

Wendy Sharpe
Venice 2010



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King Street Gallery

on William

10am – 6pm Tuesday – Saturday
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Directors: Robert Linnegar and Randi Linnegar

Venice

In the European autumn of 2009, when the weather was unusually warm, Wendy Sharpe took an apartment being offered for rent by a professor of music. The Venice apartment was brilliantly located. From its windows, Sharpe could see the eternal beauty of the Grand Canal and the Rialto Bridge. Using the apartment as her home and sometime studio, Sharpe spent an uninterrupted month as a free wanderer in the ancient city of Canaletto and Guardi. Venice was not new to Sharpe, and the familiarity born of earlier trips allowed her to settle quickly into a routine. Using all her senses, she explored everything – the bustling tourist sites where cameras clicked and maps were pored over, and the quiet back streets where every corner presented a fresh visual delight. She studied the Tintoretto paintings in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. She spent entire days in a corner of the Piazza San Barnaba, observing the ebb and flow of the city and its people and making jottings in gouache. “I could see gondoliers trying to chat up tourists, little bridges, a cafe, a church. It was kind of a microcosm of a whole lot of things,” Sharpe says. “I would walk there with gouache and water containers, and work all day. Spending a whole day sitting in a place like that, you get a real understanding of how it works.”



Sydney Studio 2010 Screen oil on linen 165 x 320cm



View From The Bridge 2010 Oil on canvas 122 x 136cm

All the gouaches in this exhibition were done on location during the day, or in the evening in the professor's apartment. The oil paintings were done on Sharpe's return to her St Peters studio in Sydney, where she wove her still-fresh memories and sensations into a series of canvases which vibrate with the richness and intensity of her Venetian experiences. Looking at the paintings, we are unmistakably in Venice, but it is not a historical relic we see. It is a boisterous, jostling city as experienced through Sharpe's uniquely panoptic vision, where tourist sites provide a Renaissance backdrop to the ephemera of modern artistic life – a pair of sunglasses, an overturned

coffee mug, a Venetian mask, a postcard of St Mark's, discarded sketches and a pair of bright orange shoes. But in this feast of colour, it is a modestly sized gouache on paper which holds the key to what Sharpe has achieved in her epic depiction of one of the most painted and photographed cities in the world.

Titled *Self Portrait with St Mark's*, it is a night-time study in lurid highlights that blaze under an inky sky. The people and the pigeons have all left the famous Piazza San Marco, and the artist stands alone but resolute in front of the famous cathedral, her drawing paper clutched under one arm. Behind her head, the domes and arches of St Marks resemble a monumental, glowing tiara. Sharpe, having discovered the city with her feet and all her senses, has crowned herself with the jewel of Venice. It is not just the look of Venice that Sharpe gives us in this body of work, it is the smell, the sound and the feel of it, as well.

Elizabeth Fortescue
Visual arts writer, Daily Telegraph, Sydney





Tourists and the Bridge 2009 Concertina book gouache 17 x 92cm



Canal at Night 2009 Concertina book gouache 17 x 92cm



View from the Balcony 2009 Concertina book gouache 17 x 92cm



Toward the Rialto Bridge 2010 Oil on linen 36 x 115cm



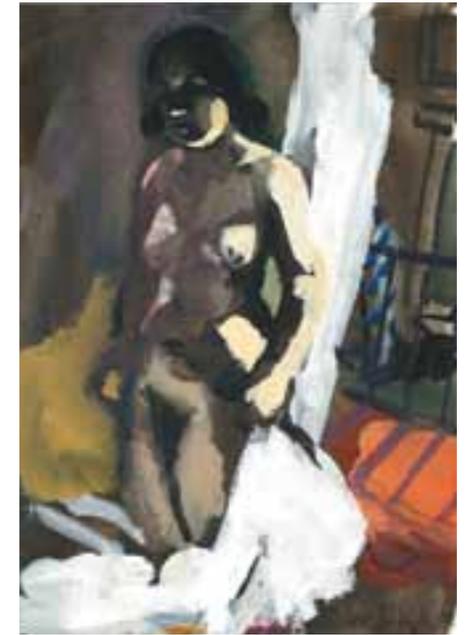
The Canal at Night (with Gold Light) 2010 Oil on linen 36 x 115cm



Pink Cup Venice 2010 Oil on canvas 136 x 122cm



Venice nude [with shadowy face]
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



