

Nicholas Harding: Drawn to Paint

15 January - 7 March 2010

The National Trust S.H. Ervin Gallery is committed to highlighting the works of Australian artists, promoting the idea of a sense of place and the importance of recognising and preserving unique places. Artist Nicholas Harding documents a distinctly Australian sense of place, in particular Sydney, from its sun drenched beaches and industrial settings to its spectacular flora. The Australian psyche is also captured in Harding's many portraits including those of well known personalities such as Robert Drewe, Margaret Whitlam, Margaret Olley, Robert Dickinson and his Archibald Prize winning work of actor John Bell as King Lear.

This exhibition surveys Harding's artistic practice from 1984 to 2009. This is the first exhibition to showcase the works of this highly regarded artist over a twenty-five year period and covers Harding's diverse themes; landscapes and industry to portraits and still life. Known predominantly as a painter, this is also the first exhibition to cover Harding's practice of drawing as both a critical gathering of observations that inform his paintings as well as equally important artworks. *Drawn to paint* explores the artist's mark making as well as his recognisable tactile paint application.

The exhibition is curated by Steven Alderton and is accompanied by a full colour catalogue.



Nicholas Harding
In the swell (snorkeller) (detail)
2006 oil on Belgian linen 56x51cm

Salon des Refusés 2010

The alternative Archibald & Wynne Prize selection

27 March – 23 May

The Salon des Refusés, is selected from the official entries to the annual Archibald Prize and Wynne Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Our guest panelists go behind the scenes of the judging process to select an exhibition from the overwhelming number of art works not chosen as finalists.

The Salon exhibition was initiated by the S.H. Ervin Gallery in 1992, in the tradition of the renegade French Impressionists of the 1860s who held a breakaway exhibition from the reactionary French Academy. This 'best of the rest' exhibition often rivals the official prize show and stimulates popular debate on differing approaches in contemporary art. The criteria for works selected for the exhibition are quality, diversity, humour and innovation. Selected artists are invited to discuss their work at the Gallery's Public Program, Sundays at 3pm.

Visitors can vote for their favourite artwork in the Holding Redlich People's Choice Award.

What's new at the S.H. Ervin Gallery?

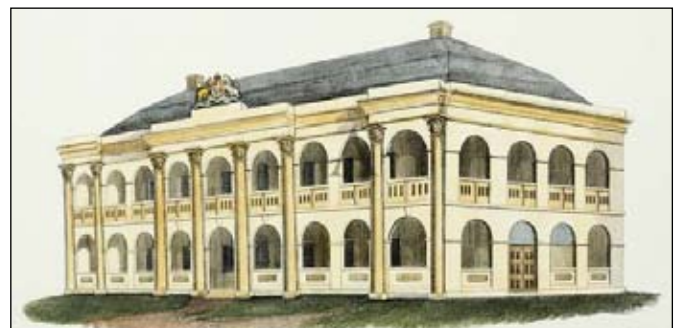
As most members know, the National Trust S.H. Ervin Gallery has recently undergone an upgrade to its display space, retail area and improvements to the collection store. This has been done to improve not only visitor safety and experience but also to ensure that the artworks on display and in storage are kept in optimum condition.

One of the wonderful benefits of the refurbishment is the creation of a permanent collection display space at the rear of the gallery. For the first time the gallery can display works from its own collection on a rotational ongoing basis, as well as highlights from other National Trust collections. S.H. Ervin left over 40 works in his will to establish the collection and it has been enlarged over the years with bequests from other donors and donations through the Cultural Gifts Program. Another great donor to the collection was Sydney solicitor, Alan Renshaw who was also Ervin's lawyer and an avid art collector. As its largest single bequest, the paintings and works on paper bequeathed by Renshaw are among the Gallery's finest.

The S.H. Ervin Gallery collection provides an insight into the cultural history of Sydney and is characterised by works which allude to a sense of optimism and hedonism that to this day is a distinguishing feature of the city. Many of the artworks focus on Sydney's changing cityscape and lifestyle and works span the period 1850-1950, a century that witnessed the transformation of Sydney from a post-colonial town to a prosperous international city renowned for its physical beauty.

Currently on display is a selection of works from both the Ervin and Renshaw Bequests showing the passions of two very different collectors. From S.H. Ervin's collection works by Sydney Long, Thea Proctor, George Lambert, Kenneth McQueen feature while the Renshaw Bequest works include Donald Friend, James Gleeson and Justin O'Brien. Also on display are several prints depicting the changing usage of the Gallery and the National Trust Centre over the last hundred years.

With generous assistance from International Conservation Services the works were cleaned, re-matted and reframed to prepare them for the exhibition. The Trust's collections number nearly 60,000 objects including furniture, artworks, decorative arts and social history items. International Conservation Services undertake routine conservation on collection items to ensure that they continue to remain available for public viewing. As a charity the Trust relies on donations to assist us with our work, including conservation which is vitally important to safeguarding of our collections.



Joseph Fowles
National School c1848 (detail)
Engraving on paper, purchased 1988

S.H. Ervin Gallery Hours

Tuesday – Sunday 11am – 5pm

Closed on Mondays, public holidays and for exhibition changeover.

Cost: \$7, \$5 seniors & concession, \$4 members **P:** (02) 9258 0173.

E: shervingallery@nationaltrust.com.au. **A:** Watson Road, Observatory Hill, The Rocks, Sydney. Limited parking and Trust Café on site.