

# art ALMANAC

Australia's Monthly Briefing on Art

## Tony Albert wins the 2016 Fleurieu Art Prize

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The highly anticipated winning entry of the world's richest landscape art prize, the Fleurieu Art Prize, was officially announced on Thursday 2 June 2016. From 750 entries, 58 finalists were selected but only one artist could win the coveted \$65,000 prize. This year the Fleurieu Art Prize has been awarded to Tony Albert for his work, *The Hand You're Dealt* (2015).

Returning international judge, Nigel Hurst, Director of London's Saatchi Gallery, led this year's judging panel which included the Art Gallery of New South Wales' Deputy Director & Director of Collections, Suhanya Raffel, and the Director, Samstag Museum of Art, Erica Green.

“We chose Tony Albert’s work for its deft and playful, yet considered interpretation of his homeland. His use of something so every day as playing cards to create this exquisite, visually arresting and pertinent work exemplifies the skill and talent of this deserving Fleurieu Art Prize winner”, said Hurst. Albert’s winning work, *The Hand You’re Dealt*, is a wall piece comprised of a suite of vintage playing cards, whose placement weaves references to Western popular culture and Australian Aboriginal culture. These intricate pieces which comprise the overall installation are superbly crafted by Albert through cutting, collage and construction techniques, work to displace traditional Australian Aboriginal aesthetics and accepted national stereotypes. This seamless blend of the kitsch and classic speaks in a contemporary voice about the Australian landscape.

In interrogating his immense collection of “Aboriginalia” (a term the artist coined to describe kitschy objects and images that feature naive portrayals of Aboriginality), Albert asks us to engage with the Australian landscape: tangible, social and political.

Albert who is represented by Sydney’s sullivan+strumpf, is currently working with the family of famed Aboriginal artist Albert Namatjira in Alice Springs and said this prize will help continue work with the Namatjira family and towards the development of a Namatjira Foundation.

## **2016 Fleurieu Art Prize Finalists’ Exhibition**

**[Samstag Museum of Art](#)**

**Until 29 July, 2016**

South Australia

Tony Albert, *The Hand You’re Dealt*, 2015, vintage Aboriginal playing cards, dimensions variable

Tony Albert is represented by Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney

Photograph: Sam Noonan