



# TOM BASS SCULPTURE STUDIO SCHOOL

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Dear Friends,

## We have great news!

In the last week we have received confirmation from the Sydney Opera House that they will allow us to hold a **RETROSPECTIVE** of Tom's work in their Exhibition Hall during November/December 2006. This is an enormous project for us to undertake and we are grateful to Meg Gervay from Australian Art Link for her liaison with the SOH and to Genevieve Carson, Art

Consultant, who prepared the successful proposal for them. The exhibition will be based on Tom's archives, maquettes and photographs - we will need all the of the year or so available to us to prepare it. We also plan the exhibition to extend to the East Circular Quay and adjoining end of the City where four of Tom's major works exist – creating a TB Sculpture walk!

One of the sites in the lower City is the Deutsche Bank Place on the corner of Phillip and Hunter Streets. This used to be the site of the AGC building and Tom's **AGC Sculpture** was there. The new building is designed by a renowned English Architect Sir Norman Foster. The AGC sculpture has been restored and found a new and specially designed site in an annex to the foyer of this major new building in Sydney. The owners feel that had they commissioned a sculpture they could not have had a better outcome – some works are timeless.

## Feature section about Tom Bass' AGC Sculpture on page 2 of this newsletter

**Our second AGM was held early August 2005** This is always an opportunity for the Management committee to take an overview of the previous year and clap ourselves on the back for all the hard work we have done. I have attached my report to the end of this newsletter so that you can appreciate the efforts of everyone.

## July 2005 Workshops

Bernice Lowe taught a life study workshop over two days and two evenings and it was very well received. Bernice has been teaching the life class on Tuesdays with Tom over the last (nearly) two years. Student feedback to this intensive:- "Bernice was great .... sensitive and encouraging as well as giving clear guidance when we were heading down the wrong path..."

During the January Holidays there will be another chance to take the life study as an Intensive for those of you unable to come to Tuesday classes.

**Next one day Life Study Introduction** on Sunday September 18<sup>th</sup>: with Tom Bass and Bernice.



## The Pioneer Woman by Damien Lucas

was unveiled on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> of July and hailed as a great success by the Stockman's Hall of Fame Sydney

fundraising group .... The idea of a tribute to pioneer women has been developed over sixteen years and the sculpture will be included in celebrations for the Year of the Outback in 2006. In 2003

Damien Lucas was confirmed as the NSW Branch of the Stockman's Hall of Fame's unanimous choice to create this sculpture.

And for Damien ..... "A sculptor, like an actor often has to become his subject. The great value in making the pioneer woman was that I had to become sensitive to her circumstance, her place in history, and her hardships. "

**Open Studio Saturday and Sunday** on July 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> gave visitors to the school the opportunity to see what we do and also view the Pioneer Woman. It was part of the Marrickville Open Studio Trail



## NOTICES:

### Drawing Class

The drawing class has been buzzing. Drawing is an essential for anyone seriously interested in sculpture  
**Cost \$150 for the 6 classes - occasional class \$30 per class** Tuesday nights at 6.30 to 9pm from October 18th for 6 weeks.

### Book early

To ensure your place in classes and to facilitate the functioning of the office it would help if you book in advance of the classes and workshops. Check the website (Classes/Class Outlines page and also added a "Diary at a Glance" or ring or email Ann at the school

## Sunday September 18<sup>th</sup> One Day Introduction to the Life Study with Tom Bass

### About one of Tom's works – The AGC Sculpture

#### The 'creation story' - Tom Bass

At the end of WWII I was living with my young family in an old cottage in a 10 acre paddock in Minto at the corner of Campbelltown Rd and St Andrew's Rd. We rented it for 10 shillings a week from a nearby farmer. We lived there because we realized that if I was to be a sculptor we would have to live simply and inexpensively.

Not long after that Morris and Cherry Jackerman came to live at Varroville further up St Andrew's Rd. It was a property that Sturt had lived in when he was doing his major explorations and was a historic house which Cherry restored accordingly. We had two young daughters and so did they and we became friends through that connection.

Cherry was the daughter of Arthur Davies who had co-founded the AGC hire purchase company which was associated with the automobile industry. It must have been soon after we got back from our first trip to Europe in 1962 that Cherry said to me "You know Tom, we are building a new headquarters for our company and I think we should have a sculpture for it"

I realized that the theme for the sculpture should be hire purchase and I decided to treat this theme seriously. So I arranged to talk to an executive of AGC so that I could understand how the practice of hire purchase worked and how it related to the whole society. I made a maquette of the sculpture to express that. A hire purchase company named "Custom Credit" had collapsed not long before and the AGC executive emphasized the importance of security for the company. The sculpture was fabricated under my supervision in copper sheet. The building was officially opened by Sir Robert Menzies in 1963.