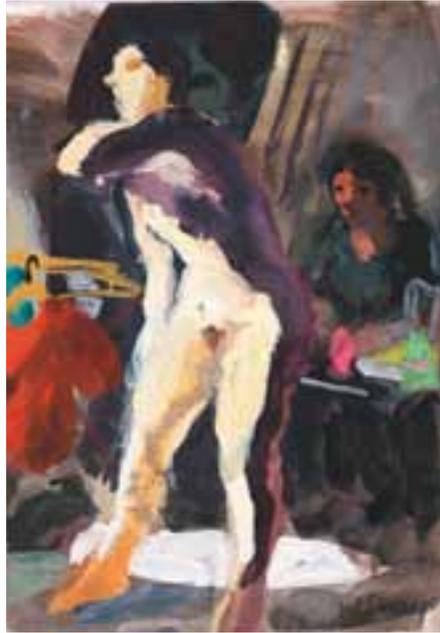
Venice nude [with orange light]
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



Venice nude (looking from the window)
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



Venice nude (with mobile phone)
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



Venice nude (with self portrait)
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



Venice nude with blue carpet
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



Venice nude (with suitcase)
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



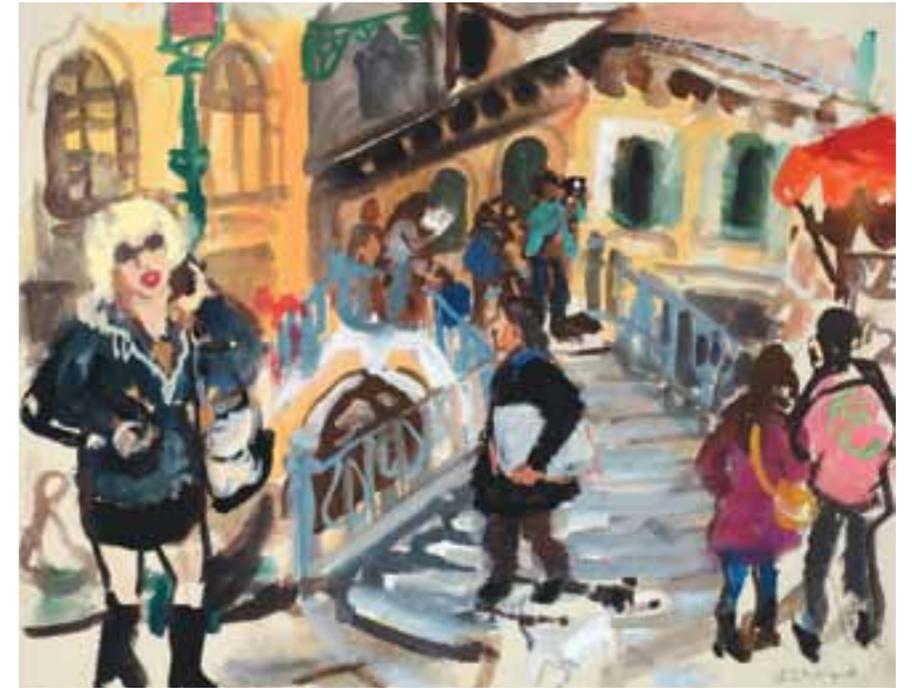
Venice nude (seated)
2009 Gouache on paper 18 x 13cm



Venice nude [with Moorish window] 2009 Gouache on paper 13 x 18cm



Tourists on the Canal 2010 Oil on canvas 122 x 136cm



The bridge to Piazza San Barnaba 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



Lost Tourists 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



Woman with sunglasses and red top
2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



