



CANBERRA NATIONAL SCULPTURE FORUM

A show of ideas and impressions

First Impressions, maquettes for monumental sculpture, Beaver Gallery, 51 Denison Street, Deakin. Daily 10am-5pm till May 3.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS is an exhibition by members of the Sculpture Society of NSW. Founded in 1951, the society has 150 professional sculptors as members. Its founders included such well-known artists as Lyndon Dadswell, Margel Hinder and Robert Klippel. Among its purposes are the provision of a forum for its membership, and acting as a mediator between sculptors and a potential market.

First I must admit that few names are familiar to me, and without an exhibition listing or any background information I can only wonder at the artists' records.

One exception is Ruth Faerber, best known for her prints and relief images in paper pulp. Her *Ancient Site Revisited*, a proposed free-standing relief, is characteristic of her oeuvre.

The work of a number of individuals is mediated by humanist traditions and the example of the late great British sculptor Henry Moore. I felt I had walked into a time-warp, as if nothing had happened since the 1950s.

But while much of the work here is easily assimilated and familiar, hardly confrontational or provocative, there are some pleasing and formally well-resolved pieces from Diana Hunt, Gaye Porter and Richard Strutchbury in particular. Susan Dorothea White at least attempts an Australian subject in her *Spirit of the Willy-Willy Wind*.

Consisting of maquettes, studies for larger public works, it is a commendable exhibition in that it is expressly directed towards public art of a substantial and lasting nature. In a businesslike way the labels give the proposed medium and dimensions, the former not necessarily the same as what is in the gallery. There are also a number of photographs of individual works which have been taken in such a way as to indicate how a larger version might look in a particular site.