

**Michael Le Grand: Sculpture**



# Acknowledgments

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The artist of course deserves my special thanks and I am pleased to have had the opportunity to present a sustained examination of his career at Canberra Museum and Gallery, as a testament to his standing as an artist and as a gesture from an old friend.

Peter Haynes  
Director  
ACT Museums and Galleries  
February 2011



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In particular Michael wishes to acknowledge:

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## **Michael Le Grand: Sculpture**



*Menhir*, 1987  
painted steel  
320 x 220 x 130cm  
163.5 300cm (base)  
Coll'n: the artist

# Michael Le Grand: Sculpture

There is a right physical size for every idea<sup>1</sup>

The twentieth-century witnessed some of the most profound developments in the visual arts. Not the least of these occurred in the field of sculpture. The reverberations of Marcel Duchamp's *ready-mades*; the essays into welded metal by Pablo Picasso and Julio Gonzalez in the late 1920s; Henry Moore's deep concern with the human figure as a vehicle for expressing permanence and the eternal; Alberto Giacometti's explorations into the perception of human figures in space and how to articulate that perception in a concrete way – each of these attests to the openness of the vocabulary of sculpture from the beginnings of Modernism to 1945. Post-1945 that openness witnessed an ever-expanding variety of materials, forms and concepts that perhaps reached its apogee in the multifaceted (and sometimes confusing) pluralism of the 1990s.

Australian artists were not immune to the above, and in the period from the end of the Second World War to the 1960s, the influence of Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Naum Gabo, as well as that of Picasso/Gonzalez, exerted influence (albeit for the most part one- or two-times removed) on local practice<sup>2</sup>. The previously dominant figurative approach to sculpture for much Australian sculptural practice, no longer held sway after the 1950s. The emergence in the 1960s, and the proliferation in the 1970s, of art forms such as video, conceptual art, minimalism, performance, body art, installation and earthworks, further challenged notions of the definition of sculpture as a single object with set boundaries.



*When dalliance was in flower*, 1977  
steel  
c. 180 x 170 x 160cm  
Whereabouts unknown  
Image only

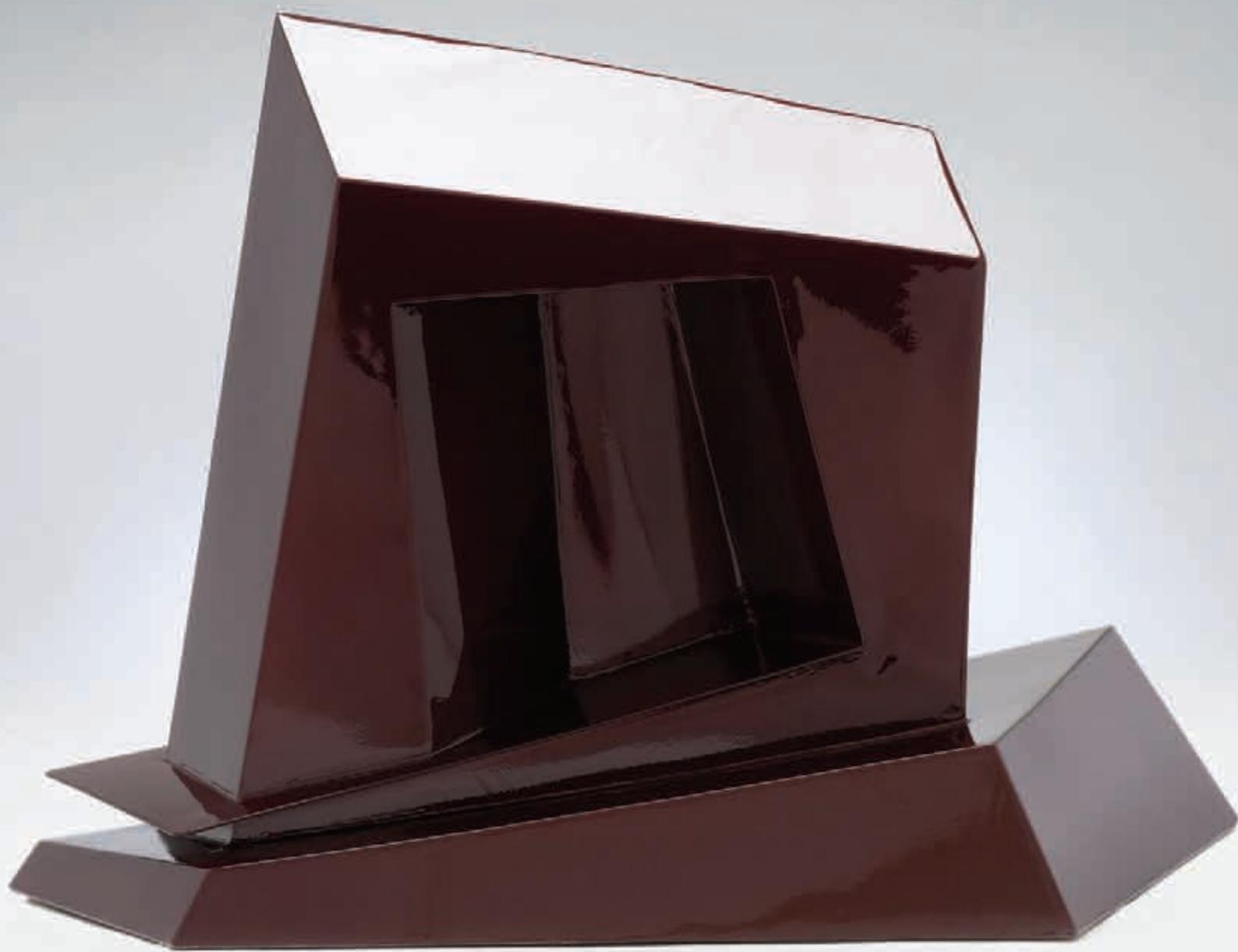


*Pissoir*, 1977  
 steel  
 c. 200 x 230 x 175cm  
 Whereabouts unknown  
 Image only

Rather it announced a culture where flexibility of individual practice was the norm, and *sculpture* was no longer a closed, static term but one which had to be as multifarious in its interpretation as it was in its conceptions. Ironically the self-referentiality and non-specificity of *place* that were characteristic tenets of Modernism remained important and continued to inform much sculpture during this time and especially sculpture that embraced an abstract vocabulary.

Meanwhile in America and England the work of David Smith and Anthony Caro established precedents which would play important roles in the ongoing development of a Modernist abstract sculptural language in Australia. Smith, using the exemplum of Picasso's Cubist constructions, adopted iron as his material of choice. For him this not only acknowledged his material's roots in urban, industrial society but coerced viewers into dealing with the apprehension of form as an intellectual and imaginative experience. Iron is heavy, subject to gravitational forces, yet in his pieces of this time the elements appear light and almost floating. Each element has a formal role, much like a word in a sentence, and the combination of elements draws the viewer into an intimate cerebral (and aesthetic) relationship with the work and in the doing of this removes (or at least diminishes) the viewer's relationship with the space inhabited by the object.

Caro first saw Smith's work in 1959, and that, along with his viewing of paintings by Kenneth Noland, led him to eschew the figurative modernism that he had been introduced to while working as an assistant to Henry Moore in the early 1950s. It should be noted that Caro's figurative works never took on the smooth surfaces of Moore's, but were characterised by an exploration of the expressive qualities of the clay he used to create his sculptures. Following Smith's example, Caro abandoned a figurative medium in favour of a purely abstract idiom, and began to construct sculpture using welding or bolting of prefabricated industrial metal, often painting



*Nabataean*, 2005  
painted steel  
84 x 121 x 77cm  
Coll'n: Max Dingle, Shoalhaven



*Shimenawa*, 2007  
painted steel  
83 x 217 x 166cm  
Coll'n: the artist



the finished work in a bold, matt colour. Material for him was a medium of expression and did not hold meaning or significance in itself; it was a means to an end. His next move – to remove the plinth – revolutionized the formal language of sculpture in ways that still hold sway. This conceptually and aesthetically liberating gesture emphasised the relational character of sculpture *ie* that sculpture on the floor inhabits the viewer's space; it requests participation from the viewer and demands response – actual, metaphorical, and conceptual.

