



AUSTRALIAN GALLERIES
SYDNEY

RON ROBERTSON-SWANN

Landscape, Still Life, The Figure and More. A survey.

MEDIA RELEASE

Exhibition Dates: 23 August - 11 September 2016

15 Royston Street Paddington NSW 2021

Open 7 days 10am to 6pm

Landscape, Still Life, The Figure and More presents a dynamic survey of the sculptures of Ron Robertson-Swann, in which we see the artist explore over several decades the use of colour, media and scale.

“Ron Robertson-Swann often starts with something that is lying around his home, like a ball or a spoon. It will have a shape and a weight that prompt response. Should it sit on the ground or be suspended in the air? What intervening space and shadow result when another thing is put beside? How far can it be transformed before something else emerges? Ron makes things, although rarely from scratch. His sculpture expresses a material relationship with the world, one that is filled with possibility. Things are pauses in a continuum. A ball prepares to roll, a spoon waits to be grasped. And as things change, so space is altered. A right-angle becomes an inside, while a convexity creates a behind. One looks at Ron’s work with eyes that are alive and moving.

Colour comes at the end of the process. It expresses mood, beyond protection and weight. Ron’s favourite, as both a sculptor and a painter, is yellow. He says it makes lovely shadows, but that it is difficult to operate in such a high key, since any false step is revealed. The mood of yellow borrows from the one allied to flowers, which in turn binds back on the challenge of its shallow tone. It is brief and brittle, yet tense and suggestive.

In the early 1960s, Ron worked in London under Anthony Caro, who would create a new language of modernist sculpture. Returning home, in 1968 he appeared in *The Field* exhibition, a herald of international contemporary art in Australia. The following decade, Ron helped establish the Visual Arts Board; in 1973, he was included in the inaugural Sydney Biennale. Twenty-five years later, he became the first artistic advisor to *Sculpture by the Sea*, an annual exhibition that reinvigorated the profession after time in the doldrums. Finally, over almost fifty years Ron has taught students at the National Art School that it’s the work that matters. Ron takes prides in making things”.

Excerpt from catalogue essay by Dr Michael Hill,
Head of Art History and Theory
National Art School
July 2016

Landscape, Still Life, The Figure and More is current until 11 September 2016

For more details or images contact:
media@australiangalleries.com.au
australiangalleries.com.au 02 9360 5177