The AGC Sculpture is an emblem of the hire purchase system represented by a mechanical corporate tree. The branches of the tree represented the various

### Keeping in touch

Please let us know you details so we can keep you informed of all our activities or check the website [www.tombasssculptureschool.org.au](http://www.tombasssculptureschool.org.au)

### Past Students

We want to add past students to our webpage and we are interested to profile them on our About us/ Past student page. Please to let us know what you have been doing in your creative life and if you know any past students tell us about them so we can get in touch with them [tbsss@tpg.com.au](mailto:tbsss@tpg.com.au)



activities of the AGC group of companies, as it existed then.

The two top branches represent the dominant lending arm and the supporting arm is insurance, which is an important feature of every hire purchase transaction. These two arms support an automobile wheel – the automobile industry had always been supported by AGC. At the base of the tree there are two powerful protective arms, which could also be seen as roots. They represent the importance of security and stability, which are of vital significance in the hire purchase industry.

This emblem represents the hire purchase industry as an essential feature of our industrial commercial society, which would collapse if the hire purchase process did not exist.

# Annual General Meeting August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2005 Chair's Report

The last year has seen responsiveness to our vision for making sculptors and sculpture and an evolving clarification of the dual aspects of the TBSSS, the School and the Studio, through which the process of moving from student to sculptor can become a greater focus for the future.

The most remarkable transition that has happened over the year has seen Tom slowly hand over the teaching program. Damien Lucas, Michael Christie, Bernice Lowe and Wendy Black have all taken over classes and also contributed to the now regular teachers meetings. This has left Tom free to come to support them and with flexibility in his hours this has taken a lot of pressure from him. With Tom's encouragement the school has supported an intensive program of professional development and support for the teachers and senior students through opening up classes being taught by Tom as well as the drawing class. These arrangements will ensure the functioning of the school as a teaching institution of high standing into the future.

The jewel in the crown has been the Public Sculpture Course – the making of the Rainbow Serpent for Erskineville Public School. Starting as a 6 months project and becoming a bigger work than initially intended it has been a highly successful learning project and is now near completion. The goal of the project was for the students to learn about the making of a public sculpture in the tradition which Tom has evolved in his own professional career. A report will be written on the basis of the work done by the group and based on our learning from this exercise further projects will be explored for commencement early next year – it is the seedbed for the cultivation of students as public sculptors.

Commissions have been completed (The Pioneer Woman by Damien Lucas), others commenced - The Wool Mill Memorial by Cliff Pain and various 'Expressions of Interest' have been written and we wait to hear about them.

We have continued a successful regular teaching schedule as well as intensive weekend or holiday workshops. Numbers have slowly increased and several students are showing promise in their work.

Special events like the workshop in association with Sculpture by the Sea, open studio days, the end of year student exhibition and Sculpture 2005 exhibition and the unveiling of the Pioneer Woman have attracted valuable media coverage, raising our public profile and bringing new people to the school.

The creation of the website was taken over by Paul Knight and it was launched at the 2004 Annual Student Exhibition. It is successfully up and running and there is a lot of positive feedback about its quality.

The office has been restructured with a new computer and better office layout. Trish Craven has been with us helping with the financial organisation which is now soundly established with MYOB.

We prepare for the Tom Bass Retrospective as Meg Gervay and Genevieve Carson and myself plot the biggest art event about Tom's work ever and the signs are very positive that this will happen in late 2006

Genevieve Carson has joined our humble team as art consultant as she has poured an enormous amount of energy into setting us on the path of being a professional arts organisation, laying the groundwork for projects dedicated to recognising Tom's life time work as a Public Sculptor and sharing her knowledge about arts management issues. Over the next year she will continue to guide us through various projects

The management committee has embraced its responsibilities regarding legal and insurance concerns, OHS tax and DGR requirements. It has continued to explore marketing and promotion

Acknowledgements once again are due as all have acted above and beyond the 'call of duty'. I particularly want to thank:

1. Damien Lucas, Michael Christie, Bernice Lowe and Wendy Black for being wonderful teachers and for their willingness to go the extra mile,
2. The public sculpture groups – Peter Bartlett, Karen Alexander, Michael Christie, Julie Mahony and Janet Coyne for their positive commitment in the face of what almost became a never ending project,
3. Ann Fisher for her passion and enthusiasm to put the school on the map,
4. Trish Craven for sorting out all those complex and important MYOB issues
5. Genevieve Carson for finding us and being passionate about us and coming on board to help us to move forward
6. Meg Gervay for her willingness to embrace the concept of the Retrospective and her work towards getting the Sydney Opera house to embrace the exhibition
7. The management committee for their guidance in their particular area of expertise or interest
  - a. Christine Crimmins for legal guidance and keeping us on track with OHS as well
  - b. Virginia Lloyd-Tait for her gentle presence and ongoing willingness to try to record our unruly MC meetings as well as design the OHS policy ,
  - c. Julie Mahony for organising the marketing subcommittee and legal advice and
  - d. Cliff Pain for his support in the setting up of the website, his wise counsel about our financial management but particularly being a mentor for me in the management of the school.

Thank you to Tom for your forbearance and allowing me to push forwards with the school and all our related activities even when we venture into areas where you have never trod.

Margo Hoekstra  
Chair TBSSS Inc