

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **Artist's maggots and marsupials make their mark**

An artist who uses maggots, Tasmanian devils and other marsupials to create his work will be awarded a PhD from the University of Tasmania this week for his unique work.

John Parish, whose work features 'mark-making' done by wildlife on his bushland property Cloud 13 in the foothills of Tasmania's Western Tiers, is also a skilled sculptor in bronze.

His bronzes feature Tasmanian devils, the famed Tasmanian tiger (which he maintains may not be extinct in the State's wilderness areas) and a family of native hens, colloquially known as 'turbo-chooks'.

But for his most unusual works he has enlisted the help of maggots infesting the carcasses of roadkill: devils, wallabies, possums and quolls.

He placed the carcasses of a devil, a wallaby, a possum and a quoll each in its own Parish-created contraption allowing the maggots to drop into a funnel, then into one of four dishes containing four different coloured paints.

The maggots swam out of the paint, crawling across the paper away from the light, leaving behind their individual records.

Mysteriously, these maggot patterns somehow "embody some aspect of the creatures consumed," John maintains.

Placed beside his intricate drawings of the animals, the maggot markings bear an uncanny resemblance to the animal they dropped out of: heavy black splodges for the devil; light swirly patterning for Tasmania's native cat, the quoll.

He also left soot-covered sheets in ancient caves on Cloud 13 to entice marsupials to leave their marks – and was not disappointed.

"The devils in particular didn't just leave their footprints, they scratched over and over, seemingly enjoying themselves," John said. (*See photo below*)

John has transferred these images onto ceramic tiles and onto transferred them onto larger canvases.

*For more information or to arrange interviews  
contact Sharon Webb, University of Tasmania, ph. 0438 510616.*

Devil mark-making: Art by John Parish



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