

2/11/2017

[EMBARGOED UNTIL 9PM THURSDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2017]

MICHAEL STRONG
Volunteer, Senior Curator
Abbey Museum of Art and Archaeology
Winner at State Awards

The strength, ingenuity and talents of Queensland's public galleries and museums were triumphantly demonstrated tonight with the announcement of the winners of the **2017 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards** (GAMAA) at a gala presentation event, proudly hosted by Old Government House, QUT.

Michael Strong, volunteer Senior Curator at the Abbey Museum of Art and Archaeology, was **announced the Winner** for his outstanding achievement in the category of 'Individuals – Volunteer.'

Michael Strong is the volunteer Senior Curator at the Abbey Museum of Art and Archaeology, situated in Caboolture and housing one of the finest collections of European and Classical artefacts open to the public in Australia. An avid self-learner with a passion for history and archaeology, Michael has a deep personal commitment and connection to the legacy of John Ward, the founder of the original Abbey Museum in England.

Michael began a quest in the 1980s to build a museum to house this extraordinary collection, raising around \$1 million in support. Michael was volunteer Director of the Museum until 2012, when he took on a more focused role of Senior Curator; managing the collections, developing and upgrading displays; and managing a team of volunteer researchers.

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) Executive Director, Rebekah Butler said, "We congratulate Michael Strong on being recognised as the Winner in this category. For more than thirty years, he has made an immense contribution to the Abbey Museum of Art and Archaeology and to our sector more broadly. This accolade is testament to Michael's vision and leadership.'

Michael Strong spearheaded the establishment of the Abbey Museum of Art and Archaeology in Australia, driving its design and construction, installation of permanent exhibitions, and construction and installation of a manuscript gallery. He presents lectures and guided tours of the Museum and the medieval stained glass in the Abbey Church; has written numerous articles on the collection; and initiated the Museum's Aboriginal heritage trails which have been a foundation of the Museum's education programs. He also contributes significantly to the Museum's annual flagship event, the Abbey Medieval Festival.

Ms Butler said, "This year's winners and finalists stood out from an exceptional group of nominations. These accolades embody outstanding examples of our sector's achievements, professional excellence, and innovation. They also highlight the valuable contribution and achievements of professionals and volunteers working in our industry."

The GAMAA were established by Museums & Galleries Queensland in 2004 to honour the achievements of our state's individuals and organisations in striving towards excellence.

Winners of the 2017 GAMAA received an exquisite trophy crafted by Queensland artist, Lincoln Austin. Commissioned by M&G QLD, the trophies are generously sponsored by our long-standing Awards supporter, Brian Tucker Accounting.

For media enquiries or images, please contact:

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