

MEDIA RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 7:30PM ACDT MONDAY, 9TH OCTOBER 2017

VIDEO ARTIST WINS \$25,000 WHYALLA ART PRIZE FOR THE FIRST TIME

For the first time since 1972, a video work has won the Whyalla Art Prize.

Regional South Australia-based artist CJ Taylor has won the \$25,000 Prize with a video artwork titled *The Hut (5/4)*. It is the second time video artwork has been included as an option for entrants and the first time this medium has won.

Taylor's was chosen out of 55 finalists from the 206 entrants from across the country. The finalists' work included a variety of wall-based mediums such as oil, watercolour and acrylic on canvas, board and wood, video-based art works and even some unusual ones like garden hoses.

"I'm thrilled that the work has been recognised, not only because of the strength and depth of work from the other finalists, but also because of my respect for the judges who selected it," said Taylor, who is from Prospect Hill, near Kuitpo Forrest.

"Video art has claimed its own place in contemporary art. It's extremely gratifying that video work is now included in this respected award."

The judges of this year's prize were the Art Gallery of South Australia's inaugural Curator of Contemporary Art, Leigh Robb; Director of the Riddoch Art Gallery, Dr Melentie Pandilovski and Paul Snell, winner of the 2015 Whyalla Art Prize.

"The Hut (5/4) by CJ Taylor was selected unanimously as the winner of the 2017 Whyalla Art Prize," said the judges.

"CJ Taylor's genre-defying video is cinematic in atmosphere, poetic in sentiment and painterly in palette. A sophisticated moving image work full of Renaissance motifs, it was filmed in multiple locations around the world from the haunting South Australian desert to the reaches of the Shetland islands. This powerful and emotive screen work collapses history and geography in an original contemporary gothic story."

Video has long been exhibited and collected since the 80s. The moving image has become an important art form, communication channel and storytelling platform for the 21st century."

The Prize was originally established by the Whyalla Arts Council in 1972 with the purpose of promoting regional emerging artists, but has since grown to attract entrants from right around Australia, putting this region of South Australia under a national arts spotlight every two years. Country Arts SA delivers and manages the Prize.

"With the addition of video entries, the already established Whyalla Art Prize has widened its reach to even more contemporary artists nationwide. We were intrigued and delighted to hear that the winning work was a video art piece for the first time, and a unanimous decision from the independent judges," said Anthony Peluso, Arts Programs Director at Country Arts SA.

Media enquiries: Joy Lothian Joy.Lothian@countryarts.org.au or (08) 8444 0417 / 0423 828 035 or Helene Sobolewski Helene.Sobolewski@countryarts.org.au or (08) 8444 0429



UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 7:30PM ACDT MONDAY, 9TH OCTOBER 2017

Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer said the aim of the prize was to attract contemporary art attention from across the country to the Whyalla region.

“Every two years the Whyalla Art Prize attracts exciting new works from a notable size of artists nationwide. It’s a wonderful way for the nation to see what Whyalla has to offer, and for Whyalla residents to be at the forefront of this great art prize. We feel privileged to play a part in furthering an artist’s practice,” said Mayor Breuer.

The acquisitive award has meant that the Whyalla City Council has acquired a notable collection of artworks in iconic styles that reflect the changing face of the country over this time.

For the first time this year, a selection of works from the finalists will be on display at the Adelaide Airport from mid-December until late January 2018. This will provide finalists with international exposure from a wide variety of foot traffic at the capital city’s only airport during the busy holiday period.

Statement - Whyalla Art Prize 2017

The Hut (5/4) is set in a 'nowherescape', a liminal hinterland of collapsible time that is at once bittersweet, life-affirming and deadly. This photo-cinematic project features unique techniques that intimate depth in photography. The work embodies the idea of 'Elastic Photography' that sits between the stilled film and the filmic still, reality and illusion, analogue and digital.

This project includes work created in South Australia, the ACT, the United States and the Outer Hebrides and Shetland Islands of Scotland and artefacts photographed in the Adelaide Civic Collection, The South Australian Museum and the National Museum of Australia.

CJ Taylor 2017

The Hut (5/4) can be watched in full at <https://vimeo.com/217267075> with password CJT675. Please note this is not yet available for the general public to view.

Media enquiries: Joy Lothian Joy.Lothian@countryarts.org.au or (08) 8444 0417 / 0423 828 035 or Helene Sobolewski Helene.Sobolewski@countryarts.org.au or (08) 8444 0429

