FIFTEEN YEARS OF URBAN ART PROJECTS

Publisher

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Exhibition

Fifteen Years of Urban Art Projects
QUT Art Museum
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QUT Art Museum

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UAP URBAN ART PROJECTS

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FOREWORD

Urban Art Projects is a burgeoning success story in the creative industries in Queensland. In 1993 brothers Mathew and Daniel Tobin took the risky step of establishing their own art foundry in Brisbane. Their tenacity in establishing the foundry and their foresight in contributing to a growing awareness of the importance of public art in the built environment is a model for creative industries development in this state.

Mathew and Daniel are respected artists in their own right, but the distinctive success of Urban Art Projects has been in the collaborative projects that they have undertaken with architects, design firms, developers, government departments, and a number of Australia's more important artists. It is their particular skill to work with the complexities of public art projects to achieve outcomes that satisfy diverse and demanding stakeholders. More than this though is the trust built over time with particular artists where collaboration produces a whole that is bigger than the sum of its parts.

Public art has come of age in Brisbane over the 15 years since Urban Art Projects was established. The Art Built-In policy of the State government has bolstered this growth and the private sector has accepted that public art has become a client expectation in quality developments. This has supported the development of public artists in the State's creative industries sector. This exhibition has been proudly supported by the Queensland Government through an Arts Queensland grant, and we acknowledge their role in partnering the QUT Art Museum to celebrate the work of Urban Art Projects over the past 15 years.

For Daniel and Mathew this is just the beginning. They have been awarded major national projects and have a rapidly accelerating international operation that will link Australian artists, designers, crafts people, and a cluster group of manufacturing industries in Brisbane with opportunities in the United States, China, and the Middle East. I have no doubt that in 15 years time we will reflect with pride that a company of international significance gave its first work to the people of Brisbane to enjoy in their everyday lives.

Professor Peter Lavery
Director QUT Precincts
March 2007

Identical twin brothers Matthew and Daniel Tobin, both respected practising visual artists in their own right, are the owners and founders of one of Australia's most successful art foundries—Urban Art Projects, based in Brisbane, Queensland. Urban Art Projects (UAP) creates public artworks and specialist urban elements for a wide range of architectural and landscape projects. They have manufactured some of the best known contemporary public art in Australia.

In 2007, UAP celebrates its fifteenth year in the business working with artists from all over Australia, an important milestone as the brothers branch out into lucrative and competitive international markets. Since late 2004, Urban Art Projects has been expanding into the West Coast American market, offering specialist design and construct services to architecture and design firms while promoting Australian artists and designers in the United States.

UAP's existing clients include some of Australia's leading developers, architects and design firms as well as commercial galleries, private clients and collectors. Government clients represent a significant part of UAP's core business and in 2006 Matthew Tobin (together with architecture firm Fairweather Proberts) won a national competition to design the National Police Memorial in Canberra, commissioned by the Federal Government.

Over the past 15 years UAP has worked with some of Australia's most respected artists and developed a reputation for creating memorable large-scale public art projects that range in diversity and scale, including the impressive Walama Forecourt (*walama* means 'to return'), which greets arrivals at Sydney International Airport, a collaboration with Indigenous artists Judy Watson and Brook Andrew; the production of London-based, Australian artist Nike Savvas' installations *Transcendental* and *Cascade* for Deutsche Bank in the Norman Foster building in Sydney, and Reconciliation Place in Canberra. In development at the time of writing, Reconciliation Place includes the integration of artworks responding to the concept of reconciliation by Indigenous artists Judy Watson, Thanakupi and Vic McGrath.

As a foundry UAP balances unique large-scale public artworks that range from monumental bronzes through to intricate glass installations and neon lighting with small one-on-one collaborations with artists on editioned projects. In 2001 UAP began producing editioned sculptural works through collaboration with Maningrida Arts and Culture and some of their key artists, including Lena Yarinkura, Bob Burruwal and Owen Yalandja. The foundry has continued to produce editioned works with artists including William Robinson, Joe Furlonger, Michael Zavros and Fiona Foley. On the occasion of their fifteenth anniversary, the foundry is set to expand their core business nationally and internationally. The following interview was conducted over several days in late January 2007.

