

Healthy sculpture

REVIEW

VISUAL ARTS
Focus on Sculpture 2002
Where: Axia Modern Art, 1010 High St, Armadale

Until: June 7

Jennifer Goodman, Chromatic Progressions
Where: John Buckley Fine Art, 114 Bendigo St, Prahran

Until: June 7

Reviewer: Jeff Makin

SCULPTURE always plays the heavy in the art game. Unlike paintings, you have to move aside, walk around or physically confront sculptures.

Intellectually, as ideas travel, sculpture runs slower than painting because it takes longer to make.

But because of the material used in its fabrication, it often outlasts painting and remains the more visible measure of a culture.

Axia, which uses sculpture in corporate locations around Australia, have curated a small survey by some of our best sculptors.



Effigy: brooding *Eagle* 2002.

As a survey exhibition it ranges across a number of styles and materials, figurative to abstract, in bronze, wood and marble.

And, at first glance, it suggests the discipline is in a healthy state of creative diversity.

Leading the field is the bronze and wood brooding eagle by Bruce Armstrong. Like a leftover effigy of

an ancient civilisation, it eyes you as you walk in the door, its minimal beak and tensed wings a masterpiece of understatement.

To the left are wonderfully malleable wall pieces by Geoff Bartlett; in front, a pair of dog-headed dancers, one in a tutu, by Anne Ross; and a succinct architectural parody by Peter D. Cole.

Dean Bowen has created yet another *Lady with Flowers* from Middle Earth. In bronze, she is rolled flat and hammered short.

Other artists in this survey include Alun Leach-Jones, Erwin Fabian, Richard Whiteley, Peter Blizzard and Michael Le Grand.

JENNIFER Goodman's cool, precise, abstracts at John Buckleys gallery are impressive performances.

Beautifully painted, flat, squares and rectangles are used as a structure to explore the psychological value of colours. Brushed violets, sunset yellows and somnambulant greens register a melancholic key.

Goodman is a lyricist, and has turned down the volume on what was a very loud 20th-century development.