



## Gallery moving to get nearer the scene

After almost eight years in Balmain, Access Contemporary Art Gallery is investing \$1 million to move premises to a new warehouse in the heart of Redfern's emerging gallery belt.

"The building cost us in excess of half a million, and the refurbishment will cost the same," gallery director Brenda May revealed yesterday.

Access - which specialises in Australian contemporary painting and sculpture - will begin refurbishment of the Boronia Street premises next week and plans to move into the 550-square-metre space in October.

"At the moment it's actually just a brick shed," May said.

Robert May, of May & Swan Architects, will direct the refurbishment.

"He's also my husband, which means he's got a very difficult client," May quipped.

She explained the move was spurred by the realisation that, in Balmain, they were isolated from the nucleus of Sydney's art scene.

"We opened in Balmain in the first place because we didn't want to be seen as yet another Paddington gallery," she said.

"We wanted to do something different and develop a different feel. But, in retrospect, we made ourselves less accessible.

"Balmain's gorgeous and I love it. But it's become very gentrified, whereas the East Redfern-Surry Hills area hasn't yet.

"It still has that character where there are older residents who haven't been bought out and moved on."



Moving pictures . . . Brenda May in the new gallery space in Redfern.

May noted there were "heaps" of advantages in moving to Redfern: "When people go to galleries they don't usually just shoot out to one. They like to take a few hours and go to a few.

"And we're right in among the

gallery belt here - next door to Yuill/Crowley, 10 minutes' walk to Ray Hughes, and Legge Gallery is down the road.

"People will start at Taylor Square, go to the artist-run galleries like Ten Taylor Street, then take in Ray Hughes,

Yuill/Crowley, us and so on.

"Redfern is also one of the few areas that still has decent-sized warehousing."

Apart from Access, Redfern will also see a new gallery, Pendulum, open in June.

Pendulum directors Cameron

Prince and Mishka Borowski are seeking to support younger artists.

Pendulum will swell the number of exhibition spaces from Taylor Square to Redfern to at least 17.

□ MICHAEL HUTAK

Picture by BEN RUSHTON