

MEDIA RELEASE

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CHIEF SCIENTIST ANNOUNCES SKA ART PRIZE WINNERS

Australia's Chief Scientist Professor Ian Chubb will tonight announce the winners of *SEEING STARS - the SKA Art Prize 2013* at the Yarra Gallery, Federation Square, Melbourne, from 6.30 p.m.

The announcement of the *open* and *under-12* prize category winners marks the opening of a week-long exhibition of Australian science-themed art.

"The quality of the work is exceptional", Professor Chubb said. "It is excellent to see Australian artists young and old, exploring the intersection between art and science."

The *Seeing Stars* SKA Art Prize 2013 is a national initiative inviting artists to create artworks inspired by the research potential of the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) - the world's largest telescope. Proudly co-hosted by Australia, the SKA will provide answers to the five fundamental mysteries of the universe; the birth of stars and galaxies, dark energy, alien life, the genius of Einstein, and giant magnetic fields of space.

"Art and science share much in common. Both are inherently creative and inquisitive and can give us a greater appreciation and understanding of the universe and our place in it," Professor Chubb said.

The response to the competition was overwhelming, attracting over 2,300 entries, of which 150 are on display at the Yarra Gallery during National Science Week. Admission is free and the exhibition closes on Sunday evening.

Professor Brian Boyle, Australian SKA Project Director, was also impressed by the quality and quantity of the work received.

"It's exciting to see so many Australians contributing to this competition. The *Seeing Stars* prize is a clear demonstration that scientific endeavour can inspire creativity well beyond the scientific community".

Besides the five research questions that the SKA will explore, Professor Boyle said that it is very possible that the greatest discovery the SKA will make is the answer to a question that we haven't even thought of yet.

The SKA will be some 50 times larger than any existing radio telescope, comprising thousands of antennas, distributed over hundreds of kilometres in both Australia and southern Africa.

For more information about the winners or the SKA visit <http://www.ska.gov.au> or contact Jerry Skinner on 0410 221 806

