

The Sculptors Society Bulletin

www.sculptorsociety.com

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Profiling a member's work

Amongst the twenty or so sculptures in the Australia Square exhibition is one by Malcolm Currey, *Reaching For Serenity* which has the form of an offset cross designed for wall mounting without any supports. In its final unknown destination it would have a series of rocks on the floor as an earthy reflection of the sculpture. The material is Queensland silver ash, an interesting semi-hardwood timber with an off white colour measuring 1.8m x 2.0m x 0.032m and weighing 36kgs.

This sculpture is derived from, and very similar in both form and dimensions, to one made from Sydney bluegum timber which is shown in the photograph. This sculpture, *The Trinitae Cross* was designed for wall mounting with the reflecting stones. This, with a temporary support and stand, was shown in a recent exhibition, *Wood A Gift of Nature* at the Springwood Braemar Gallery along with the work of five other sculptors and wood turners. Two other Society members, Aris Ruicens and Torben Jensen had work in this well presented exhibition with many examples of excellent creative endeavour.

The sculpture, now as *The Trinitae Cross - Going on Forever* has been accepted for presentation in the 2005 Blake Prize for Religious Art at the Sir Herman Black Gallery, Level 5, Wentworth Building of the University of Sydney Union. Exhibition dates are 18 November - 17 December with Gallery hours Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm. Saturday 11.00am to 4.00pm. The entrance is in Butlin Avenue just off City Road, Darlington.

The *Trinitae Cross* had an interesting development based on both purpose and chance. The triangular and varying form, until this sculpture always thought of as vertical blades, first emerged out of a daydream in the early 1970's as



Malcom Currey: *The Trinitae Cross*. Sydney bluegum

a single piece in blackbean about one metre high. This has been repeated in varying arrangements, timbers and sizes since then.

The close and more interesting form of later sculptures, normally in sets of three blades, came by chance when other loose elements were placed with those already in an earlier spaced arrangement. The closer placement added strength and interest with the pieces and space interacting continuously as viewing moved around the sculpture.

It was Ian Smith, friend, mentor, artist and sculptor, now twice shown in *Sculpture by the Sea*, who picked up one of the loose blades and set it horizontally to give a refreshing new presentation. And from this he commissioned a multi-element external sculpture for his house for both resting and feeding birds. The first arrangement which was produced did not satisfy Ian's multi-element sculpture requirements, but later satisfied, and almost immediately became the model for the horizontal sculpture with an added strong vertical element. Chance has been very helpful in encouraging ideas forward.

The Sydney bluegum timber was bought at auction from a quantity which had been passed in several times. When examined after very careful blinkered selection and successful bidding against no one it proved on unpacking to be of poor quality, perhaps intended for rough work but unlikely ever to have been thought of as timber for a sculpture. And despite misgivings about the blemishes, flaws, cracks and shrinkage it turned out that it was these characteristics which provided, with selective use or elimination, one of the rewarding challenges in working towards expressions of ideas and form.

Yes, the sculpture in the photograph and the one in Australia Square were made from inherently unattractive hardwood timbers.

Christmas Party

Time: 6.00pm

Date: Saturday 3

December

**Address: 74 Baringa Rd,
Northbridge**

Hostess: Vice-President Margaret Sheridan

What to bring: A plate of something, savoury or sweet, and a bottle to share.

Optional extra: Bring a fold-up chair if you hate standing!

Who to bring: A partner or friend or just yourself!

Notes: There will be no cooking on the night, so we can all enjoy ourselves, without anyone being on duty. It is a superb venue, with a lovely relaxed atmosphere, plenty of room to move about, and get-togethers here have been an enormous success in the past. Do come! We look forward to seeing you, and seeing out the year together!

Last Forum with Belinda Paterson (nee Tierney) and Patricia Knapp

Belinda: "I have been based in Melbourne until recently and have now moved to our Sydney office of Australian Art Resources. I manage Axia Modern Art Gallery, the gallery arm of Australian Art Resources. Patricia Knapp, my long time colleague, is based in Sydney too but is involved in the corporate consulting, art rental and site specific art program for Australian Art Resources.

