

# The Sydney Morning Herald

LIFESTYLE GOOD WEEKEND

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## Art: Wendy Sharpe

By John McDonald

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**Lives:** Erskineville, Sydney. **Age:** 57. **Represented by:** King Street Gallery on William; Philip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane; no Melbourne representation.

**Her thing:** Colourful, expressive paintings of Parisian life, viewed through open windows.



Two People (2018), oil on canvas 40 x 50cm.

**Our take:** Wendy Sharpe is often at her best when she's travelling, and has a flair for capturing those passing moments of life that would be the envy of any novelist. In 2010, Sharpe and her artist partner, Bernard Ollis, purchased an apartment in Montmartre, where they now spend part of each year. The views from their balcony provide part of the inspiration for her current exhibition, *Paris Windows*, the rest coming from Alfred Hitchcock's movie *Rear Window*, in which a disabled James Stewart watches a crime being committed in a nearby apartment.

Sharpe doesn't seem to have found any murderers among her neighbours, but she has allowed her imagination to roam amid the lives of people she knows only on

sight. She was fascinated by the fact that so many Parisians can live in such close proximity, seeing each other every day, yet remain strangers.

**Can I afford it?** For an artist who has won the Archibald and Sulman prizes, and two Portia Geach Memorial prizes, Sharpe is affordable. This is partly due to her making many more small studies than large canvases. Lots of people own one of her small-to-medium works.

The most expensive piece in this show is *Paris Windows*, a four-panelled wooden screen (160cm x 240cm), painted on both sides, and with so many individual vignettes it's virtually an exhibition in its own right. It has already been sold for \$44,000, setting a new record for Sharpe's work. The least expensive work is a painted ceramic bowl titled *Nord Sud* (7cm x 25cm) for \$900. Overall, there are more than 30 items in the show, in a variety of media, with oil paintings apart from the screen ranging in price from \$5800 to \$28,000, depending on size.

**Where can I have a squiz?** King Street Gallery on William, 177 William Street, Darlinghurst, until September 8; [kingstreetgallery.com.au](http://kingstreetgallery.com.au).

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