

Celebrated artist Guan Wei receives Western Sydney University graduation honour

Internationally acclaimed artist, Mr Guan Wei, has been recognised with an Honorary Doctorate of Creative Arts from Western Sydney University, as part of the University's December graduation celebrations.

Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Barney Glover AO, said the University community is pleased to recognise Guan Wei as an iconic figure in the Australian contemporary art scene, whose work is a blend of past and present, east and west, and personal and collective experience.

"Guan Wei is a visual artist whose body of work spans four decades and remarkably includes 73 solo and 269 group exhibitions. His work is renowned for its intellectual depth, originality, humanity and sharp sense of humour through the exploration of universal themes and the contemporary issues facing our society, including climate change, identity and migration.

"In particular, Guan Wei has a long-standing association with Western Sydney University, and has made many valued contributions to the Greater Western Sydney region.

"As a member of the University's Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture Advisory Board, he plays an active role in guiding and advising the Institute on its art activities as well as helping it to expand its networks.

"The University is honoured to confer the award of Doctor of Creative Arts (*honoris causa*) on Mr Guan Wei, in recognition of his significant international contribution to the visual arts and to Western Sydney University."

Guan Wei first came to Australia in 1989 as an artist-in-residence at the University of Tasmania, and in 1993 became a permanent resident. With the assistance of an Australia Council grant in 2008, he set up a studio in Beijing and has made considerable contributions to the art exchanges between Australia and China over many years.

His work, 'Nesting, or the Art of Idleness', was the Museum of Contemporary Art's first solo exhibition by a Chinese Australian artist. Further to this, the Museum commissioned him to create the mural, 'The Journey to Australia', as well as the Guan Wei: MCA Collection, which showcased his mural, 'Feng Shui', and the 48-piece artwork, 'Two-Finger Exercise'.

In 2002, Guan Wei received the Art Gallery of NSW's Sir John Sulman Prize for his piece, 'Gazing into Deep Space No. 9', while his work, 'Under the Southern Cross', was included in the Sydney 2000 Olympics Fine Art Collection.

The Powerhouse Museum also curated 'Other Histories: Guan Wei's Fable for a Contemporary World' – one of its largest exhibitions.

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