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## **JAMES GLEESON INTERVIEWS: ROSEMARY MADIGAN**

**James Gleeson:** Rosemary, could you begin by giving us some biographical background material—when and where you were born, your family background and so on.

**Rosemary Madigan:** I was born in South Australia, at Glenelg.

**James Gleeson:** What year was that?

**Rosemary Madigan:** In 1926.

**James Gleeson:** Was there any interest in the arts in your family background?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Not particularly, no. My father was a geologist and an explorer.

**James Gleeson:** Yes, a well-known explorer. Tell us something about your father—where he explored.

**Rosemary Madigan:** He went down to the Antarctic with Sir Douglas Mawson; he was on that expedition. He was a Rhodes Scholar and went straight over to England to take up the scholarship. That was during the wartime, so that was delayed. Then he came back and was attached to the University of Adelaide. He did explorations in Central Australia. He was one of the first to cross the Simpson Desert, and wrote a book about that. Being interested in rocks and stones—I suppose there may be some connection there, not in an artistic sense, but in a physical sense, perhaps.

**James Gleeson:** You were surrounded by stones; that is the essence of geology, anyway.

**Rosemary Madigan:** It was in the air.

**James Gleeson:** And your mother's family?

**Rosemary Madigan:** We traced my mother's family back to about the 1300s, which is quite fascinating. Her father was a gem merchant—the same field, I suppose. He promoted the opal. He had a marvellous collection of opals. He was a gardener and he made a very beautiful garden in the Adelaide Hills, which has been taken over now by the Department of Education as an in-training life centre.

**James Gleeson:** And you studied first in Adelaide?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes; I went to school in Adelaide. I came over here during the war years, and went to tech at night here.

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**James Gleeson:** You had no previous art training before you went to the tech here?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No.

**James Gleeson:** How did you know you were interested in art?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Strangely, I was about twelve and I just thought to myself one day, 'I'd like to become a sculptor'. I don't really know how this idea came to me.

**James Gleeson:** Never a painter?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Never a painter; just a sculptor. But, of course, when you go to the art school you don't go straight into sculpture.

**James Gleeson:** No; it's a general course, to begin with.

**Rosemary Madigan:** I always knew that was what I wanted to do.

**James Gleeson:** What year did you first go to the tech?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I had a sort of checkered career, because we were over here. In about 1940 I first went to the evening classes. I did three years, the basic course, and in the third year I went into sculpture.

**James Gleeson:** Who was in charge of the sculpture?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Lyndon Dadswell was, back then. Then I went back to Adelaide, and studied for a while at the art school there.

**James Gleeson:** Under whom?

**Rosemary Madigan:** That was just part-time. I took classes in sculpture and drawing. Then I came back here to finish the course in sculpture.

**James Gleeson:** So that would have taken you to about the mid-forties?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** And from then on you worked as a sculptor, but you taught as well?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No. I gained my diploma, I think, in 1948. That was the time when I did the—

**James Gleeson:** *The torso?*

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**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** Was that your diploma piece?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I suppose it did go in for the diploma. It was an old piece of stone that was found in the tech grounds. Many of us did that. There was quite a lot of stone lying about.

**James Gleeson:** Any idea where it came from?

**Rosemary Madigan:** It's supposed to be indurated sandstone. It could have come from the Pymont quarries or from the North Shore, around here; I'm not quite sure.

**James Gleeson:** Is there any way of telling locality by the quality, texture or colour of local sandstone?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I think so. I had thought it came from the North Shore, but I think mine is a little greyer. That is perhaps a little yellow.

**James Gleeson:** There is a lot of grey, and the quality of the colour is beautiful.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. That may be from Pymont, quite close to here.

**James Gleeson:** When you cut into it, was it that colour, or did it take on a patina?

**Rosemary Madigan:** It has been out in the open for many years, and I think it does have an aged patina on it.

**James Gleeson:** But it was always grey, in a sense, not red?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No.

**James Gleeson:** That takes you to the diploma year, 1948.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** What happened after that?

**Rosemary Madigan:** In 1948 I went back to Adelaide. It is hard to recall all of this.

**James Gleeson:** Just the main outlines as far as the arts are concerned.

**Rosemary Madigan:** I worked on here for another year for the Travelling Arts Scholarship, which I put in for in 1950, and went away then for three years.

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**James Gleeson:** You won the scholarship?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I won the scholarship and went away to Europe for three years.