Artist on the way to work
2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



Woman in Leopard Coat 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



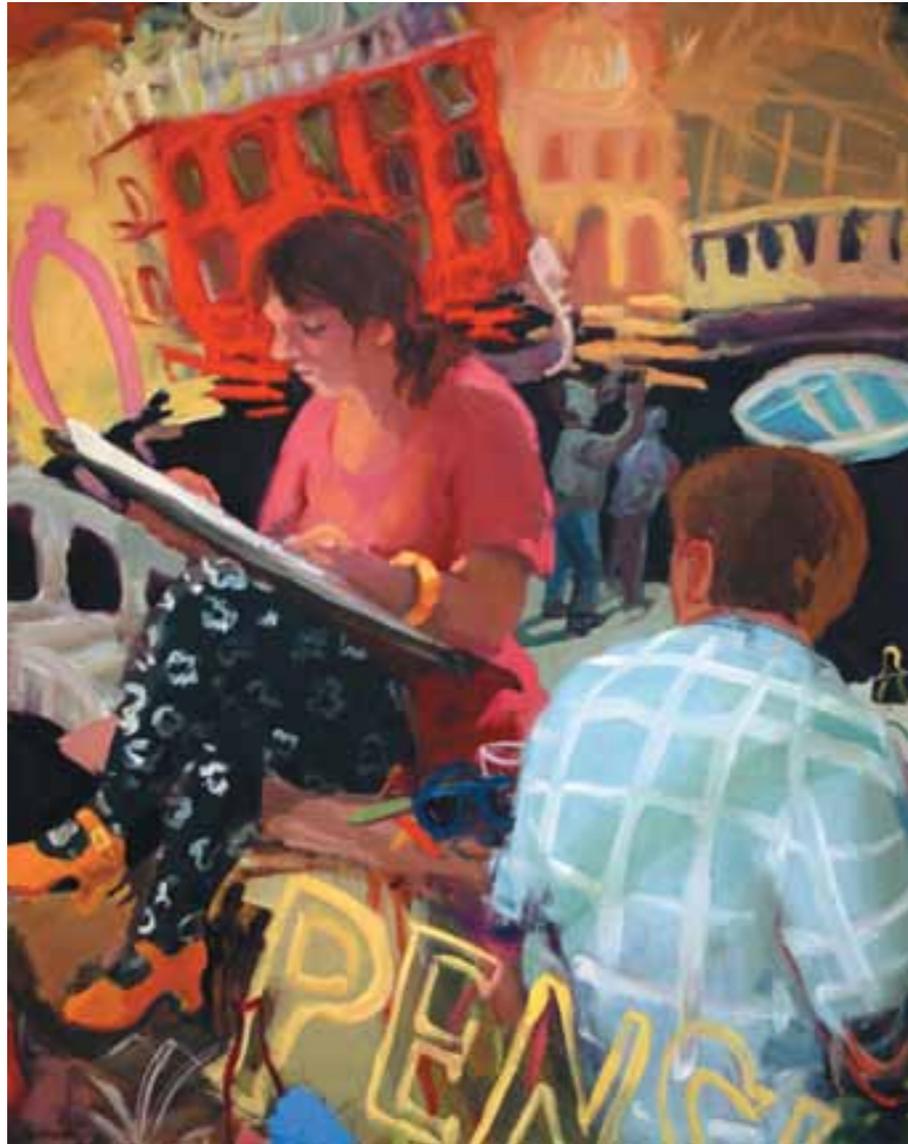
Self portrait with tourists [Venice]
2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



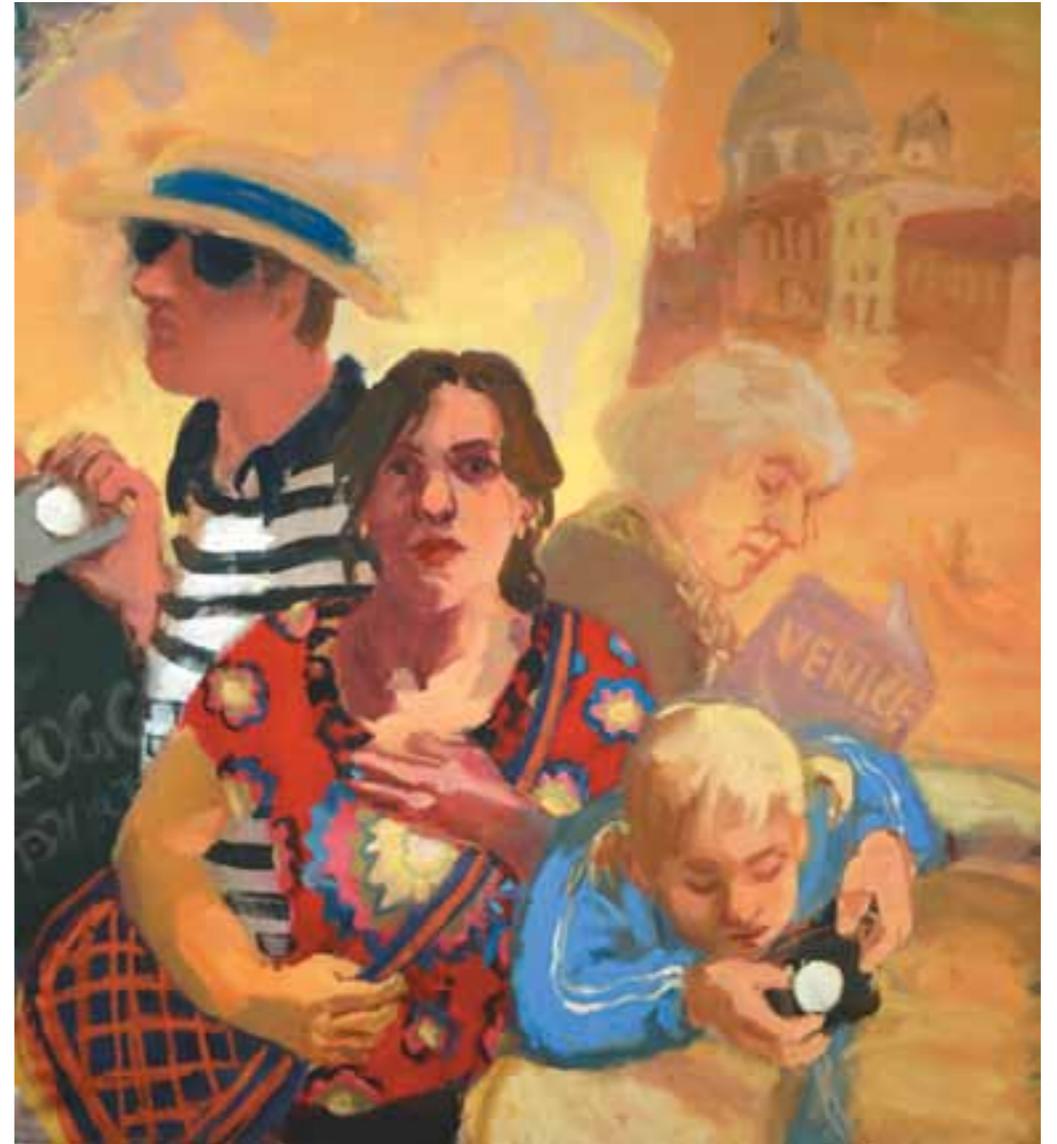
Drawing by the Canal
2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