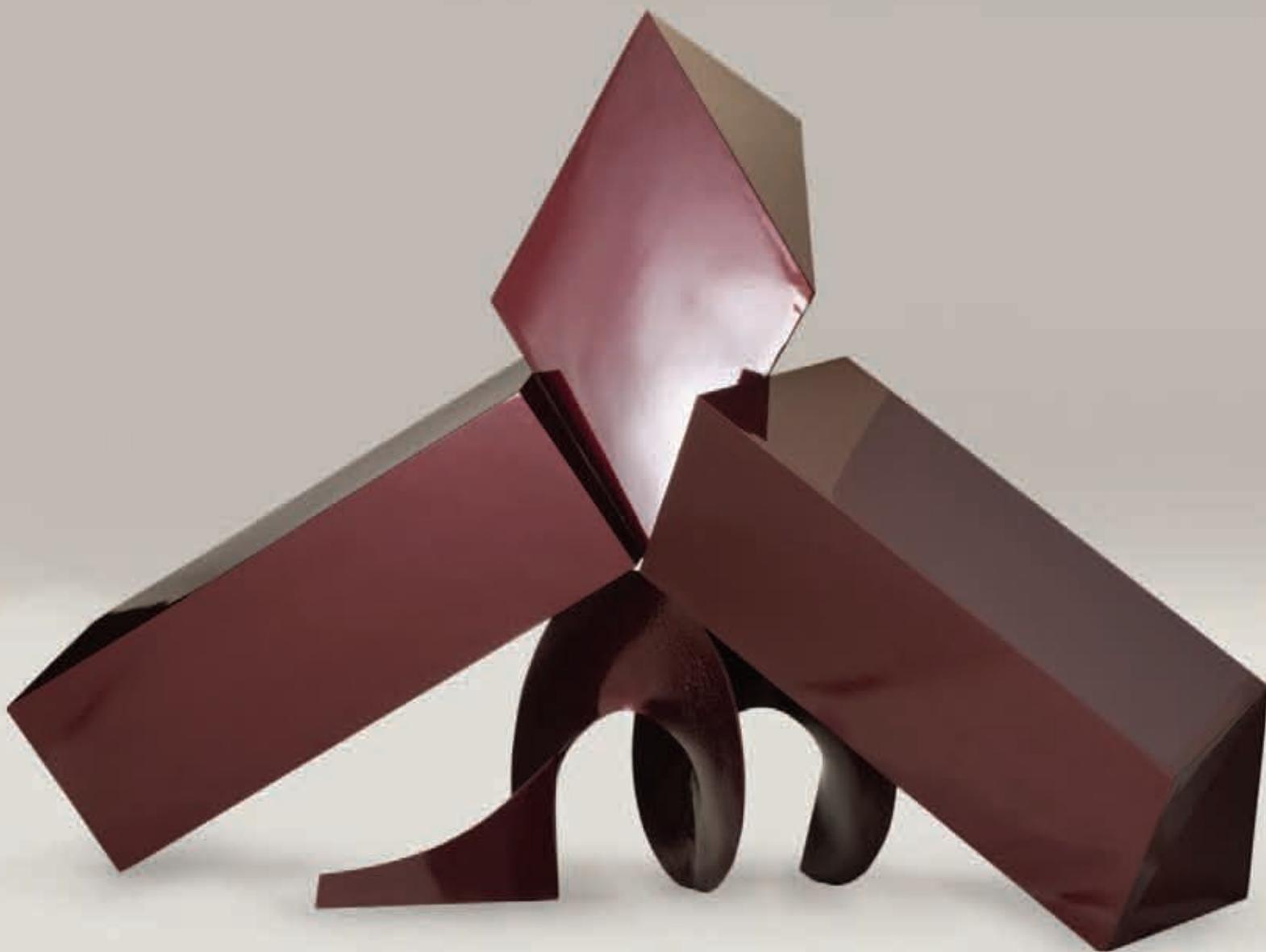
Caro's example was to hold particular resonance for Australian sculpture in the late 1960s/early 1970s and beyond. In 1965 the Whitechapel Gallery in London staged an exhibition titled **The New Generation**. As well as Caro, this included Philip King, Tim Scott and William Tucker, all of whom were associated with the St Martin's School of Art in London. The work in this exhibition was in some ways a reaction to the large-scale, heroic postures of Henry Moore's figures, and an attempt to provide a more rational and intellectual framework for sculpture than was thought to have previously existed. The materials for this new sculpture were provided by industry, and the suitable language for an art which assumed an objective stance, was an abstract, geometric one. It was this approach, and particularly the approach of Anthony Caro, which would be of particular relevance to Australian sculptors. The work of the English sculptors represented in this exhibition was also a manifestation of the Minimalist aesthetic current in New York, in the 1960s, and was reflected in the choice of artists for **The Field**, the exhibition which opened the new building of the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne in 1968.

1968 also saw the return to Australia of Ron Robertson-Swann with, as Graeme Sturgeon put it, *the gospel according to Caro*<sup>3</sup>. Robertson-Swann is important in this discussion for a number of reasons. He studied with Lyndon Dadswell in Sydney (1957-1959) and later (1962) at St Martin's School of Art where he worked

with Anthony Caro and Philip King. From 1963 to 1965 he was an assistant to Henry Moore. From 1977 to 1989 he was Head of the Sculpture Workshop at ANU School of Art, a position held by Michael Le Grand at the time of his retirement in 2007. Robertson-Swann was an articulate and intelligent promoter of Caro's formalist aesthetic, although his own work was by no means an echo or pastiche of Caro's, but rather an original and inventive expression of his own. The example of Caro filtered through to a number of artists in Australia. The *example* is not necessarily manifested in the presentation of their work but more in a shared philosophical approach to the sculptural medium. Speaking of his work of the early 1960s Caro wrote: *I have been trying to eliminate references and make truly abstract sculpture, composing the parts of the pieces like notes in music. Just as a succession of these make up a melody or sonata, so I take autonomous units and try to make them cohere in an open way into a sculptural whole. Like music, I would like my sculpture to be the expression of feeling in terms of the material, and like music, I don't want the entirety of the experience to be given all at once*<sup>4</sup>. It is into this world that Michael Le Grand began his continuing artistic journey.

Le Grand was born into an artistic family (both his mother and father were ceramicists) and following his parent's divorce, his mother opened a commercial gallery in Canberra<sup>5</sup>. His exposure to art was an integral (and *imposed*) aspect of his teenage years. One which prompted a real need to seek respite in a field effectively far removed from the art world of 1960s Canberra. He worked for some two years with the (then) Bureau of Mineral Resources, participating in geological surveys in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia, before enrolling at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) in Melbourne. Interestingly, given his subsequent artistic directions, Le Grand initially chose painting as his major, but later gravitated to sculpture which was *better suited to (his) sensibilities and desire to use (his) hands*<sup>6</sup>. What remained with him from this

*Keystone*, 2005  
painted steel  
84 x 243 x 120cm  
Coll'n: the artist





*Maketa*, 2006  
painted steel  
16.5 x 15 x 16cm  
Coll'n: Robyn  
McDermott, Adelaide



*RHS*, 2008  
painted steel  
17.5 x 20 x 16.5cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Meditation*, 2009  
painted steel  
15.5 x 19 x 14cm  
Coll'n: the artist

time was the experience of working with dedicated and motivated individuals, totally committed to his/her art and to the creation of that to the highest aesthetic calibre. These values informed Le Grand's own practice from its beginnings and are still held by him to this day.

As stated above, the (visual) cultural world into which Le Grand embarked was a remarkably auspicious one for Australian artists. In 1973 the Australia Council was established by the magnanimous and in some ways notorious (and short-lived) Whitlam Government. He was one of a large number of individual artists who benefited from the largesse of a government determined to foster the creative arts in Australia in order to establish a value system within the wider population of an appreciation of the necessity of a thriving cultural sphere as a hallmark of a mature national identity. The opportunity to work for a Certificate of Advanced Studies at the prestigious St Martin's School of Art in London was a windfall for a young artist and one much appreciated and capitalised on by Le Grand.

He studied there from 1976 to 1977, a period that encompassed an extraordinary creative and intellectual energy in British art, and in the influence of British art internationally. His teachers included Philip King and Anthony Caro. The experience of their input and, more importantly, the example of their practice, made indelible marks on Le Grand's creative persona and aesthetic language.

Illustrated in this catalogue are two works produced by the artist during his time at St Martin's. *When dalliance was in flower* (1977) and *Pissoir* (1977), reveal Le Grand's early understanding that for him the properties of sculpture involve a deliberate play on the relative experience of mass; express the variability of a three-dimensional object viewed from different angles; involve the integration of solids and space and the (necessarily) harmonious relationship between the solid material and the space it encloses, disguises, conceals and reveals; celebrate planar structures that are formally rigorous and

aesthetically expressive; and assert and speak of formal power and compulsion. These works also reveal a particularly developed and refined plastic sensibility and understanding, and revelation of a language that expresses at once the qualities alluded to above and asserts the validity of the subjectivity of vision which is articulated in them in such a mature and sophisticated manner.