**James Gleeson:** So that was 1951, 1952 and 1953?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** Whereabouts in Europe did you go?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I went to England. I didn't study straight away there; I travelled around England and did the cathedrals and became fascinated with Romanesque sculpture. I went to Europe and spent a year in Italy. I went down to Sicily and around and came back to London. I went to the Sir John Cass School of Art there, where I found another piece of stone in the old, bombed out site that they had for the sculpture section, and I did a carving there. I don't know the name of the stone. I don't know where that piece is; it is lost.

**James Gleeson:** Lost in England? Did it come back?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. I exhibited it in the Royal Academy and it wasn't accepted. I was going to leave to come back, so I left it there—you could leave them there. I didn't have anywhere to place it, so I left it. It could have been thrown out, someone else could have carved it, or maybe someone owns it. That's a mystery.

**James Gleeson:** What was it?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Looking back, it was influenced by India. I was fascinated by Indian art at that time.

**James Gleeson:** Where would you have seen that—in the Victoria and Albert Museum, or in the British Museum?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. Going through we had a day at the museum in Bombay, which was very impressive. So I think it was influenced by India. It was about the same size as *The torso* that you have. I was using, for the first time, power tools with that piece, which was quite an innovation.

**James Gleeson:** *The torso* was done using only hammer and chisel.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. I thought I'd try this because they had power tools there.

**James Gleeson:** How did you find them?

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**Rosemary Madigan:** I found it was good for roughing up, not for the final surface. I wanted to get it done and I finally finished it, packed up my things and said to them, 'I've finished that and I'm going to have the baby tomorrow'. So I went off, but I didn't have her till a week later. That was Celia, who has turned out to be a painter.

**James Gleeson:** How many children do you have?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Three daughters.

**James Gleeson:** And Celia is going to be an artist?

**Rosemary Madigan:** In that sense, yes; in the visual arts. I suppose she had had enough of sculpture by that time, so she was a painter. Then we came back to Australia.

**James Gleeson:** Sydney or Adelaide?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I spent a month on the way back in India, which was a very fruitful time. I did a lot of drawings in the caves at Ellora—specifically Ellora; I stayed for three weeks there—and then came back.

**James Gleeson:** This would be in 1954 or 1953?

**Rosemary Madigan:** At the end of 1953. I worked in Adelaide then.

**James Gleeson:** When did you settle in Sydney?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I have only recently come to Sydney to settle. I have been here for seven years now.

**James Gleeson:** You call that recently?

**Rosemary Madigan:** To settle, yes.

**James Gleeson:** Rosemary, you mentioned that the Indian influence appeared in that piece in London. Did that continue in your work?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Not really. I felt very close to the Indian work and the whole Indian ethos and wanted to go back, but didn't have a chance to. No, that petered out with me. I don't see the work in the same light as I did. To me now it does not have the formal structure that I need.

**James Gleeson:** No. I can't see any sign of that influence or interest in *The torso*.

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**Rosemary Madigan:** No, because that was before. I have gone back to my original stance.

**James Gleeson:** Yes. What interested you at that time, in 1948, when you carved *The torso*?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Being young, and a student, most things interested me. But there was very little communication.

**James Gleeson:** I know. It was so difficult to find any information—

**Rosemary Madigan:** Especially about sculpture.

**James Gleeson:** Yes.

**Rosemary Madigan:** I had found Gaudier-Brzeska and been very struck by his work as having all the ingredients I needed for sculpture. I was influenced by seeing those books. That would be the main one.

**James Gleeson:** I am probably reading into it things that you never intended, but to me the way the forms flow in a flame-like way always reminds me of the modelling on an El Greco torso. Were you aware of El Greco?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, I did love El Greco.

**James Gleeson:** Do you see any—

**Rosemary Madigan:** I hadn't thought of it until you said so, no.

**James Gleeson:** So it wasn't a conscious thing at all?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No, certainly not conscious. But I liked Matisse and El Greco—most of the good painters. I had books in those days on all the painters, but very few books on sculptors.

**James Gleeson:** When you began work on the carving by for *The torso*, did you have a maquette?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No.

**James Gleeson:** Or drawings—something fixed in your mind?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No, I didn't. I had an idea that I wanted to do a reclining torso. I began that and it didn't work out to my satisfaction.

