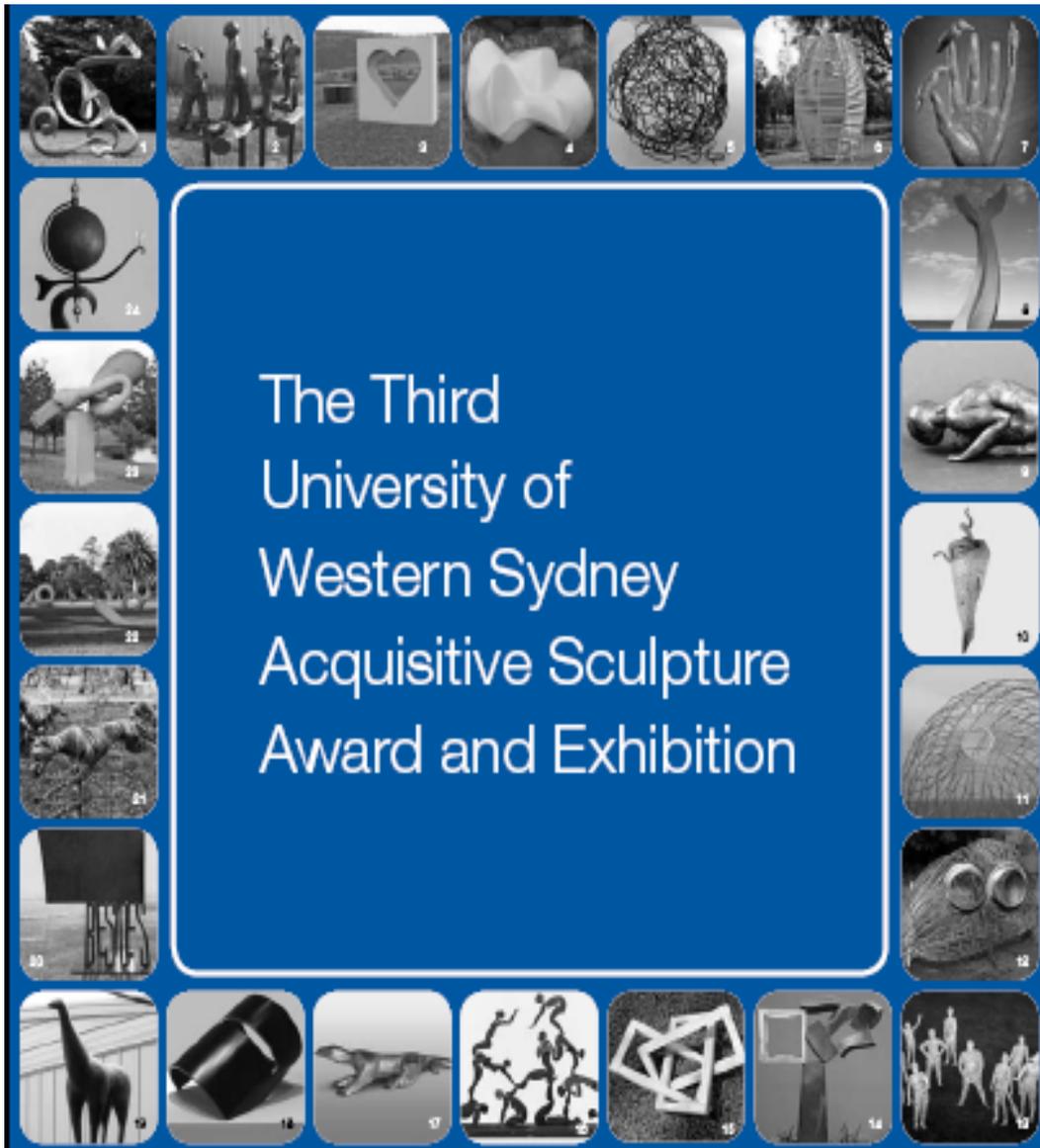


2008 Education Resource Kit



2 May – 1 June
2008

University of Western Sydney
Campbelltown campus



UWS Acquisitive Sculpture Award and Exhibition 2008

Overview

Sculptors around Australia were invited in June 2007 to submit work for inclusion in the third UWS Acquisitive Sculpture Award and Exhibition to be held on the Campbelltown Campus from Friday 2 May - Sunday 1 June 2008.

The initial selection panel was convened in September 2007, for the selection of works in the 2008 exhibition.

