

# ***History of Australian 9x5 Art***

*The history of 9x5 art is very Australian and started in August 1889 at the **9 by 5 Impression Exhibition** held in Swanson St Melbourne.*

*At that exhibition there were 183 works painted mainly by the up and coming young artists of the day Tom Roberts, Charles Conder and Arthur Streeton.*

*The “9 by 5” wording used in the title of the exhibition referred to the 9x5 inch size of a cedar cigar box lid, easily obtainable in those days, and used as the “canvas” for many of the works in the exhibition.*

*Part of the reason for such a restricted “canvas” size exhibition was to make art affordable for the general population, although today many of the works from that exhibition have sold for hundreds of thousands of dollars.*

*In today’s Australian art scene, many professional and amateur artists are intrigued by this 9x5 sizing and while not employing cigar box lids on which to apply their skills, they have embraced the concept by substituting plywood or masonite for their canvas.*

*This 1889 Exhibition, that has gone down as a “celebrated event in Australian art history” has now spawned a number of 9x5 exhibitions across Australia in the last few years. Organised by major art galleries and local art societies, a number are billed as competitions offering cash prizes. Most of these exhibitions/ competitions offer the art work to the public at affordable prices, as with the original exhibition.*

*Yarramalong Valley does 9x5*