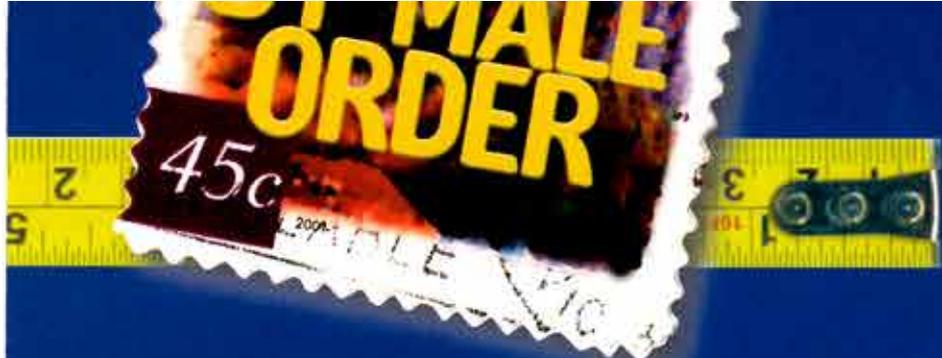


Eight Australian male artists who work on a

**grand scale**

A Wagga Wagga Art Gallery Initiative





## Does **SIZE** matter?

Size and scale in art are ideas that have long interested me. I had been considering curating an exhibition around these themes for some time, and had created a mental list of the artists I might approach. When I relocated to Wagga Wagga Art Gallery and became familiar with the physical size, shape and scope of the Gallery's built environment, the opportunity to stage such a show became a reality.

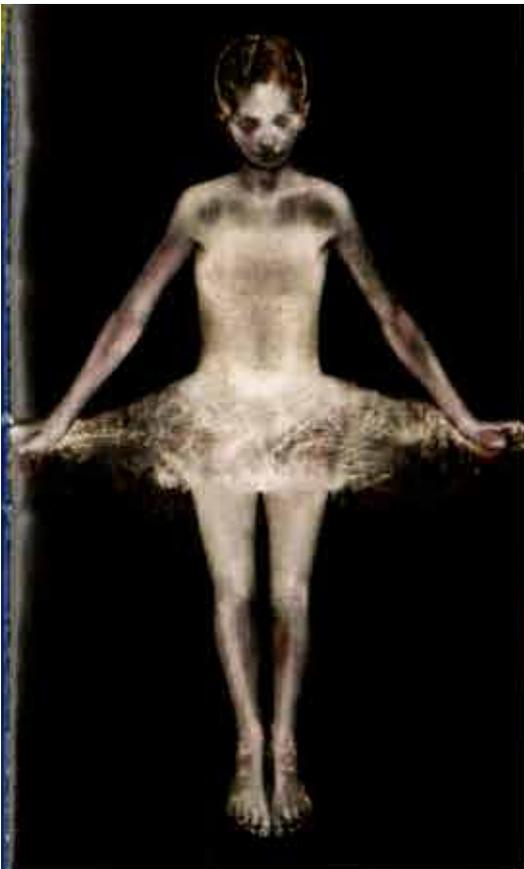
In putting this exhibition together, the notions of scale and bigness struck me as concepts that society tends, by association, to categorise as particularly male attributes. There are many more artists I could have included in this exhibition, not to mention female practitioners. Then I got to thinking that it has been a considerable time since I had seen an all-male exhibition. While male solo exhibitions are staged frequently, I really had to think back to the last male group show I had seen. As the word play around *male* and *mail* formed in my mind, I became resolved to play with these notions of size and masculinity and highlight a number of prominent male artists working in Australia.

I don't really think that size matters. I am more interested in why these artists have chosen to work on a grand scale. Whether size is an identifiable or continuous trait throughout their careers or not, these artists have become known for the magnitude, scope and the idea of bigness in their practice. Is scale such an important feature, or does their artwork just happen to be big? Do they find the large-scale format more accessible for their subject matter? Is their message easier to get across in a large format? Did something or someone influence them early on in their practice to spark a fascination with the large scale? Is there more freedom in a large format? These are the questions I was asking both myself and the artists in curating this exhibition, and ones that I would like audiences to consider when viewing the show.