This outdoor sculpture exhibition as in previous years, consist of major works by significant Australian artists who have created sculptures especially for the picturesque lakeside setting at Campbelltown campus

The finalists and exhibiting artists in the 2008 exhibition are:

- Rae Bolotin
- Kerry Cannon
- Rick Clise
- Janet Coyne
- Louisa Dawson
- Gary Deirmendjian
- Jon Eiseman
- Ron Gomboc
- Clara Hali
- Cassandra Hard Lawrie
- Matthew Harding
- Nigel Harrison
- Col Henry
- Rudi Jass
- Akira Kamada
- Phyllis Koshland
- Des McKenna
- Campbell Robertson -Swann
- Michael Sibel
- Michael Snape
- Amanda Stuart
- Marcus Tatton
- Charlie Trivers
- Tim Wetherell.

The above finalists are all eligible to win one of two awards, one for the UWS acquisitive prize and one for the Landcom acquisitive prize.

Selection panel:

- Michael Le Grand, sculptor
- Monica McMahon, UWS art curator
- John Sorby, Landcom representative.

Judging panel:

- Michael Le Grand, sculptor
- Janice Reid, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Western Sydney
- John Sorby, Landcom representative
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The UWS Sculpture Award 2008

Catalogue essay

The prominent position of sculpture within the grounds of universities was established in the nineteenth century with traditional commemorative figure sculptures placed within halls, corridors and courtyards and decorative additions made to large buildings, but throughout the twentieth century, with the rise of campus type universities, architects, designers and university administrators have installed contemporary sculpture to decorate their foyers, walls and open spaces. The placement of contemporary sculpture on campus lawns is an idea originally from the US but which has been used to great effect throughout Australia.

The long term UWS project of exhibiting some twenty works around its Campbelltown campus, for a month every two years, and then selecting one to stay, is a visionary one. It enables large scale sculpture to be seen as it has always meant to be seen: as objects that one has to negotiate physically, as it shares the space with us and loses the preciousness and distance it can have in gallery environments. The increased reputation of the UWS prize has seen many artists plan singularly architectural or monumental works that can take their place alongside the previous winners, Michael Le Grand and Grant Calvin and enabled them to envisage their work's life outside of the studio. All of the artists have an eye to create a permanent object which will age gracefully and add to the changing moods of the landscape and not have its impact diminish as the surrounding trees grow.

Three figurative works reflect the environments appropriate to their activities. Clara Hali's restful crouching figure *Coming to Water* blends with the dominating lakes and evokes thoughts of thirst: the environmental message is subtle and effective. Col Henry's *Is it our turn yet?*, a group of eleven colcast and glass figures playing cricket, suggests a group pastime for the grounds and its liveliness and familiarity engages viewers. It is the most immediately interactive work in the exhibition. Phyllis Koshland's acrobatic troupe – *Launch* – is a playful and stylized take on group cooperation, with effort and support as necessary elements.

Evocative expressions of the human condition can be seen in Kerry Cannon's *A Congaline's of Suckholes* which manipulates figures into grotesque creatures for comic political purposes, reminding us of the previous local member's colourful vocabulary, and in Jon Eiseman's *Birds of a Feather*, a symbolic exploration of human vulnerability, with a large hand supporting two watchful birds and a bird/ human figure.

The animal works, Des McKenna's "*Gerties*" the *Goanna* and *Mongrel Country (Nil Tenure)* by Amanda Stuart play with the forms and symbolism of Australian indigenous and feral animals. "*Gertie*" the *Goanna* intrigues because of its scale and colour; Stuart's work explores hybrid type animals that are a result of human intervention in the environment. Both are at home roaming freely in this landscape, ironically near suburbia.

Works that use the lakes as an inspiration have referred to the theme of water in individual ways and created works that please aesthetically, as well as refer to our contemporary interests. These include Ron Gomboc's *Nature's Balance III*, a stylistic version of a whale tail, slick and seductive in its sweep and patina, its topicality imbuing it with an added disturbing sense and Janet Coyne's *Mindscape*, an organic form that appears to float on the lake's surface, emulating the illusionism created by the lake itself which is only one metre deep. Louise Dawson highlights the topical issue of water consumption in her tree like *Water Sculpture*, a conglomeration of garden hoses; and Cassandra Hard Lawrie refers to the mysteries of water life with her sea shells and mammals in *Origins (5)*. Rae Bolotin's *Peeled World*, stands alone as a monumental piece reworking an organic form. This clever red enamel and reflective stainless steel apple peel is at once dramatic and playful and gives permanence to an everyday perishable natural form.

