



City Centre
Public Art Plan
June 2013

city of villages

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City Centre Public Art Plan

**by Barbara Flynn, City Centre Curatorial Advisor
in collaboration with City Design
endorsed by Council 24 June 2013**



Youngsters Caroline Rothwell Barrack Street 2012

INTRODUCTION

I. Executive Summary

The City Centre Public Art Plan aims to bring inspiring public art with a permanent legacy to Sydney's residents and visitors. By placing high quality public art in our urban spaces, the plan greatly contributes to Sydney's social fabric and the quality of daily life for Sydneysiders. It also sets out processes to encourage and enable public art commissioning in Sydney.

The City of Sydney's many public domain initiatives, past and present, represent our city's varied and complex history. Thanks to these initiatives, we already have a significant public art collection as part of the fabric of our city. This city centre plan ensures that new public art projects will complement our existing public art, and add meaning and vibrancy to the experience of living in, working in and visiting our city.

New public art created under this plan will magnify the ideas that founded the city, highlight those places most important to people, and enhance our city's well-known features. It will focus on Sydney's unique topography, urban structure and harbour identity, and its multicultural villages that are home to more than 200 nationalities. It will also make the most of Sydney's exceptional climate, which allows for outdoor experiences of art and culture, and recreation of all types – from sports and entertainment to fine dining.

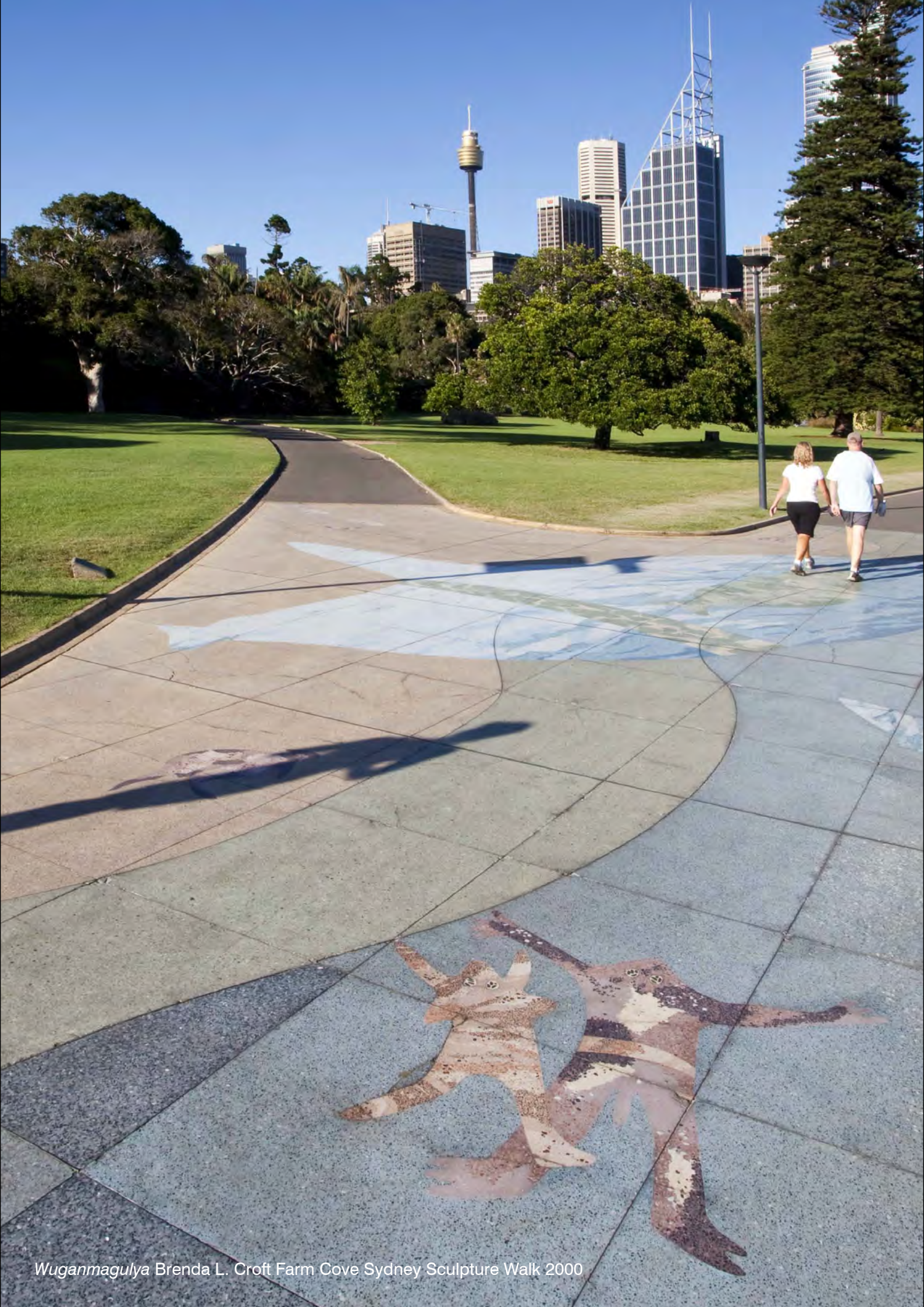
Over the next ten years, the City of Sydney will bring together an amazing group of artists, appealing to the most inventive and exciting artists working today. All project briefs for art in the city centre will be fair and inclusive and open to equal numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, Australians and non-Australians – including artists representing the many nationalities that make up Sydney's population.

