

BRAZILIAN-BORN-ARTIST Aseem Pereira is humbled that a work from his *Panorama Surface* series, brilliantly woven from strips of Coke and Bundaberg Rum cans, was short-listed for this country's prestigious 2007 Wynne Prize. Every one of his works, he explains, is really his way of coming to terms with Australia's panoramic vistas and a means of connecting with his new country, so he's surprised that one of them has been honoured in this way.

In 1989, looking out to sea on Australia's east coast, the poinciana-scented villages of Brazil seemed so remote. The artist acutely felt the absence of 'home' and he shed tears freely. In his country, there's a word for such melancholy, *banzo*, and one can even die from it. In the ensuing years, Aseem translated his homesickness into art, weaving discarded materials – broken bottles, crushed beverage cans and other detritus – into shimmering surfaces of light and beauty. Initially working in glass, he produced pieces so breathtaking that he came to the attention of renowned US publication *New Glass Review*, and those in the know from his adoptive home hailed him as a glass designer of note.

Large-scale commercial commissions followed and today his sculptural forms can be found in hotels and numerous corporate and private collections. "To be in silence and make something beautiful come to life," Aseem muses, "this is my way of communing with my surrounds." It's also a means, he admits, to validate his past. Often feeling like an alien in Australia, for years Aseem struggled to find a language for his sensibilities, but he has now found a way, ironically, through the traditions of his native country. Using the skills of Brazilian basketweavers, Aseem hammers and drills glass shards before threading them into magical weaves reflecting Australia's vistas. More recently, he's been plaiting aluminium debris across steel fretwork to create his works.

Having found his artistic voice, Aseem is elated to discover that an ever-widening audience is listening, most notably the Wynne judges, who voted his work among the "best landscape painting of Australian scenery, or figure sculpture".

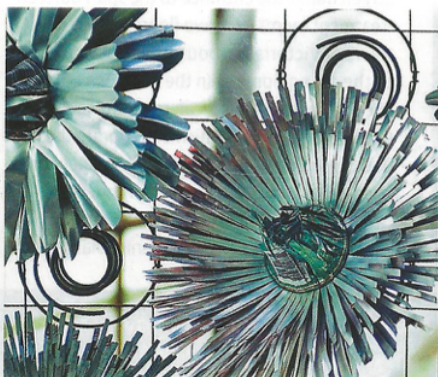
It's hard to say what pleases the artist most – being considered in the same illustrious company as painters Hans Heysen and Russell Drysdale, or finally feeling like a real Australian. In his quest to fulfil his destiny, Aseem feels that he may have finally reached 'home'.

For more details, or to see more of Aseem's art, call Artduo on (02) 9371 2138 or visit www.artduo.com.au.



The alchemist

Discarded waste and a longing for his native homeland became the inspiration for Aseem Pereira's exquisite works of art.



TOP RIGHT Aseem Pereira surrounded by woven aluminium landscapes (one of which also features right) from his *Panorama Surface* series. LEFT A wire and aluminium sculpture from his current series.

