

NEWS

Tony Albert Takes Home Basil Sellers Art Prize

by [Art Guide Australia](#) | Posted 25 Jul 2014



Tony Albert, *Once upon a time...*, 2014, mixed media on paper, installation (variable): 200 x 300 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney.

Tony Albert has won the 2014 Basil Sellers Art Prize for a confronting work that delivers a punt kick to racism in Australian sport.

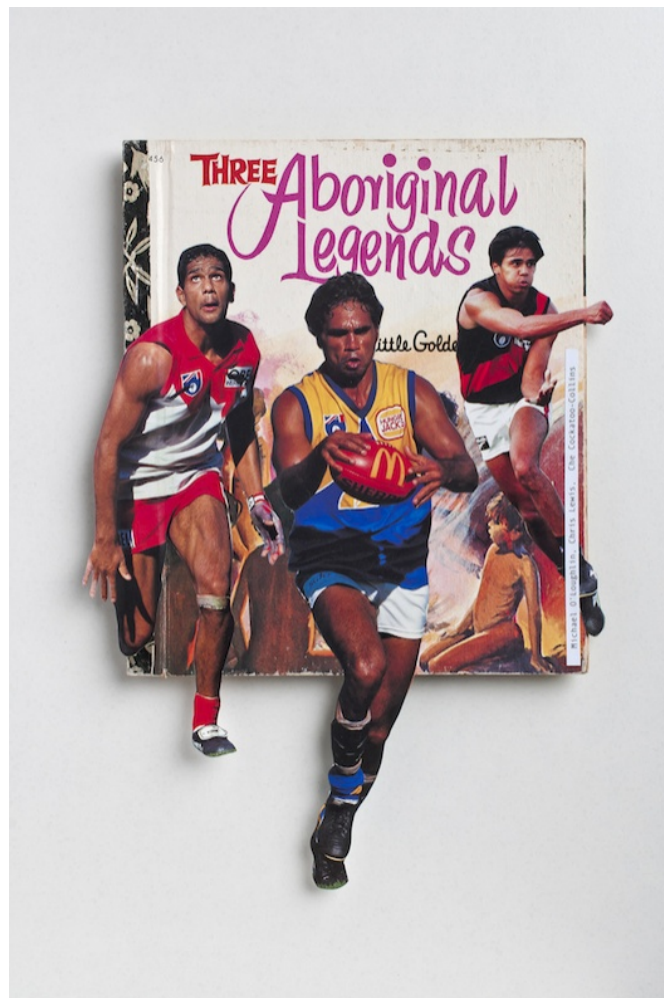
Selected from a shortlist of 16 finalists' entries, Albert's *Once upon a time...*, 2014, is a football-shaped collation of 23 watercolours, photographs, collages and found objects that includes a letter from Albert to fellow artist and inspiration Gordon Bennett, who passed away earlier this year.

"Judges commended *Once upon a time* for its bravery and poetry," Ian Potter Museum of Art director Kelly Gellatly said, "and for the fact that it tackles such a difficult and emotive issue in sport and Australian culture without being didactic or heavy-handed. The work is neither a lesson nor a sermon, and provides no answers, but instead creates a contemplative space that encourages the audience to think about these issues in a way that engenders a sense of hope and of the possibility of change."

"It also highlights the ways in which sport can be a positive forum in which to both air and tackle difficult subjects. Issues such as racism will no doubt continue to arise and to

confront, but the very public nature of the sport ensures that it provides a platform on which to air, discuss and debate these issues rather than pretend they don't exist." The \$100,000 prize is given every two years to artists whose work broaches the subject of sport in a broad sense, and has been awarded in the past to Jon Campbell, Tarryn Gill and Pilar Mata Dupont and Daniel Crooks. This year's judges were Museum of Contemporary Art director Liz Ann Macgregor OBE, Ian Potter Museum of Art director Kelly Gellatly, Art Gallery of Western Australia curator Robert Cook, Australian Rugby Union chair Michael Hawker AM, Basil Sellers Group consultant Dr Chris McAuliffe and Basil Sellers AM.

The remaining finalists are still vying for the \$50,000 National Sports Museum Basil Sellers Creative Arts Fellowship and the \$5,000 Yarra Trams People's Choice Award. An exhibition of all the finalists' work will be shown at the Ian Potter Museum of Art until 26 October.



Tony Albert, *Once upon a time... (detail)*, 2014, mixed media on paper, installation (variable): 200 x 300 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney.



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