



TOM BASS RETROSPECTIVE
SYDNEY CELEBRATES THE SCULPTURE OF TOM BASS

Tom Bass Retrospective Update July 2006

“There is no power on earth that is greater than the power of an idea” Tom Bass

After Tom Bass' 88th birthday in June 2004, the idea of a *Retrospective* in the year of his 90th birthday was conceived. This would celebrate his work and life as a public sculptor.

With no funds and only “the idea”, Meg Gervay, director of Australian Art Link responded to my call with enthusiasm (October 2004) and it is through her that we were able to get the support of the Sydney Opera House (Feb 2005 confirmed end of August 2005) and later AMP, who became our first partner in January 2006.

Genevieve Carson, arts consultant and freelance curator, helped us with our research and proposals and she moved into the role of curator for the *Retrospective* in January 2006.

In November 2005 Brian McInerney, photographer, began to photograph some of the major works so that they could become part of the *Retrospective*. Much of Bass' work is large and impossible to have in an exhibition other than through photographs.

By the end of 2005, sculptor and patron Lea Ferris joined us to help with the organisation. We had to become pragmatic and put out some figures. With the Sydney Opera House as our host we were able to set the budget at \$190,000.

Early 2006 we developed promotional material to reflect the vision and quality of the exhibition we planned. By April 2006 we were ready to proceed with further approaches for partnership and patronage.

At the end of April 2006, we were thrilled to receive the news that the Governor, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir would open the *Retrospective*.

We approached the Australian Council and Arts NSW for support, and Arts NSW responded to our call with a grant to develop the Exhibition Book.

Investa Property Group and Lady Mary Fairfax became Major Patrons.

The City of Sydney, Tranny's and Quay Grand at East Circular Quay have offered in-kind support

As part of the celebration of Tom Bass' 90th Birthday in June we organised several events to both celebrate his birthday and to raise funds and the profile of the *Retrospective* through support of his family, friends and students. This resulted in very generous private donations from 75 patrons making the *Retrospective* reflect the community spirit in which Tom's work has always been done.

Close to an estimated 1000 volunteer hours have been contributed by the organising committee, friends and students in planning and fundraising.

We are approaching the 45% mark of our budget and we continue to make further approaches for support to potential patrons and partners. We are aiming for 150 Patrons and several more partners.

The curatorial process has been continuing and we have been fortunate to have competent volunteers and university interns to help Genevieve Carson in this.

We have come a long way – ‘*flying by the seat of our pants*’ as Tom would say – and we know that the *Retrospective* will evolve as a highly professional exhibition that will achieve the goal of bringing Tom Bass' work to the public and pay tribute to a 60 year career as a public sculptor and teacher.

Margo Hoekstra
Chair, Tom Bass Sculpture Studio School Inc