

MEDIA RELEASE
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Peter Mungkuri named inaugural winner of the *Hadley's Art Prize 2017*

An indigenous artist from South Australia, Peter Mungkuri, has taken out the inaugural *Hadley's Art Prize*, winning \$100,000 for his depiction of his birth place, Fregon, in Central Australia.

Peter's winning piece, titled *Ngura Wiru (Good Country)*, is a delicate ink on somerset paper drawing, telling a very personal story of the place where he grew up.

"This is my story about that creek at Fregon," Peter said. "I was born there."

"Back then we lived in the bush, slept in the warm sand and we lived on the bush tucker. That place is where it all started, that was my home.

"I love this country, it has watched us Anangu (people) for many years. It is a wise country."

Hadley's Art Prize Judge Lisa Slade said the judging panel was continually drawn back to the beauty and vitality of Peter's piece.

"Painted flat with the paper becoming the land itself and the artist moving around the paper, this delicate work of art depicts the rich plant culture in Central Australia and its enduring importance for the artist, a senior law man, and for all Anangu people," Ms Slade said.

Iwantja Arts Manager Beth Conway said Peter's work was loaded with an energy and flowing movement, and depicted his reverence for country.

"Peter's piece depicts sweeping paths linked loosely together, connecting a myriad of softly dotted rings, evoking a landscape enigmatic with hidden water holes," Ms Conway said.

"Tenderly constructed trees spring up between the interlocking rolls of a mountain range, hinting towards the corrugations of a dynamic sand swept desert."

Four Highly Commended Awards, worth \$2,250 each, were also presented to Sue Lovegrove from Tasmania, Guan Wei from New South Wales and Nyaparau Gardiner and Jane Tangney both from Western Australia.

Prize Curator Dr Amy Jackett said the inaugural prize, themed 'History and Place', had attracted a remarkable 385 entries from across Australia, the vast majority of which are new works.



Hadley's Art Prize

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“It is really exciting that the prize has brought such a diverse range of exceptional art to Hobart, sharing many different stories about Australia’s past,” Dr Jackett said.

“I encourage people to come and experience the work of these incredible contemporary Australian landscape artists, both established and emerging, and especially to have their say in deciding the People’s Choice Award.

“The new gallery spaces have been fully fitted to accommodate contemporary art, while respecting the heritage of Hadley’s Orient Hotel and its stunning features, including an ornate leadlight ceiling in one of the galleries.

“There are some great events on offer to enrich people’s experience of the exhibition, including presentations about contemporary art and the Prize theme, guided tours and packages with Hadley’s signature afternoon tea as well as an Education Kit for school groups.”

The *Hadley’s Art Prize* is an acquisitive award, with the winning entry added to a permanent art collection at Hadley’s, to be open to the public.

It is set to become one of Australia’s most significant and lucrative art awards, further cementing Tasmania’s reputation as an ‘Island of Art’.

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