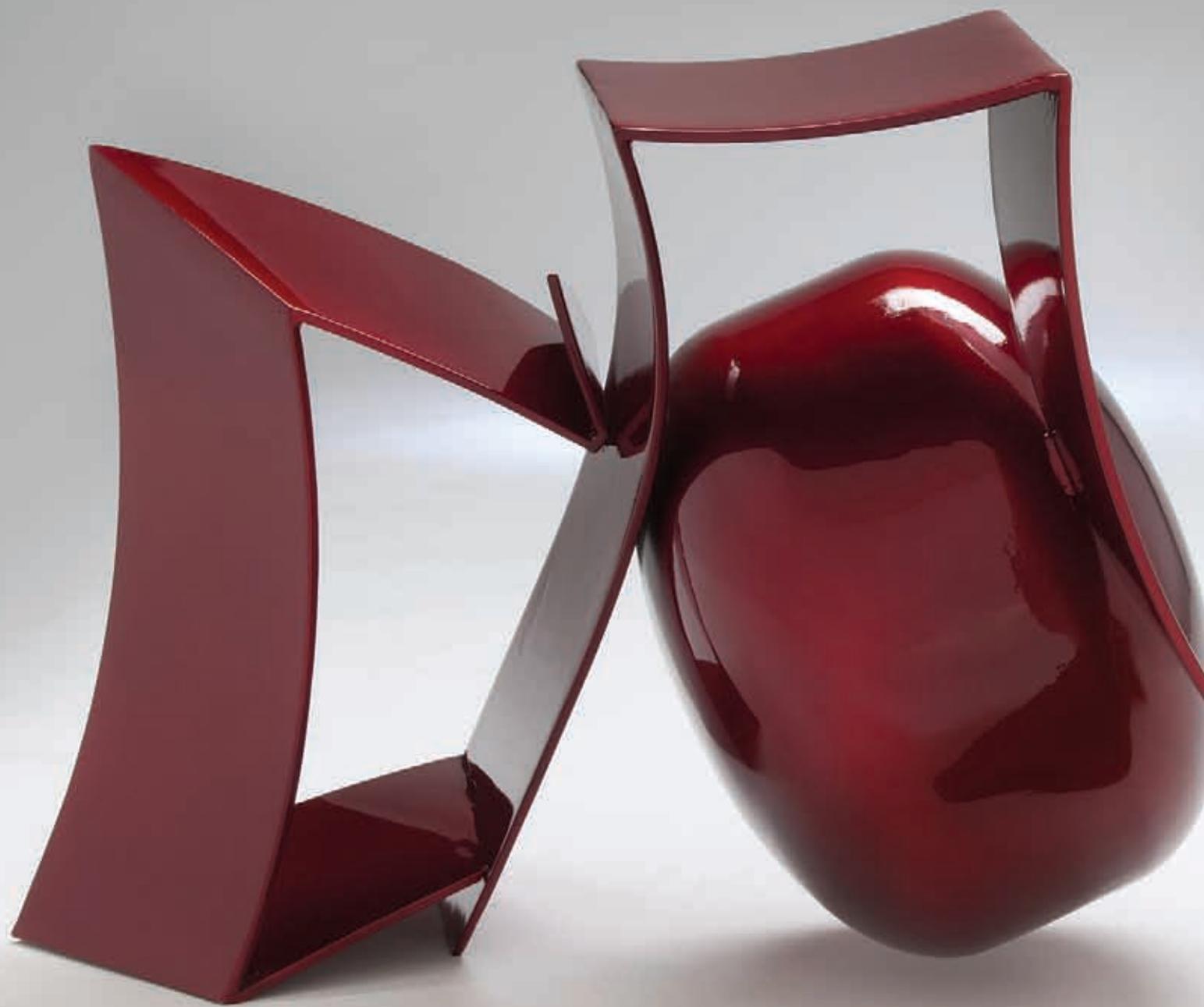
The angular geometries of *When dalliance was in flower* set in place a formal vocabulary of volumetric planes juxtaposed against one another in a spatial and temporal syntax. The sequential massing of elements, and concurrent *Gestalt* of the combination of these, create an integrated form whose individual components are clearly articulated and whose unity, derived from its individual parts, is also loudly asserted.

The singular aesthetic maturity of this work is also present in *Pissoir*. Whereas in *When dalliance was in flower*, Le Grand concentrates on the straight line and angular forms, in *Pissoir* the eloquence of the curve, both in actuality and in absence, is beautifully manifested and finely played off against straight angularities and flat rectangular forms. Both these works signal very early in the artist's career his understanding that perceptual and aesthetic experience (at least as far as the apprehension of sculpture is concerned) is intimately and integrally connected with the spatial and temporal conditions in which the experience of confronting his work takes place. For Le Grand sculpture is avowedly experiential. Its 3-dimensionality denies any validity of a single view or perspective. It demands participation from its viewers, whose active engagement over time and space, will ultimately reveal the work in its entirety.

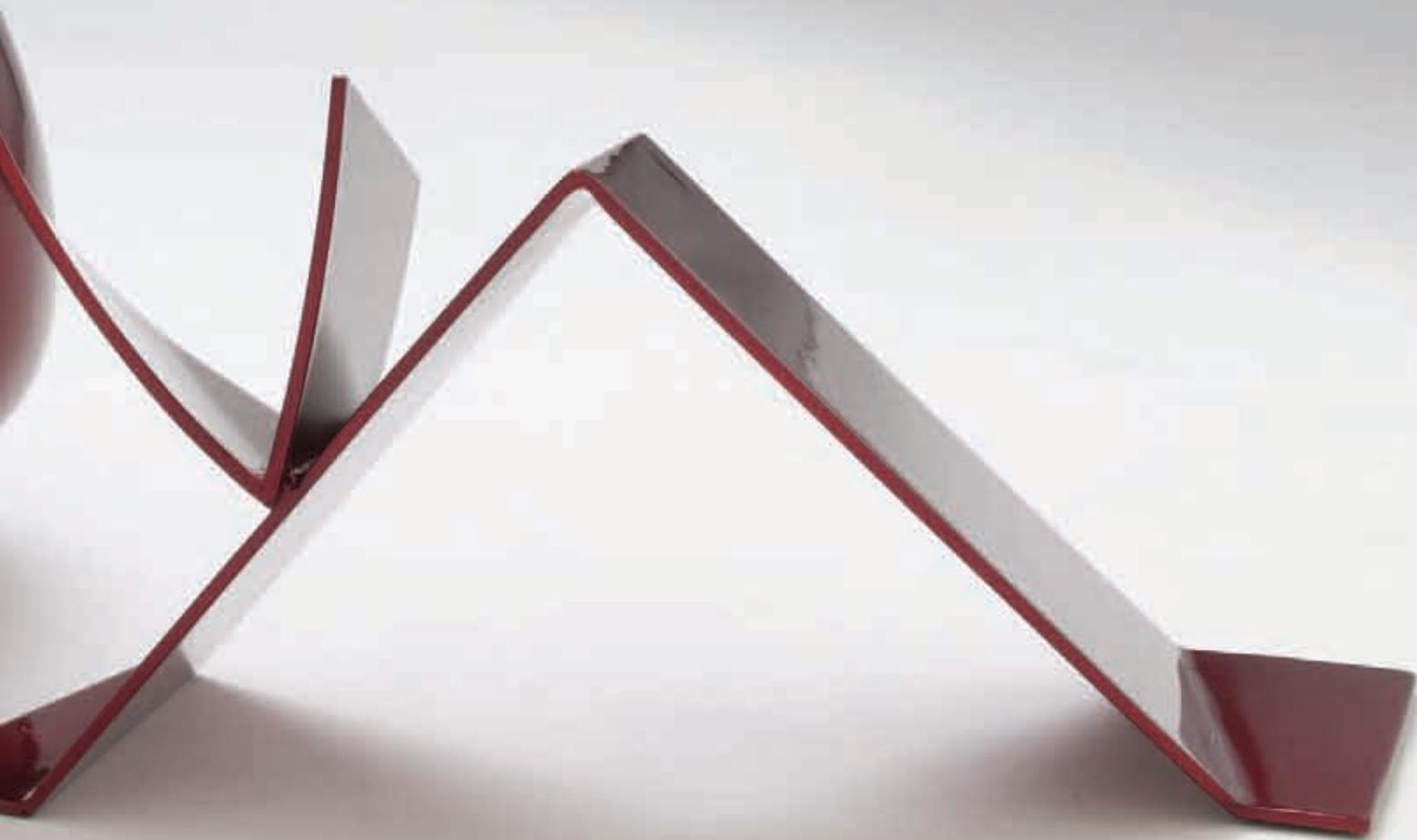
Both the above works exemplify an additive approach to the artist's creative process. He accumulates and combines various motifs or units until they cohere into an aesthetically satisfying and formally integrated whole. The cohesion is also underplayed by the choice of



*Commodore*, 1979  
steel (rusted)  
c. 150 x 200 x 160cm  
Coll'n: the artist  
Image only



*Ricochet revisited*, 2008  
painted steel, 60 x 123 x 60cm  
Coll'n: the artist





*Pump*, 1985  
painted steel  
c. 150 x 160 x 100cm  
Destroyed  
Image only

surface treatment decided on by the artist. Surface will remain for Le Grand an integral and determining component of all his oeuvre. For him an object stands not just on its form but on its surface as well.