Alison Kubler
Curator (Public Programs)

Thoughts from the foundry floor:

Alison Kubler in conversation with Matt and Dan Tobin

Alison: *Urban Art Projects as it exists in its current incarnation was founded in 1993, but you were both working prior to this, casting work for other artists. Can you tell me about how you started, and what the original manifesto or thinking for the foundry was?*

Matt: I completed art college in 1990 with a Bachelor of Visual Arts at QUT Kelvin Grove campus where I studied under artists including Bill Robinson, June Tuppicoff and Bob Morris. Kelvin Grove at the time had a bronze foundry that it would not operate due to cost and safety issues. I had a great interest in artwork for the public realm and was frustrated that access to a foundry at college was not possible. During our time at college we worked for an art-based firm producing semi-permanent artworks for public spaces, including much of the public artworks created for Expo '88. The firm also ran a small bronze foundry and it was here that I learnt the process of bronze casting and gained a desire to become involved in the production of public artwork.

In 1993 (in Daniel's last year at NIDA) the company moved its core operation off shore and we decided to set up our own foundry. Obviously it is very difficult to start a business from scratch, especially an art-based foundry. We decided to purchase an existing business, a small general welding works, and use the cash flow to establish Urban Artists, as we were called then, and build the foundry.

The welding works' core business was the fabrication of industrial waste skip bins and reo mats (pre-fabricated metal reinforcing used in concrete construction) for building sites. During this time I learnt my welding skills. Dan graduated from NIDA in November 1993 and set up the Sydney office.

Dan: The first years were pretty tough, more so for Matt as he was running the welding works in Brisbane while I was in Sydney doing a mix of theatre and television work while we developed Urban Artists. The Brisbane workshop was a rough and ready welding works that involved long hours doing heavy lifting and menial labour. I escaped most of that, although when we were quiet I would come back to Brisbane and do stints in the shed. It took a couple of years before we had the foundry built and operational, then another few years before we started producing any meaningful work. I get exhausted talking about it—some things you would never want to repeat! Cash flow was a big issue and we paid ourselves a minimum wage. Suffice to say, there were some serious celebrations when we were able to sell the welding works and concentrate on just artwork!

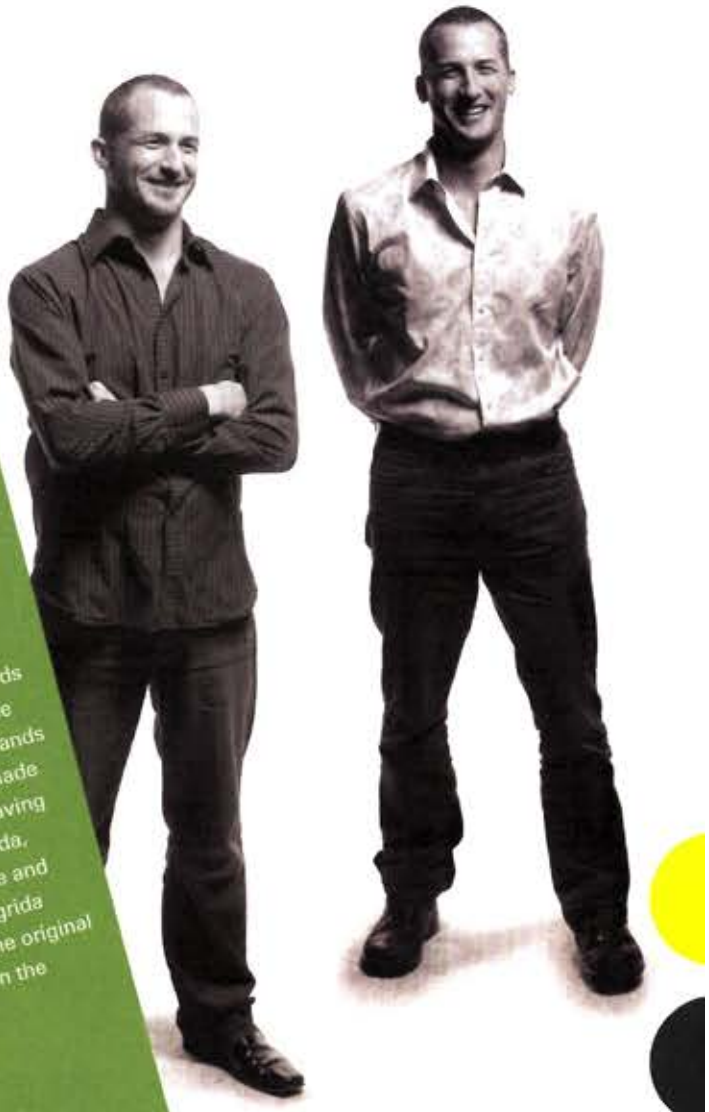
Alison: *When UAP began, the main focus was on furniture and industrial products. When did the foundry first move into collaborating with artists and what was the first major public art commission undertaken by UAP? Does UAP still manufacture furniture and design elements?*

Matt: Furniture was initially a way of gradually producing creative elements for the public realm. They were practical 'useful' objects that clients could justify spending money on. They were also of a scale and a price we could afford to fund the development of, and take to market. Initially we developed furniture for the high-end interior market but this market is difficult and ultimately unsustainable. However, we used this work as a platform to move into exterior street furniture, which is now a growing and highly successful part of our business.

