show and two at Gomboc Gallery. His work is typified by macabre assemblages which position the human figure, or part of it, within a situation of pain or imprisonment. His work is always exquisitely crafted; the anatomical correctness of the works accentuates their sinister qualities.

Arkelov's influence over a section of the sculpture community cannot be overlooked. Artists such as Theo Koning, Stuart Elliott, Peter Dailey and Claire Bailey all make work which addresses important social issues through making insightful and often witty caricatures of the human condition. The Art Gallery of Western Australia has in its collection a particularly good example of Stuart Elliott's work. It is an installation of a complete town of dark, ruinous buildings, which on closer inspection do not quite function. The buildings are made from ceramic and are fired black as though they have been through some terrible destruction. On the streets of this town, rows of trucks with front axes like horns march relentlessly forward in ways that always block each other's path. Elliott is preoccupied with the complete futility of the relentless pursuit of tasks and ideals with which mankind concerns itself.

David Jones is a sculptor with an international reputation. Mahogany Spiral made from 144 charred wood blocks describes the formal use of natural materials which characterises his classic and highly refined work.

Carmela Corvai's work Untitled Seed is well-proportioned and harmonious. Using sticks, thread, clay, leaves and paper she has patiently constructed an intricate, woven, structure of two semi-spherical seed shapes while the base of the piece is made from a careful layering of amber-coloured leaves. The work is somewhat evocative of British sculptor Andy Goldsworthy who makes ephemeral work from reconstructing all kinds of natural elements within the environment.

References to catalogues:
Sculpture Survey 1995 Gomboc Gallery Middle, Swan.
One Hundred Years of Sculpture 1895 - 1995, AGWA, 1995.

**Image-Scavenging**

*Dangerous Liaisons*
Plimsoll Gallery, Centre for the Arts, Hobart
7 - 30 April 1995
Reviewed by Jennifer Spinks

*Dangerous Liaisons* is both a more unruly and less interesting exhibition than the title - with its seductive, sophisticated overtones - would appear to promise. It is, in fact, a rather motley, indifferently-hung collection of works by contemporary Australian artists who have been more or less inspired by periods and features of Western art as diverse as the Renaissance, seventeenth century Dutch genre painting, Maltese and South American Catholic imagery, the Baroque, Rococo, Classicism and Neo-Classicism. It includes the artists Maree Azzopardi, Rose Farrell & George Parkin, Brad Levado, Anna Platten, Siobhan Ryan, Timothy Schultz and Lisa Tomasetti. Curator Diana Klaason invokes Postmodern image-scavenging as the unifying stylistic element of the exhibition, while the thematics are broadened to include "private or shared agendas — significant social, cultural, sexual and moral issues — (addressed) in highly individual, contemporary and contrasting ways, with humour and irony tempering serious intent."

One aspect remains constant throughout this grab-bag of an exhibition: it is clear that none of the artists can hope to duplicate the technical mastery and illusionary power of their sources, and indeed, seem uninterested in doing so. We must assume that they have other concerns, ranging from the referential to the subversive. It is, then, unfortunate that the curator appears to have a greater interest in simply demonstrating that these artists have historical antecedents than in probing how such complex relations have developed within their work. A more selective curatorial approach allied with a more considered, intimate hang may have allowed the intriguing individual qualities of the works to emerge, rather than swamp them in a chaotic whole.

Those artists in *Dangerous Liaisons* who pursue a quietly thoughtful vision fare badly from an uncomfortable proximity with exuberant, dramatic artists like Schultz and Ryan. Two Polaroid photographs from Rose Farrell & George Parkin's 1989 series Miserable Pleasures and Glorious Mysteries are almost lost in the melee. Their Madonna's poigniant, melancholy gesture and the rich yet subdued background details of these tableaux fail to command sufficient attention in such gaudy surroundings. In any case, this specifically South American religious imagery seems inappropriate in an exhibition which proposes to concentrate on European masterworks.

