

MEDIA RELEASE DATE: 13 FEBRUARY 2025

FACE VALUE: A BOLD CELEBRATION OF FIRST NATIONS ICONS

The powerful new exhibition by Archibald Prize-winning artist Blak Douglas celebrates the resilience and richness of First Nations people and culture.

Four larger-than-life portraits are [on display](#) for the first time together at the Parliament of NSW until 27 March. Taking Uncle Max Eulo, Christine Anu, Uncle Roy Kennedy and Brooke Boney as subjects, the portraits were entered into the Archibald Prize over the past decade – with two artworks selected as finalists. Each painting measures up to two metres in width and height.

Blak's artistic style is deeply influenced by themes of politics and social justice. His achievements include winning the Kilgour Prize in 2019, the STILL Award in 2020 and the prestigious Archibald Prize in 2022, after being a five-time finalist.

"I project the face onto a large canvas and use my trademark cracking paint technique on the background, which signifies how dry the continent has become – my nod to global warming," Blak Douglas said of his artistic process.

"I use my customary seven bands in the background to represent 'The Seven Sisters', or 'Kungkarangkalpa' a well-known dreamtime story.

A proud Aboriginal man, Blak resides in mid-western New South Wales. Born in 1970 in Blacktown, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Western Sydney.

"While my art isn't about the Dreaming, it reflects living in the modern Dreaming. I hope it inspires others to pick up a pen and sketch their loved ones."

Located in the public '[Fountain Court](#)' exhibition space, the Reconciliation Wall forms part of the Parliament's commitment to reconciliation with First Nations peoples, as a dedicated space for engaging with and promoting Aboriginal artists in NSW.

The Hon. Ben Franklin MLC, President of the NSW Legislative Council, who is also the exhibition sponsor, said *Face Value* offers a powerful opportunity to reflect on the legacy and ongoing achievements and cultural contributions of indigenous Australians.



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“As the Parliament of NSW continues to strengthen its relationship with NSW’s diverse First Nations communities, we’re thrilled to have an artist of Blak’s calibre showcasing his work on the Reconciliation Wall.”

“It’s a moment to acknowledge four extraordinary cultural leaders, but also a reminder that every voice should be heard in our democracy.

“Displayed at the very heart of NSW Parliament, the portraits serve as a potent symbol of the representation, respect, and reconciliation that we are seeking to nurture in this place.”

Face Value exhibition details:

- **Exhibition Title:** *Face Value*
- **Artist:** Blak Douglas
- **Location:** NSW Parliament House, 6 Macquarie Street, Sydney
- **Dates:** Now until 27 March
- **Times:** Weekdays 9am – 5pm, excluding public holidays
- **Entry:** Free