**James Gleeson:** Using that same block?

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**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, the same block. It just didn't take off. That has happened to me several times with work. If it doesn't take off, there is something to do with the material that doesn't fit my idea; maybe that comes into play. So I made this into a standing torso. It was years before I went back to that. I have been recently doing some reclining figures because I remembered that I had never really accomplished that. I just took it as a torso, as a simple form, and didn't have a maquette. I did a couple of drawings for it, that I found recently. I am not sure whether they were done beforehand. Maybe they were done before. Sometimes they make drawings in between, in the middle of a work.

**James Gleeson:** You teach drawing, don't you?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. I like teaching drawing very much.

**James Gleeson:** You draw very well.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Thank you. Sculpture is very private for me. I have no proselytising attitude or inclination. Drawing is wider, somehow. I do not have to influence people towards a certain form or shape. It is a freer way, a freer approach. I just keep the sculpture. I take some sculpture classes now because there seemed to be a need for it. I was asked to do some and I thought I should.

**James Gleeson:** Do you have any definite method of approaching a piece of sculpture? You clearly didn't use a maquette or even basic drawings. Do you ever do that? Do you ever start a major work, for instance a sculpture, with a small maquette?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, I have done so. In those early years it was very much the fashion to work direct. Looking back, possibly that concept was deemed necessary then. I didn't, because we were tired of having machine pointing up a maquette. To cut that right away, we just go straight to it and work direct, carve direct. But that's over; I think it's free now. Sometimes I can do that. Sometimes I know exactly, and I go to it and that's all right. At other times I might make some drawings, or make some maquettes, really little sketches. I might use one because I see the possibility in that. So I have done that.

**James Gleeson:** Rosemary, you're fundamentally a carver, aren't you?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** You are not interested in constructed sculpture?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I have done some of that, but it doesn't hold me enough. Also with the modelling, with clay I find that is too wide; the scope is too big for me. I need more discipline, which I like in the given piece of—

**James Gleeson:** Stone or wood.

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**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** You work with equal interest in stone or wood?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, it gives a certain tension, a certain resistance for me that I need to pull the forms into strength, whereas I find clay difficult. It's too moveable, too fluid.

**James Gleeson:** Yes, too malleable.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Too malleable, yes.

**James Gleeson:** Does the stone or the shape of the wood or its grain or texture suggest the form to you?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Not directly. I try to choose stone and wood without grain because it disturbs me. I prefer to have a completely plain piece of material to work with, just so that it doesn't influence me. Of course, the size will influence the final object.

**James Gleeson:** But you don't select a shape of timber or stone at random and then devise a form that will fit into it? You approach with a preconceived idea of what you want to get out of it.

**Rosemary Madigan:** There again, it is variable. If you have an idea you may go and choose a block and get it cut because you know exactly. You have a maquette, or you have an idea of the size you want and the kind of stone, and you look for that. At other times you find a piece if you wander around the yard, or something might come in and you think, 'I could do something with that'. You do not quite know what, but you feel that it's a piece for you. So you buy that, and you keep it until the idea gels, germinates.

**James Gleeson:** How about the crucifix up in your house? How did you come by that?

**Rosemary Madigan:** The crucifix began through Bob Klippel, who was in Brittany and who had seen Gauguin's painting *The yellow Christ*. While he was in Brittany he went to a little chapel where the original crucifix was hanging, the one Gauguin had taken his painting from. He sent me a postcard of it. It was quite different from *The yellow Christ*—the actual one. It was just a starting point for Gauguin. Bob wrote and said, 'Why don't you do one, using this as a starting point? I feel you could do it'. So that was just a nice little postcard. Years later I met another sculptor, who had been finding timber but who had changed to metal work and no longer needed this timber. So I took one of the logs home—it had been a tree in the streets of Adelaide. Again, as you were saying before, which comes first: the piece of timber or the idea? This piece of timber just came, and I remembered *The yellow Christ*, and I thought how it was a yellow timber.



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**James Gleeson:** Yes, very clearly yellow.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. It was a log of about five feet. I had it cut in half, and used one half for the figure and the other half I then divided into two, and carved the two arms from that and there was *The yellow Christ*.

**James Gleeson:** Another major work is just outside in the courtyard—the relief in dark timber. Could you tell us something about that?

**Rosemary Madigan:** That was another piece that I did for the Travelling Arts Scholarship.

**James Gleeson:** As long ago as that?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. That would have been carved in 1949, and into the early part of 1950. That was a large block of walnut that I found at White Bay here. Again, I thought 'Now that's a piece I can use'. I had quite a different concept for that. That was going to be a carving with two figures. I started carving into the centre of that for the two figures, and suddenly realised that I would not have time with this enormous block because it was such a huge, three-dimensional shape. So again, I dropped that idea and had it cut into sections, and then I carved this relief. It still took me about six months to carve.