When one considers the actual process involved in creating artworks on this scale, we are first struck by the physical commitment demanded of the artists. Clearly there has been considerable time, physical effort, dedication, (and in many cases, expense) involved in creating these works. There is a strong sense of construction involved in the processes of executing all of these works. Whether it be through the physical manipulation of products and material, the setting up of photographic equipment or the arrangement and preparation of paper, canvas or etching plate in readiness for the execution of the artwork, each of these artists have decided to use the large format in anticipation of creating a different kind of relationship with the viewer. The viewer is obviously confronted by the large work as it demands attention - the message is powerful and the viewer cannot easily avoid interacting with the work in some way. Do all of these artists start with big ideas in their practice? I think not. Sometimes the imagined artwork may have been initially small, but the idea becomes large through the process involved in capturing that idea in the execution of the artwork. When you examine the ideas in each of these artworks, the magnitude and scope of the underlying themes are what are actually big. The resulting works just happen to be big too.

There are many big questions to consider. I hope you can come up with a few of your own through engaging yourselves with these artworks.

Susi Muddiman  
Executive Officer  
May 2004



Innocent – diptych innocents IV and V (detail) 1995-2002

## Godwin Bradbeer ARTIST STATEMENT



*Innocent – diptych innocents IV and V*

Since the late 1980s I have conceived most of my major works as diptychs. Images companioned with their reflection or shadow. Perhaps inspired by Caravaggio's beautiful Narcissus.

Usually I endeavor to create a reverse duplicate and the impossibility of the task amidst the many thousand marks allows a latitude of interpretation that might suggest inwardness or outwardness, inhalation or exhalation, the moment or the memory.

Between 1995 and 1999 I made two ballerina images. Conceived as sister images (though she is more singular than plural), they were never together, separated by premature purchase.

From a vague sense of propriety I waited several years before I gave myself permission to draw the twins and to deny their separation. These girls could couple side by side like a paper chain but I intended, and I prefer, them above and beneath each other as one might be when standing on glass.

The drawing is not about dance, nor is it just about a girl, like most of my work it is a meditation on the symbol of ourselves two dimensionalized as an abstraction, like a butterfly in a case or a rose petal between pages.

Standing or falling, ordinary or bizarre, sentimental or sublime, the increment between the two is a fine line.

## Jon Cattapan ARTIST STATEMENT

Not all ideas in art start as big ideas. Sometimes an idea becomes big through the processes involved in manifesting it. For me, the type of painting I am most interested in pursuing has at its core a thematic device that can offer up repeated interpretation. My paintings have for a long time worked around the theme of 'the city' and urban spectacle. *Pink*, with its globalisation narrative and *The Group Discusses* with its data-drizzle dialogue, are examples of this continuing fascination having grown into a fully - fledged visual language.



The group discusses 2002

## Sebastian DI MAURO ARTIST STATEMENT

These forms compare the close relationship between people and nature, and extend my ongoing sculptural exploration. The fake 'grass' offers a dialogue between the real and the artificial, and extends the nature/cultured debate. My work alludes to the ritualistic Australian weekend pastime of mowing the lawn, as well as to the traditional European art of topiary, which has been embraced by many Australian suburban gardeners in the pursuit of a manicured, formal garden. This work offers a whimsical thwarting of traditional notions of sculpture, eschewing traditional material in favour of contemporary fabrics. For me art needs to directly relate to everyday life. My collective practice explores an interest in the transformation of ordinary objects into something poetic and metaphoric.



## Graham FRANSELLA ARTIST STATEMENT

I have never set out to promote any issues or obvious content in my work. I have always felt that work either contains something or not. An overt desire to have content in one's work can have the reverse effect. The activity lies at the heart of the matter.



Four Figures 2002



Soft centre 1998

## Christopher LANGTON ARTIST STATEMENT



All art is imitation. The fundamental function of plastic is to imitate natural materials. I use plastic as my medium to imitate aspects of the natural world that have already been reproduced as consumable goods in the mass market. The transaction that takes place fits into the concept of the simulacrum: to copy a toy, which in itself is a copy of something else. In the process of making I often inject the subject matter with an inflated sense of scale. This can be seen as ironic as 'cute' objects often metamorphose into sinister creations.

Warped scale is a recurring aspect in my sculpture. The initial impact is a feeling of being awe struck. This is achieved with grand use of size and scale, intense selection of colour and exaggerated, stylised manipulation of form. Repetition is used to further warp the usual and the term *ad infinitum* can often be applied to my installations. This obsessive yet earnest gesture emphasises the complex relationship between reality / fantasy and popular consumable object / art object.



Ride on 2003



## Robert MOORE ARTIST STATEMENT

Do I have to do an Artist Statement? ... I really hate the things as I believe painting the picture is the communication.