Following his return to Australia in late 1977 the artist continued to develop the stylistic directions he had been pursuing in England. The success of these is seen in *Sisyphaean* (1979). This formidable piece presents as a dense yet inventively *mobile* work, whose mass is amplified by the overall dark colour of its surface. Solid curves, arcs and rectangular planes of varying dimensions, are set in and against one another to create a singularly dynamic whole. The solid masses are simultaneously activated by the negative spaces which surround and move through them creating an exhilarating tension between stasis and kinesis, positive and negative, light and dark.

Other works from the late 1970s include *Commodore* (not in the exhibition) whose ancestry in *When dalliance was in flower* is clearly apparent in the amalgamation of volumetric planes and the surface of rusted steel. The dynamic spatial configuration of *Sisyphaean* appears here too but the movement is processional, an acknowledgement of the formal solidity of *Commodore's* mass.

In the 1980s Le Grand's work becomes more exploratory in the ways that he expands his formal language, and opens up the structures of his work to stretch the limits of the vocabulary of welded steel sculpture. The 1980s was a period in the visual arts when Modernism was deemed not just *passé*, but effectively a spent force; painting once again became the dominant mode of (multifarious) expression; and the rhetoric of Postmodernism and its (often) confused (and confusing) concomitant ideologies and philosophies held sway with theorists and practitioners alike. The Modernist, formalist approach (particularly in sculpture) to art making was irredeemably no longer relevant. It was an approach that was felt to have exhausted itself of any possibilities for new and innovative expression. The denigrators of Modernism



*Florentine*, 2007  
painted steel  
62 x 75 x 42cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*East meets West*, 1991  
painted steel  
241 x 450 x 156cm  
Coll'n: Therapeutic Goods Administration,  
Symonston, ACT  
Image only

(and Modernist sculpture) saw that the Modernist stance of the *placelessness* and *self-referentiality* of the art object needed to be replaced by an art that adopted a social approach, or that was used to deliver political, social and like issues, (as well of course as artistic ones) and whose means could embrace literally *anything*. This approach to art remains an anathema to Le Grand<sup>7</sup>.

So the anti-formalist 1980s presented a challenge for Le Grand which he took to with a vigour and determination that resulted in a number of major works and that prepared the groundwork for his later work. *Menhir* (1987) is a large and commanding piece. The title refers to the enigmatic stone structures associated notably with the Megalithic cultures of Western Europe. Their purpose remains a subject for debate with archaeologists. For Le Grand it was the stature of many of these, and their imposing presence individually and in groups in the landscape which appealed; not the possibility for the evocation of mysterious ritual secrets. It is important to point out that titles for Le Grand are used for a number of reasons, but essentially they are just *names*. That said there will be instances where the title of a work does play a role in how the viewer might enter a work and some of these will be discussed through this essay.

*Menhir* is made of steel and painted a dark, charcoal grey, a colour that increases the viewers' impression of the work's density. The artist uses (roughly) wedge-shaped triangular forms placed in juxtaposition against one another to produce an elegant formal conversation among the varying elements. The wedges constitute the formal *centre* and it is their relationships that give coherence to the total composition. The strong contrasts between the solid left-hand wedge and the openness of its laddered opposite, is visually exciting and creates a beautifully cadenced spatial rhythm which moves through and around the work. The contrasts are further underscored by the strong downward thrust of the solid wedge and the upward flow of the laddered motif, a combination which reinforces the sense of concurrent oppositional movement which so characterises *Menhir*.



*Python*, 2009  
painted steel  
53.5 x 59.5 x 32cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Deshabillé*, 1996  
 painted steel  
 228 x 812 x 180cm  
 Coll'n: Landcom, Nelson's Bay, NSW  
 Image only

The linear quality which could otherwise dominate this work is broken by the insertion of rows of semicircles placed decoratively along the edges. This device, almost a *mannerism*, which both *softens* the overall presentation, and imbues a playful element into the work, is, in its circular intrusion, an element that will find ongoing recurrence in the artist's work. *Menhir* is an important work and one which embodies the concerns which are integral to Le Grand's practice, concerns which have occupied him from his early sculptural endeavours. For him, everything in a sculpture exists to demonstrate ways in which the viewer interprets form, in its presence and in real time and space. There is here, a preoccupation with aesthetic tension, a tension that is simultaneously actual, metaphorical, and conceptual. In the development of the finished form he creates a series of formal *gestures* that follow on from one another conceptually, empirically and aesthetically, without being necessarily bound by prescription or closure, but will be *stopped* through the artist's inner necessity. Le Grand wants his art to be visually available to his viewer and through the processes of apprehension and comprehension that each viewer must undergo, the revelation of meaning will become clear.

Also from 1987 is *Calyx*, a work which reveals the artist's explorations into actively dissimulating the materiality of steel through opening the curved and twisted planes and creating energetic and highly mobile internal relationships between the solid metal and the spatial voids which constitute this work. By opening the structure and celebrating the integrated role of the spatial delineation within the overall composition, Le Grand asserts a sequential viewing process that demands active participation from the viewer. This process, whilst slowly revealing the artist's making, simultaneously discloses the irreducible identity of the whole. Sculpture for this artist does not accept the validity of a single *Gestalt*, nor that a single sculpture is a fixed entity or that there is a possibility of fixed image, but avers rather that the relationship



*Salut*, 2010  
painted steel  
36 x 68 x 59cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Muse*, 2002  
painted steel  
50 x 122 x 49cm  
Coll'n: David and Genevieve Jacobs



between viewer, object and artist must accommodate multiple and flexible meanings that reflect the life experience of those that make and those that view.

The 1990s was an especially fertile period for Le Grand and it was also the decade in which he introduced the use of high gloss auto paint onto his surfaces, a device which he enthusiastically embraced and which remains a constant in his practice. He had used paint before but it was normally matt, often in colours (grey, black) that reflected the tones of the metal used to make his art.

The surface of a sculpture (indeed of any work of art) is a sort of membrane, the contact point between the artist, the object and the viewer's vision. It is also in sculpture an arena of choice in which the sculptor makes a final and determining decision about how a work will look. Surface can also embody possibility for change and the inevitable changes over time associated with use or touch are intimately part of the evolutionary life of a sculpture.

The first work Le Grand painted with auto paint was *East meets West* (1991). This is an eloquently commanding work which sits most appropriately in front of the Therapeutic Goods Administration building in Symonston in the ACT. The building has a somewhat foreboding presence, perhaps reflecting what goes on inside (?), but it is situated in a bush landscape, a juxtaposition of the rural and the industrial that is perfectly suited to the artist's work.

It may not be overtly apparent but there is in Le Grand's art a quiet acknowledgement of the Australian landscape. This is expressed mainly through forms which allow themselves the opportunity to be given a *natural* interpretation. It is not that his art is *about* nature, but it is *about* the artist's awareness of the insinuating character that the natural world has in an Australian context. For him the complementary settings of *East meets West* is particularly apposite.

Formally *East meets West* continues the dynamic openness seen in *Calyx*. It is a large work composed of curved and arched planes *supported* (visually and physically) by a number of curved and straight pipes. The solid pieces move sinuously through the space, at once activating it and determining its limits. They appear almost weightless as they disport themselves through space, and the impression of weightlessness is beautifully underscored by the calligraphic lightness of touch with which the artist has imbued this seductive piece. The notion of sculpture as *drawing in air* is given elegant expression here. The rich royal blue colour gives overall unity to this work but also allows for the effects of reflection, chiaroscuro and the natural play of light to enliven the surface and once again reinforce the rightness of where it is placed.

Throughout the 1990s Le Grand continued to revisit the Modernist attitudes about form and content that have informed his art from the outset. His renegotiations produced lively and exciting works which stressed the validity and relevance of his approach in an intensely pluralistic art world.

*Tsunami*, 1991 (not in exhibition) exemplifies this. This is a dramatic and enthralling sculptural statement. It is a large work – 240 x 750 x 300 centimetres, but its attraction goes well beyond its physical presence. It reveals the refined and considered aesthetic intelligence behind its making. Le Grand uses a number of curved planar elements whose multitude could, in less experienced hands, overpower the compositional structure and hinder any opportunity for formal resolution. Instead, the artist's consummate conceptual and aesthetic control is clearly at the helm.



