



Ron McBurnie *The Temptation of St. Antony* 1994 hard ground etching and aquatint, 200 x 200 cm (eight plates), edition of 15

Ron McBurnie

# METAL AS ANYTHING

## EDUCATION RESOURCE

A PERC TUCKER REGIONAL GALLERY TOURING EXHIBITION

# INTERVIEW (continued)

6. Have you heard or seen something funny or unusual recently that you would like to make into an artwork?

Yes. In one of the streets near where I live, is a short, round man who walks with his dog every morning around 9am. I would like to make an etching of him and his dog. He never wears a shirt but has a large belly and an enormous Mexican hat sits on his head. One day his dog had a blue bucket round its neck to stop it from scratching a sore ear. The man is attached to his dog by a long rope. The dog walks wherever it likes. The round man seems to have no control over it.

7. What would be the best and worst thing about being an artist?

The best thing about being an artist is that I can make and enjoy making different things. As well as this people seem to enjoy them too. The worst thing is that there is never enough time to make all the things I would like to in the time I have available.

8. What advice would you give to an artist just starting out?

Learn from the dead. Don't just look at what contemporary artists are doing. Look at what those artists of the past have achieved. Don't be scared off by their brilliance. Try to analyse what they have done then try to use those achievements in your own work.

9. Your art practice involves a lot of travelling to different countries. What has been your favourite travel destination thus far?

I like many countries and places. One of my favourite places is Bruges in Belgium. It is a wonderful medieval walled city which has an amazing collection of Renaissance art and sells the best fries (chips) you could ever eat.

10. If you weren't an artist or an art teacher what would you be doing?

Maybe I would have a music shop or be an antiquarian print dealer.

11. If you were stranded on a deserted island what are three things you couldn't be without?

1 My wife 2 Some of my favourite music 3 My dog Lou Lou

12. What is the most bizarre thing about you that no-one knows?

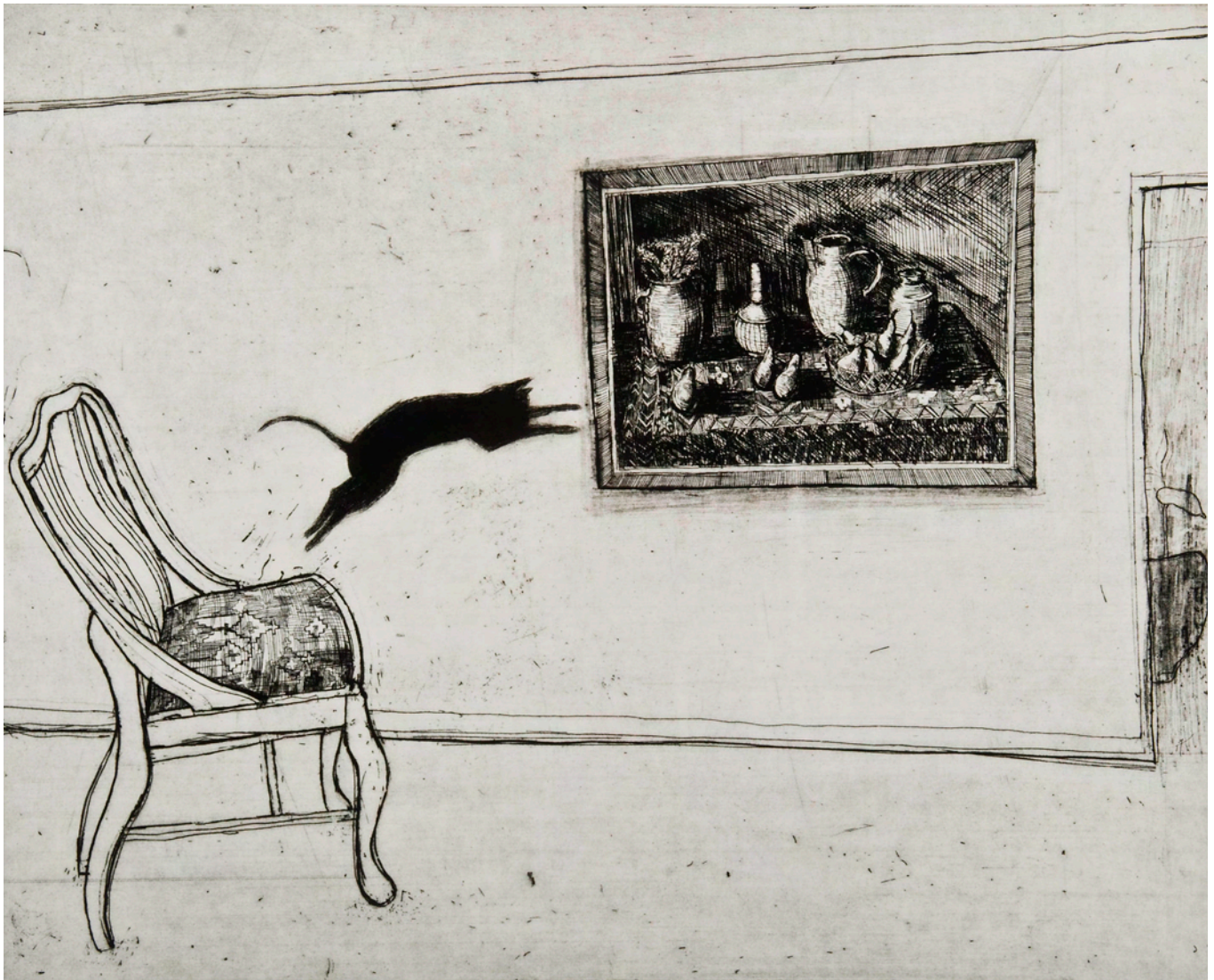
That I rode a calf in a rodeo when I was five. I was bucked off but lived to tell the tale.