Sculptures exploring architectural and monument forms proclaim themselves as man-made, designed forms, coexisting with the natural world and not attempting to imitate it. Three works are large scale representations of their artists' feelings about mortality and relate to eternal questions of the meanings of life. *Nano* by Matthew Harding explores the influence on nano science of the growth patterns of living organisms and on our self perception with a stainless steel globe; Nigel Harrison's *Life Turning 1 (one)* is an abstracted heart form of stainless steel, expressing his personal fear of mortality; and Michael Sibel has reworked the Medieval Wheel of Fortune with animals, with *Carousel*.

Tim Wetherell's *Transit of Venus* places the models of the sun and Venus on a stylized stand. Its double reference is of course to the astronomical phenomenon and its importance to the founding of eastern Australia. Charlie Trivers places a snake, representing consumerism onto a "cardboard carton" plinth to comment upon the place of consumption in our society in *Dynamic Supermarketism Animadversion Composition Number 2*.

Marcus Tatton's *Digital Litter* places the 0s and 1s of digital technology in a random pattern like ruins from an archaic building and Rusi Jass' pun on Edward de Bono's maxim of *Think outside the square*, a combination of architectural and organic forms, relate to their locations within a University campus. These titles would be meaningless to previous generations and show artists utilizing traditional forms and media to speak to contemporary audiences. Rick Clise's *Moved On*, a pun on a contemporary phrase about problematic relationships, cleverly removes a heart from a block and places it at a distance, thereby creating two works that play with the natural human emotional softness and hard edged shapes.

Gary Deirmendjian and Akira Kamada present constructions that aspire to higher values: Deirmendjian's *Brancusi's nest* to that artist's monumental *Endless Column*; and Kamada's to the physical bonds and interlocking necessary to build a cohesive society in *Three*.

Michael Snape's *Besides* is a visual pun which plays with the notion of the usual usage of the word at the beginning of adverbial clauses to strengthen arguments, when Snape claims that it weakens them since it is an addition to bolster a defence. In this sense the curved steel slab is the argument, weighing down upon the defence.

Campbell Robertson-Swann's *The Bush Ranger* extends arguably twentieth century Australian art's most famous image, Ned Kelly's black helmet, into a architectural form that seems to be peering over the landscape, rather like a would-be sniper. Its solidity is undercut by its curved form and the wit inherent in the pose.

Whether the artists have chosen figurative or abstracted forms, they have done so with clear and unique visions of the site in mind: that is, the physical landscape and the concept that this is a learning institution where people from all different backgrounds and interests gather and where ideas and conflicting philosophies are studied and debated. The combinations of seductive aesthetics and the sophisticated concepts and multi layered meanings give the works their strengths and ensure that they demand contemplation: surely a manifestation of their success.

Michael Hedger

Public Art:

The personal becomes public when we enter a public space. Everything about us - our dress, speech, behaviour-is encoded by that public identity. Public spaces include all those places that are essentially urban-parks, plazas, shopping malls, cafes and markets, as well as transport areas, buildings and architecture. All places have a particular feeling, character or identity, and place is not so much about location or buildings, but about the interaction between people and the setting. It is in this interaction that public art is created.

Public art such as *UWS Acquisitive Sculpture Award and Exhibition* is seen by a wide variety of people (including those who may unintentionally view the work). The audience will include students, employees of the university, temporary tradespeople, artists, critics, and general public, it will be documented in the form of a catalogue, website, and be seen in publications, television and the World Wide Web.

"It's very important to make your art, make your marks. Important to pass on your understanding emotionally rewarding to share your feelings essential to leave something behind, a thought, an idea or sometimes something more tactile."

Col Henry

Sculpture Terminology:

Sculpture: Is three dimensional art concerned with the organisation of masses and volumes, it also is solid and exists in space.

Technique: The process by which a work was made

Carving: A solid material is reduced to reveal the sculpture, using chisels, files etc:

Modelling: A soft material (wax or clay) is shaped with hands or tools to make a form.

Construction: Materials are brought together to make a sculpture eg. gluing, welding, tying, arranging etc.

Casting: An original form is modelled in clay or wax, and then a plaster or ceramic mould is taken. A form is then cast from the mould, usually in bronze or plaster.

Assemblage: An artwork composed of three dimensional objects, either natural or manufactured.