*Eclipse*, 2010  
painted steel  
66 x 86 x 59cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Torii*, 1999  
painted steel  
240 x 428 x 247cm  
Coll'n: Australian National University  
Image only

The forms move through space in a range of vigorous and forceful directional flows that point the viewer around and through the work in a continuous pattern whose activity is enclosed by the beautifully resolved spatial configuration. The partnership between solid and void is especially important in this work and its absolute *rightness* is a tribute to the artist's abilities and talent.

I have referred to *weightlessness* earlier and that concept is vehemently present in *Tsunami*. Here Le Grand capitalises on its use to deliver a clever device of imbuing the space with an elastic force which impels the viewer to move *with* the space and in the doing of this undergo the complete experiential force of the work. The use of colour (blue) assists with this process in that it not only brings unity to the various parts, but draws the viewer into the necessary circumnavigation of the whole. This means that the viewer will have to experience the different presentations that the artist instils at various sites in the work to fully appreciate the aesthetic and formal virtuosity at play in this complex and beautifully realised work.

The title is one that we are very familiar with. As I said above, titles more often than not are simply *names* for the artist and may or may not have relevance to the viewer's reading of the work. Here our understanding of the devastating effects of a tsunami and of its multifaceted appearances during its course of destruction have realisation in a *formal* sense in Le Grand's work. I stress *formal* because while Le Grand may use a title for its associative properties, he is not interested in narrative content per se and is more concerned with *how the object exists and reads visually in relation to the viewer and the environment*<sup>8</sup>. A title may give access to his work but it does not hold or deliver its meaning or *raison d'être*.



*Slip sliding away, 2010*  
painted steel, 65 x 77 x 72cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Inara*, 2004  
painted steel  
240 x 285 x 190cm  
Coll'n: University of Western Sydney  
Image only

Le Grand's morphological vocabulary displays a remarkable fluidity and ability to accept the new while never discarding what has proved pertinent in the past. This facility is allied with an understanding of the value of maximising the expressive potential of his vocabulary in ways that renew and refresh the viewer's participation with his art. *Nabataean* (2000) is a remarkable and sophisticated work. It is on first confrontation a simple and attractive structure composed of a rhomboidal *base* on which sits a larger rhomboid in an ostensibly balanced and comfortable relationship. The whole is painted in a rich maroon that not only adds to the attraction but supplies an overall unifying agent.

There is a satisfying solidity to this work that belies the subtly adventurous insertions into the top motif. The seeming equanimity of the balance between the two major parts is threatened by the intrusion of a thin planar wedge into the bottom left of the top motif. This plane should logically repeat the receding angle of the base above which it hovers. It however injects a formal and visual disequilibrium by not doing this, but rather pushes upwards and thus creates a spatial wedge, a sort of absent sculptural component that threatens to upset the implied balance of our first viewing. The possibility for disequilibrium is further revealed by the contiguously strong downward and upward slope of the base; a simultaneity that imbues kinetic as well as visual tensions.

The tensions evoked by the above are underscored by the ambiguous movement of the top motif. It could be emerging from the base or it could be sinking into it: another example of how formal ambiguity is strikingly and astutely employed to impart fresh aesthetic tension. The top is also enlivened by positive and negative inclusions that read as relief extensions to the vehemently geometric flatness of each of its planes. These insertions are subtle, so subtle in fact that they are difficult to see from some

angles, but they are nevertheless defiantly present. The forms of these repeat or at least *echo* or *allude to* the forms of the protagonists. Colour is also an extremely effective contributor, not just as a unifying element but also in the fact that it (literally and metaphorically) adds another layer to the compelling subtlety that so characterises this marvellous work.

In *Muse* (2002) we see Le Grand paying *homage* to one of his august sculptural predecessors – Constantin Brancusi (1876 – 1957) – and in particular to works such as *Sleeping muse*, 1909–10, (Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington), *The newborn*, 1915 (Philadelphia Museum of Art) and *The beginning of the world*, 1920 (Norton Simon Museum of Art, Pasadena, California). The central motif in these works is an oval form, a characteristically reductive image of a head that holds strong symbolic resonance. It is the powerful simplicity of the form that appeals to Le Grand. His work may be an *homage* but it is defiantly presented in his own sculptural language.

Brancusi's oval becomes a circular lozenge which sits in a serpentine flow of steel ribbon. The ribbon delineates the space and quietly infuses it with a rhythmic and seductive crawl. The *muse* rests in contemplative solitude, inward looking and comfortable in her introspection. The beautiful smoothness of the surface, reinforced by the gentle curve of the lozenge (a shape derived from the top of gas cylinders, and a shape that will recur in Le Grand's art), is played off against the more dynamic form of the ribbon.

The ribbon is also the motif which directs the viewer to other ways of seeing, a directional pointer to the effect of full visual engagement with this (once again) formally simple juxtaposition of the linear and the volumetric. The formal simplicity is contrasted with a complex spatial structure set off by the ribbon's outward

*Tsunami*, 1997  
painted steel  
240 x 750 x 300cm  
Coll'n: Gandel Sculpture Collection,  
Mornington Peninsula, VIC  
Image only







*Al dente*, 2005  
painted steel  
230 x 410 x 134cm  
Coll'n: Janet Holmes à Court, Vasse Felix,  
Western Australia  
Image only

fall at both ends. Viewed from these ends their flatness creates a single plane (at either end) but one which invites the eye to move beyond it to embrace the other views offered by the artist and to fully appreciate the elegant simplicity of *Muse*.

2003 saw the production of a work for a staff exhibition at the (then) Canberra School of Art. *Cadeaux* concretely manifests the artist's expectation of the viewer's active participation in the initial apprehension and subsequent comprehension of the work of art. Four respectively disclosed modules present the activity of unwrapping a gift (*Cadeaux* is French for "presents") in an overtly *in your face* procedural revelation. The *in your face-ness* loudly announces a sculptural *presence*, and if the homophonic similarity of *presents* and *presence* is a coincidence, it is ironically a very happy and apt one.

*Cadeaux* is also a metaphor for the revelatory imperative that is a key aspect of all of Le Grand's art. For him the participation of the viewer is essential in completing the dialogue he establishes when his work is exhibited. This work imaginatively exemplifies the phased process that is a requisite for any viewer to open him- or herself to the experiential awakening that confrontation with a work of art demands. Its scale is impressive and its conceptual presence even more so.

The diversity of Le Grand's language and his continuing ability to mine his archived morphological repertoire is powerfully demonstrated in *Keystone* (2005). Once again he capitalises on the strength of simple and direct forms to convey his aesthetic message. Three strongly geometric elements comprise the *keystone* and these sit on a distinctly contrasting spiral base. The three geometric parts have their formal ancestry in works such as *When dalliance was in flower* (1977) and *Commodore* (1979). Their combination here, as it was in the earlier works, is original

and fresh, reinforcing the unique ability of the good artist to bring reinvigorated energy into previously configured forms.

*Keystone* is vehemently triangular in its presentation and, like other works, it presents as obverse and reverse on first apprehension. Its resemblance to the format of an architectural pediment gives this reading a degree of credibility. However, as in all Le Grand's art, careful looking is imperative and any two-dimensionality is quickly subverted. The top motif has an intrusive and off-centred placement in the inverted triangle created by the coming together of the two lateral motifs that support the top (also) triangular wedge. This placement twists the space and forces the viewer to deal with the sophisticated spatial combinations that move in sweeping gestures down and around the side motifs and which are then forced through the determined spiral of the base in a circular movement that spreads around and through the entire work.

The contrast between the geometric and the organic evokes the conflicts between abstraction and realism, yet Le Grand's combining of these (while still proclaiming the individual identity and value of each) speaks of possibilities and of the variety at play in the world of form.

Two works which exemplify the artist's ability to create variety within sameness are *Shimenawa* (2007) and *Sabre* (2007). *Shimenawa* is a major work where economy of expression is no hindrance to complete aesthetic resolution and beauty of presentation. The title is a Japanese word that loosely refers to a special type of rope used in the Shinto religion for enclosing spaces that are sacred and consequently pure. Le Grand has visited Japan on several occasions and while *aspects of its culture intrigue and fascinate* (him)...(he) *does not travel there for inspiration*<sup>9</sup>. This is not an apologia but rather a means of contextualizing some titular references that occur in his art, occurrences which are about memory and experience and not about creative influence.



*Sabre*, 2007  
painted steel  
121 x 89 x 69cm  
Coll'n: the artist

*Shimenawa* is exquisitely simple. It consists of three components – a T-bar with one extended arm; a knot; and a curved tubular bar with two feet. The whole is painted in a pictorially appropriate red which happily assists in the realisation of the seductive sculptural promise of the work. The potent horizontal thrust of the top is neatly held back by its vertical support which, with a slight lean to the right, restrains the potency with an eloquent visual tension. This is reflected in the equally restrained and eloquent curve of the base element. The upward curve of the T-bar forces an almost aggressive spatial flow that encircles the entirety of the work and which is conversely underscored by the equivalent (but downward) pull of the curve of the base. Within this vigorous configuration, the central knot draws all the energies into its own taut structure, imbuing an extraordinary tension between each of the three sculptural components and their innate contrasts of the linear with the circular.