Dan: We were two artists wanting to engage wholeheartedly in the process of making work whether we were engaging with other artists, architects or theatre practitioners. We got our first big break in 1995 or 1996 when we made an artwork with Judy Watson for the Casula Powerhouse in Sydney. Judy is brilliant to work with, she drives us as hard as she drives herself and she is a great perfectionist. After making that work, a year or so later we made her work for the 1997 Venice Biennale as part of the Australian pavilion exhibition *fluent*, which also featured Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Yvonne Koolmatrie. This was a very exciting commission. At the time we were making our own work as well as making work for others. In the early days the market was less interested in large-scale artworks; there was not the understanding or interest in the inclusion of artworks into architectural and landscape environments, which would start to emerge more so in the late 1990s. We spent a lot of time operating on the fringe of the arts and architectural community; we now bridge both and collaborate with artists, architects and designers alike.

Alison: An important aspect of UAP's contribution to raising awareness of contemporary Indigenous art has been your ongoing collaborations with Maningrida artists such as Lena Yarinkura, Bob Burruwal and Owen Yalandja through Maningrida Arts and Culture (MAC). Can you tell me how the initial contact was made and how UAP has forged this relationship with this remote community?

Matt: We had been appointed to complete a public art commission for the Sydney International Airport with artists Brook Andrew and Judy Watson. Daniel was part of the curatorial team under head curator Sally Grey for the entry portal part of the project. Judy's work for the airport referenced craft methods of Indigenous people who would have lived in the area where the airport now stands. Being a wetlands area the local Indigenous people would have made and used dilly bags, created fish fences etc. Having worked previously with artists from Maningrida, Judy drew a connection between the lifestyle and traditional practices of the people of Maningrida (also a wetland community) and the way the original Indigenous inhabitants would have lived in the Sydney basin.



Judy requested Dan and I accompany her on a trip to Maningrida to discuss with the women weavers of Mumeka her concept for the airport. The responses were varied, from questions about why would we make the screens in metal, to 'those metal fish fences will catch a crocodile!' On completion of Judy's work a number of the women weavers came to Sydney to see it. The opening was very moving; the women from Maningrida wept. They told us they were so proud to see their culture on view in Sydney. Shortly after, we were invited back to Maningrida to hold workshops with the artists; they felt they could make their art in metal too.

Dan: MAC Arts Adviser, Fiona Salmon was instrumental in developing the Remote Projects workshops and collaborations. The first workshop was co-funded by the late Gabrielle Pizzi, recognised as one of the first people to have worked closely with artists from Arnhem Land to promote their work. The first workshop happened in the art centre in Maningrida, not much more than a dusty shed. Lena Yarinkura and Bob Burruwal were stand-outs and they came to our Brisbane foundry on a number of occasions to make work. Gabrielle opened a show in Melbourne a few months after the first workshop and Lena and Bob attended the launch with Fiona Salmon. The relationship has continued and the Queensland Government then asked us to do a similar project with the community in Aurukun. The late Ron Hurley was a key figure in developing our relationship with the Aurukun artists.

UAP also partnered with the Department of State Development on initiatives such as 'Kank Inum Nink Inum', the first stage of the development of cast artwork with the remote indigenous community of Aurukun. This project was supported personally by Premier Peter Beattie. UAP has been well supported by the Department of State Development, and Matt has sat on the Creative Industries Consultation Committee. In 2006 UAP participated in the Business Development Program Vortex 4, sponsored by the Department of State Development.

We are now working with Dennis Nona from the Torres Strait. His first major bronze has already sold out and a second commission is underway. The British Museum purchased *Apu Kaz*, a Dugong mother and pup.

Alison: ***Urban Art Projects regularly tenders for public art commissions, matching artists to unique projects. Can you elaborate on this process a little and explain how you approach each project?***

Matt: As a rule we are invited to participate in projects as a result of our industry reputation. We tender on less than 10 per cent of our projects. Our client may be a developer, a construction firm or an artist; however we are often introduced to a project by an architect, curator or public art project manager. Each project is delivered under a different model. Sometimes an artist is directly appointed to a project based on their body of work. On other occasions we manage a limited competitive design process where a number of artists produce concepts for a site and a panel selects the preferred concept to proceed to construction. Many permutations of this process are also employed; the value and profile of a project often determines the preferred process. Also artists will come directly to us as their preferred manufacturers after winning a project.