Maquette: A small, preliminary model for a sculpture that the artist creates before they make the actual sculpture.

Form: The general type of structure of the sculpture.

In-the-round: A sculpture which is worked on and viewed from all sides.

Relief: A Sculpture with parts that project from a back slab in shallow space.

Installation: A sculpture which is so large it creates an environment made of constructed or found objects. Usually only exists for the duration of an exhibition.

Ephemeral: Things that exist only briefly

Style: The approach taken by the artist to the sculpture.

Representational: Where the sculpture represents something in the real world.
(Symbolic)

Realistic: Where the sculpture closely resembles a person or thing.

Expressive: Where the sculpture represents something in the real world but uses either *simplification* or *distortion* to describe it.

Abstract: The sculpture is about its physical qualities i.e. shape, space, surface, mass, line. It does not represent anything in the real world.

Analysing A 3D Artwork:

Describe

Location – Where is it?

What is the artworks subject matter?

Is it Abstract, representational?

Describe the environment.

What is the sculptures function?

Does the appearance of the work change when it is viewed from a different angle?

Analysing techniques used

How was it made?

Comment on the techniques, equipment and materials used?

Comment on the construction of the work.

Design elements and principles

Comment on the design elements and principles.

How is the negative and positive space used.

Is the size of the work relevant to the scape?

Evaluate qualities of the artwork

How well does it fit into the environment?

Does it have a purpose? How is this purpose communicated to you?

Do you think it is successful? Give reasons.

Do you like the artwork, why or why not?

The Conceptual Framework:

World

Public art is directly affected by environmental and health and safety issues, town planning and engineering restrictions. Government bodies such as local councils and authorities for water and power also restrain art in public places.

Public art is directly answerable to the general public for commission. Historically, art in public spaces may be in the form of memorials, commemorations and decoration. It must be culturally sensitive to religious and political powers.

Public art can be iconographical, used as propaganda, advertising and tourism. Art in public spaces also bears a very close relation to architecture and the maintenance of ambient spaces.

Artworks

Art in public spaces is site-specific. It must be complementary to the environment and architecture. The materials, scale and mass will be directly related to its permanence or temporary characteristics. The purpose and function of the art may include beautification, memorials and dedications, and the symbolic.

Artist

Artist working in public spaces are mindful of the purpose of the art, its size and scale, sensitivity to environment and its materials. They can be commissioned to supply a work to fill a need such as architecturally, ascetically or functional. Artist can submit a proposal for a public or private competition such as the *UWS Acquisitive Sculpture Award and Exhibition*

Audience

Public art such as *UWS Acquisitive Sculpture Award and Exhibition* is seen by a wide variety of people (including those who may unintentionally view the work). The audience will include students, employees of the university, temporary tradespeople, artists, critics, and general public, it will be documented in the form of a catalogue, website, and be seen in publications, television and the World Wide Web.

