

FRANCES KEEVIL GALLERY

MICHAEL KOLBE

Lifelike creations from the old and abandoned.

"My current works have been inspired largely by the English sculptor, Harriet Mead, who produces the most amazing range of metal sculptures. My niece in England sent me a few pictures of Harriet's work which set me on a new path. For nearly twenty years I have been making metal sculptures following much the same pattern, working cold steel, manipulating it either by hammering, cutting and bending or with limited heat from a small gas bottle, producing full bodied works of similar appearance.

Over the past two years I have been on an extremely steep and exciting learning curve, producing totally unique works which have brought me great satisfaction and joy. It is difficult to explain the feeling one has after converting what is essentially a pile of junk, into a metal sculpture which is truly pleasing to the eye. This transformation has been assisted largely by a homemade forge that I made after obtaining the information on Google. In fact, the forge has opened up a whole new world to me, and I encourage anyone I meet, who is working in metal, to also take this step.

One exciting aspect is to be able to see some creature, either in real life, or on the Internet, knowing now that I can make my own unique version of my chosen subject. I spend a lot of time on Pinterest and Google, sourcing items I like (this is critical, because it is difficult making something which you do not like), sketching them in my workshop, then building the sculpture.

Patience, pain and passion are experienced in varying degrees and at times, one needs to leave the piece, take a walk or go for a coffee.

The reactions of some people are so gratifying when seeing the sculptures for the first time. One lady offered me a huge range of metal objects in her shed, so I followed up and gained multiple treasures for my work.

But then you do get the odd man who takes a real close look, grunts, and criticises the quality of the welding! "

Born in Bulawayo, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe)

Having lived on the land for most of his life Michael developed a strong bond with the environment, with a special love for wildlife.

The family immigrated to Australia in 1979.

Following a trip back to Zimbabwe, a metal bird from Mbare Markets in Harare triggered Michael's desire to sculpt.

Having this great love for animals and birds he found it relatively simple to capture their poses, mannerisms and life-like qualities, using historic old, tools; capturing 'life' with simple lines, balance, poise and flowing movement.

EXHIBITIONS:

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