*Sabre* is visually more complex than the above work, yet it again is (relatively) structurally uncomplicated, comprising two units in an aesthetically intimate and fitting relationship. The signature serpentine curve, here vertically oriented, literally sits on its partner whose curved supports provide the work with a title that is formally relevant. *Sabre* refers to the shape of the legs found on antique chairs particularly of the Regency period (and even more particularly associated with the English furniture designer, Thomas Chippendale) whose antecedent was the Ancient Greek *klismos*. The innate elegance of these chairs is eloquently translated in Le Grand's sculpture.

The insistent curvilinearity of the left-hand motif versus the more subdued presence of the right-hand motif, creates a dialogue that activates the space in which the forms operate and concurrently underscores the individual identity of each motif and the singularity of their combination. Again, the unifying aspect of colour is eminently appropriate for this work.

Another work which demonstrates very clearly the artist's profound ability to constantly explore affinities with earlier works in order to create works with renewed presence and associations, is effectively demonstrated in *Ricochet revisited* (2008). Le Grand uses exactly the same elements seen in *Muse*. The circular lozenge and the ribbon-like attachments are instantly recognizable but their combination is very particular to *Ricochet revisited*.

The lateral spread of the work, configured especially through the placement of the ribbons, highlights the opening up of the space and the infusion of the feeling of weightlessness in the solid elements. Indeed the forms, especially the linear ones, seem to disappear as the spatial voids assume such an active presence. This is a lively work in which the component parts engage in a temporal, spatial and formal dance.

Le Grand's most recent work is distinguished by its continuing variety of expression. *Eclipse* (2010) is a work of exceptional visual power and presence. It references earlier works (notably *Nabataean*) in its plastic clarity and the sculptural intelligence of the artist's choice of limiting his means of communicating its aesthetic condition.

The work is composed of four structural ingredients: two horizontal base pieces, the rhomboidal form of the actual base is repeated in an exact smaller version placed on to it; a rhomboid, flat-topped wedge (whose recurrence in Le Grand's work is signature); and an elliptical form which hugs the rhomboid in an embrace that effectively splits the form into equal halves across two of the adjoining planar surfaces of the rhomboid. The embrace is ambiguous because there is an overt potential for the ellipse to slowly slip down on to the base. This is further visualised by the fact that the ellipse overhangs the upper level of the base, so the inference of downward movement has already been put into



*Pamplona*, 2007  
painted steel  
57 x 52 x 27cm  
Coll'n: the artist

play. The title, *Eclipse*, and the modulated movement of form over form that characterises this phenomenon in the natural world, may appear to deny the usually *nominal* status of titles in the artist's oeuvre. The obviousness of what is physically happening with the various interactions among the formal elements in this work would seem to effectively subvert, or at least make irrelevant, any actual titular input into the interpretation of *Eclipse*.

Le Grand uses a wonderfully declarative and referentially rich *red* to cover the work, and this enables a virtuosic play of light and shade and tonal interactions to take place. This enlivening of surface is a delightful foil to the austere plastic expression, an expression that despite its austerity is allusively complex and sculpturally articulate.

*Slip sliding away* (2010) is another powerful work where size bears no relationship to scale and where movement (kinesis) is modulated to underscore its compositional counterpart (stasis). The artist has imparted carefully nuanced interactions and interrelationships between formal entities. The felicity of these combined with the visual *éclat* of the blue surface give *Slip sliding away* a conceptual and aesthetic *frisson* that marks the ongoing fertility and depth of the artist's current production.

The experience of examining an artist's oeuvre over an extended period (here, 34 years) is an especially enriching one. This enrichment is especially significant when the artist is one of the stature of Michael Le Grand. His achievement is singular in its dedication to the ongoing exploration of the language of sculpture through the very distinctive idiom of abstraction, and in the articulation of that exploration in powerfully expressive and aesthetically relevant sculptural statements.

Footnotes:

1. Moore, Henry *On being a sculptor*, Tate Publications, London, 2010, p.27
2. For a fuller (though dated) discussion of this see Sturgeon, Graeme *The development of Australian Sculpture 1788 to 1975*, London, 1978
3. *ibid*, p.184
4. Moorhouse, Paul *Interpreting Caro*, Tate Publications, London, p.12
5. Biographical information in this essay was provided by the artist in his (written) response to questions put to him by the author in January 2011.
6. *ibid*, unpaginated
7. *ibid*
8. *ibid*
9. *ibid*

**Peter Haynes**

Director

ACT Museums and Galleries

March 2011

*Cadeaux*, 2003  
painted steel  
c. 170 x 500 x 150cm  
Coll'n: the artist



# List of Works



*When dalliance was in flower, 1977*  
steel  
c. 180 x 170 x 160cm  
Whereabouts unknown  
Image only



*Pissoir, 1977*  
steel  
c. 200 x 230 x 175cm  
Whereabouts unknown  
Image only



*Sisyphaean, 1979*  
painted steel  
c.150 x 130 x 140cm  
Coll'n: Lena Karmel



*Commodore, 1979*  
steel (rusted)  
c. 150 x 200 x 160cm  
Coll'n: the artist  
Image only



*Pump, 1985*  
painted steel  
c. 150 x 160 x 100cm  
Destroyed  
Image only



*Menhir, 1987*  
painted steel  
320 x 220 x 130cm  
163.5 300cm (base)  
Coll'n: the artist



*Calyx, 1987*  
painted steel  
246 x 300 x 163cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*East meets West, 1991*  
painted steel  
241 x 450 x 156cm  
Coll'n: Therapeutic Goods  
Administration, Symonston, ACT  
Image only



*Deshabillé, 1996*  
painted steel  
228 x 812 x 180cm  
Coll'n: Landcom, Nelson's Bay,  
NSW  
Image only



*Tsunami, 1997*  
painted steel  
240 x 750 x 300cm  
Coll'n: Gandel Sculpture Collection,  
Mornington Peninsula, VIC  
Image only



*Untitled, 1997*  
painted steel  
64 x 79 x 24cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Shovelling remnants, 1997*  
painted steel  
77 x 44 x 34cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Untitled, 1998*  
steel  
66 x 78 x 0.2cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Untitled, 1998*  
steel  
18.5 x 28 x 0.6cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Torii, 1999*  
painted steel  
240 x 428 x 247cm  
Coll'n: Australian National  
University  
Image only



*Reamer, 2000*  
painted steel  
39 x 75 x 25cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Lambada, 2000*  
painted steel  
57 x 87 x 62cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Until the party's over, 2001*  
painted steel  
54 x 105 x 71cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Moon rising, 2002*  
painted steel  
85 x 1009 x 10cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Mollusc, 2002*  
painted steel  
64 x 175 x 60cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Schism*, 2002  
painted steel  
200 x 600 x 250cm  
Coll'n: the artist  
Image only



*Muse*, 2002  
painted steel  
50 x 122 x 49cm  
Coll'n: David and Genevieve Jacobs



*Hashi-Hana*, 2003  
painted steel  
c. 216 x 400 x 210cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Cadeaux*, 2003  
painted steel  
c. 170 x 500 x 150cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Inara*, 2004  
painted steel  
240 x 285 x 190cm  
Coll'n: University of Western  
Sydney  
Image only



*Nabataean*, 2005  
painted steel  
84 x 121 x 77cm  
Coll'n: Max Dingle, Shoalhaven



*Festoon*, 2005  
painted steel  
99 x 96 x 19cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Sheela-Na-Gig*, 2005  
painted steel  
110 x 64 x 24cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Keystone*, 2005  
painted steel  
84 x 243 x 120cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Al dente*, 2005  
painted steel  
230 x 410 x 134cm  
Coll'n: Janet Holmes à Court,  
Vasse Felix, Western Australia  
Image only



*Intimacy* 2005-06  
painted steel  
15 x 13.5 x 9cm  
Coll'n: Karen O'Clery, Tanja



*Ukiyo-e*, 2006  
painted steel  
270 x 700 x 200cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Maketa*, 2006  
painted steel  
16.5 x 15 x 16cm  
Coll'n: Robyn McDermott, Adelaide



