

hous projects

Charles Robb

Biography

Charles Robb is a graduate of Victorian College of the Arts (Melbourne), now based in Brisbane. Robb's work has been seen in numerous group and solo exhibitions both inside and outside Australia in venues such as The National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne), The Museum of Contemporary Art (Sydney) and the Institute of Modern Art (Brisbane).

He was selected for the 2005 National Gallery of Australia Sculpture Prize and Exhibition and has been short-listed three times for the Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award, winning Judge's Commendations in 2002 and 2005. He has received project grants from Arts Queensland (2000 and 2004) and the Australia Council (2001) and he was awarded an inaugural Freedman Foundation Scholarship to research Baroque religious sculpture in Spain (2001). Charles was recently awarded the Australia Council's studio residency at the Cite Internationale des Arts in Paris.

In addition to appearing in catalogues, his work has featured in reviews in Art and Australia, Artlink, Art Monthly, Australian Art Collector, Broadsheet, Eyeline, World Sculpture News and Contemporary. His writing has been published in Eyeline, unMagazine and Photofile. He has recently completed his MFA at Monash University in Melbourne and currently holds the position of Associate Lecturer in Visual Arts at Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.

Robb's 2007 Solo Exhibition at hous projects is characterized by sculptural representations of the same man- namely himself, in differing states. None of the sculptures possess limbs; rather, they are concentrated statements poignant because Robb hones in on facial expression. Robb's stark busts reveal our common moods and vulnerability. The figure is seemingly comfortable in his own skin, but Robb uses position and installation to create off-balance fragility to otherwise solid objectifications of man.

Artist Statement:

Interruptions is the latest installment in my ongoing project of sculptural self-portraiture.

My work is concerned with the traditions of sculptural portraiture, particularly its uncertain ability to capture the 'inner self' of the subject. This is typified in my sculptural busts (which are literally hollow forms) by introverted expressions, often with closed eyes and mouths, where the inside of the body is sealed off from the outside world.

These expressions are evidence of the emotions that the artist might experience in the studio while making the work: concentration, tiredness or doubt, but interestingly, when these appear on a sculptural portrait they are often interpreted as heightened emotions such as torment or pain: emotional effects that are associated with the romanticized ideal of the male artist.

My sculptural portrait busts seek to convey my ambivalence toward the heroic male subject: deeply suspicious of the paternal certainty that the bust embodies while simultaneously lamenting its loss. – Charles Robb