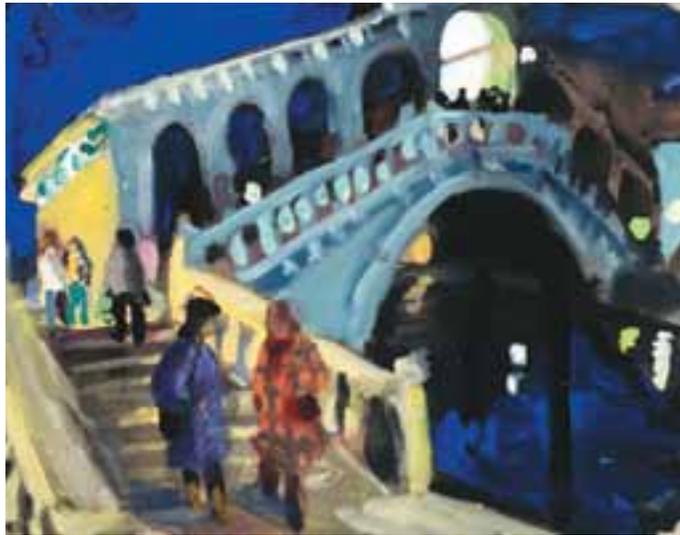
Madeline on the Balcony [Red tights] 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



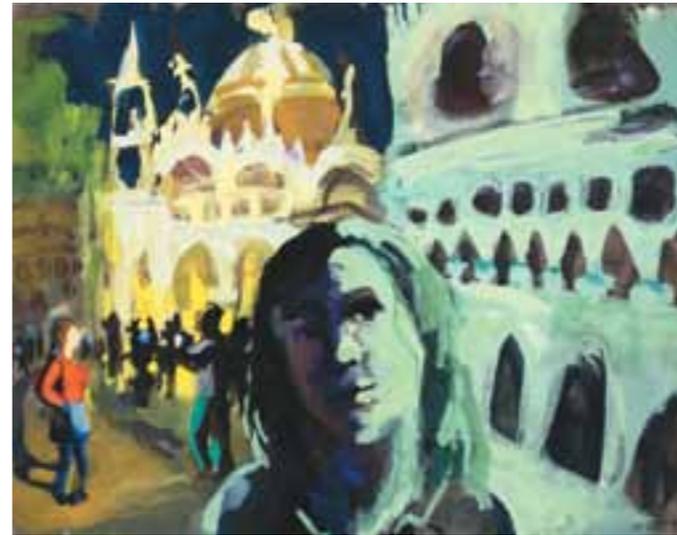
Self Portrait with Bernard Ollis 2010 Oil on canvas 122 x 252cm



