



AUSTRALIAN GALLERIES
ROYLSTON STREET

KEVIN MORTENSEN

Sculpture & Drawing

MEDIA RELEASE

Exhibition Dates: 22 July - 10 August 2014
15 Roylston Street Paddington NSW 2021
Open 7 days 10am to 6pm

Kevin Mortensen's enigmatic artworks are as diverse as the media in which he is proficient, with persistent narratives appearing throughout his varied oeuvre. Equally skilled in sculpture, performance, printmaking, drawing and painting, Mortensen combines refined personal motifs into a visual language to produce works both spiritual and potent, illustrating his impressions of the world around him. Mortensen's works evolve in a cyclical manner with birds, mythology, decay, landscapes and our relationship with nature, recurrent themes in his artistic journey.

The hybridised bird/man has appeared in Mortensen's work since the 1970's, initially through his bird masked performance pieces with which he represented Australia at the Venice Biennale in 1980, and continuing in this exhibition with the imposing Charioteer. The commanding two metre sculpture, intended for bronze, depicts a naked bird/man chimera astride an Egyptian chariot. It is reminiscent of Mortensen's powerful performances utilising minimal

movement to create tension to highlight the manifold layers of meaning characteristic of his work.

Of the elements of decay and the chariots of war that appear in *Sculpture & Drawing*, Mortensen quotes the American artist William T. Wiley "If you cannot accept that which you deem ugly (regardless of how you define the term ugly), beauty in all its facets (which are endless) will be revealed only in relation or in proportion to the amount of dissatisfaction you find allowable" (1970). Like Wiley, Mortensen's art is about inviting the viewer to form their own interpretation in response to the work, challenging preconceived notions and provoking an internal dialogue.

Sculpture & Drawing is current until 10 August 2014

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