

# Mountford

## Dan Spriggs

Existing as an artist in Perth Western Australia is a challenging juggle between practice and life, smart talk and network construction. This is before you even start the conception of an artwork. We live in an increasingly expensive city that generally does not filter through to the people forging new work and ideas in art. Let alone conceiving a piece that aesthetically pleases both the artist and the viewer. The flashy wealth I see in the city reminds me of gluttony, baroness's equivalent to King Richard the 5th, grotesques, deeply sceptic of anything that they may have to take personal responsibility for. Yet this is the trade off for our so-called comfort, we wage wars to secure resources and we entertain sceptics.

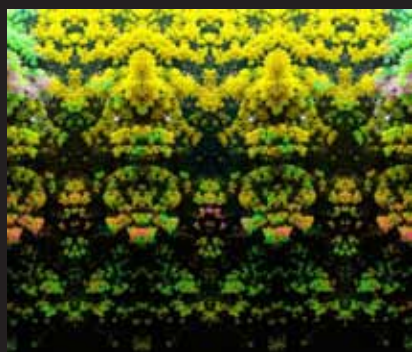
As an artist I can only try to reflect this unconscious condition consuming the consumers, living with the fact that I too am one of them. In an attempt to do this I use stories and reappropriated folk fables, dirty ditties and bon homes to define my sculptural and print parameters.

My most recent major works are 'The Swelpies' a mystical swan dog, a cross between a black swan and the iconic kelpie. Forged in bronze these sculptures are totems for contemporary West Australian life. In the show, I have presented some prints of the original drawings. The graceful natural indigenous beauty of the black swan and manic workhorse of the dog, incredibly loyal and faithful to an owner, snarling, snapping teeth and manic to strangers and when unrestrained can leave a trail of destruction and the digging of holes. These sculptures have a repellent nature with the revealing of canine teeth but upon a closer look, the material of bronze and its long history of masters are brought to mind. Forged in a suburban backyard they have a certain naive charm to them.

'The Boat People, Crabbing for a Future' sculptures are modelled on a similar naivety and rawness approach. Depicting grotesque individuals lounging about in a vessel that hardly seems water worthy is play of role reversal of the issue that seems to dominate our political climate. It is not a response to the recent SBS series 'Go back to where you came from' as it began before the show went to air but it runs strikingly parallel.

I also present 2 pieces from my digital mandala series 'Roebourne Mandala' and 'Dwellingup Wattle'. These works are landscape inspired pieces from around my travels in West Australia in which I photograph and manipulate concerning myself with repetition and colour. Inspired by indigenous artists and their deep spiritual connection to the land and the consequential art works. I attempt to spend time on the land, look through lens then computer process the image in a trance state such as that of producing a more traditional mandala.

The last piece 'Steam Machine' is a found work deconstructed and put back together. It also asks questions of aesthetics and the absurd use of raw materials, which in this case is copper.



Dan Spriggs  
*Dwellingup Wattle*, 2010  
digital print mounted on aluminium



Dan Spriggs  
*Roebourne Mandala*, 2010  
digital print mounted on aluminium

