

How great thou art

MASTERWORKS

Where: Swipers Gully Vineyard and Restaurant, Kangaroo Ground

When: October 15-30

Visit: masterworks.com.au

Preview: Angela Allan

Masterworks began as an annual art and craft fair for Eltham College students; it has since evolved into a biennial event, attracting some of the area's well-known artists.

No longer a showcase for students, this year's exhibition features 133 pieces from more than 30 experienced artists in a range of media, including oils, print, jewellery and metal, glass, wood and ceramics.

Sculptor and printmaker Deborah Halpern, who is known for her giant multi-coloured work *Angel*, which stands tall at Birrarung Marr in the city, is part of this year's event.

"I'm interested in having work that expresses myself and the part of me that connects with other people," she says. "I love to make work

that's whimsical and joyful and life-affirming and [art] that really inspires people. So if that's what the work does, my job is done."

Halpern's entries are sure to do just as she hopes, with a sculpture called *Cheeky Monkey*, a kinetic work known as *Wayfarer*, and three hanging panels – *Sleeping Bird*, *Fish*, and *Cat and Vase of Flowers*, on display.

Halpern was an artist in residence at Eltham College in 2007.

Masterworks also showcases three artists from South Australia and two from New South Wales. All works are chosen by a selection committee.

"In the past, we've had jewellery from the UK and oil paintings from Israel so it has branched out quite a bit," says exhibition co-ordinator, Simone Houlihan.

On display is Robin Phillips' cloisonne jewellery, which is crafted with Coober Pedy opals, and Gillian Hillman's pieces made with pearls, black diamonds and sapphires.

Three artists who debuted their works in



Deborah Halpern with one of her pieces.

DARREN JAMES

1999, are returning to Masterworks this year.

"Ona Henderson, a local artist who started the Nillumbik open artists' studios and Sheryl Lewis and Syd Tunn are exhibiting with us again," Houlihan says.

"It will be interesting to see what they think as they haven't been involved in the past few years."