The plan allows us to carefully choose the right list of qualified artists and keep their project briefs broad to allow these artists to best respond to our sites. The briefs will seek inventive, state-of-the-art projects that also have an element of surprise.

Sydneysiders have a genuine enthusiasm for public art, and this was clearly voiced in recent forums held to discuss ideas for the City of Sydney's new cultural policy.

This audience for public art in the city is broad, and includes residents, workers, students, and visitors from Australia and abroad, and children – the most important audience of all.

Good ideas are worth pursuing no matter how long they take to realise. Building in the possibility of change – by leaving some of the possibilities to the future, for subsequent generations to work through – will instil commitment to the benefits of public art for the city.



Wuganmagulya Brenda L. Croft Farm Cove Sydney Sculpture Walk 2000

II. Recommendations

Now is the time for Sydney to step up to the mark and implement a legacy of public art. The City of Sydney is in a financially strong position and has an unprecedented opportunity to incorporate public art in its plans for large-scale urban regeneration. These regeneration plans include the pedestrianisation of George Street and the implementation of light rail under the direction of Sustainable Sydney 2030.

Together with pedestrianisation, light rail and urban design improvements, public art will transform the city, improving the tenor and texture of life for its residents, workers, students and its increasing number of international visitors.

This plan recognises the critical path of light rail delivery for George Street and recommends that the City immediately develop artists briefs for the major George Street permanent public art projects to align with it.

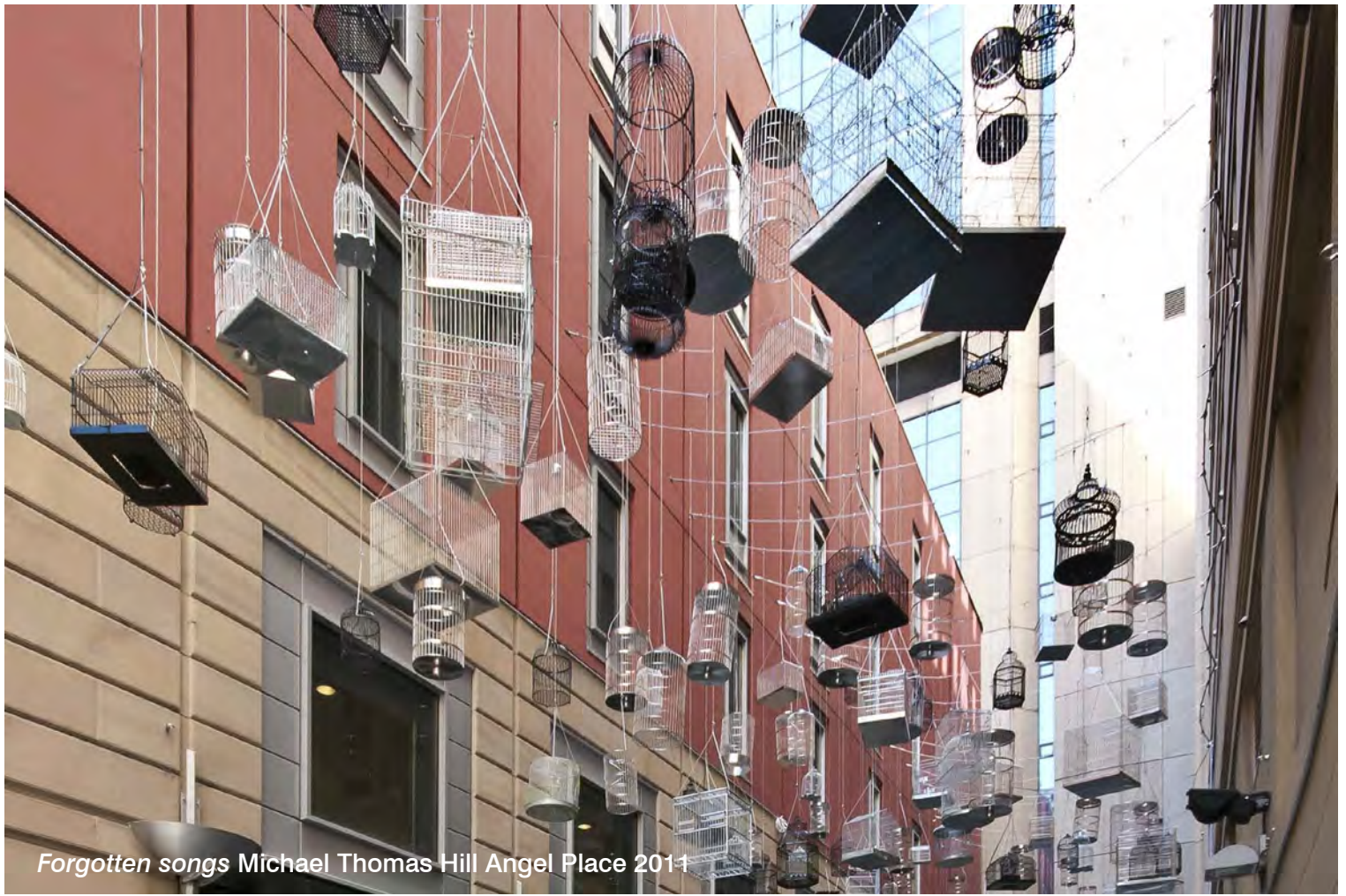
The opportunity to integrate high quality permanent public art in the City's laneways and other city spaces should also be progressed as part of the City's capital works projects that are already underway.