## David STEPHENSON ARTIST STATEMENT

The Domes project was begun during an Australia Council Studio Residency in Italy in 1993. I had little notion about the sort of work I would do before arriving, but spent a month travelling around Italy before the residency at Besozzo began. This was my second trip through Italy, and like most tourists from the "new worlds" of America and Australia, I was amazed again by the extraordinary art and architectural monuments of Europe. I made a circuit of the major centres, first going to Florence and Rome. While making the mandatory pilgrimage to the Pantheon in Rome, I recalled a panoramic photograph of the dome of this dramatic building that I had made a decade earlier, on my first visit to Europe in 1984.



Great Synagogue, Szeged, Hungary. 2000/2004

That moment of rediscovery probably defined the project that was to occupy most of my time in Italy over the next four months: a documentation of the domes of many great churches and cathedrals throughout the country. The domes struck a chord of recognition - here was an attempt to create an experience of the sublime in architectural form. Since 1996 I have continued the documentation of these amazing architectural structures, making several trips back to Europe to photograph in Italy, Spain, England, France, Germany, Austria, Turkey, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Russia, and Ukraine. Many architectural styles from Byzantine to Romanesque, and Renaissance to Neo-Classical have been investigated, particularly the buildings of great Baroque masters such as Borromini, Guarini, Vittone, and Santin Aichel, and the geographical spread of Baroque preoccupations with the manipulation of interpenetrated architectural space, and its expression within the form of the dome.

Presently numbering over 200 images in total, the series represents a tangible record of this research into the idea of the dome as both a site of sublime experience, and a theological representation and symbol.

## Michael ZAVROS ARTIST STATEMENT

Making work about horses is like coming full circle for me because my four sisters and I were keen riders in our youth. I stayed with the sport longest, riding competitively until my early twenties. Besides ponyclub competition, we would take our horses to local shows where we often did very well. Shows were exciting. Here the ribbons were of felt rather than satin and prize money was involved. As well as showing horses, I would also enter (and mostly win) handwriting, and various visual art categories. But most importantly each year I would show my chickens. I had bred many fine birds and would wash and dry them, paint their nails, oil their combs and present them in their various categories. Some of my hens did well but I had one rooster who consistently triumphed. After a few seasons we proudly amassed several certificates and a sash for 'Champion Cock.'



Springfall 5 2003

**Godwin BRADBEER** New Zealand 1950

*Man of errors* 1991

Chinagraph, pastel and graphite on paper

168 x 104cm

Courtesy of the artist and Annandale Gallery, Sydney

**Godwin BRADBEER**

*Innocent – diptych innocents IV and V* 1995-2002

Chinagraph, pastel and graphite on paper

Each panel 180 x 120cm

Courtesy of the artist and Annandale Gallery, Sydney

**Jon CATTAPAN** Australia 1956

*The group discusses* 2002

Oil on linen

195 x 275cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kaliman Gallery, Sydney

**Jon CATTAPAN**

*Pink* 2001

Oil on linen

195 x 275cm

Courtesy of the artist and Bellas Milani Gallery, Brisbane

**Sebastian DI MAURO** Australia

*Nap* 2003

Astroturf and polystyrene

55 x 110 x 130cm

Courtesy of the artist & Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

**Sebastian DI MAURO**

*Lair* 2002

Astroturf and polystyrene

65 x 92 x 62cm

Courtesy of the artist & Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

**Sebastian DI MAURO**

*Hide* 2002

Astroturf and polystyrene

67x 90 x 69cm

Courtesy of the artist and Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

**Sebastian DI MAURO**

*Trick* 2003

Astroturf and polystyrene

55 x 110 x 110cm

Courtesy of the artist & Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

**Sebastian DI MAURO**

*Sway* 2003

Astroturf and polystyrene

57 x 110 x 130cm

Courtesy of the artist & Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

**Sebastian DI MAURO**

*4 x Foil* 2003

Astroturf and polystyrene

4 units, each 110 x 110 x 60cm

Courtesy of the artist & Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne

**Graham FRANSELLA** United Kingdom 1950

*Head on sand* 2004

Etching on paper

Three panels, c. 88 x 213cm

Courtesy of the artist and Grahame Galleries and Editions, Brisbane

**Graham FRANSELLA**

*Four Figures* 2002

Etching on paper

Four panels, c.176 x 142.5cm

Courtesy of the artist and Grahame Galleries and Editions, Brisbane

**Christopher LANGTON** South Africa 1954

*Soft centre* 1998

PVC coated polyester, acrylic paint and fan

385 x 350 x 350cm

Courtesy of the artist, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne and

