Capturing the beach with art

Two local artists have caught the atmosphere of Bondi beach in their work. Report SHALINI ELLIS

Wendy Falk (left) and sculptor Rosa Gadget with samples of their work which will be on show at the Art Marwan Gallery. Photo: Melanie Russell

V[illegible] Falk moved painting Bondi beach 20 years ago when her daughter started to look back. "I went her paintings so she could always feel like she was living on the beach," she said. "No matter where you go, there's something like the sea around here. Bondi has a feel [illegible] colour that you can't get anywhere else."

A [illegible] artist in trade, Falk grew up in the Eastern Suburbs before her work took her to Canberra, Brisbane and then around the world. "But I always knew I'd come back here to live for good," she said. "It's where my heart's always been."

On returning to Sydney in 1990, she saw another reason the area had changed. "It's become more of a hub, and I like that. It's more cosmopolitan, and exciting," Falk said.

Falk uses bright colours on large canvases to capture the spontaneity of the sea, sand, dunes and hundreds of people on a summer day. "When you sit in a cafe by the beach, you just relax. There's the feeling I put in my paintings," Falk said.

Falk is exhibiting a series of Bondi beach work at Bondi's Art Marwan Gallery.

Jostaying close to her friend Rosa Gadget, a prolific local sculptor, still working in her 70s. Gadget moved to Sydney from South Africa in 1991 and has subsequently sought and practiced art for 30 years. "I've had a pencil and paper in my hand since I was 11," she said. "It's been my life."

After studying both painting and sculpture, Gadget found she had to make a decision between the two artforms. "Mine I started and had children, then women's strength came for body," she said.

The sculptures are modelled mostly of people – both well-known and unknown. "That's why I'm doing art. [illegible] people," she said.

"Spirit at Bondi" is on the Art Marwan Gallery, 99 Carlisle Street, Bondi Beach from December 14 to January 6. Phone 9365 4000 for more information.