Dan: The most exciting part of art commissions is the process, the collaborative work done with the curator, artist and architect. This process can be extremely rewarding for all. Art can play a vital role in the identity of a project, not just in the physical outcome but also culturally and socially. Finding the right artist for a project is very important; they must be able to collaborate with the design team while ensuring their work is realised without intellectual or creative compromise. Architects work in a very similar way, pushing the creative intent while ensuring they design useable spaces suitable for their clients' needs.

Alison: ***The debate about the relevance or irrelevance of public art continues to rage, particularly in Queensland, in light of the Queensland Government's allocation of two per cent of capital works building budgets towards public art since 1999. More public art exists than ever before, and I wonder how this initiative has benefited UAP?***

Matt: In general terms we support the Queensland Government's percentage-for-art scheme and are looking forward to the results of governmental review of the scheme. However, art as a result of the legislation only

makes up about 15 per cent of our business. Developers have embraced the need for a layer of artworks in their developments to differentiate themselves from their competitors and in response to the expectations of their clients. The public art percentage scheme began in July 1999, seven years after UAP had commenced business. The policy has contributed substantially to the growth of the public art industry in Queensland, leading by example; however, the industry was well underway prior to the policy becoming 'law' in July 1999.

Dan: The creative industries are recognised as key economic drivers in the new world order. Studies in both the US and the UK reinforce the strength of the creative industries and the benefits they bring economically, socially and culturally. Our continued drive into international markets certainly provides a reality check in terms of the Queensland debate. Projections show that in five years we will be doing more business internationally than in Australia, we will be assisting and supporting Australian artists and designers, crafts people and a cluster group of manufacturing industries in Brisbane expand their practices and businesses also. The economic benefits will be real. Our industry will continue and prosper and I hope educate that artwork is a vital part of our culture and community.

Alison: ***I expect you are both somewhat fatigued with talking about the pros and cons of public art, but could I ask you to express your opinions here for the record perhaps, from your experience and perspective both as practitioners and fabricators?***

Matt: Just like any form of design for the public realm, public artwork comes under close scrutiny, and appropriately so. There are many good pieces of public art, many bad pieces and some excellent pieces. This is not much different to architecture.

The quality of public art is determined by many factors including but not limited to the desires of the commissioner, the vision of the curator, the talents of the artist, the talents and input of the collaborators including the architect, landscape architect, engineer, lighting designer and so on, and the quality and ability of the manufacturer. To deliver an outstanding public artwork a diverse team needs to collaborate to explore opportunities, take risks, push boundaries, solve wide and varying issues relating to building an artwork for a public space. Excellent examples of public artworks are the result of successful collaborations between many participants.

I believe excellent pieces of public art add a layer of meaning to public spaces and engage the viewer or participant intellectually, emotionally, aesthetically and physically. Successful public artworks will be embraced by the community that engages with them and over time will be sustained. Unsuccessful public artworks like a poor piece of architecture will be removed, replaced or demolished.

The debate that surrounds public art can at times be uninformed and emotionally charged but quality criticism and informed debate is vital to develop and increase the quality of public artwork. Engaging artists to create elements for public spaces has occurred for millennia and will continue for millennia. The passage of time will be the ultimate judge and jury. That said, I strongly support more investment by all stakeholders in temporary public artworks. These give artists and their collaborators the ability to be more experimental and take greater risks with their public installations.

Dan: As Matt says, intelligent and informed discussion, debate and criticism are what sustains and develops our sector and leads to more successful outcomes. After 15 years in the industry, I have little time for regurgitated rhetoric that speaks only of money being wasted while ignoring the other benefits that the work brings. The Queensland debate is not mirrored in the international sectors we are targeting where there is a different understanding of and commitment to public sculpture.

Alison: *In recent years UAP has been collaborating with artists and commercial galleries on editioned works, with artists such as William Robinson and Joe Furlonger. Can you tell me how UAP manages these collaborations?*

Dan: Our first editioned work was a camp dog we made for Lena Yarinkura. Lena was part of the Remote Projects workshops we ran in collaboration with MAC and Gabrielle Pizzi. Our interest in editioned work with artists is complex. We see it as an opportunity for artists to broaden their practice by utilising materials or skills they may not have been able to access before, to engage with artists on a more intimate level as opposed to always working on large-scale art projects and, importantly, increasing the potential commercial return for all. We have established a program where we actively invest in the process, allowing artists to make work for gallery shows without the sometimes expensive personal outlay required to create cast work. Our collaboration with Bill Robinson has been very rewarding as both Matthew and I were taught by Bill while we were at art school. To now be making work for Bill is remarkably exciting. What really tickles my fancy though is seeing artists exploring new mediums and being deeply rewarded by the process, the relationships artists might develop with our craftspeople, and the success of the completed works.

