

MEDIA RELEASE



THE HEART OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

For Immediate Release
9 June 2021

\$5000 ART PRIZE FOR WHITSUNDAYS FESTIVAL ART EXHIBITION

The 2021 Whitsundays Arts Festival returns to Fairy Tree Park on the Airlie Beach Foreshore on 17-19 September. New this year is The Whitsundays Arts Prize Exhibition on the festival site. The Whitsunday Regional Council has generously granted WAF a \$5,000 acquisition prize so the winning artwork will stay in the Whitsundays Council collection. Admission to the festival and art exhibition is free to the public.

Other generous sponsors include Bendigo Bank, Wilmar, and Smart Arts who have contributed to prizes for emerging artist, high commendation, local artist, and people's choice. Entry forms are currently available on the festival web site and close in July.

Whitsunday Regional Council Mayor, Andrew Willcox, said he was proud that Council had stepped up to the plate to financially support the Whitsundays Arts Festival. "The Whitsunday Art Acquisition Program will provide the opportunity for Council to build a collection of two-dimensional award-winning Art pieces which can be housed in Council offices, the new Proserpine Entertainment Centre or the new Flagstaff Hill Conference and Cultural Centre in Bowen," he said.

"Council's \$5,000 funding of an acquisition prize will attract a higher standard of submissions and elevate national interest in the festival. Arts festivals give our community the opportunity to meet, to showcase their artistic talents and share creative ideas. The Whitsundays Arts Festival includes markets, workshops, cabaret and music and ensures The Whitsundays are the Heart of Events," Mayor Willcox said.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer, Tash Wheeler said the exciting announcement about The Whitsundays Art Prize Exhibition is a great addition to this bright and colourful festival.

"The 2021 Whitsundays Arts Festival is shaping up to be a wonderful weekend filled with markets, workshops, performances and music. The winning artwork being awarded an outstanding \$5,000 prize and staying in The Whitsundays Council collection is incredible news.

"This festival brings Airlie Beach Foreshore to life in September and it's fantastic to see Whitsunday Regional Council supporting this community event," Ms Wheeler said.

The 2021 festival focuses on the performing arts, the inaugural Art Prize Exhibition, multicultural celebration, and lots of exciting workshops by regional artists. Two esteemed companies are coming to the Festival from Townsville.

Dancenorth will present movement workshops on Sunday 19 September and Full Throttle Theatre Company will perform their outdoor show Astronomical 2 including workshops for kids and telescope viewing of our magnificent night sky on Saturday evening 18 September.

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Saturday arts workshops include digital animation, weaving, children's book writing and illustration, and abstract painting as well as poi making by local Maori group Kotahitanga Kapahake. Pour into the mix lots of multicultural music - didgeridoo, Irish singing, African drumming, Maori song and dance, and Cuban and Columbian music, as well as some of the best musicians from our region. Add puppet shows, learning the haka, African drumming workshops and a magnificent lantern art installation "Mermaid Dreaming" made with resident lantern and fire artist Lily Podger from the Woodford Folk Festival. And of course the popular Handmade Market returns to the Festival on Sunday 19 September from 9:00am - 4:00pm.

For further information and to find out how you can join in the fun check out the [festival website](#) and follow the festival on Facebook and Instagram.

For further information contact Jess Begun [via email](#) or phone on 0417631500.

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About Tourism Whitsundays: *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.*

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