

David Harris

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty
Minister for Gaming and Racing
Minister for Veterans
Minister for Medical Research
Minister for the Central Coast



Media Release

Anzac Memorial veteran artists in residence named

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Images of the veterans artists in residence available here:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/wa2oo7rsn1m8r5eclet55/ALKckuEpmprNr2Owuxi_eCWg?rlkey=kixybjm9mubrwh08idp7g0mww&st=oywd14bp&dl=0

Two veteran artists have received \$20,000 in NSW Government funding thanks to the Anzac Memorial Veteran Artist in Residence program.

The program offers contemporary veterans with established creative practices the opportunity to engage with the Memorial and the broader community through an artwork or project.

Thanks to support from the Veterans Benevolent Fund, for the first time two residencies have been funded with veterans Hugh Semple and Warrick Young today announced as the 2025 Veteran Artists in Residence, with each awarded \$10,000.

Semple, an Army veteran of the Royal Australian Corps of Transport is a watercolour painter.

What started as a therapeutic outlet, became a passion and full-time career after Semple found refuge in art to heal and find balance after medically discharging from the Army.

Young will use the residence to assist with production of a film titled *Echoes of Sacrifice*, which aims to bring the Memorial's symbolism to life through poetry, music, and archival imagery. Young's Army career began in 1983 with a mixture of full-time and part-time service including deployment on operations, including Iraq.

Launched in 2019, the Veteran Artist in Residence program supports current veterans in their development as artists and the use of the creative process in their healing journeys. The program also recognises the strong historic connection between art and military experience.

The use of art to depict and record Australia's involvement in war and its impact has resulted in a vast collection of trench art, paintings, music and poetry whilst also serving as an important tool in the rehabilitation and recovery of veterans that have been affected through their military career.

More information is available here: www.anzacmemorial.nsw.gov.au/about/veteran-artist-residence

Minister for Veterans David Harris said:

"I am pleased to announce the successful recipients of this year's Anzac Memorial Veteran Artist in Residence program.

"I want to congratulate Hugh and Warwick for presenting two amazing concepts that won them selection this year.

"Art is a powerful tool whether practised as a hobby or profession, its importance to veterans can be priceless as a form of rehabilitation or a vehicle for sharing their experiences with the broader community.

"I am glad that this year's program has enabled two veterans to use their art to share their story or to honour service to our nation."

Hugh Semple said:

"The artist in residency for me is a way to connect back with my military roots. I will be producing a series of watercolour paintings on veterans, and their new journey after service. I will get to surround myself with Anzac spirit on a daily basis.

"Like my own story in finding purpose, I want to show the passions that other veterans have to keep them moving positively in life outside defence. I hope through this series of paintings I can inspire other veterans to take a new direction after service, that benefits their existence and gives purpose to their lives.

"After discharging most veterans feel a loss of identity. Through art, I have rebuilt who I am and now have a lasting purpose in life. I started painting a year after my medical discharge to bring purpose to my life. I was going down a road of darkness and destructive behaviour, so I decided to do something meaningful and rewarding to bring myself on track.

"Throughout the last 4 years I have had continued interest in painting and now have made a business out of it. I am proud to now call myself an artist."

Warwick Young said:

"I'm deeply honoured and grateful for the opportunity to be one of the veterans to feature in this program. Creating a film that reflects the meaning of sacrifice at the heart of the Anzac Memorial is not just a privilege, it's part of my own healing, and I hope it resonates with others in the veteran community too.

"I'm genuinely excited to make this film alongside fellow veterans from the Screen Warrior Program. Together we can honour the sacrifices of those who came before us, and those still serving, in a way that feels deeply personal and connects audiences across the whole state of NSW."

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