Alison: *How involved is the foundry with the architects and various stakeholders on projects such as the Brisbane Magistrates Court and The State Library of Queensland, for example?*

Matt: Key to the success of public artworks is negotiating the relationship between all stakeholders associated with the particular project. We are often the key point of liaison between the artist and all other stakeholders, and we invest substantial time and energy to negotiate the desires of all stakeholders against frequent construction and budget constraints.

Dan: It is interesting the part we play in the diverse and complex mix of arts workers, architects and commissioners who all have a hand in the delivery of a large-scale artwork. I reference my background in theatre; to produce a play or even a film there is a large collection of professionals who collaborate to deliver the final result; each one plays their part, all overlap in some way or the other. Large-scale artworks are delivered in a similar way. We play different roles for different projects, either forming a team ourselves or playing our part in another team. With Fiona Foley and Judy Watson, we are very engaged with the process with the artists. There is a trust built between the artist and the fabricator on these projects and an expectation that the team will always aim for the best possible outcome. On a project like the Brisbane Magistrates Court where there was a complex management process and significant hurdles the artists needed to negotiate, we certainly provide significant support and advice, especially in liaison with the architects and the builders during design development, documentation and construction.

Alison: *UAP has grown in size and ambition considerably in the past 15 years. How has the foundry changed in this time?*

Dan: It is very rewarding having a workplace that is so diverse and engaging. The culture of our business is very important. Jerko, our Head Pattern Maker and Chris, Director of Construction have both been with us for 10 years. We are interested in long-term relationships both with our staff and with the artists and architects we work with. With work opportunities growing both locally and internationally we are undertaking a significant growth phase. Partly in preparation for and response to our increased work levels we have commissioned architects Fairweather Proberts to design our new premises. Our new studio and workshop will be purpose built, ensuring the best possible environment for our staff and our clients to engage in the process of art making both on a large scale as well as more intimately. We envisage a strong link between the workshop and the studio with interlocking parts that engage our designers with our craftspeople.

Our off-shore market is in its infancy, and represents an extremely exciting time for us. The work of Australian artists and designers we are promoting internationally has been very well received and is leading to involvement in some interesting projects. We have a range of artists being considered for projects in the US, Hong Kong and

throughout the Middle East. We are also developing relationships with architectural and landscape firms world wide and engaging in collaborations on both artwork and design projects. Australian designer Kylie Bickle has just completed concept design for street furniture for the University of Virginia, an Ivy League campus founded by Thomas Jefferson in 1825. Sandra Selig, Sebastian Di Mauro and Daniel Templeman have been short-listed for a project in West Kowloon, Hong Kong and the UAP team is discussing projects in Dubai with Los Angeles-based design firm Fluidity; in Macau, China with 5 Design from Los Angeles; with Edaw in San Francisco; and the MGM City Center in Las Vegas, with Gensler Architects.

Matt: When we commenced 15 years ago with a welding works we had three full-time staff—Daniel who was based in Sydney and myself, and a boilermaker based in Brisbane—and one part-time business adviser/trouble shooter/some-time sculptor and welder/full-time father Adrian Tobin. Today UAP employs a full-time staff of approximately 30 including a full-time staff member in America.

The foundry and workshop have developed gradually over the years. Most importantly our key staff have developed with the business, their skills and knowledge growing with the size and complexity of the projects UAP takes on. Our growth has been sustained not only by our ability to deliver high-quality outcomes but by the entire UAP team's ability to develop strong working relationships with the artists and clients we collaborate with.

January 2007

'To deliver an outstanding public artwork a diverse team needs to collaborate to explore opportunities, take risks, push boundaries, solve wide and varying issues relating to building an artwork for a public space.'

