

Salon des Refusés 2010

27 March – 23 May 2010

The *Salon des Refusés* was initiated by the S.H. Ervin Gallery in 1992 in the tradition of the French Impressionists of the 1860s who held a breakaway exhibition from the French Academy. Each year our guest panel goes behind the scenes of the annual Archibald Prize and Wynne Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), to select an exhibition from the many works entered in both prizes and not chosen for the official award selection. This year is the 19th *Salon des Refusés* exhibition. In 1863, the French Academy rejected a staggering 2800 canvases submitted for the annual Salon exhibition. Among artists refused were Paul Cézanne, Camille Pissarro, Henri Fantin-Latour, James Whistler and Édouard Manet, who entered his now legendary painting, *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*. This particular work was regarded as a scandalous affront to taste. The jury also argued these artists were 'a clear danger to society and that the slightest encouragement would be risky.'

Since there were very few independent art exhibitions in imperial France, the taste of the buying public was dictated almost entirely by the Academy. Most members of the public invested only in artists sanctioned by the Salon. Rejection by the Academy therefore threatened many artists with professional extinction. The protests that followed the Academy's 1863 decision were so public and so pointed that eventually Napoleon III himself appeared at the Palais de l'Industrie and demanded to see the rejected works. He then instructed the Academy to reconsider its selection and when it refused, the Emperor decreed that the rejected paintings would be displayed in a separate exhibition.

And so the phrase *Salon des Refusés* entered into the world's artistic lexicon. One hundred and twenty nine years later, the S.H. Ervin Gallery revived the tradition and the name. The Salon is the alternative selection to the official Archibald and Wynne Prize selections at the AGNSW. The Salon has an



Wendy Sharpe
Self Portrait in Florence (detail)
2009 oil on canvas, Courtesy of the artist

excellent reputation, and is often cited as more interesting than the official exhibition. The criteria for works selected are quality, diversity, humour and experimentation.

A series of talks by artists and sitters will be held every Sunday at 3pm during the exhibition. The Gallery is once again fortunate to have Holding Redlich on board as sponsors of the *Salon des Refusés*. Vote for your favourite work in the Holding Redlich People's Choice Award and the winning artist will receive \$2,000.

Sidney Nolan: the Gallipoli series

28 May - 27 June 2010

In May the S.H. Ervin Gallery will be presenting the travelling exhibition *Sidney Nolan: the Gallipoli series* from the Australian War Memorial. Sidney Nolan (1917–1992) was one of Australia's most complex, innovative, and prolific artists. In 1978 Nolan presented the Gallipoli series to the Australian War Memorial. These 252 drawings and paintings, completed over a 20-year period, were donated in memory of his brother Raymond, a soldier who died in a tragic accident just before the end of the Second World War. Gallipoli was a theme to which Nolan constantly returned throughout his artistic career.

Sidney Nolan: the Gallipoli series showcases a selection of these works, which constitute both a personal and public lament, commemorating not just the death of Nolan's brother but a campaign that had cost so many Australian lives. The series was inspired not only by the Gallipoli campaign but also the myths and legends of the Trojan Wars and how Australian history and identity are perceived. The exhibition offers a rare opportunity for visitors to experience these striking and iconic works.

One work in the exhibition is *Young Soldier* (1977), one of the final works Nolan painted in the series. It shows a soldier with bloodshot eyes who appears to be in a state of shock and apathy. Nolan described these later works and their evolution: 'The first paintings are a very youthful generation of soldiers. They then begin to absorb the fatigue, the weariness, the suffering, the mass experience of war ... There is one in the later section of a young soldier. He is neither dead nor alive. He is kind of stopped by war ...'

These are two exhibitions not to be missed.



Sidney Nolan
Young Soldier (detail)
1977, alkyd on hardboard, Australian War Memorial collection

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.

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