Self Portrait in Venice 2010 Oil on linen 167 x 152cm



The Rialto at Night 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



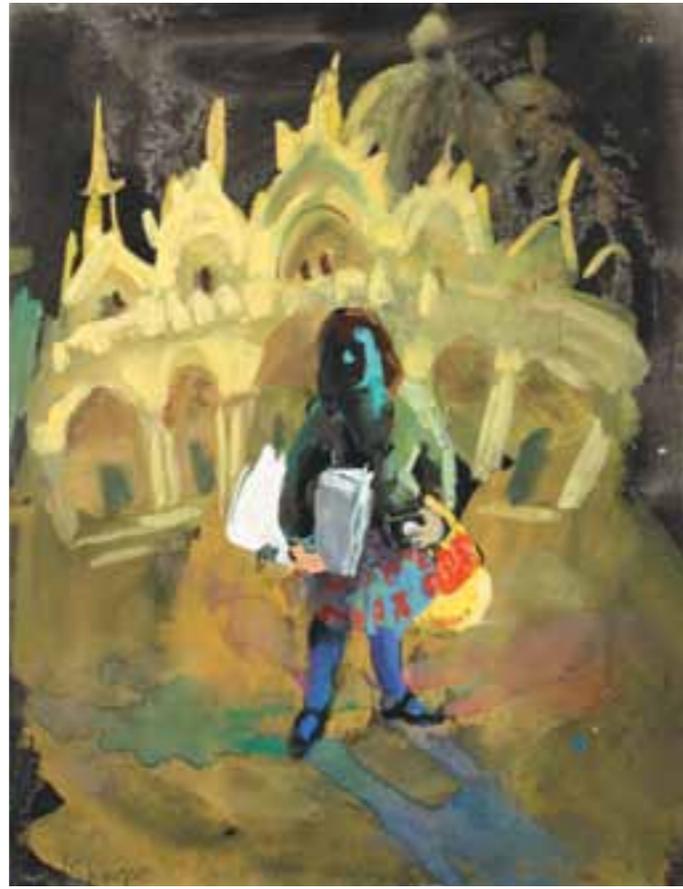
Doges Palace 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



Piazza San Marco Blue faces 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



Tower of tourists 2009 Gouache on paper 36 x 28cm



Self portrait with St Marks 2009 Gouache on paper 36 x 28cm



Tourists and Gondola 2009 Gouache on paper 28 x 36cm



By the Canal 2010 Screen Oil on linen 165 x 320cm



Wendy Sharpe

Born

1960 Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

Studies

1978-79 Art Certificate, Seaforth Technical College, Sydney
 1980-82 B. A. (Visual Arts), City Art Institute, Sydney
 1983 Graduate Diploma of Education, City Art Institute
 1984 Graduate Diploma of Professional Art, City Art Institute
 1991-92 M.A. (Fine Arts), College of Fine Arts, University of NSW

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2010 *Venice* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
 2008 *Paris* King Street Gallery on William
Travel MARS Gallery, Melbourne
Intimacy and Solitude, Adele Boag Gallery, Adelaide, S.A.
 2007 *Stories from the Studio* Phillip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane
Tales from the Studio MARS Gallery
 2006 *the opera series* king street gallery on burton, sydney
Million Dollar Mermaid Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney
 2005 *Artist and City Paintings and Spanish Series*
 Chapman Gallery, Canberra
 2004 *paintings (city series)* king street gallery on burton
Travel Paintings Phillip Bacon Gallery
 2003 *Recent Paintings* Chapman Gallery
Paintings Phillip Bacon Gallery
 2002 *Wendy Sharpe: a selection of works 1999-2002*
 king street gallery on burton at Span Galleries, Melbourne
new paintings king street gallery on burton
 2000 *New Beginnings-East Timor* Australian War Memorial, Canberra
East Timor king street gallery on burton
 1999 *Drawings, Paintings and Mixed Media Works for The Annette Kellermann Mural* (at Cook & Phillip Aquatic Centre, Sydney) king street gallery, sydney
 1997 *Night Paintings* king street gallery on burton

