

# Stephen Birch



'Untitled', 2005, fibreglass, polyurethane, acrylic, oil paint, hair,

The exhibition is Birch's first major museum show and features creations made of fibreglass, papier-mache, polyurethane and resin. Visitors can expect to see handcrafted plant forms, human figures and urbanite objects such as car tyres and chandeliers taking on human characteristics. His sculptures evoke complex states of mind and act as reflections upon society and culture. – Sydney museum Web-statement

1

This means that Birch uses cultural references to make us think about how we see things. Spiderman engages our interest but then we have to work out why he is looking at the strange face coming out of the wall. What does it all mean?

Birch used fibreglass resin to create these detailed figures. He has made the figures out of this to show how Spiderman can be related to a children's action figure. Making the work relate to a larger audience. Children admire pop culture, and to see Spiderman in a normal body position will show not only children but all people that Spiderman isn't real and a fragment of Stan Lee's imagination.

2

Birch is influenced by a lot of mythology and how it influences society today. In this work Birch has hung the bearded man to the wall this is symbolising the past, a figure of a knowledgeable man. Spiderman is representing today's society. Spiderman is being used because he is a powerful figure in society's pop culture. It is as if the old man is passing down his wealth of knowledge to today's society giving us the advice to be great and powerful, Just like Peter Parker's Uncle Ben gave him the knowledge **"With Great power comes great responsibility"**. This saying can be put into society's context so we can step forward into the future knowing the past generations mistakes.

3

This work 'Untitled' is also based around popular culture and how we see things not as they are. Spiderman is a heroic superhero that is constantly swinging around by his web. But Birch has arranged this Spiderman's positioning in a very plain body position he's just standing there looking at the bearded man sticking out of the wall. The fact that Spiderman is motionless shows that he's only a freak or a mutant as such he will now never fit into society. The man's head that has been hung to the wall is an absurd freak. He is being used to be a metaphoric mirror of Spiderman's reality, that only other freaks can see him as a freak.

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