

Andrew Sayers AM (1957-2015)

Andrew Sayers AM was an art historian and artist who worked in Canberra and Melbourne. From 2010 until 2013 he was Director, National Museum of Australia in Canberra. He was the inaugural Director of the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra (1998-2010) and prior to taking up that role, he was a curator and then Assistant Director (Collections) at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (1985-1998). In 2010 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for services to arts administration.



He was one of Australia's pre-eminent art historians and writers. Sayers' scholarly work is highly regarded, with publications such as "Drawing in Australia" (1989), *Sidney Nolan; The Ned Kelly Story* (1994) and *Australian Art in The Oxford History of Art* (2001) contributing to the academic discourse on Australian art. In 1994, his publication "Aboriginal Artists of the Nineteenth Century" was a groundbreaking work of scholarship for which Andrew received the Stanner Award of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies.

Unbeknown to most in the arts community, throughout his career in arts administration Sayers spent his private time creating his own art, which resulted in a large body of works. In 2013 he retired from arts administration and focussed full time on his career as an artist, adding to this body of works.

Following a small exhibition of Sayers' works on the South Coast of New South Wales in 2014, his first major solo exhibition, *Nature Through the Glass of Time*, was shown at Lauraine Diggins Fine Art Gallery in Melbourne in 2015, with a second exhibition, *Defining the Artist*, at this gallery in 2019. An exhibition of his works was also shown at the Beaver Galleries, Canberra later in 2015. One of his self-portraits was a finalist in the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize in 2014 and another of his self-portraits hung in the 2015 National Self-Portrait Prize held at the University of Queensland Art Museum. In addition, yet another of his portraits was a finalist in the Archibald Prize in 2015.

Sayers' work is represented in the permanent collections of several regional art galleries in Australia, as well as the National Gallery of Australia.

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