13. If you had super powers what would they be and why?

This is a really tricky question. I think I would like to have the ability to be in more than one place at the same time. That way I could do much more.

# WORKS IN PROFILE

## Suburban (Pets)



Ron McBurnie

*This was Whistler's mother's cat's third attempt to jump onto the table of the Margaret Olley painting*  
1997

Hard ground etching and aquatint, 39 x 49 cm, edition of 20

# WORKS IN PROFILE

## Suburban



Ron McBurnie

*A Lady of Elephants*

1988

Hard ground etching and aquatint, 20 x 31cm, edition of 20

# WORKS IN PROFILE

## The Rake's Progress



Ron McBurnie

*White dreaming with a black conscience*

1989

Hard ground etching and aquatint, 74 x 50.1 cm, edition of 30

# WORKS IN PROFILE



Ron McBurnie  
*A short story of progress*  
1989  
Hard ground etching and aquatint  
75 x 50cm, edition of 30



Ron McBurnie  
*Still searching for a Gallery, Fortitude Valley 9pm Friday*  
1989  
Hard ground etching and aquatint  
73.6 x 50.1cm, edition of 30

*The Rake's progress series was made over a two year period in Brisbane and Townsville. The etchings, like those made by William Hogarth in his original series, follow the fate of the "Rake" on his journey through life. Unlike Hogarth's narrative, the Rake in my series is a young artist who both observes and participates in events as they unfold in different environments. As well as recording many local events that occurred while I made the series, I included many historical art references that had some way influenced my early artistic development.*

– Ron McBurnie 2009

*The Rake's Progress* is a suite of twelve etchings completed in 1990 and pays homage to the etchings and painting series of the same name by William Hogarth. McBurnie's rake character is distinctly Australian, set within suburban Brisbane and Townsville, Queensland. The Rake's quest is to find an art gallery in which to exhibit his work. Loaded with numerous quirky art and cultural references Rake's adventures involve inheriting a suburban backyard barbecue, witnessing the city's cultural and historical destruction, getting lost in the visual delights of a hypermarket, sales of the century and disappearing into an abyss. Semi-autobiographical the series follows and records the life, events and many influences of Ron McBurnie.

# WORKS IN PROFILE

## Romantics



Ron McBurnie

*Under the light of the hill*

1997

Hard ground etching and aquatint, 50 x 59.5cm, edition of 30

# GLOSSARY

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**AQUATINT** is an etching with tonal variations. It is created through the use of resin dust which is melted on to the etching plate prior to being put in acid. Darkness depends on how long the plate is in the acid.

**ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE** is when an artist lives and creates artwork in a new or different location. This could be in another school, town, state or country.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY** is a person's own life story represented in an artwork, song or piece of writing by that person.

**BODY OF WORK** is a series of artworks produced by an artist over a period of time.

**BURNISH** is to polish an etching plate surface smooth with a hard steel tool.

**DRYPOINT** is a printmaking technique in which an image is incised or scratched directly into a plate with a hard-pointed "needle" of sharp metal or diamond point. The plate can be copper, zinc, metal or a hard plastic such as acetate.

**INTAGLIO** print is an image printed from a design incised, scratched or etched into the surface of a plate. The ink lies below the surface of the plate and is transferred to the paper under pressure.

**EDITION** is a set of identical prints, sometimes numbered and signed, produce by, or under the supervision of the artist. Two numbers are often written at the lower edge of a print — the first indicating the prints place in the order of all prints in the edition, the second number indicating the total number of prints in the edition.

**ETCHING PLATE**  
An etching plate is a flat sheet of metal, usually copper, steel or zinc. An etching plate can also be hard plastic such as acetate.

**ETCHING** is an intaglio printing process in which an etching needle is used to draw into a wax ground applied over a metal plate. The plate is then submerged in a series of acid baths, each biting into the metal surface only where unprotected by the ground. The ground is removed, ink is forced into the etched depressions, the unetched surfaces wiped, and an impression is printed. Also, both the design etched on a plate and an impression made from an etched plate.

**HOMAGE** is a reference to someone with an artistic work. It is a recognition and celebration of this person's influence on them.

**MEZZOTINT** print is made by creating a rough surface on the plate that will hold ink and print as a rich black. The whites and greys are obtained by scraping and burnishing the metal flat again.

**NARRATIVE** is a story that tells the details of an occurrence or course of events.

**RECORD** or long play (LP) is how music was recorded, stored and released to the public before the invention of compact discs (CD's). Either 25cm or 30 cm records are played on record players.

**STUDIO** is a room, shed or building where an artist creates their artwork.

**SUBURBIA** refers to the area or areas of residential communities (houses) located outside a city centre.

**SURVEY EXHIBITION** is a specific selection of artworks.

# REFERENCES

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# A Perc Tucker Regional Gallery travelling exhibition

*Metal As Anything: Ron McBurnie* is a travelling exhibition developed by Perc Tucker Regional Gallery and toured by Museum and Gallery Services Queensland. This touring project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland and the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