**James Gleeson:** You mean the block was much deeper?

**Rosemary Madigan:** It was a solid block.

**James Gleeson:** What—about four feet square cubic?

**Rosemary Madigan:** It must have been. Yes, it is a shame that I did that to it, looking back, but I knew the idea would take me a lot of time, a lot of preparation—

**James Gleeson:** I see. It wasn't a relief that you had in mind originally, when you started—

**Rosemary Madigan:** No.

**James Gleeson:** It was a three-dimensional, two-figure—

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. So I had this cut and worked on that. I remember that I used to sing while I cut that.

**James Gleeson:** The theme is beauty?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. I wonder if that had anything to do with it. I do not remember which way it went—whether I sang because I was carving musicians

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or whether, because I was singing, I thought, 'Maybe they should hold instruments'. They were holding early instruments, small harps. I was working outside, out of doors, with that one. That seemed to go straight away. I don't remember any drawings for that. I think that was a direct carving again.

**James Gleeson:** You worked directly into it?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. That dark, almost black colour is the natural colour of the wood.

**James Gleeson:** But it has been outdoors.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. That has been exposed also, and that has got very dark and black with the aging process.

**James Gleeson:** I notice it is a split and you've had to reinforce it to bring pieces together again.

**Rosemary Madigan:** It did split, only in one part, on one panel. That was already split and I filled that. But that had to be redone recently just because it was old. It did have the little cut at the top where I had begun to do the first idea. So that has been filled in since. That was why that was there.

**James Gleeson:** There was another work that Daniel was looking at, at Gallery A. Has this one outside in the courtyard got a name?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, I called it *Fete champetre*.

**James Gleeson:** *Fete champetre*.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. It's just a little outdoor concert.

**James Gleeson:** And the one Daniel was interested in, in Gallery A?

**Rosemary Madigan:** That is a piece called *Eingana*, which is based on an Aboriginal legend. That is a piece of English lime. I think it's about twelve feet in length. It is a horizontal relief. That again was interesting because, although I wanted to carve, it started with that motif. But I wanted to carve it very sharply, in a hard-edged way. I hadn't done that before, and I felt I wanted to cut it very decisively. I started working on it, and the wood is beautiful wood to work with, but it is a flowing kind of wood, and it wouldn't let me do this.

**James Gleeson:** What year was this?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I think I began that in about 1968.

**James Gleeson:** In Adelaide?

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**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, I worked on that.

**James Gleeson:** And the English lime?

**Rosemary Madigan:** It is, again, a yellow timber. It's very nice; it's not too soft and it's not too hard. You can work it without a hammer, without a mallet. You can work it by hand. It cuts beautifully.

**James Gleeson:** What is the theme of *Eingana*?

**Rosemary Madigan:** The theme is the story of Eingana the snake, the serpent. It is the creation of the world. Eingana contains all the tribes, all of nature. It is before the world began—it is the Creation story.

**James Gleeson:** According to the Aboriginal mythology.

**Rosemary Madigan:** In Aboriginal terms. An Aboriginal comes along and spears Eingana, and from the wound all is created: the trees, the fish, the stones, the rocks, the mountains, man—all is created then. This carving is Eingana the snake, with these elements within. It is a sort of see-through shape; they may be a little vague. Also at that time I was relating my own Western heritage to the Aboriginal, the fact that I was an Australian and lived here and loved and understood, I hoped, in the same way as a native Australian did. It was my land and yet I had this Western heritage, especially religiously. So I just combined those two things in the carving as a way of thinking myself at the time. On the right-hand corner I have the traditional hand of the father with the two fingers, but it's in a sort of gum-leafy shape. You can read into that that idea, if you like. There are Aboriginal symbols of journeying, there's the spear with which Eingana was pierced, there's a tree, and there are some animals. I forget now; I haven't seen it for a quite a while. I thought of the Eingana serpent as the Mary figure; there's a sort of a halo around the head of the snake. Then there is the mountain where the Aboriginal people take their holy symbols—churingas, are they called?

