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A Ringing Glass (Rilke) **A major installation work by Ken Unsworth on Cockatoo Island** **1 – 28 June 2009**

Ken Unsworth is one of Australia's pre-eminent contemporary artists. In June 2009, Unsworth is exhibiting a series of four major new installation works in an extensive site-specific exhibition space in the Turbine Hall on Cockatoo Island.

Entitled *A Ringing Glass (Rilke)*, the event is in honour of his wife Elisabeth who died in October 2008. The works use many of Unsworth's recognisable motifs including pianos and suspended objects. As part of the exhibition opening on 1 June, Unsworth will host a private function for 160 guests (28 May), who after viewing the installations will be treated to an evening of fine dining, live orchestra, dancing and entertainment in a custom-built ballroom.

Throughout June, the public will be able to view the four installations, as well as view footage of the opening event, to be screened in the ballroom.

The installation title is a phrase from early 20th century Prague-born poet Rainer Maria Rilke's *Sonnets to Orpheus*.

Born in Bendigo in 1931, **Ken Unsworth** began his career as a painter before moving to sculpture in the mid-1960s. He has had numerous solo exhibitions in Australia and overseas, including a major survey exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (1998). Unsworth has exhibited in three Australian Sculpture Triennials and in six Biennales of Sydney. In 1978 Unsworth represented Australia at Venice Biennale. Major international exhibitions include Paris Biennale (1985), Magiciens de la Terre, Paris (1989), and Biennale of Istanbul (1995). He has received numerous awards including the Bi-centenary Sculpture Competition Award (1970) and the DAAD Scholarship, Berlin (1987). In 1989 Unsworth was awarded an Australian Creative Fellowship and was made a Member of the Order of Australia for service to sculpture. Unsworth lives in Sydney.

Born in Paris in 1922, **Elisabeth Unsworth** had a promising career as a pianist. After meeting Ken Unsworth in Hamilton, Victoria, and moving to Sydney, Elisabeth became a driving force in his career. After the death of her son from a brain tumour at age 33, Elisabeth established the John Mitchell Crouch Fellowship, awarded to young researchers in surgery and medical research.

Cockatoo Island has established a reputation for the exhibition of contemporary visual arts and hosting cultural events. The island was a major venue for the 2008 Biennale of Sydney, attracting over 85,000 visitors, and was the venue for the All Tomorrow's Parties music festival in January, part of the 2009 Sydney Festival.