



Media release

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Australian artist Sally Smart awarded coveted Rome residency

Acclaimed visual artist Sally Smart has been awarded the highly sought-after [Mordant Family and Creative Australia Affiliated Fellowship](#) at the American Academy in Rome.

Sally Smart is renowned for her large-scale cut-out compositions, installations and performances exploring identity politics, the body, and cultural histories. Her work has been exhibited globally and is held in many major public and private collections across Australia and internationally.

Since 2016, the Fellowship has offered Australian artists the opportunity to pursue their creative practice in an inspiring, collaborative, and supportive environment, with accommodation and studio space in the American Academy's historic building on the Janiculum Hill in Rome. This once-in-a-lifetime professional development opportunity is generously supported by the Mordant Family.

Sally Smart said:

"I would like to sincerely thank the Mordant Family, Creative Australia and the American Academy in Rome for this significant opportunity. This Fellowship represents a significant opportunity to research early modernist avant-garde art in Italy, including artists and designers (Giacomo Balla, Fortunato Depero and Elsa Schiaparelli) at the intersection of art and performance practice; their use of costume and textiles; along with the related historical legacies of Ancient Roman Theatre, the Commedia dell'arte and Italian puppetry traditions.

I look forward to being able to live, research and make art, in an environment with other artists, writers and scholars from around the world, while living in a city with Rome's extraordinary history, architecture and the powerful creative energy that resonates."

Simon Mordant AO said:

We were overjoyed to see the extraordinary quality of applicants for this residency and are delighted to support Sally Smart as the next Australian Affiliated Fellow at the American Academy in Rome. Sally's work is innovative, thought provoking and deeply connected to cultural dialogue, making her an exceptional recipient of this Fellowship. Our family believes in the transformative power of art, and we look forward to seeing how this experience continues to inspire her work."

The Fellowship is open to established visual artists with a significant record of exhibiting in public institutions and galleries.

Creative Australia CEO Adrian Collette AM said:

“Over the years, the Mordant Family and Creative Australia Affiliated Fellowship has enabled a remarkable cohort of Australian visual artists to enrich their practices. Sally Smart joins an extraordinary list of past Fellows, including Lynne Roberts-Goodwin, Jenny Watson, Alex Seton, Barbara Campbell, Reko Rennie, Angela Valamanesh and Khaled Sabsabi. We thank the Mordant Family for their ongoing generosity in fostering opportunities for Australian artists to engage with the vibrant international community at the American Academy in Rome.”

Director of the American Academy in Rome, Aliza S. Wong said:

“The community of the American Academy in Rome has been impacted deeply by the presence of artists and scholars of diverse experiences, approaches, processes, and expertise. We have been so fortunate to host incredible artists from Australia thanks to the vision and generosity of the Mordant Family and Creative Australia. The engagement of the artists and scholars from the United States, Italy, Australia, and other parts of the world with one another and with the city of Rome, its mythological past, its very real present, and its possible futures, allows for the enrichment and enlargement of their creative and research practices.”

Established in 1894, the American Academy in Rome is the oldest American overseas centre for independent study and advanced research in the arts and humanities. Its Affiliated Fellowship program provides artists and scholars from across the globe a unique opportunity to pursue their work in an inspiring and collaborative setting.

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