Brian Moore Gallery, Sydney

**Christopher LANGTON**

*Jumbo, Stumbo and Ernie join the circus* 1997

PVC

3 units, each 280 x 160 x 175cm

Installation size variable

Courtesy of the artist, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne and

Brian Moore Gallery, Sydney

**Christopher LANGTON**

*12 foot flowers* 2000

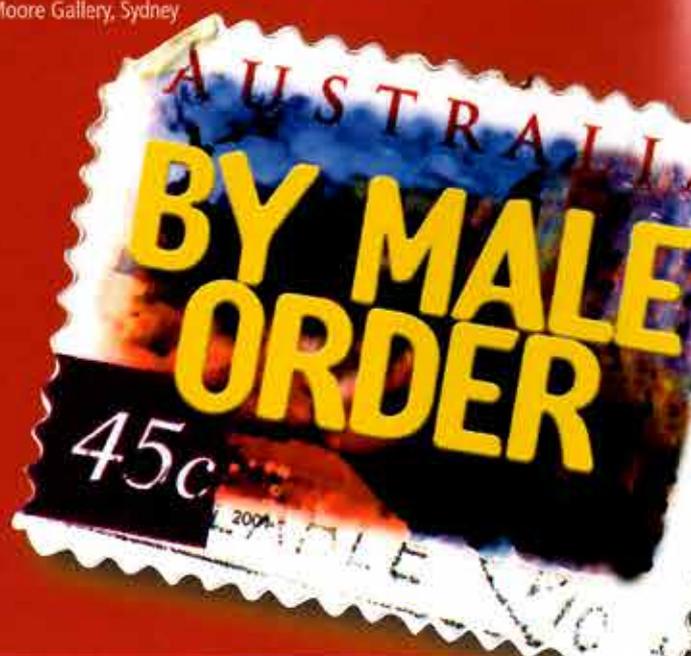
PVC, acrylic paint, fake fur, steel, electric motor

4 units, each 400 x 234 x 60cm

Installation size variable

Courtesy of the artist, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne and

Brian Moore Gallery, Sydney



**Robert MOORE** Australia 1964

*Ride on* 2003

Oil, enamel and charcoal on canvas

90 x 120cm

Courtesy of the artist

**Robert MOORE**

*Early morning horses* 2002

Oil, enamel and charcoal on canvas

90 x 120cm

Courtesy of the artist

**Robert MOORE**

*Grey fergie brown dog* 2004

Oil, enamel and charcoal on canvas

90 x 120cm

Courtesy of the artist

**Robert MOORE**

*Last brumby of Brooms Head* 2003

Oil, enamel and charcoal on canvas

90 x 120cm

Courtesy of the artist

**Robert MOORE**

*Bare Point* 2004

Oil, enamel and charcoal on canvas

120 x 990cm

Courtesy of the artist and owner

**David STEPHENSON** United States 1955

*Great Synagogue, Szeged, Hungary* 2000/2004

Type C colour photograph

Edition 8/15

73.5 x 73.5cm

Courtesy of the artist and Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne

**David STEPHENSON**

*Benedictine Monastery, Kladruky, Czech Republic*

2000/2004

Type C colour photograph

Edition 3/35

56 x 56cm

Courtesy of the Artist and Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne

**David STEPHENSON**

*Sala de las Dos Hermanas, Alhambra, Granada, Spain* 2003/2004

Type C colour photograph

Edition 1/35

56 x 56cm

Courtesy of the artist and Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne

**David STEPHENSON**

*St. Casimir, Vilnius, Lithuania* 2000/2004

Type C colour photograph

Edition 2/35

56 x 56cm

Courtesy of the artist and Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne

**David STEPHENSON**

*Comenadoras de Santiago, Madrid* 2003/2004

Type C colour photograph

Edition 3/15

73.5 x 73.5cm

Courtesy of the artist and Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne

**David STEPHENSON**

*St Bernard's Chapel, Cistercian Monastery, Plasy, Czech Republic*

2000/2004

Type C colour photograph

Edition 3/35

56 x 56cm

Courtesy of the artist and Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne

**Michael ZAVROS** Australia 1974

*Spring/Fall 5* 2003

Oil on canvas

213 x 167cm

Courtesy of the artist, the owner, Art Galleries Schubert, Gold Coast and Mori Gallery, Sydney

**Michael ZAVROS**

*Spring/Fall 11* 2003

Oil on canvas

213 x 167cm

Courtesy of the artist, Art Galleries Schubert, Gold Coast and Mori Gallery, Sydney

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