

Metropol | Angela Bennett spends

## five minutes with

You may not have heard of Allan O'Loughlin – he's not one to seek the limelight, but thanks to encouragement from his partner Andrea he is having his inaugural sculpture exhibition on 14 and 15 February from 10am – 4pm. Titled Works of the Weld, it features stunning super-sized sculptures displayed in a two-acre garden in Mandeville just north of Christchurch. Following the exhibition Allan is sure to be the talk of the local art world as his sculptures are clever, intriguing and beautifully crafted.

Allan and Andrea bought their two-acre property 15 years ago and have created a haven of planted rooms and water. It will definitely be worth the short drive to see these sculptures which are being opened to the public for the first time at 1 Roscrea Place, Mandeville. Directions from the city are: Take the motorway north, take the first turn off onto Tram Road, travel 9km then turn left into McHugh's Road and travel 700m.

**You're a fitter welder, when did you begin using your trade to create sculptures?**

15 years ago I worked for a power construction company, we had hundreds of left over punched steel pieces and from there I started constructing a knight in armour. He has never been completed and lies happily in our garden.

**I understand you build automotive conveyor systems for commercial ventures part time as well as pursuing your interest in sculpting – how much time do you manage to put into your art on average?**

If I'm not working on conveyer projects I can spend two and a half to three days a week creating my pieces.

**Have you always been interested in sculpture and/or have you dabbled in other art forms and media?**

Artistic flare has definitely come from my mother's side of the family. I took art at college and have always had a creative side. Black and white photography is also a passion of mine.

**The human form is seen in many of your sculptures, what aspect of people do you enjoy capturing most?**

I enjoy all aspects of the human form, the emotion, the creativity and challenges it presents. I can also exaggerate the form a little, as you will see!

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Continue to master  
and capture life in  
my sculptures  
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Sculptor Allan O'Loughlin  
with partner Andrea – in their  
garden in Mandeville.

**Your work is in steel – is this a difficult medium to shape and create with?**

No. With steel you can always add to it or cut it off to reform. The heat of the weld can bend the steel into interesting shapes but it can also work against you.

**Is wearing a welding mask while creating your works restrictive?**

Welding flash burns and damages your eyes. There is no choice you just have to work with it.

**You have galvanised your sculpture of the Storyteller which makes it look very striking, other of your works are in rough steel; do you enjoy the variety of finishes steel produces?**

Yes I do love the galvanised finish, although the rusted tones blend into nature better but they won't last forever.

# Allan O'Loughlin



**At present you are working on a piece which has a gentleman on a penny farthing bicycle do you think you will have it finished in time for your exhibition?**

Hope so. Even if it isn't, people can view it as a "work in progress".

**Which is your favourite sculpture to date and why?**

I don't have a favourite piece, but some of my early works have a special place.

**Your sculptures are large and oversized – how long do they take you?**

I can work on a couple of pieces at the same time. When I get tired of one I start another and can go back weeks and sometimes years later. Generally they take anything from three weeks to six months.

**Do you sell your work?**

Yes. Everything is for sale, isn't it?

**What do you enjoy most about being a sculptor?**

I love having a free licence to create anything I want.

**Do you have a favourite sculptor or artist who inspires you?**

With my passion for photography I like the group of photographers "Magnum", the way they capture life.

**What was the last book you read and how long did it take you?**

Three Billy Goats Gruff and I don't think I finished it either.

**What is your favourite piece of clothing?**

My leftie (welding glove).

**What couldn't you live without?**

I suppose I'm meant to say my partner, but I would have to say my eyesight.

**What do you love to do on a Sunday afternoon?**

Pottering in the garden and lying in my hammock.

**What is your favourite drink?**

A strong gin and tonic.

**Which is your favourite café, restaurant or bar in Christchurch?**

The Good Street Deli in Rangiora and a dark ale in Harringtons, Belfast.

**What are you like at parties?**

They always finish too soon and I'm always the last to leave!

**What are your plans for the future of your art?**

To continue to master and capture life in my sculptures.