FEATURED ARTISTS

Brook Andrew
Krista Berga
Sebastian Di Mauro
Fiona Foley
Joe Furlonger
Dennis Nona
William Robinson
Nike Savvas
Sandra Selig
Judy Watson
Lena Yarinkura
Michael Zavros

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Sebastian Di Mauro | b.1955

Sebastian Di Mauro and Alice Hampson, *Undulant* (2005) astro turf and timber, Logan Community Health Centre. Photography by David Sandison

Chat (2001) cast aluminium, 176 Eagle Street Brisbane. Photography by Thomas Justice

Drift, detail

Main image: *Drift* (2004) cast aluminium, 33 Charlotte Street, Brisbane. Photography by Aperture Photography

Sebastian Di Mauro's practice consistently engages with and sparks questions surrounding the possibilities of sculpture. On the one hand his oversized works suggest a lineage of monumental, masculine twentieth-century sculpture. Yet, Di Mauro's works exude an intimacy and concern for the senses as well as the metaphysical that denies a straightforward reading as colossal *tour de forces*.

Continuing themes throughout Di Mauro's practice are the consideration of human experience and an exploration of the relationship between nature and culture. The artist's interest in the human desire to replicate and improve on natural forms is a key aspect of ***Undulant***, 2005, a collaboration with artist and architect Alice Hampson. Fashioned from a skeletal structure overlayed with astro turf, the work offers a dialogue about the real and the artificial. The invention of synthetic, durable grass could be read as both a triumph of humanity over the impermanence of nature, and as an elaborate folly turned kitsch signifier.

The thwarting of transience is also present in ***Drift***, 2004 and ***Chat***, 2001. ***Chat*** captures a pair of hands gesticulating in support of a (now absent) conversation. Here Di Mauro has rendered permanent a fleeting moment of time that speaks to human expression and the nature of communication. The work can be read in relation to the practice of collaborative artists Gilbert and George, who regard themselves as 'living sculptures', hence suggesting that the human body and all its expressions are art and highlighting the sculptural nature of everyday actions.

Drift alludes to notions of transformation, growth and regeneration, and subverts two seedpods' natural process of decay, through transference into cast metal. In ***Drift*** the artist becomes alchemist, remaking ephemeral pods in aluminium, a material known for its strength and durability. Aluminium is also notorious for its light weight, which is an essential quality for seedpods to ensure they are carried by the wind and distributed. Consequently, the work relates to ***Undulant*** in terms of the human desire to 'improve' nature. The seedpods in ***Drift*** function as a metaphor for the cycle of life and, by enlarging these once 'inconsequential' objects into the realm of the monumental, Di Mauro foregrounds the continuing dialogue surrounding the nature/culture debate and sparks discussion about what propels and connects the universe.

Simone Jones

Artist's Bio

born 1955, Innisfail, Queensland
Lives and works in Brisbane

Senior Lecturer at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Queensland
Master of Arts (Visual Arts), Monash University
Graduate Diploma of Arts, (Visual Arts), Monash University
Bachelor of Arts, Queensland College of Art, Brisbane

Sebastian Di Mauro is represented by Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne and Sullivan + Strumpf Fine Art, Sydney

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Artists and Designers Dale Ampeybegan, Lisa Anderson, Brook Andrew, Robyn Backen, Lyell Bary, Jack Bell, Krista Berga, Kylie Bickle, Natalie Billing, Marion Borgelt, Bob Burruwal, Carol Liyawanga Campion, Bruce Carrick, Yenda Carson, John Coleman, Marion Conrow, Nameer Davis, Kim Demuth, Sebastian Di Mauro, Adam Donovan, Simone Eisler, Vanessa Fisher, Craig Flood, Fiona Foley, Hew Chee Fong, Joe Furlonger, Hamish Ginn, Karlene Gwinner, Barbara Heath, Andrea Hicks, Ron Hurley, Jonathon Jones, Stephen Kawurlkku, Delphina Kerindun, Ingo Kleinert, Craig Koomeeta, Crusoe Kurddal, Peter Lewis, Susan Lincoln, Andrew MacDonald, Hillane Mais, Dale Mann, Susan Marawarr, Jennifer Marchant, Dani Marti, Delores McDonald, Vic McGrath, Merv Muhling, Lyndall Milani, Virginia Miller, Wendy Mills, Marisa Molin, Gary Namponen, Simeon Nelson, John Nicholson, Moto Yuki Niwa, Brian Njinawanga, Dennis Nona, Laurie Nona, Brad Nunn, Stephen Page, Arthur Pambegan, Barbara Penrose, Charlie Bob Pootchemunka, Robert Preston, Ben Puah, Sarah Rayner, Mandy Ridley, Charles Robb, Luke Roberts, William Robinson, Sarah Robson, Nike Savvas, Pamela Mei-Leng See, Sandra Selig, Terry Summers, Mike Taylor, Daniel Templeman, Thanakupi, Thomas Tolkalkin, Carl Warner, Joyce Watson, Judy Watson, Lila Watson, Jubilee Wolmby, Albert Womiddjol, Owen Yalandja, Lena Yarinkura, Jay Younger, Roderick Yunkaporta, Roxanne Yunkaporta, Michael Zavros Steve Yunkaporta