Axia Modern Art is at 124 Jersey Rd, Woollahra. I deal with sculptors, painters and printmakers on a daily basis. We have been working, like you have, in a pretty tough industry, but it is something we do love.

Our consultancy prides itself in having very senior sculptors that are based nationally. Our job is to find the people who support the sculptors. The way we work with sculptors is in a strongly consultative process where we go to their studios and nut out a program and costing. We work with the architects, engineers, client and the artist to make sure that the work is delivered on time and meets all of the requirements.

The following are questions to our guests and their responses:

Q. How much or what percentage does a sculptor get paid? What are the commissions with Australian Art Resources ?

A. When we work with a sculptor, the commission structure, for example 40% to the gallery/ 60% to the sculptor that works in a lot of galleries just isn't appropriate. We are involved in the development of some pretty large art works which are sighted in large open spaces such as, at the entrance to major buildings, in plazas, parklands and in foyers. We go about making a commission contract which incorporates an agreed artist's fee. Then we have to allow on top of that such costs as fabrication costs, the artist's reimbursement for out of pocket expenses, insurance, transportation and the consultant's fee. We work with the client, builder or architect to negotiate the overall costing.

Q. Have you noticed if there is a difference between the sculpture scene in Melbourne as against Syd-

ney and if so, why? How did this come about ?

A. Well, yes, there are significant aspects of difference between what has developed in Melbourne as against Sydney. It wasn't something that developed in a short period of time. It developed over several generations. Melbourne has historically a stronger report card in the commissioning of sculpture and its integration into the Melbourne Central Business District. Yes, it does house more sculpture than Sydney. There have been a couple of main influences. The private patronage for sculpture has a history. Wealthy families invest in sculpture and the arts more strongly in Melbourne than in Sydney. There seems to be more of a prevailing culture and almost an expectation in Melbourne of support for emerging as well as senior artists.

Q. How do you take a sculpture from a maquette to a monumental sculpture.

A. A good example of how we went about that was with a maquette sculpture by Anthony Pryor. Anthony had been a very influential modern Australian sculptor. Unfortunately he passed away at a very young age. An estate was established by his family called the Anthony Pryor Estate. The Shell Corporation were looking for a sculpture and identified one of Anthony's maquettes which we had. This led to the development of scaling up the sculpture using the notes and plans Anthony had left. It was a very substantial commission. We engaged his past technicians and family members in creating the final sculpture.

One of the main points we wish to make is Australian Art Resources are not fabricators of sculpture. We see ourselves as distinct from this type of practice. We are there to be part of the artistic process between the sculptor and the client. Unfortunately, in the public realm, major projects in architecture often absorb the art budget in various forms of ornamentation and even utilize it in signage, paving and seating.

Q. What can our Sculptors Society or sculptors in general do to bring about more sculptural commissions in public art.

A. We need to engage architects as much as possible such as inviting them to your Forums and invitations to view your exhibitions.

Some of the sculptors Australian Art Resources work with closely have been: Bruce Armstrong; Greg Johns; Geoff Bartlett; Anthony Pryor; Chris Booth

(from New Zealand); Peter Blizzard; Jane Valentine; Peter D Cole; Robert Hague; Augustine Dall'ava; Mark Stoner; Dean Bowen; Michael Nicholls; Lenton Parr; Cliff Burt; Gaye Porter.

Members at the Forum viewed an extensive presentation of the sculptures of the above artists. A copy of this text will be placed on the new website together with the slide presentation of the above sculptors' works.

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Christmas Message

This is the last Bulletin for 2005. It has been a good year and a busy year, but 2006 promises to be even bigger and busier, with exhibitions starting as early as March, and continuing throughout the year.

We take this opportunity to wish all our members, friends and supporters a very Merry Christmas, with plenty of luck and happiness in 2006!

