

Off the Cuff

Near-death influences art

ARTIST and art educator Sebastian Di Mauro last week launched a book which explores his works and the influences behind them.

The book, *Between Material*, is available at Folio Books, 80 Albert St, City. Celia Feil spoke to Sebastian this week.

Name: Sebastian Di Mauro

Occupation: Artist and lecturer at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University.

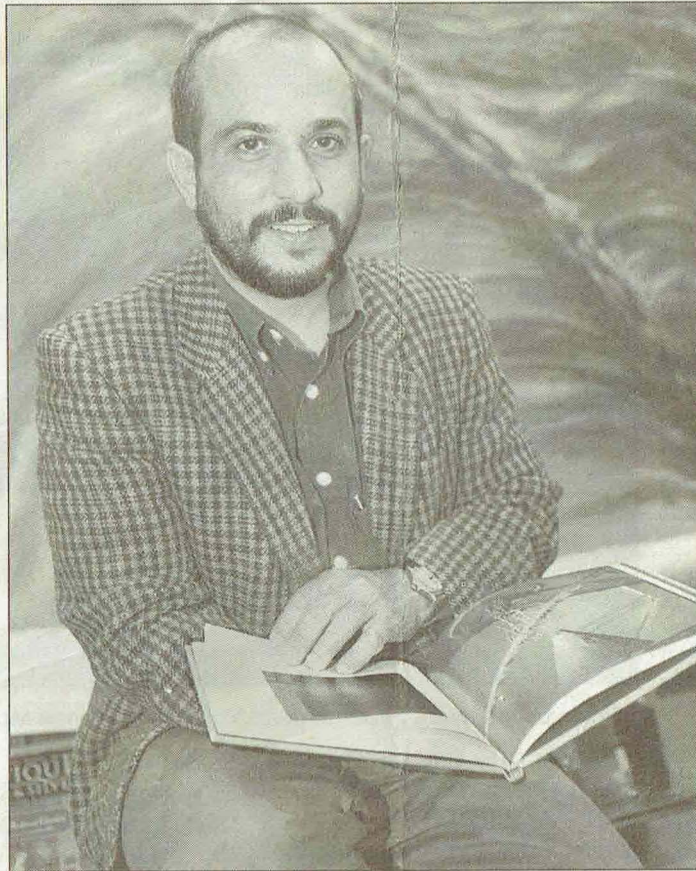
Age: 43

Favorite movie: *Zelig* by Woody Allen.

Favorite book: It's an artist's book called *Truisms and Survival: Rubber Stamps* by Jenny Holtzer.

When did you become interested in art? I started painting in 1980 and I had my first solo exhibition in 1987.

What prompted your interest in art? My interest began after I left school. I wanted to study after I left school and I wasn't sure what areas I wanted to study. I was told about the graphic design course at the Queensland College of Art. I started the course part time, and became enthralled in it, and haven't stopped



Artist Sebastian Di Mauro . . . works are the result of a near-death experience.

ever since.

Now I teach graphic design at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University.

Within the design degree we have a graphic design business called Liveworm,

where all the design students come through the design studio and get work experience. And I've been managing that for a while. I've been at the College of Art for 15 years.

How would you describe your art?

Metaphysical. I'm looking at the metaphysical issues and I suppose that was informed by a car accident that I had quite a few years ago where I had a near-death experience.

I had an accident in 1981, between Ipswich and Toowoomba and I survived. I went through a self-analysis and saw the tunnel of light, then I came back.

My artwork has been informed as a result of that experience.

It changed everything about my life.

A lot of the issues I try to communicate in my work are a direct narrative of that accident, but for other people it would be much more abstract.

What's your book about? I've produced a book on my work over the past 10 years. The book is called *Between Material*.

I actually put in a grant to Arts Queensland and they gave me some money to put the book together. I wanted to let a greater number of people understand the work that I've been doing over the last 10 years, and I felt the book was the best way of doing that. The book has 24 color plates.

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