

MEDIA RELEASE

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Countdown is on for popular art awards winners' announcement

An incredible transformation is under way at the Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum (GRAGM) this week.

With all entries submitted in *The 44th Rio Tinto Martin Hanson Memorial Art Awards 2019* by artists near and far, it now remains to be seen which works have passed pre-selection to feature in the exhibition.

Gladstone Region Mayor Matt Burnett said the best way to find out who this year's winners are in the popular awards is to be at GRAGM when the announcement is made on Saturday, 19 October.

"The Gallery & Museum is closed for installation of the *Art Awards* exhibition before reopening on Saturday," Councillor Burnett said.

"The doors will open at 10am when artists and their supporters will stream through to see their works within the exhibition of entries."

Cr Burnett said attendees would have the opportunity to meet this year's awards judge, Simon Elliott, who will lead an exhibition floor talk at 11am, giving the group a chance to view the works from his perspective.

"Visitors will be encouraged to stay on for an informal artists' lunch, available for a gold coin donation, before Simon delivers his much-anticipated illustrated lecture *Three Generations of Australian Painters: Margaret Olley, Ben Quilty, Jon Molvig*."

The exhibition will remain open to visitors until 5pm before closing to enable preparations for the gala official launch and awards presentations from 6pm.

Cr Burnett will be a guest speaker on the night, along with major sponsor representative and General Manager of Queensland Alumina Limited, Pine Pienaar, to officially open the exhibition.

Then, all eyes focus on Simon as he announces the winners of the lucrative prize pool, before concluding the evening's formalities.

Members of the public are welcome to attend all of Saturday's events and admission is free. To RSVP, phone the Gallery & Museum on 4976 6766 or email gragm@gladstone.qld.gov.au

The exhibition of award entries will remain on display until 5 December, 2019.

The Gallery & Museum is located on the corner of Goondoon & Bramston Streets, Gladstone.