Anna Platten's realist painting *Self-Portrait in Studio* (1992) draws on the traditions of seventeenth century Northern European painting. She imparts an eerie presence to the mostly intimate subject matter of this work and the accompanying drawing *Study for Puppets* (1994). The potential of these images to unsettle the viewer could have been developed to a fascinating degree in a more intimate setting.

Both Platten and Farrell & Parker have produced works with quietly complex relations of imagery and technique to their sources. It is a shame that various other works in *Dangerous Liaisons* meet the curatorial criteria of art historical elements and implicit or explicit sexual content in a much less interesting fashion. Brad Levado's monochrome paintings combine beautiful young men with fragments from classical antiquity. They are intelligent and sympathetic homoerotic images, but technically and stylistically tame.

In a similar vein, Lisa Tomasetti draws on Renaissance traditions when posing her black and white photographic nudes. She employs well-worn clichés of the genre (including deeply-shadowed studio lighting, exaggerated grain, and languidly narcissistic figures) which undercut any subversive intent she attempts to bring to her work.

Maree Azzopardi's reworkings of religious imagery combine basic
elements of découpage, splashes of
gold paint, and rather heavy-handed
applications of shellac. Her theme of
specifically female religious ecstasy
is potentially intriguing, but its
impact is lessened by a thoroughly
mediocre presentation.

Siobhan Ryan's sculptural work is
quite different: her almost excessive
attention to the materiality of these
Rococo-inspired extravaganzas has
fascinating results. Metal, velvet, and
"dripping" resin, among other
components, twist through the pieces
Boudoir, Landscape and Plode (all
1994). Their elaborate, convoluted
forms are reminiscent of hearts,
maps, female genitalia, and human
cells, and refer insistently to female
experience.

Similarly, Tim Schultz's paintings
Goria (1994), Marquise (1993), Psyche
(1993), and Severed Head (1994),
exaggerate, and render demonic,
features of Rococo art. They are
peopled by monstrous, predatory
women, who are decorated with
pears and lurk in decadent interiors.
These funny yet macabre paintings
have a sophisticated relation to the
Rococo; they exploit its inherent
sensuality, while challenging its rigid
categorisations of humour and
tragedy. Schultz clearly revels in
both the pleasures of the artificial
image, and the murky, sinister
undercurrents of human sexuality.

Large-scale, gaudy and dramatic,
these paintings dominate Dangerous
Liaisons. Despite their intrinsic
interest, it is a shame that the cool,
subtle works of Farrell & Parker and
Anna Platten were not also permitted to
achieve their full impact. Had they done so, the
exhibition might have offered some
intriguing insights into
contemporary art and the persistent
lure of European culture.

Building with bits
The Futures Technology Centre
Elizabeth College, cnr of Warwick
& Murray Streets, Hobart
Design team: Paul Ian (architect),
Ian Friend (artist), Sarah Lindsay
(artist), Kevin Todd (artist)

Reviewed by
Ian McLean

Tasmania's State government has
an art-for-buildings scheme: budgets
for buildings constructed from the
public purse are obliged to commit
an amount towards the purchase of
art works. This usually results in the
commissioning of a sculpture, or the
purchase of other art works to adorn
the building. In these projects the
relationship between the architect(s)
and artist(s) have not always been
easy or necessary. However, for the
recently completed Futures
Technology Centre, a state
government project and part of a
secondary college in Hobart, artists
and architect formed a collaborative
team; a new order of design was
conceived in which artist and
architect were not competing for the
same territory.

The Futures Technology Centre
has received more bad press in its
short life than any other building in
Tasmania. I have found it difficult to
find any person, any architect or
artist who is not shocked by the
building's inelegance. This is clearly
a building with 'meaning'.

The design team agreed that they
should interpret the pedagogical
function of the building in
architectural terms, deciding that the
necessary construction elements of
the building would be its
embellishment and form. If this
sounds like form would follow
function, in fact function followed
frame. The aesthetic strategy was to
re-engage the design precedents set
by early modernism within a
postmodern frame. While the Centre
would be a zoo of formalist
quotations, these quotations would