In particular, we wish to thank Clive Calder of Australian Bronze, Alan Crawford of Crawford Castings, and David Latham of Lathams Australia for their wonderful support and sponsorship over the year. Barnes Products have said they will support us again at Darling Park next year, which we are delighted about, and Anna Cohn is going to present a \$200 cash prize to a lucky sculptor, a first for sponsorship from a private individual, which we are thrilled about too.

We also would like to thank Ruth McColl and Stella Downer for their involvement in opening and judging our major exhibition at Darling Park this year.

Another big thank you goes to all those people who supply us with the marvellous venues for our exhibitions and meetings – Darling Park, Australia Square, Sydney in Bloom, The Royal Agricultural Society, and North Sydney Leagues Club. It is a pleasure to live in a world where people are welcoming, pleasant and helpful. Seasons Greetings to all!

Paradise Revisited

Hal Holman CAM also spoke at the last Forum: "My art career began in earnest when I was discharged from the army at the end of hostilities in the South Pacific war against the Japanese. I was a NCO in the 216 Commando Squadron. On demobilisation, the Army, together with the Commonwealth Repatriation Training scheme (CRTS), offered us returned soldiers a choice of courses to assist us in our re-entry into civilian life after our prolonged absence from society. In addition to this we were granted a living allowance whilst studying, with all expenses paid such as fees, books, materials and sundry other costs deemed to be appropriate.

We were granted a loan to purchase a home, and a loan to set up in business. I chose an art course and earned a Diploma of Art and became firmly entrenched in industry as a designer-illustrator. I also purchased the Sydney Commercial Art School in anticipation of becoming skilled enough to take over teaching in classes. Meanwhile I employed part time teachers until I was qualified."

Journalist Chris Ashton wrote: *"A shed of one's own is the cave to which modern suburban man can retreat. In the backyard of Holman's bungalow are two such sheds. One is the artist's studio, the other a workshop. Paints, canvas, scrap metal and wood, hand tools and machines together with plaster, foam rubber, Heath Robinson contraptions Hal has devised for cutting or shaking air bubbles out of casts, a forge, a lathe and countless other items trespass on one another's turf. What to the world at large would be chaos is for him harmony in an artist's heaven."*



Hal Holman and his bronze bust: The Young Queen.

Holman the artist is heir to the ancient tradition of the artist as craftsman, of harnessing his gift to interpreting the physical world through a variety of materials. At the Darling Harbour Market Festival Hall the fibreglass flying black swans with the three-metre wing spans were his doing; so too are the bronze and steel pond creatures - frogs, ducks, tortoises and dragonflies - on the ornamental fence along the embankment of Sydney's Centennial Park Lake. A Sydney based Filipino entrepreneur (Clive Troy) recently commissioned him to sculpt a bust of Jose Rizal, Philippines' national hero from its war of independence.

Insects, birds, tortoises, small marsupials, even fairies, all larger than life and wrought in various metals, figure prominently in his repertoire. "I suppose it's because of my stature!", he explains. Holman once designed a set of stamps for Papua New Guinea of its birds, rep-

tiles and small marsupials, much praised at the time. But his heart wasn't in it. *"To me reducing things to miniatures went against the grain. I suppose I am trying to prove that I am larger than life. I'd rather have been born on stilts than stumps."*

In 1962 Hal flew to Port Moresby for what was intended as a brief visit to see his sister, Lexy Burns. Instead he joined the Department of Information and Extension Services (DIES) with the title of Senior Illustrator responsible for pictures and other visual aids to government departments. Among his colleagues was a young journalist named Michael Somare, who later became PNG's first Prime Minister.

In this capacity he was called upon to train Papua New Guineans direct from village level, as art room staff. They eventually achieved competence. Hal's job required that he designed publications with illustrations of PNG subjects for education and conservation of wildlife such as Birdwing butterflies, Birds of Paradise, and endangered reef fish and coral. At that time he designed the PNG National crest and was largely instrumental in the design of their flag. Since then many commissions have come from PNG such as a large bronze bust of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and bronze busts of the six Prime Ministers of PNG since their Independence. In addition Hal created an eight metre high stainless steel Bird of Paradise that is now close to Parliament House on a highway roundabout in Port Moresby. There are many other sculptures in such places as the Botanical Gardens and the University. Hal's home town, Sydney, also exhibits many of his works.



