

AUGUSTINE DALL'AVA

SCULPTURE 2002 - 2006

21 February - 10 March 2007

John Buckley Gallery

8 Albert St
Richmond, 3121
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Augustine Dall'Ava

Fourteenth Dialogue 2004 - 05
Painted wood, stainless steel, natural and painted
stones, travertine and marble
44.5 x 59.5 x 15.5 cm

Press release

The John Buckley Gallery is delighted to announce the first exhibition at our Albert Street premises of the work of Augustine Dall'Ava.

Already acknowledged as an important Australian sculptor, Dall'Ava's work is in many private, corporate and public gallery collections. He has regularly exhibited in Australia and overseas and has undertaken major sculptural commissions in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra.

There is a particular pleasure in welcoming Dall'Ava to the gallery as, together with Geoffrey Bartlett, his presence completes our representation of the two surviving members of the original trio (the third being Anthony Pryor, who died in 1991) who studied together at RMIT in the early 70s and whose early group exhibitions heralded the emergence of a new approach to sculpture in Melbourne.

Anne Galbally, writing about this, has said:

*"Coming out of the 1960s welded steel abstraction of Anthony Caro and David Smith where form was pure shape engaging in space, the trio of Pryor, Dall'Ava and Bartlett did away with the sombre monumental statement in favour of a delight in the play of materials, mechanisms and the possibilities of assemblage. Audiences were invited to look through the sculptures as though they had a linear existence. The terrestrial compulsion that grounded an earlier generation was challenged. Suddenly, it seemed, sculpture could defy the weight of materials. New combinations using natural materials seemed not only possible but imperative."*¹

Since then Dall'Ava has maintained a rigorous studio practice out of which has developed a distinctive visual vocabulary and an imagery which reflects a playful dance between beauty and absurdity. His antecedents, of course, are the Dadaists and the Surrealists together with the Catalan whimsies of Miro.

In her introduction to Dall'Ava's 2002 exhibition, *If Only Carl Knew*, at Stonnington Stables Museum of Art, Deakin University, the exhibition curator, Caroline Field, sums up the artist's work thus:

"Celebrating natural, organic beauty, his sculptures place everyday objects; stones, wood and marble on heightened display by arranging them with meticulous placement and finish, alongside man-made objects subject to a similar brilliant treatment. Brilliantly polished metals balance the tonal effect of grey stone and high key colour treatment of smooth wooden surfaces, to produce a carefully planned amalgamation of disparate shapes, surfaces and textures."

And,

*"Augustine Dall'Ava is one of those rare examples of a creative force that can be best described as uncompromising. Dall'Ava has unassumingly devoted his working life to patiently and methodically developing his personal vision. He is a quiet achiever who for the last twenty-six years has been honing, refining and extracting the essence of his art."*²

John Buckley
2007

¹ Galbally, Anne, *If Only Carl Knew*, Stonnington Stables Museum of Art, Deakin University, 2002, p. 12

² Caroline Field, *If Only Carl Knew*, Stonnington Stables Museum of Art, Deakin University, 2002, p. 4



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Top:
Augustine Dall'Ava
Eleventh Dialogue 2004
Painted stones, marble, natural
stones, stainless steel
27 x 50 x 14.5 cm

Left:
Augustine Dall'Ava
Auto - Retrospect 2006
Painted wood, stainless steel,
stones, marble, linen thread
128 x 91 x 22 cm