**James Gleeson:** Yes, churingas.

**Rosemary Madigan:** So I have a symbol there of bread and of water, material and spiritual. There was one space in Eingana that was vacant. I always thought a bird had to go there but for some reason or other I resisted that idea. I can't think why now. I thought, 'No, that doesn't fit into any of this mythology that is mixing itself up in my mind; no, a bird I don't understand'. But this bird would be there—although I hadn't carved it. I was leaving this space and one day I went down to the workshop and I just gave in. I walked in and said, 'All right, I'll carve you'. And I did. It turned out to be a sort of a pelican bird, which had a symbolism, in the end.

**James Gleeson:** A Christian symbolism, yes.

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**Rosemary Madigan:** An Australian bird, too. At the end of this carving—it reads from right to left—there's a large symbol of an ear, which to me meant hear—hear about what has been given to you, not only visually, but in this other way. All of that is basically incidental to the actual forms, but while I was carving them, because I did have the drawing for this—

**James Gleeson:** You did?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. I drew this before I thought of all these things specifically. But while I was carving it, it was more that these ideas came to my mind and influenced the shapes a little bit.

**James Gleeson:** Is *Eingana* a unique work, or does a philosophical or symbolic thread run through a lot of your work?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No.

**James Gleeson:** It was unique?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, out of context. I haven't done anything like that before or since. I got really interested in that as an idea. I don't think art should have these literary—and my work doesn't have—literary connections. It was interesting to have a story, but it wasn't a story to me as such. It was the Aboriginal story, and I was reading those stories at that time. I basically wanted to make a carving, and to make it work, and for it to have a geometric shape. I just used the way I was thinking at that time, and put that into it.

**James Gleeson:** What are you working on now? I can see you have a relief over in the corner.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, that is English lime.

**James Gleeson:** Is that difficult to get out here?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. I was lucky. I found this timber yard and they had a stack of these pieces, and I bought up several pieces.

**James Gleeson:** Do they import them for sculptors?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I think they cut them up and they just happened to come out. They were at that time shipping them out in large pieces, instead of cut-up pieces. But it is unusual. It is very difficult to obtain a solid piece of timber. They are about three inches in depth, which is about as much as you can get in that size.

**James Gleeson:** That theme is music too.

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**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes it is. They happen to be my three daughters. One at that time was playing the violin, one was playing the harp, and another the recorder, so I put those instruments in.

**James Gleeson:** Rosemary, I know drawing has always played a very important part in your creative work, and you do draw very well. What precise role does it play? Do you use drawing as a method of approaching sculpture? Do you do it for its own sake? Just how do you feel about drawing?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I just do it for its own sake, and love it for that. For me, that is the

way it should be. Of course, I do at times need to use it during a work of sculpture. If I am not sure which way it may go, I may make several drawings. If I get stuck I will make some drawings because they are easy to discard. You think, 'Well, that's what I don't want. That wouldn't work'. But often I just draw them, and then I find out what I do want to do and discard them. Usually if I draw during a piece of sculpture, I don't use any of the drawings. They just seem to be a way of clearing my mind and the possibilities quickly. The drawings don't have any direct relationship to the sculpture, usually.

**James Gleeson:** Do you think sculpturally when you're drawing?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** Do you think of solid form?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I do, and my students often say, 'That is a sculptor's attitude' and I say, 'Well, that's what I am, and that's the way I see it'. So I think it does influence the drawing the way you think—whether you are a sculptor or a painter.

**James Gleeson:** I seem to remember looking through some of your drawings; it was some time ago. Many of them were based on early forms of sculpture, Cycladic. Am I mis-remembering or not?

**Rosemary Madigan:** I didn't draw consciously from forms in that sense. I did study in the museums and maybe did some drawings directly from pieces in the museum. I spent a long time drawing in the British Museum.

**James Gleeson:** That is what I may be recalling.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. But not for my own drawing.

**James Gleeson:** No.

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**Rosemary Madigan:** I drew a lot in India, and everywhere I went in Europe I made drawings from galleries and museums, more so than drawing landscapes or buildings.

**James Gleeson:** You drew sculpture?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** And you drew paintings. You did the frescoes?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes. The only paintings I drew were the Etruscan paintings in the tombs of Tarquinia. I was fascinated by those and couldn't help drawing them because they're so lively. But I didn't draw—you can't really draw from paintings. They were linear, in a certain sense. Also, I was taken into this big wheat field and every now and then we'd dive down into a tomb. I thought, 'These are not easily accessible', so I just took my sketchbook and drew as much as I could. Then I found that the museum had taken some from the tombs and I had a chance there to study them in more depth more and put some colour in. So I did have a chance to draw them there, with a little bit more time.

