,” said Lewis in his concept statement.

Bianca Beetson is a Kabi Kabi (Sunshine Coast) Wiradjuri woman, and has extensive experience in art installations across Australia, and the

world. Bianca has a keen focus on collaboration with community to develop public artwork, her concept explores the process of asking permission to enter Country, when a visitor first announces themselves to the ancestors and wait for a response. “This work will explore the idea of echoing back the community’s wellspring, achieved through connection to Country. A whispering wall that listens and responds to the sounds of Country through a sound/ voice activation. Coloured LED lighting sequences will demonstrate the feeling of connection to Country, changing in response to the community who will activate the work through sound,” said Bianca in her concept statement.

Finally, Kent Morris of Barkindji heritage lives on Yauk-ut Weelam Country in Melbourne, and has a strong connection to Dubbo through Aunties and Uncles who live here. Kent has had his public work featured in numerous major collections, including the National Gallery of Victoria, and most recently, a public commission for the University of Technology in Sydney. Kent is also interested in exploring the significance of rivers, and plans to explore the deep ancestral knowledge embedded in Country, and the continuation of this knowledge with new technologies, and its importance to the healing of Country. “The intertwining of Aboriginal cultural knowledge systems, technology and the built environment is an integral element of my work. By visually deconstructing and reassembling the built environment, my practice reshapes contemporary thought around the deep existence of Aboriginal knowledge and the role this knowledge continues to play today,” he said.

Mayor of the Dubbo Region, Councillor Ben Shields, says the kinetic art competition has attracted a high calibre of artists from across Australia, and it was incredibly difficult to choose just three, who will now go on to workshop their ideas with UAP – the company engaged to install the

kinetic artwork. “There was an impressive field of artists, and it was so difficult to choose just three from a large field of candidates. It’s great to see that our top three have a strong connection to the Dubbo region, and even better that we have a local shortlisted! I’m looking forward to seeing how their concepts are going to develop from here,” said Councillor Shields.

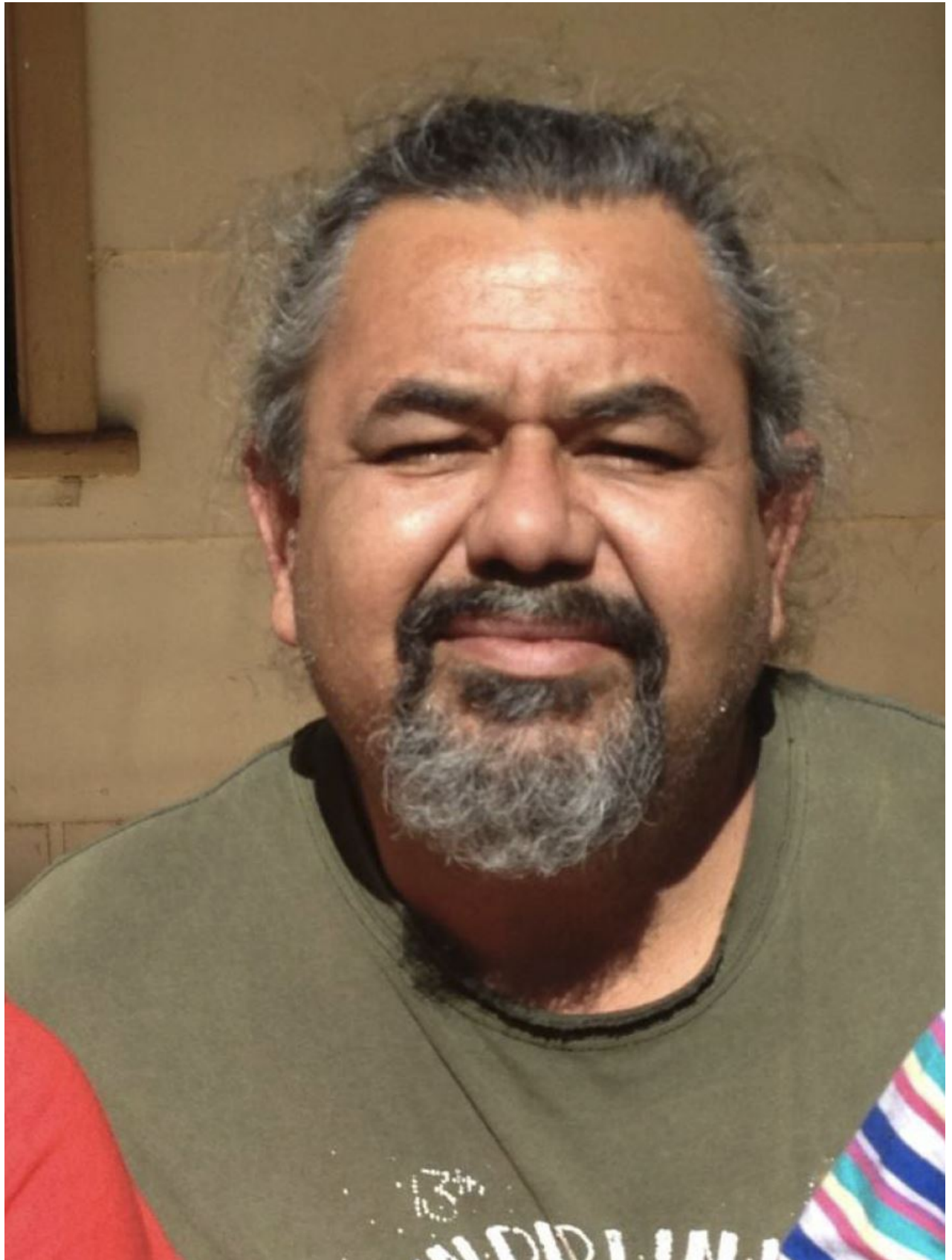
A panel of eight people, comprised of Indigenous artists and curators, the Mayor, Member for Dubbo Dugald Saunders, and Telstra’s Senior Specialist for Indigenous Affairs, as well as members of the Wiradjuri Technical Advisory Panel, and Aboriginal Community Working Party, shortlisted the final candidates, who will now receive \$5,000 each to workshop their ideas and carryout consultation with community in the coming months.



Bianca Beetson



Kent Morris



Lewis Burns

Last Edited: 17 Jul 2023