UAP Staff Kylie Bickle, Valorie Born, Kevin Clare, Richard Earl, Shane Hancock, Amanda Harris, Ben Harris, Luke Harris, Keith Jose, Jason Kahl, Josh McGrath, Phil Main, Brendan Morse, Chris Nagle, Stefan Purcell, Vincent Do Rozario, Rachel See, Belinda Smith, Matthew Smith, Jerko Starcivic, Paul Stoten, Jack Stuart Seidler, Mary Stuart, Ben Tait, San Tran, Geoff Williams, Jason Williams, Sean Williams, Stan Wilshire

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A

armature

The internal framework or skeleton used by an artist to support a sculpture. An armature is made by bending and manipulating a material to form the general shape of the sculpture. For example, heavy gauge wire is commonly used. It is important that the framework is rigid so it will hold its form after further materials have been applied and moulded over and around it to create the final work.

assemblage

A three-dimensional version of collage, generally constructed from found objects. The premise of assemblage is to re-contextualise these objects through juxtaposition and composition rather than disguise their original form.

B

bozzetto

(Italian meaning 'sketch')
A small, roughly shaped preliminary version of a sculpture, usually made of clay. Also see *maquette*.

C

carving

Along with casting, carving is one of the oldest sculptural techniques used from antiquity to present day. Carving operates on the process of beginning with a solid, shapeless block of material and progressively removing sections to form a figure or design. Stone and wood are most traditionally used for carving; however modern substances such as concrete and Styrofoam are also used.

casting

Casting is a process that allows the production of one or more copies of an original composition. To achieve this, a fluid substance is introduced into a *mould*, left to harden and then released from the mould to reveal the final work which is then finished through a series of processes such as polishing and patination (see *patina*). For large works, segments are often moulded independently and joined after casting. Traditionally, molten metals such as bronze are used for casting. However other materials such as thermoplastics and materials that cold set, including *resins*, *plaster* (see *Plaster of Paris*) and concrete are also used.

The casting process can be clearly divided into two sub-categories: expendable mould casting and non-expendable mould casting. As the name suggests, expendable mould casting involves the use of a temporary mould that can be used only once. Examples of this process include *sand casting* and *lost wax casting*. In non-expendable mould casting a permanent and durable mould is created from which an edition of castings can be made. Examples of this are die, centrifugal and continuous casting.

ceramic shell

A ceramic shell is a hard layer that is built around a wax model. This shell creates a highly detailed reverse impression of the wax piece and is used for making identical casts. The ceramic shell is built by dipping the wax into vats of 'slurry'—colloidal silica and fused silica flour suspended in liquid—followed immediately by a layer of sand. This process is repeated until a suitable crust forms around the wax. The piece is then put into a kiln (see *Top Hat kiln*) for firing. Firing the object serves two purposes: first, it burns out the wax to reveal the mould and second, it draws all of the moisture out of the shell and hardens it, making it resilient enough to hold form when molten material is poured into it.

Ciment Fondu

(French meaning 'liquid cement')
Ciment Fondu® is a commercial product made of calcium aluminate cement by Lafarge Aluminates. Due to its high resistance to temperature and quick setting time, Ciment Fondu has been widely adopted by artists for, among other things, making *moulds* for *casting*.

crucible

A vessel usually made of porcelain, graphite or another infusible material, used for melting and then pouring metal at high temperatures.

D

direct carving

An approach to carving sculpture introduced in about 1906 by Brancusi whereby no maquettes or preliminary models are made before commencing the work. The final form evolves through the process of carving and is refined by the artist being consciously mindful of the inherent qualities of the material and working with them.

E

edition

In sculptural terms, an edition is the number of identical pieces cast from the one mould. This is generally a fixed number, known as a limited edition, meaning no further casts will be produced after that number has been met. To ensure this, the mould is usually destroyed.

F

foundry

A factory in which metal castings are produced.

furnace

A furnace is a device that produces heat. Not only are furnaces used in the home for warmth, they are used in industry for a variety of purposes such as making steel and heat treating materials to change their molecular structure. These furnaces are basically insulated vessels with a heat source created by the fuel.