**James Gleeson:** But the corpus of your drawing is an independent activity?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Quite an independent activity. When I'm making it I don't think 'This is going to be a sculpture', or 'I'll change it like this because it will suit the work of a sculpture'. But I do draw from the figure as much as I can. Of course, a sculpture is basically figurative and from the figure, so there's that automatic relationship.

**James Gleeson:** I have seen sculptural works of yours that are completely abstract.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** Not many.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Not very many, no.

**James Gleeson:** You don't regard it as a direction that you want to take.

**Rosemary Madigan:** No. I've made little forays and thought, 'No, that's not my branch at all', and I've come back to the figure because I still do not understand it as I would wish to. There's a world there for me, and I'm content with that. I hope I've learnt the twentieth century lessons. But I still feel that something perhaps can be done with the figure.

**James Gleeson:** Yes. You don't feel that it is finished, closed?

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**Rosemary Madigan:** No. If I did, I couldn't go on using it. I feel that I can contribute perhaps something in that way by using the figure. It is just natural. As I say, I have tried to be purely abstract and it doesn't satisfy me. Even in collage I've tried it, and I always go back to the body and to the figure.

**James Gleeson:** It's obviously an instinctive thing, a basic thing, and since you don't feel that it's exhausted there's no reason not to.

**Rosemary Madigan:** No.

**James Gleeson:** Rosemary, I think that covers it very well. I notice that you have been using wax there in some of those little maquettes. Are they maquettes?

**Rosemary Madigan:** To a certain extent they are. I think of them as drawings, in a way—drawings in sculpture. As you might make a quick sketch, for sculpture I make little wax pieces.

**James Gleeson:** Sketches.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Sketches. They are not meant to be blown up; they are just experiments. They are quick and small. They can be the germ of an idea. But then if I want to go on with that, I might make a larger work. But it is always an original, another work, in a sense that it is just the process of the small piece. Then the larger piece will be different—perhaps quite different but just with the same idea. It might be cut out in that way with the wax. Doing that with that flat sheet wax might turn into a piece of metal sculpture. It could happen that way.

**James Gleeson:** You have not yet worked in sheet metal?

**Rosemary Madigan:** No, I haven't. But I've done some wax pieces that could arrive at that. It would be incidental; it wouldn't be that I'm thinking, 'I want to make metal pieces. I want to go into that'. It would be just that that idea happened to fall into that pattern because I had some flat pieces of wax.

**James Gleeson:** You are obviously a carver; there's no question about that.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Evolving—perhaps so. It is very difficult being a carver because you need to have a supply of good timber, and I don't really fancy gluing sections together because that always shows. I like the timber to be a natural carved surface without too much preparation on top of that, or disguise. To laminate the timber isn't a satisfactory way—

**James Gleeson:** Doesn't do anything to—

**Rosemary Madigan:** You have to get it cut in large blocks. That is one of the drawbacks of timber, of woodcarving—but not so much so with the stone. We don't have any satisfactory marbles in Australia, so they have to be imported.

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**James Gleeson:** Are all these pieces imported?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes.

**James Gleeson:** Are they Carrera?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Carrera, yes. We do have an Australian marble, as you know, but it is very sugary.

**James Gleeson:** Is this Wombeyan marble?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, and Angaston marble.

**James Gleeson:** Angaston?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, from South Australia. It is too sugary for me.

**James Gleeson:** It crumbles, does it? Is the grain coarse?

**Rosemary Madigan:** Open grain, yes, like lump sugar.

**James Gleeson:** I see. Carrera is fine grain. Do you prefer wood to timber, wood to marble?

**Rosemary Madigan:** For a long time I worked in timber and then suddenly I started working in stone and in marble. That is what I am doing at the moment. I think I'll have a time carving stone now. So I like to alternate, I like to be very flexible. People grow and change and sometimes you feel like doing one thing, and sometimes another. If I have timber around and I have stone and I have wax and I have clay, I move within them. Certain ideas seem to be tolerated better in certain mediums.

**James Gleeson:** That's good.

**Rosemary Madigan:** It's good to have a lot going on around you.

**James Gleeson:** Yes. I think most artists do that. They work on a number of things and if they come to a full stop at one point they go on to something else.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Yes, I do that.

**James Gleeson:** Rosemary, thank you very much. I think that covers it very well indeed.

**Rosemary Madigan:** Thank you, Jim.