*Cassolette*, 2007  
painted steel  
24 x 41 x 34cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Pamplona*, 2007  
painted steel  
57 x 52 x 27cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Florentine*, 2007  
painted steel  
62 x 75 x 42cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Sabre*, 2007  
painted steel  
121 x 89 x 69cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Shimenawa*, 2007  
painted steel  
83 x 217 x 166cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Ricochet revisited*, 2008  
painted steel  
60 x 123 x 60cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*RHS*, 2008  
painted steel  
17.5 x 20 x 16.5cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Python*, 2009  
painted steel  
53.5 x 59.5 x 32cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Yoga*, 2009  
painted steel  
15.5 x 13 x 13.5cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Meditation*, 2009  
painted steel  
15.5 x 19 x 14cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*V for Void*, 2009  
painted steel  
14 x 13.5 x 15cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Icarus*, 2009  
painted steel  
14 x 14 x 11cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Salut*, 2010  
painted steel  
36 x 68 x 59cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Eclipse*, 2010  
painted steel  
66 x 86 x 59cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Slip sliding away*, 2010  
painted steel  
65 x 77 x 72cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Kai*, 2010  
painted steel  
59 x 59 x 43cm  
Coll'n: the artist



*Canadian echo*, 2010  
oiled steel  
36 x 55 x 25cm  
Coll'n: the artist





*Ukiyo-e*, 2006  
painted steel  
270 x 700 x 200cm  
Coll'n: the artist

# Biography

## Education

- 1976–77 *Certificate of Advanced Studies, St Martin's School of Art, London, UK.*
- 1972–74 *Diploma of Art, Victoria College of the Arts, Melbourne, VIC.*

## Solo Exhibitions

- 2011 *Michael Le Grand: Sculpture, Canberra Museum and Gallery*
- 2007 *Michael Le Grand, Sculpture, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*
- 2005 *Michael Le Grand, Sculpture, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*
- 2002 *Defiance Gallery, Sydney*
- 2000 *Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
Beaver Galleries, Deakin, ACT
- 1992 *Room 371, Alberta College of Art, Calgary, Canada*
- 1988 *Irving Sculpture Gallery, Sydney*
- 1985 *Irving Sculpture Gallery, Sydney*
- 1980 *Link Theatre, Canberra*
- 1980 *Albert Hall, Canberra*

## Exhibitions

- 2011 *Sculpture by the Sea, Aarhus, Denmark*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Inside, Aarhus, Denmark*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe, WA*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe Inside, WA*  
*Sculpture Inside, Orange Regional Gallery*
- 2010–11 *Sculpture in the Caroline Chisholm Courtyard, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW*  
*McClelland Sculpture Survey and Award, Vic.*
- 2010 *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe, WA*  
*Japanese Story, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW*  
Deakin University Small Sculpture Award, Deakin University, Vic.  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi, NSW*  
*Sculpture by the Sea Inside, Bondi, NSW*
- 2009 *You Little Beauty, 14th Annual Miniature Show, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Aarhus, Denmark*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe, WA*  
*Abstraction, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*

- 2008 *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi, NSW*
- 2007 *Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi, NSW*  
*One Small Step for Mankind, 12th Annual Miniature Sculpture Show, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Sculpture 2007, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*
- 2006 *Sculpture 2006, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe, WA*  
*How Much Art Thou Shrunk, 11th Annual Miniature Sculpture Show, Defiance Gallery, Sydney.*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi, NSW*
- 2005 *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe, WA*  
*10th Annual Miniature Sculpture Show, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Sculpture 2005, Seymour Centre Theatre, Sydney*
- 2004 *University of Western Sydney Acquisitive Sculpture Award and Exhibition.*  
*Sculpture 2004, Seymour Centre Theatre, Sydney*  
*The March of the Miniatures, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*
- 2003 *McClelland Sculpture Survey and Award, McClelland Gallery, Vic*  
*Where Small Walk Tall, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Great Works for the Great Outdoors, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Sculpture 2003, Campbelltown Bicentennial Art Gallery and Defiance Gallery, Sydney.*
- 2002 *Defiance Group Show, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi, NSW*  
*Sculpture Inside, Bondi Pavilion, NSW*  
*The Lady Ethel Nock Sculpture Collection, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*  
*Factor 10, Australian National University, Canberra*  
*Edition + Artist Book Survey, Canberra Museum and Gallery*  
*Environmenta, Time, Bowral, NSW*  
*Three Colours Red, Brenda May Gallery, Sydney.*  
*That Was Then ANCA Tenant's Exhibition, Canberra*
- 2001 *Sculpture 2002, Defiance Gallery; Campbelltown Bicentennial Art Gallery.*  
*Sculpture 2001, Access Contemporary Art Gallery, Sydney; Defiance Gallery.*  
Sydney; Campbelltown City Bicentennial Art Gallery.  
*Roche Contemporary Art Prize.*
- 2000 *The Importance of being Small, The Annual 6x6x6 Inch Miniature Sculpture Show*  
Defiance Gallery, Sydney, King Street Gallery, Sydney  
*Various Views, Defiance Gallery, Sydney*

- Sculpture from the Sea*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery; Arts Centre, Hazelhurst;  
Campbelltown City Bicentennial Gallery; Manly Art Gallery and Museum.  
*Tribal Echo*, Oceanic Arts Australia, Paddington, Sydney  
*Tribal Echo*, Campbelltown City Bicentennial Art Gallery, NSW  
*Sculpture 2000*, Access Contemporary Art Gallery, Sydney
- 1999 *Big Thoughts, Small Works*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney  
*We are Australian*, George Adams Gallery, Sydney (and touring nationally)  
*Environmenta – Off the Plinth*, Moss Vale Sculpture Park.  
*Eizan Line*, CSA, Foyer Gallery, Canberra  
*Sculpture by the Sea*, Bondi, NSW  
*Still Life*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney, King Street Gallery, Sydney  
*Five Easy Pieces*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney
- 1998 *Environmenta – Off the Plinth, Moss Vale Sculpture Park.*  
*The Defiant 6"*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney  
*Figure in the Landscape* Defiance Gallery, Sydney, King Street Gallery, Sydney  
*Sculpture by the Sea*, Bondi, NSW  
*Canberra National Sculpture Forum*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1997 *Biggest Little Sculpture Show*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney  
*Sculpture Walk, Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Sydney, NSW*  
*Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi, NSW*  
*It's a Box 11*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney
- 1996 *Size is Not Important*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney  
*Sculpture Now '96*, Castlemaine, VIC  
*Box by any other Name*, Defiance Gallery, Sydney
- 1995 Solander Gallery, Canberra  
*Canberra National Sculpture Forum*, ACT.
- 1993 *Galeria Aniela, Kangaroo Valley, NSW*  
*Cuppacumbalong Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition*, Tharwa, ACT  
Alberta College of Art Faculty Show, Calgary Canada  
*Art Can't Hurt You*, Newzones Gallery, Calgary Canada
- 1991 *Cuppacumbalong Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition, Tharwa*  
Canberra Institute of the Arts Staff Exhibition, Canberra
- 1990 *Australian Contemporary Art Fair, Melbourne*
- 1989 *Huntly Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition, Uriarra, ACT*

- 1988 *Solander Gallery, Canberra*  
Canberra School of Art/National Capital Development Commission  
Sculpture Walk  
*Floriade Festival*, Canberra  
*Tenth Mildura Sculpture Triennial*, Mildura Arts Centre

### Commissions

- 2010 *Darwin Place, London Circuit, ACT (in process)*
- 1999 *Shortlist, ANU Graduate Management Program Facility Building Commission*
- 1998 *Shortlist, ANU Gravity Wave Building Sculpture Commission*
- 1997 *ACT Public Art Program, Tuggeranong Arts Centre*
- 1997 *Manly Art Gallery and Museum Sculpture Walk*
- 1992 *Therapeutic Goods Administration, Symonston, ACT*

### Collections

- Ian Hicks, Mornington Peninsula, VIC  
Gandel Sculpture Collection, Mornington Peninsula, VIC  
Spa Park, Bad Laasphe, Wittgenstein  
Arts Act Public Art Program, Tuggeranong Arts Centre, ACT  
Artbank, Sydney, NSW  
Commonwealth Industrial Gases, Wetherill Park, NSW  
Darwin Community Art Gallery, Darwin NT  
Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Evandale Sculpture Park  
Lord Alistair McAlpine Collection, Broome, WA  
Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra  
The Jackson Smith Collection  
The Niland Collection  
The Therapeutic Goods Administration, Symonston, ACT  
Tetsuya Wakuda, Sydney  
Australian National University, Canberra  
Evandale Sculpture Park, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, QLD  
Janet Holmes à Court Collection, Vasse Felix, Margaret River, WA

### Achievements

- 2011 *Emeritus Fellow, ANU School of Art (Sculpture Workshop)*
- 2010 *Helen Lemprière Scholarship*  
artsACT Project Fund Grant  
Emeritus Fellow ANU, School of Art, Sculpture