K

kinetic sculpture

Sculptural works that depend on motion for their effect. This motion may be physical—as in made up of parts that are set in motion by an inherent mechanism such as a motor or by external factors such as wind, light or interaction with the viewer, or implied—as in an optical illusion that suggests movement.

L

lost wax method

A method of expendable mould casting in which the *mould* is created by constructing a composition from wax, attaching wax *sprues* and coating it in a liquid ceramic compound and then firing it in a kiln (see *Top Hat kiln*). During the firing process the wax burns out, leaving a hard *ceramic shell*. A casting material such as bronze is then put in the *crucible* and heated to melting point in the *furnace*. The molten metal is poured into the ceramic shell. After the metal has resolidified—a process often hastened by *quenching*—the shell is chipped away to reveal the piece ready for finishing.

To form the original wax piece into the desired shape the artist can either work in a direct carving method with the wax or by making a mould and casting in wax. To create the mould, the artist constructs a full-scale model of the sculpture, commonly in clay or plasticine. This model is then covered with layers of plaster (see *Plaster of Paris*) and allowed to set. Molten wax is then poured into this mould to create the wax positive.

M

maquette

The three-dimensional version of an artist's sketch, maquettes are small-scale models for larger pieces of work. Often beautiful works in their own right, a maquette allows an artist to plan and test aspects of the composition and materials at a comparatively cheaper price than if completed full-scale. In the case of site-specific works, maquettes can be quite useful in helping the artist and client envisage how the piece will work within the space by placing it within a scale replica of the site. Also see *bozzetto*.

modelling

As opposed to carving whereby material is removed, modelling works by adding material to build a form. Commonly soft, malleable materials such as clay, wax and plaster are used for modelling as this allows the artist to easily add, remove, remould and reshape to create the desired shape. Due to the supple nature of the materials, the form is often built over an *armature* to provide strength and durability.

mould

A hollow, shaped container into which a substance is poured to make one or multiple casts (see *casting*). A mould is generally created by covering a scale model of the intended sculptural form in a material that accurately reproduces the surface detail. This is left to cure and harden and finally removed to reveal a reverse impression. Materials used commonly for moulding include latex, plaster (see *Plaster of Paris*) and *Ciment Fondu*.

P

patina

Refers to colouration applied to a metal surface. With bronze the patina is often green or brown. Patina can occur naturally by the oxidising effects of the atmosphere or artificially by the application of chemicals.

pattern

An exact copy of the object to be cast and used to form the space into which molten material is poured during the casting process. The pattern can be used repeatedly. See *sand casting*.

Plaster of Paris

A fine white powder (calcium sulphate hemihydrate) which, when mixed with water becomes a thick liquid, then when left to cure, forms a white solid. Widely used by sculptors in a multitude of applications including *carving*, making *moulds* and for preliminary *casts*.

Q

quench

The rapid cooling of hot metal by immersing it into water or another liquid.

R

resin

A usually transparent compound that is impervious to water and can be derived from either natural sources such as plants and insects or manufactured industrially. The compound is usually dissolved in organic solvents to produce a clear solution that is poured into a mould and allowed to cure, although some manufactured products can be purchased as liquids. Resin is often used as a *casting* material.

S

sand casting

A method of *expendable mould casting* in which a *mould* is constructed from compacted sand. After each cast the mould needs to be reformed for repeated casts. The construction of a mould is created by placing a *pattern*, commonly pieces of wood fashioned to the desired shape, into the sand and packing the sand tight around it. The pattern is removed to reveal the mould into which molten material is poured to create the cast.

The resulting effect is quite rough as the sand-like texture is imparted on the surface of the cast. If this effect is undesired, the surface can be further refined by processes such as grinding, peening and polishing.

silicon bronze

A commonly used casting bronze made up of an alloy of copper mixed with one–five per cent silicon. It is a popular metal choice for sculpture as it is corrosion resistant, can be remelted numerous times and possesses a clean surface finish.

sprue

Used in the *lost wax method*, sprues create channels into the *mould* through which the molten material is introduced and flows. Wax sprues are attached to a wax replica of the sculpture prior to creating the *ceramic shell*. In the wax burn-out process the sprues evaporate, leaving the channels behind.

T

Top Hat kiln

A kiln is a large and well-insulated oven that produces very high and controlled temperatures. A Top Hat kiln is what is known as an intermittent kiln, meaning the internal temperature is increased steadily over a period of time and according to a predetermined schedule known as the firing cycle. The item to be fired is placed on a platform over which a boxed-shaped cover is then lowered and sealed to create the insulated environment. Kilns are used during the *lost wax method* to burn out the wax model and harden the *ceramic shell*.