

Local artist makes a splash in New York

North Bondi artist Sally West is headed for the Big Apple. She has been invited to exhibit alongside other Australian and New Zealand artists in a group exhibition at the Agora Gallery in the art district of Chelsea in New York which houses more than 200 galleries.

Chelsea is the centre of the gallery world. It's where trendy art lovers roam from opening to opening on Thursday and Friday nights, where the hottest artists are bought and sold, where collectors clamour to be and where some of the most innovative and high profile pieces are displayed.

"It's really a great step towards where I want to be," West said.

West has been exhibiting in Australia for more than 10 years but this will be her first international showing.

"The work is really Australian. I grew up on a sheep and wheat farm near Ungarie, in central

NSW, so the colours are reminiscent of my childhood - lots of really burnt, sun bleached oranges and browns. They're mostly maps of the property I grew up on. It's so dry at the moment, the drought is taking its toll, so it's been on my mind."

The artist said her works for this show reflect a childlike awe and fascination with colour and form: "The gallery in New York liked the paintings and think they're strongly influenced by the landscape in the same way that Aboriginal art is and they're probably right, since I feel a very strong connection with my childhood home."

West's first major solo exhibition, *The Journey* (1998), was held at the Bondi Pavilion Gallery and resonated with the spirit of travellers and thrill seekers flocking to the world-famous beach. The show was a success and West has been



Bondi artist Sally West is New York bound.

exhibiting regularly ever since, mainly in Bondi, Paddington, Berry and Melbourne.

Her work is currently on exhibition at Bondi's Gould Street Gallery and the Flying Pig Precinct Gallery in Berry.

Out from Down Under and Beyond: Fine Art from Australia and New Zealand will be showing at The Agora Gallery, in the heart of New York's art hub at 530 West 25th Street, Chelsea New York, from May 4 to 24.