- 2007 *Tetsuya Wakuda Sculpture Prize*
- 2006 *Lady Ethel Nock Sculpture Prize*
- 2004 *University of Western Sydney Acquisitive Sculpture Award*
- 2003 *Sculpture in the City*
- 2002 *Sculpture by the Sea, (invited participant) Bondi, NSW*
- 2001 *Roche Contemporary Art Prize (finalist), Australia*
- 2000 *ACT Arts Quick Response Grant*  
Australian National University Stopover Grant
- 1998 *Capital Arts Patron's Organisation Creative Arts Fellowship 1998*  
ACT Government Creative Arts Fellowship, 1998 (Visual Arts)  
Donation of Steel, Transfield Sydney for the Canberra National Sculpture Forum  
Co-winner, inaugural Sydney Water Prize, *Sculpture by the Sea*
- 1979 *Creative Arts Fellowship, Australian National University*
- 1977 *Visual Arts Board Grant, Australia Council – Special Projects*
- 1975 *Visual Arts Board Grant, Australia Council – Travel Grant*
- Publications**
- 2010 **McClelland Sculpture Survey and Award 2010**
- 2009 *Scarlett, Ken An exhibition with a vast following, Australian Art Review, Aug–Oct*  
*Scarlett, Ken From Bondi to Aarhus, Art Monthly Australia, Aug 09*  
*Artnotes ACT, Art Monthly Australia, July 2009*
- 2008 **McClelland Sculpture Survey and Award 2007**  
*Streak, Diana Grand miniatures, Canberra Times, Oct 18*  
*Park, Nicky Take a walk on the magic sides, Canberra Times*
- 2007 *Price, Jenna Surfing the waves of creativity, Canberra Times, Nov. 11*  
*McDonald, John Sydney Morning Herald, Oct. 13–14, 07*  
*Six ACT sculptors shape up for exhibition, Canberra Times, Oct. 2007*  
*Ingram, Terry Art Outdoors, Australian Art Collector April–June*  
*Artnotes ACT, Art Monthly Australia, Dec 2007 – Feb. 2008*  
*Sculpture Symposium examines Public Art issues, The Triangle, April, 07*  
*On the edge, South Coaster, Winter 2007*
- 2006 *Scarlett, Ken Australian Art Review, Nov. 2006– Feb.2007*
- 2005 *Musa, Helen Steelworks on show in Sydney, Canberra Times, July 30*
- 2004 *Parker, L. Artist steels award, Camden Advertiser, December 1.*
- 2003 *Musa, Helen Le Grand's work wins top sculpture award, Canberra Times, Nov. 24*  
**McClelland Sculpture Survey and Award.**  
*Kelly, Phillipa Review – “insiders”, Muse, No.233, October*  
*Why don't you? , The Sydney Magazine, September*  
*Barron, Sonia, Insiders – Celebrating teachers' talents, Canberra Times, Sept. 20*
- 2002 *Insiders, ANU School of Art Gallery.*  
*Sponsor awards play vital role, The Australian, Oct. 30*  
*McDonald, John Marvels in miniature, The Australian Financial Review*  
*Watson, B. Little rocks, Sydney Morning Herald*  
*A head for figures, Sunday Telegraph, November 03*  
*Critics pick, Sydney Morning Herald, November 15*  
*Artlink , Vol. 23, No. 3*
- 2001 *Look, Art Gallery of NSW, October*  
**Roche Contemporary Art Prize**  
**CSA Showcase: Jubilee 2001**
- 2000 *Genocchio, Benjamin Anything goes, The Weekend Australian, December 9–10*  
*Watson, Bronwyn, In the scale of things, Sydney Morning Herald, November 11*  
*James, Bruce Arts review – arts today, Radio National, October 10*  
*Dysart, Dinah, Sculpture by the sea. Contemporary art along the Bondi to Tamarama coastal walk, Art & Australia, Olympic Issue, Vol 38, No. 1*  
*Proudfoot, Cassie Sculptor steeled for solo show, Canberra Times, August 25*  
*Barron, Sonia Reflections of human aspirations, Canberra Times, Aug 25*  
*Musa, Helen Tangible results of Arts Fellowships, Canberra Times, August 12*  
*Harris, Peter A wealth of talent, World Sculpture News, Vol.6, No.2, Spring*  
*Harris, Peter Down to the sea, World Sculpture News, Vol.6, No.2, Spring*  
*Harris, Peter The power of the miniature', World Sculpture News, Vol.6, No.2, Spring*  
*Hynes, Victoria Tribal Echo at Oceanic Arts and Campbelltown City Gallery, World Sculpture News, Vol.6, No.2, Spring*  
*Reed Burns, Jenna A new tribe, Sydney Morning Herald, April 06*

- 1998 *Nolan, Mathew Galleries-Arts- Times, Newtown Times, June Issue*  
Smee, Sebastian *Sculpture by the sea – rough ride for our new wave of sculptors, Sydney Morning Herald*, October 09
- 1993 *Scarlett, Ken Contemporary Sculpture in Australian Gardens, Craftsman House, Sydney*
- 1991 *Sturgeon, Graeme Contemporary Australian Sculpture, Craftsman House, Sydney*
- 1989 *Bishop, Margaret Young Artist, Piper Press, Sydney*
- 1985 **Art and Australia**, Vol. 29, No.1, Spring
- 1984 Winter-Irving, Celia *Metal Sculpture, Craft Australia Year Book*, Crafts Council of Australia, Sydney  
**Collins Australia Year Book**  
Sturgeon, Graeme *Australia Sculpture Now, Australian Sculpture Triennial*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne  
Nicklin, Lenore *The Arts, The Bulletin*, December 25 – January 01  
Germaine, Max **Artists and Galleries of Australia and New Zealand**, Boolarong Press, Brisbane
- 1983 *Exhibition Commentary, Art and Australia, Vol. 21, No.2, Summer*  
Haynes, Peter **Sculpture by Michael Le Grand**, Irving Sculpture Gallery, Sydney
- 1982 *Murray-White, Clive, 8th Sculpture Triennial', Art Network, No. 7, Spring.*  
Scarlett, Ken *There is no substitute for quality, Art Network, No.7, Spring*
- Employment**
- 2009 *Sculpture Judge, Kangaroo Valley Arts Festival, NSW*
- 2008 *Selector, Sculpture by the Sea, 2009, Cottesloe, WA*
- 2007 *Selector/Judge, University of Western Sydney Acquisitive Sculpture Prize, 2008*
- 2007 *Retired as Head of Sculpture, ANU School of Art*
- 2004 *Appointed Senior Lecturer, ANU School of Art, Sculpture Workshop*
- 2003 *Selector/Judge, Sculpture by the Sea*
- 2000 *Travel. London: North East London University/ Wimbledon School of Art, UK, New York and Washington, USA*
- 2000 *Bad Laasphe International Sculpture symposium, Germany*
- 1999 *Professional Experience Leave – April – September*  
Appointed Head of Sculpture ANU Institute of the Arts
- 1998 *ANU/ITA – Kyoto Seika University Exchange, Visit & Workshop Japan*  
Acting Head, Sculpture Workshop, ANU, ITA Canberra School of Art
- 1997 *Acting Head, Sculpture Workshop, ANU, ITA Canberra School of Art*  
Iron Corroboree, Blacksmithing, Braidwood, NSW
- 1996 *Iron Corroboree, Blacksmithing, Braidwood, NSW*  
Japan: Kyoto Seika University, Tokyo, Nara, Shigaraki
- 1990–98 *Lecturer III (full time) Sculpture Workshop, ANU Canberra School of Art*
- 1994 *Building and establishment of new Studio, Murrumbateman, NSW*
- 1993 *Promotion to Lecturer, Level B, CSA Sculpture Workshop*
- 1992 *Visiting Artist/Lecturer, University of Calgary Canada*  
Guest Lecturer, Alberta College of Art, Calgary, Canada  
Lecture, Foundation Workshop, Alberta College of Art, Calgary, Canada
- 1990 *Acted in position of CSA Sculpture Workshop Coordinator*
- 1988–90 *Canberra School of Art, Floriade Coordinator*
- 1989 *Acting Head of Workshop, Sculpture Workshop, ANU Canberra School of Art*
- 1987 *NSW Institute of Technology, Sculpture Workshop Participant, Sydney Triangle*  
Artist's Workshop, New York, USA
- 1986 *Acting Head of Workshop, Sculpture Workshop, ANU Canberra School of Art*
- 1984 *Participant, Sculpture Symposium, Canberra School of Art*
- Travel**
- 2010 *Tokyo, Japan – Research, Gyou-Tetsu, Helen Lempriere Scholarship*  
London, International Sculpture Conference, Chapel of Light, France, Caro,  
Kesenuma & Tokyo, Japan – Metal Bending processes.
- 2009 *Barcelona, Bilbao, Madrid, Copenhagen, Aarhus Sculpture by the Sea, Denmark*



*Cassiolette*, 2007  
painted steel  
24 x 41 x 34cm  
Coll'n: the artist

