

Artist gives students a helping hand

ART is a full-time passion for Sebastian Di Mauro who juggles his creative endeavours with teaching up-and-coming artists and designers at Queensland College of Art Griffith University (QCA).

Sebastian is Creative Director of QCA's professional graphic design studio, Liveworm, which is staffed by Design students.

He is also a prolific painter, sculptor and installation artist. In the past 20 years, Sebastian has held 30 solo exhibitions and been involved in around 100 group shows. His work features in more than 20 public, private and corporate collections throughout Australia.

Most recently, Sebastian has ventured into public art. His first major commission, the witty and whimsical "Chat", is a larger than life pair of cast aluminium hands on the footpath at 175 Eagle Street, Brisbane.

Sebastian was one of 22 artists shortlisted for the Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award, Australia's

richest art prize for sculptors. Almost simultaneously he had a solo exhibition in Melbourne and won the inaugural Montalto Acquisitive Sculpture Prize.

Sebastian's art has continually evolved — from painting to installation to sculpture, from private to public.

"I moved away from painting initially because I was finding the process and the two-dimensional medium limiting in what I could achieve and communicate," he said.

"I started installation because I felt I wanted my work to be more experimental and evocative — to do and say more. From there, it was quite a natural progression to sculpture.

"Installation uses a mix of art forms. This is challenging and demanding, but the potential is fantastic. I work with any material I feel is appropriate for what I'm trying to say."

Sebastian's media are diverse and have included olive oil, sugar, carpet underlay, steel and photography.

As design and artwork become an increasing part of our daily lives, and as the public artwork industry continues to evolve, Sebastian says it is increasingly important for the public to engage with art.

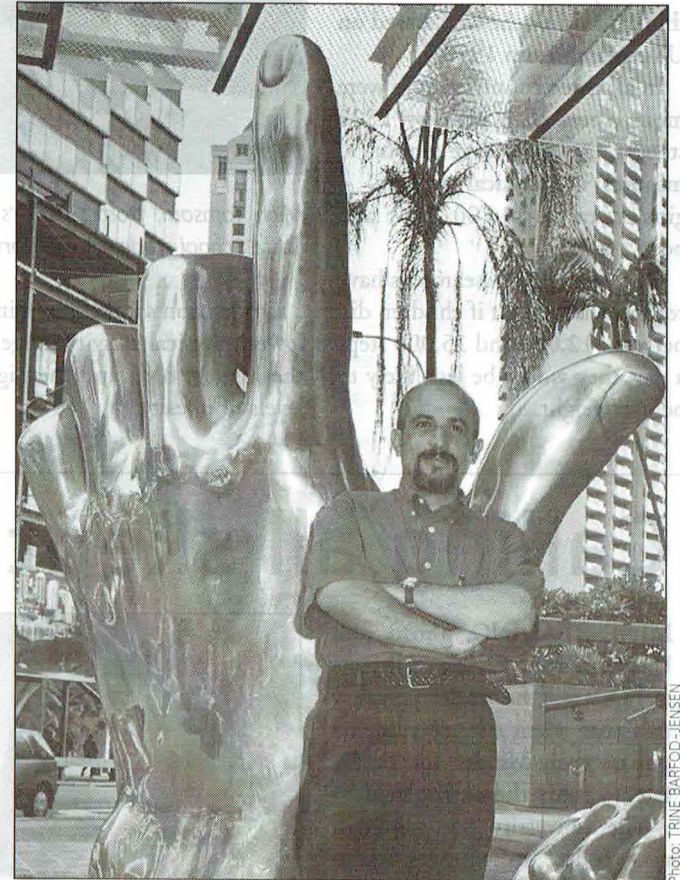
"I create art for myself initially — I set the parameters — but I like to think that people are able to interpret the work in their own way. I make art because I have to make it, because it's part of my life. I think the more it relates to me as a person, the more powerful it is."

Sebastian is as passionate about his teaching at QCA. He lectures in design, oversees student work at Liveworm, and supervises postgraduate students in sculpture and fine art.

"I love teaching and I enjoy helping the students find their feet as artists and designers. I'm here to act as a mentor — that's the way I teach."

Sebastian is currently working on a public art proposal for the Brisbane Magistrates Court.

By Michelle Hughes



Sebastian Di Mauro with his first foray into public art — a larger than life pair of cast aluminium hands at 175 Eagle Street, Brisbane.

Photo: TRINE BARFOD-JENSEN