

The art of inspiring a hotel

AS A teenager in the late 1960s, **Tim Storrier** attended art school in Darlinghurst but he says he avoided spending too much time down the road on the grimy streets of Kings Cross.

"It certainly wasn't my bloody stomping ground. In those days, it was basically whores and bad booze," the acclaimed artist told SiT.

Next week, a hotel inspired by his work will officially open in the suburb that was once Sydney's undisputed epicentre of sleaze. The Storrier is a 70-suite boutique hotel on Springfield Avenue built by the A Hotels Group, which also plans to open accommodation named after **John Olsen, Jeffrey Smart, Brett Whiteley and Ben Quilty**, among others. The group's managing director, **Will Deague**, said his family's love of Australian art inspired the idea.

"Each 'art' hotel takes on the look and feel of its adopted artist's works; in this case ... Tim Storrier and his awe-inspiring

piece *Point to Point (Evening Blaze)*," Deague said.

The hotelier's father, **David Deague**, an avid art collector, paid for Storrier to travel to Central Australia in the late 1980s and the fiery landscapes that became known as his "burning rope" series came from that trip. *Evening Blaze* hangs in the lobby, while other photographs and prints from the artist's life - all of which he approved - decorate the corridors and rooms.

Storrier turns 59 on February 13. He and his wife, **Janet**, plan to mark the occasion by attending the official opening. The guest list includes the Art Gallery of NSW director, **Edmund Capon**, Seven supremo **David Leckie** and art dealer **Michael Reid**.

As for The Storrier's location, a short stagger from Darlinghurst Road's strip clubs and sex shops, the artist said: "I wouldn't care if they put it in the Sahara. I like that it's named after me."

