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## SANDRA HILL >

For **Sandra Hill**, one of the most meaningful accolades an artist can receive comes from the viewing public. “My work is for the people, about my people, so knowing that audiences have a strong connection with my work is incredibly valuable and affecting,” she says. It is perhaps no surprise that Hill took home the 2015 People’s Choice Award at the Western Australian Indigenous Art Awards, presented at the Art Gallery of Western Australia in 2015.

A proud yorgah (woman) of the Nyoongar Aboriginal people of the south west of Western Australia, Hill’s journey as an artist was initially marked by a devastating event. At the age of seven she was removed, along with her three siblings, from the care of her parents as part of the assimilation policies of that era. Consequently, Hill has been dedicated for over 20 years to making political work that brings to light both the injustices and the true history experienced by her and her people, and that pays homage to their strength, cultural resistance, courage and survival.

Hill’s deep consideration and respect for her subject matter extends to her use of materials. Fluidly working across various media (painting, collage, printmaking, sculpture, installation) she often incorporates organic materials that are native and have a connection to Nyoongar Country. In *Skin Deep*, a new work created for the exhibition *Right Here Now* at the Museum of Australian Democracy in Canberra (open until March 2016), Hill hand-stitched a composite skin made with fragments of rice paper that had been dipped in native marri, balga and acacia resins.

Some of her current major projects are the *Welcome to Country* public artworks commissioned by the Gateway Project and the BHP Children’s Water Playground at Elizabeth Quay – both in Perth. Perhaps the most exciting forthcoming news is Hill’s inclusion in the 2017 National Indigenous Art Triennial at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra.



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1. // Sandra Hill, *Home-maker #6: Surfs Up*, 2014. Oil on linen, 76 x 91cm.

2. // Sandra Hill, *Hung out to dry*, 2010. Mixed media, 120 x 85 x 90cm.

3. // Sandra Hill, *Home-maker #4: The Party*, 2011. Oil on linen, 76 x 91cm.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND MOSSENSON GALLERIES, PERTH

Although Hill has exhibited broadly in Australia and internationally and her work is held in numerous major collections (including the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth and National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne), it is yet to be represented in New South Wales collections and exhibition spaces proportionate to her significance as a contemporary artist. Collectors should pay attention now.

*Ivan Muñiz Reed*



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