

An Interview with...

# Rachel Boymal

By Andrea Fabris

**Rachel is a Melbourne based sculptor and painter, with an extensive knowledge and ability on working with a variety of mediums such as; oil, pastel, acrylic, wax, clay, steel and bronze. She's had professional training throughout her life and is therefore constantly experimenting with these mediums listed. Rachel thoroughly enjoys exhibiting her work on a regular basis in solo and group exhibitions. Her artistic style is primarily to illustrate the human form in a simplified manner, suggestive yet rarely defined.**

**How did your career as a sculpture artist/ painter take off?**

I have always loved art and have painted from early childhood. I completed two art degrees after I was married and had young children. I really wanted to go ahead and use my painting major, and therefore had a solo painting exhibition in 2001, entitled "Deconstruction etc". This exhibition was named after a philosophical theory. I deconstructed painting by multiplying and subtracting images of abstracted figures. It was a successful show. I followed with another solo exhibition in 2003, called, 'Come to my Circus'. In this show I sold some paintings, but my sculptures proved to be more popular. I have also done portraits of famous people and been in the Victorian Archibald a number of times.

However it is with sculpture that I have been most successful. I have won a number of prizes and have a public sculpture commissioned by AMP in Collins Place, Collins St Melbourne.

**Did you always dream of becoming an artist?**

Yes art has always been a love of mine. When I was in year 10, we were given a vocational test to help us decide our career paths. My choice results were; commercial artist, art teacher or occupational therapist. All these choices are along the art path.



*Storyteller – Collins Place, Melbourne, 2013*

**What do you love about your profession as an artist?**

I love the way I can develop my ideas and not be restricted to produce works that are necessarily popular and will sell.

**Run me through a day in your life as an artist? What does your day consist of?**

If I am working towards an exhibition, then I will spend some time of the day in my studio drawing and combining poses together for sculptures. I often have models who are involved in my theme, for instance I am currently working on the theme of modern dance and my model is a graduate of the Australian Ballet School. At other times I take wax sculptures to the bronze foundry and also go to factories to have my stands made.

**What did you enjoy most about your university experiences?**

The experience of a mature student is different I would imagine. I was always conscious of time constraints. Having said that, I really enjoyed studying Art History as my major for my B.A. degree, and also my painting major for my B.ED (Art and Crafts), which covered four years.



***Lazy Days - Bronze 43 x 28 x 23 cm***

**What is some beneficial advice for someone wanting to pursue a profession in art?**

I think it is very hard to only have art as a profession. I would advise someone to have a secondary and allied career, such as perhaps an art teacher, curator, or graphic artist.

I also think it is beneficial to join an art association, go to talks and be involved in group shows.



***About Rebecca - Bronze 26 x 60 x 30cm***

**Did you ever do an internship during or after having finished university? If so where and what tasks were you given?**

When I finished my degrees, I became an art teacher for number of years

I have been an artist in residence at St Vincent's Hospital. I was asked to leave one of my paintings, which I understand is in one of the hallways of the hospital.

**Have you travelled much? If so where to and has your work played a part in these opportunities?**

Yes, I have been rather fortunate in that my husband has been on a number of international committees. Therefore I have been in most of the major cities of the world and also the galleries. These would include New York, London, Paris, Rome, Madrid and other places. My enjoyment of these galleries comes from my knowledge

gained through my degrees, my own work and love of art.

**How did you become recognised in the art world?**

I would say that I got my large commission because my style is different. I am a member of the Association of Sculptors of Victoria, and my sculptures were viewed by the architects of AMP on the Association's website. They were looking for a contemporary work that would suit the environment and had a relaxed aspect. They offered me the commission.

I also find that my website has invited a lot of interest. I am in a number of group exhibitions each year, and sell a lot of my work in these shows. I am also involved with a gallery and have sold work through them.



*Classical Sculpture*

**Which is your preferred medium to work with?**

I like my work to finally finish in bronze. I generally work initially in wax, and also sometimes in clay. I prefer to work in wax;

it is a looser medium and lends itself to show movement and line more easily.

**Are there any artists who inspire your work?**

Not really, because my style is different. However the sculptor I admire the most would be 'Gian, Lorenzo Bernini'. I love his sculpture of, 'The Ecstasy of Saint Theresa. I love the movement that flows through the work. Movement and line are very important to me in both my paintings and sculpture.

**What obstacles do you come across when making your art?**

There is always the obstacle of funding. Materials, studio rent etc. are a problem, no matter how well you are selling. I am lucky, my husband is very supportive.

I guess also one always has other commitments and therefore there is always a time factor in producing work. The only real obstacle would be if you didn't believe in yourself and your art.

**Do you find the art making process to be therapeutic?**

Making art is definitely therapeutic. It has the power to focus one's thoughts and also to inspire. I gain complete concentration and the ability to remove myself from the outside world. Creating art at that time becomes the only responsibility I have and I find that wonderful.

**Do you prefer to work alone or surrounded by other artists in an open studio space? Why?**

I have a studio amongst other studios. I prefer to work alone. Basically I find it easier to concentrate and develop my ideas when I am on my own. However sometimes I find inspirations for my work may arrive at odd times, eg when listening to music with other people.



*Gisella - Bronze open form 36 x 33 x 18 cm*

**Have you ever worked in collaboration with other artists?**

Not really. The only time I have worked with other people, would be with the architects, project managers and engineers in conjunction with the AMP commission.

**Have you ever worked on a number of projects at once?**

Sometimes group exhibitions overlap in time sequence, and I have to decide which sculptures would suit each venue. In respect to group exhibitions, sculptures should provide a visual variety. In solo exhibitions the work is faithful to the theme, and I try to vary the media I use.

**Does taking your artwork out of the studio and exhibiting it in a gallery help you see it from a different perspective?**

Of course putting your work out for public display provides a different perspective. You are looking at the work through the eye of the viewer. It is very challenging because you hope the viewer will understand your work and more commercially, buy it.



*Odalisque - Bronze 31.5 x 19*



*Crouching Man - Bronze 33 x 40 x 30 cm*

**Will you be involved in any upcoming exhibitions?**

I am involved in 3 group exhibitions in May. Altogether I have to provide 15 sculptures.

Toorak Village Sculpture Exhibition  
1 May – 15 June 1 sculpture

Gasworks Anngela Roberts-Bird Gallery  
12 May – 3 June 4 sculptures

Steps Gallery, Lygon St Carlton  
14-17 May 10 sculptures

**What are you working on at the moment?**

I am working towards a solo sculpture exhibition in May, 2016. The theme is modern dance.