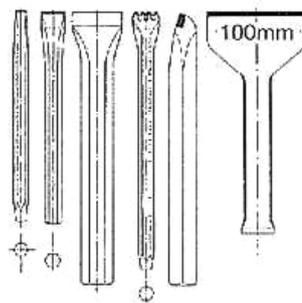
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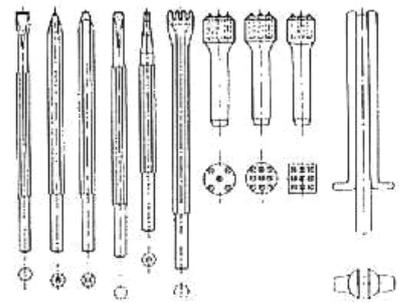
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If this appeals to you, and you have an email address, send us an email requesting receipt of the Bulletin electronically. Of-course you need to be a financial member!

Our new web will show everything that has been current up to the end of 2005, and will also have an archive of old Bulletins, and they are of-course accessible to the general public. But to get the current ones in 2006, as they are printed, you have to be a member, and be on our list. Your address will be confidentially kept, and the Bulletin sent by Bcc. We would prefer to receive your address via email, and then we know there are no mistakes with the address.

Please send your emailed request for the Bulletin to come to you via email in the future, to our secretary Eva Chant: sculpt1@bigpond.net.au by 21 December 2005.

The web gets better and better! Read on...

The new Sculptors Society website will be unveiled at the AGM in March 2006. IT HAS THIS, AND MORE....

- All exhibiting members are to have their own works displayed nationally and internationally on the web, for free.
- A larger personal page added for only \$100 for 2 years.
- Information on over \$500,000 worth of sculpture prizes ...where and when.
- Details of all galleries across Australia that exhibit sculpture.
- Instant updates via email of our latest sculpting news and Sculptors Society Bulletins.
- Useful publications to help you win commissions, prepare grants or deal with galleries.
- Information links to some of the best sculpture websites in Australia and internationally.
- A calendar of upcoming events such as our exhibitions and forums.

Option A. We need all of you to send us 3 clear, good quality, standard size photos of your works. Try to have uncluttered backgrounds, and good contrast. Don't forget to give us the details of your works.... the title, materials and dimensions. Add a BRIEF artist's statement and a BRIEF biography, in point form. No more than 100 words in total, please. Poor quality images will not be accepted, nor can we edit long screeds!

Option B. If you want more, for \$100 you can have a 2 year gallery of up to 12 of your works on the new website, a more extensive CV of about 200 words, listing of your contact details and a link to your own personal website, if you have one. (Current website sculptors who have paid their \$100 are included for the next 2 years at no extra cost). Whatever you send must fit onto one page!

For simplicity send your packages including photos, text, and cheque to Eva Chant at **10 Corang Rd, Westleigh, NSW 2120**. Alternately (and this is our preferred option) send your scanned information electronically to Eva at sculpt1@bigpond.net.au with the cheque and the completed enclosed form sent by mail. Remember not to make the images too large to email successfully. The image should correspond in size to a normal standard size photograph of 4" x 6".

In a nutshell:

- Membership Renewal fees go to Feisal Ramadan, or to Eva Chant. The 3 free images + supporting documentation of Option A should all go to Eva.
- Option B information including a cheque for \$100 made out to The Sculptors Society should all be sent to Eva Chant.

Don't be late!! Please fill out the form included with this Bulletin.

DEADLINE: 21 - 12 - 05.

The Sculptors Society Bulletins provide information, and topical news and views considered to be of interest to our readers. Nothing written here is intended as a substitute for professional advice, and no liability arising from our publications is accepted. Articles and reviews submitted may be edited at the discretion of the editor, and no correspondence in this regard will be entered into.

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