



SCULPTURE at SCENIC WORLD

MEDIA RELEASE

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Blue Mountains duo win Sculpture at Scenic World 2018

Blue Mountains duo, Mark and Hannah Surtees, have taken home the Sculpture at Scenic World 2018 Major Award, rising above fierce competition to win the coveted \$20,000 cash prize.

Mark and Hannah's work, *Geronimo!*, was selected from a field of 38 finalist's works by a highly esteemed judging panel including Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest Director, Dr Lee-Anne Hall; Campbelltown Art Centre Curator, Adam Porter; and Blue Mountains-based artist and academic, Anne Graham.

The judges applauded all finalists for their range of interpretations and made a special mention of Mark and Hannah's installation for its "elegant simplicity and thoughtful responsiveness to the environment".

Accepting the award in front of approximately 300 guests, Mark and Hannah – who are both designers by trade – said they were thrilled by the win, which will allow them to expand their art practice and explore new artistic endeavours.

"As designers we're often limited by function and purpose, but there are no boundaries as artists which is liberating... the sense of freedom and expression is intoxicating," Mark said.

"Doing this work was a reward in itself and sharing the process with Hannah has been such a lovely experience. We're looking forward to what the future holds.

"Thank you to Scenic World for this opportunity and a special thank you to Exhibition Curator Justin Morrissey and his rock star install crew!"

Announced at the event launch on Friday April 13, Sculpture at Scenic World Exhibition Curator Justin Morrissey said *Geronimo!* was sure to captivate visitors from near and far from April 13 – May 13.

"*Geronimo!* is a subtle, insightful work that embodies the natural beauty of the ancient rainforest and explores themes of freedom and exhilaration that are understood across all languages and cultures," he said.

"It's a privilege to have the opportunity to showcase art in such an iconic location along the Scenic Walkway, and I'm delighted to see the award go to two talented local artists whose work contributes to the vitality and diversity of our community."

Now in its seventh year, Sculpture at Scenic World continues to gain momentum on a global scale, with more than 1000 artists from all over the world entering the coveted exhibition since its inception.

NSW Minister for Tourism and Major Events Adam Marshall said the exhibition had cemented its position as an iconic regional art exhibition after securing a triennial grant of \$27,500 under the NSW Government's Flagship Event Fund.

"The Flagship Event Fund, which is managed by our tourism and major events agency Destination NSW, offers grants to events in rural and regional NSW for marketing activities aimed at driving overnight visitation and boosting local economies," Mr Marshall said.

"Across the State, we're working hard to make it easier for event proponents, tour operators, hoteliers, and visitor attractions to access vital grants to get their initiatives off the ground and to get tourism booming in regional NSW.

"I encourage visitors to start planning their trip to Sculpture at Scenic World for an exciting event experience in the stunning Blue Mountains."

Other awards presented at the exhibition launch include the \$2,000 Scenic World Staff's Choice Award which was awarded to Nick Warfield for his work *Calling Upon the Owl*, and the \$3,000 Environmental Award which was presented to Jacek Wankowski for his installation, *The Drowned World*.

The Blue Mountains Cultural Centre Exhibition Opportunity was also awarded to David Jenz for his work, *Ripple*, with the 2018 Sculpture at Scenic World prize pool totalling \$30,000 for the first time.

A number of artists also received an honourable mention, including Oliver Ashworth-Martin for his work, *Lost Fossil*; Paul Greedy for his sound scape, *Pulse*; David Jenz for his work, *Ripple*; and Honi Ryan and Abi Tariq for their thought provoking work, *Photos Not Taken (Here)*.

A total of 38 artworks will be exhibited in the Jurassic rainforest at Scenic World in the Blue Mountains from April 13 to May 13.

For more information about Sculpture at Scenic World visit sculptureatscenicworld.com.au.

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