Tim Wetherell

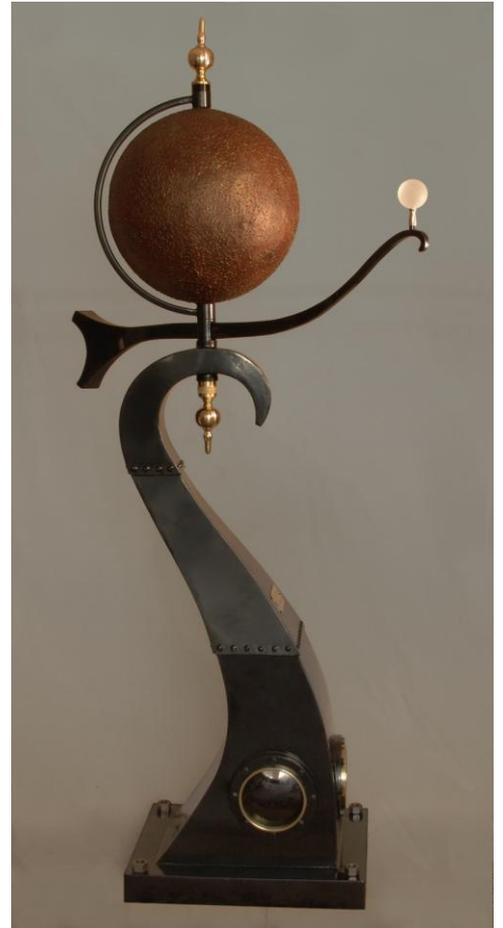
Title of Sculpture: *Transit of Venus*

Materials: Steel and Brass

Dimensions: H 185cm x W 70cm x D 80cm,
Weight 70kg

Artist's Statement

At an artistic level what fascinates me about science is not so much the technology itself but the philosophical basis for scientific thought. Scientific reasoning is fundamentally different to the subjective, emotional thinking that is inherent to us all as human beings. By divorcing its self from such factors, science has evolved into a powerful tool for understanding the universe. However such objectivity often leaves science isolated from the most meaningful of our experiences as human beings, which are by their very nature, emotional and subjective. This is where I believe art has a vital role to play, reflecting scientific issues through the distorted lens of an artist's own humanity. Much of my work explores science and technology at the boundary between fact and perception with special reference to the many different views that often exist.



Artist's Biography

I was born near Bradford, Northern England back in the early sixties and having completed school went on to gain a PhD in condensed matter physics at the University of St Andrews. My art is largely informed by this mixture of growing up in a hard post-industrial landscape and my later scientific studies.

Studying Sculpture

Critical and historical study

Tim Wetherell's *Transit of Venus* has a whimsical appearance, with the brass sphere delicately balanced on the industrial engineered base. The brass and glass optical lenses are inscribed *from where I stand it would look black*, and on the opposite side *from where I stand it would look white*. Making the subjective and scientific statement of a final conclusion, Wetherell's feelings of science being alienated from human experience transcends to his work by the juxtaposition against the rural landscape giving the work the appearance of not belonging, of being foreign in its surroundings.

1. How does Wetherell's choice of materials suggest meaning?
2. Find one sentence above that is a personal evaluation or opinion.
3. Describe the scientific elements Wetherell uses in this work.
4. In what way do you feel Wetherell's work interacts with the landscape?

Amanda Stuart

Title of Sculpture: *Mongrel Country (Nil Tenure)*

Materials: Steel, found object associated with farms (fencing, bones and scrap metal) and cast elements, textiles, bitumen

Dimensions: H 80 cm x W 150 cm x D 30 cm, Weight 4 kg each

Artist's Statement

My intention as an artist is to explore the tensions that arise when domestic and wild animal and human communities co-habit a terrain - specifically within the contemporary Australian landscape and psyche - and to address what questions arise about cultural identity.

The wild dog is an invasive, hybrid animal directly resulting from human modification of the environment, and to date the only known hybrid mammal, resulting from native and domestic mating.



Studying Sculpture

Critical and historical study

1. Stuart previously worked as a ranger with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, in what way do you feel her work as ranger has influenced her current Body of Work.
2. How relevant is Stuart's material selection to her work.
3. Does Stuart's work convey an environmental or social statement, if so what is it and how does she achieve this?



Rick Clise

Title of Sculpture: *Moved On*, 2006

Materials: Welded and Painted Steel

Dimensions: H 150 cm xW 150 cm x D 50 cm,
Weight 500 kg

Artist's Statement

The risk of loving too hard – someone gets left behind.

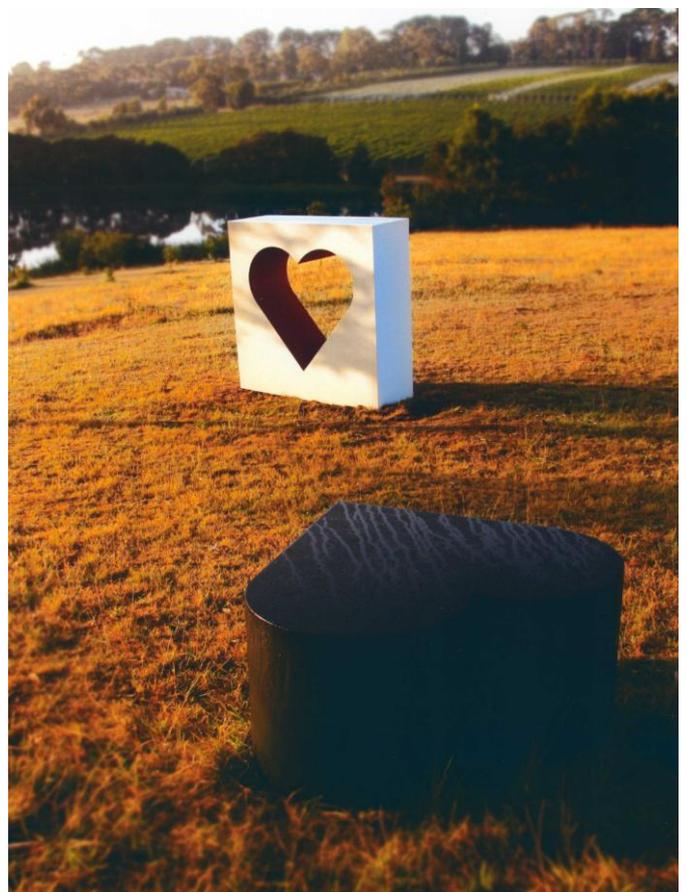
My artwork often relates to relationships and the humour of life.