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2010 *Tales from the City [Bernard Ollis and Wendy Sharpe]* Orange Regional Gallery, NSW
- 2009 *Ballet Russes Exhibition* Art Centre Victoria and Victorian regional tour
The Sulman Prize Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Salon Des Refuses S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
The Doug Moran Portrait Prize State Library of NSW, Sydney
Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing PLC Gallery, Sydney
- 2008 *Drawn Encounters* Wimbledon College of Art, London, UK
JADA Drawing Prize Grafton Regional Gallery & travelling
- 2007 *Portia Geach Memorial Award* S.H. Ervin Gallery
Dobell Drawing Prize Art Gallery of New South Wales [purchased piece]
9x5, Savage Club, Melbourne
Cuisine & Country [curated by Gavin Wilson] Orange Regional Gallery, NSW & travelling
Salon Des Refuses S.H. Ervin Gallery
- 2006 *The Inaugural Adelaide Perry Prize For Drawing* PLC Gallery
The Sulman Prize Art Gallery of New South Wales
Salon Des Refuses S.H. Ervin Gallery
witness to WAR [official art and photography 1999-2003] S.H. Ervin Gallery [travelling NSW]
The Art of the Operatic The Arts Centre, Melbourne
Australian Art Hong 1K University Gallery Seoul, South Korea
- 2005-07 *Fireworks-tracing the incendiary in Australian Art* (curated by Gavin Wilson) travelling to regional galleries throughout NSW; Qld; Vic
- 2005 *Collaboration - Sydney Printmakers* Gosford Regional Gallery; Tweed River Art Gallery, NSW; Noosa Regional Gallery, Qld
Dobell Drawing Prize Art Gallery New South Wales
Mosman Art Prize Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney
Gold Coast City Art Prize Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Qld
Salon des Refuses S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2004 *Wynne Prize* Art Gallery of New South Wales
Sulman Prize Art Gallery of New South Wales
Dobell Prize for Drawing Art Gallery of New South Wales
Spectrum 2004 [FONAS] Parliament House, Sydney
- 2003 *Salon Des Refuses* S.H. Ervin Gallery
Dobell Prize for Drawing Art Gallery of New South Wales
Winner - *Portia Geach Memorial Portrait Prize* S.H. Ervin Gallery
Winner - *Allen Gamble Memorial Art Prize* Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2002 *Dobell Prize for Drawing* Art Gallery of New South Wales
Kedumba Drawing Prize Kedumba Gallery, Wentworth Falls, NSW
Portia Geach Memorial Portrait Prize S.H. Ervin Gallery
- 2001 *Federation*, (curated by John McDonald) National Gallery of Australia Canberra
Studio Tradition (curated by Therese Kenyon) Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Sydney
Art on Steel Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Wollongong City Gallery, NSW; Museum of Tropical Queensland, Qld (& travelling)
- 2000 *Sulman Prize* Art Gallery of New South Wales
Dobell Prize for Drawing Art Gallery of New South Wales

Selected Awards, Prizes and Major Commissions

- 2009 Commissioned by Arts Centre Victoria for Ballet Russes Exhibition (and Regional Touring Exhibition)
- 2008-09 The Australian Ballets tribute to the Ballet Russes, The Arts Centre Victoria, Melbourne
- 2008 Artist Residency-Australian Embassy [by personal invitation of the Australian Ambassador], Cairo, Egypt
- 2007 Awarded Tenancy of studio, Cite des Arts Paris [AGNSW]
- 2004 Limited edition print for Inaugural Fine Art Heritage Fund Raising Program for the Australian Red Cross (launched 6 Nov, Brisbane Room, Brisbane City Hall, Qld)
- 2003 Allen Gamble Memorial Art Prize, Sydney
Winner-Portia Geach Memorial Prize Award, S.H Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 1999 Commissioned as Official Australian War Artist to East Timor, Australian War Memorial ACT
- 1998-99 Commissioned by the City of Sydney for Olympic pool murals based on the life of Annette Kellerman (8 panels), Cook & Phillip Aquatic Centre
- 1998 Bathurst Art Prize, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery
- 1996 Winner-Archibald Prize Winner, Art Gallery of New South Wales
- 1995 Winner-Kedumba Drawing Prize, New South Wales
Winner-Portia Geach Memorial Prize, SH Ervin Gallery

Collections

Art Gallery of New South Wales	Hawkesbury Regional Art Gallery
Arts Centre Victoria	Kedumba Drawing Collection, NSW
Australian War Memorial, Canberra	Orange Regional Gallery, NSW
Australian Embassy, Paris, France	Qantas, Australia
Bathurst Regional Art Gallery	University of Queensland, Qld
BHP Australia	Warringah Council
City of Sydney Council	Waverley Council

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Art work photographed by Peter Jones and Martin Lane

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