Studying Sculpture

Critical and historical study

Rick Clise work *moved on* looks at human emotion, this work uses the heart as a metaphor that humans usually associated with love and the existence of life.

1. How do you connect with Clise's many signs and symbols in this work?
2. Contrast the feelings of happy, sad, regretful, love and loneliness with *moving on*.
- 3 In what way does *moved on* allow the audience (yourself) to experience the university grounds both land and sky, from a new perspective.



Michael Snape

Title of Sculpture: *Besides*

Materials: Painted Steel,

Dimensions: H 237 cm x W 170 cm x D 140 cm, Weight 800 kg

Artist's Statement

A word can pose in relation to a material, a weight, a relative position. The material, weight and shape also changes in relation to the world. In an open – ended dialogue, a sense or sensation emerges.



Studying Sculpture

Critical and historical study

Michael Snape's work *Besides* sits proud and large in the landscape. The text appears to carry the weight of the work on its shoulders, some what like the words that carry the story within a book.

1. In Snape's artist statement he states that *a word can pose in relation a material, a weight, a relative position*. What do you think he means by this?
2. In what way does Snape's work have a dialogue with the landscape?
3. When analysing an artwork two people can have very different idea as to what they interpret the work to be about, compare and contrast your opinion of this work with another student.

4. Compose a short poem using *Besides* and the university grounds as inspiration.

Col Henry

Title of Sculpture: *Is it our turn yet?*

Materials: Colcast and Prue Glass, Galvanised Rods

Dimensions: H 200 cm x W 400 cm x D 600 cm

Weight 100 kg

Artist's Statement

'Gossamer Series' involves physically sketching in space creating shadow sculptures, using 'Colcast and Prue Glass', to create complex three-dimensional forms, a matrix that is formal, as well s conceptual, and always elegant. There is a rhythm that is meditative and engaging, but the works are not purely visual, they are also metaphors for imagination and creativity. Subtle variations in the patterns suggest organic references and there is a definite order, no matter how chaotic it may seem.



Studying Sculpture

Critical and historical study

Col Henry's work *Is it our turn next* is large, tactile and engaging, for many it would evoke memories of group pastimes and familiarity. Henry invites the audience to watch or participate.



1. In Henry's statement he said his work is a metaphor for imagination and creativity in what way is this work a metaphor?
2. Henry uses the figure to express his ideas, what formal elements of design and principles are used and how?
3. Henry has developed a unique process and technique to build his sculptures *Colcast and pure glass*. *Research* this method and explain why it is different? you may begin your search with,

<http://www.cookshill.com/exhibitions/2008/k-strong-r-walters/col-henry/index.html>

Marcus Tatton

Title of Sculpture: *Digital Litter*

Materials: Steel – Welded and naturally weathered

Dimensions: H 180 cm x W 50 m x D 40 m

Weight 1200 kg

Artist's Statement

For millennia artists have coded stories that future civilisations attempt to decipher. Cuneiform markings in stone tablets, calligraphic quill strokes on parchment, pictograms in the earth – and today we have digital photons of energy coursing through concrete, glass and our own bodies at the speed of light...

Zeros and ones are transmitted in encrypted combinations – to be unravelled in nano seconds by receiving devices thousands of kilometres away. Unanswered messages course through the universe, coded. Where do they end up? These electromagnetic ramblings may never be deciphered; but we can be sure that we are being surrounded by digital litter.

Studying Sculpture

Critical and historical study

Marcus Tatton work *Digital litter* stands strong and proud, as if it is born from the earth, or remnants of another time.



1. Tatton in his artist statement refers to signs and symbols, what are they and how has he used them in this work?
2. *Digital Litter* makes references to ruins of classical sculpture, ancient Greek or Roman that today is part of the landscape of modern cities. Compare and contrast these sculptural forms from different times.
3. In what way does *Digital Litter* have significant meaning within the grounds of the University?