As a key to transforming the city centre, the plan identifies three squares off George Street to be developed with an integrated approach to public art and urban design. These projects should be prioritised for delivery to align with the completion of the George Street light rail project.

We also recommend exploring opportunities for partnership projects with the private sector immediately, as these projects help people invest in, and be part of, the redevelopment of new city spaces. Such partnerships are also critical to creating a sustainable, cultural and creative City.

Temporary art should be included along with permanent public art in all these projects. Temporary art has an important role to play in giving artists a voice to affect change and creates opportunities for more spontaneous engagement with the people of the city.

These permanent and temporary public art projects are critical to ensure that the City of Sydney continues to build the cultural and creative city envisaged in Sustainable Sydney 2030 and build on the inspirational leadership it has shown.



Forgotten songs Michael Thomas Hill Angel Place 2011



Circle/s in the round' for (Miles and Miles +1) Newell Harry Temperance Lane 2010

III. Background

a. A track record of excellence and leadership in implementing public art

The City of Sydney Council has cause for pride in its accomplishments in the area of public art. The proposed new works will take their place near singular existing installations in the central city, including:

- Caroline Rothwell's *Youngsters* in Barrack Street (2012);
- Jason Wing's *In between two worlds* in Chinatown (2011);
- Jennifer Turpin and Michaelie Crawford's *Windlines* at Scout Place, Circular Quay (2011);
- Michael Thomas Hill's *Forgotten songs* in Angel Place (2011); and
- Newell Harry's *Circle/s in the round' for (Miles & Miles +1)* in Temperance Lane (2010).

Site-specific works commissioned by the private sector for the public domain with the guidance of the City of Sydney include the recently completed James Angus sculpture *Day in day out* at 1 Bligh Street. Other works are soon to be realised by Cerith Wyn Evans for 161 Castlereagh Street, and by Jenny Holzer for 8 Chifley Square.

Concurrent urban renewal projects such as the Darling Harbour redevelopment and the more commercial, tourist-aligned, harbour foreshore area of Barangaroo, could follow the City of Sydney's lead. This would significantly contribute to the public art landscape of the city.

b. Sydney Open Museum and Sydney Sculpture Walk

Since 1990, the City of Sydney has developed and maintained a register of the more than 250 works of art in the City's existing collection. New registers of plaques, murals and street art are currently in development.

The Sculpture Walk, curated by Sally Couacaud, Visual Arts Office, Sydney City Council, was a City of Sydney initiative for the Sydney 2000 Olympics. For the initiative, the City commissioned ten artists for site-specific works connecting to the geography and topography of Sydney. Sites included Farm Cove, the Tarpeian and Domain Precincts of The Royal Botanic Gardens, and along the site of the original Tank Stream.

c. Cultural layers – Eora Journey, Chinatown, Green Square, City Centre, and the Cultural Ribbon

Consistent with the important work the City of Sydney has been doing to develop cultural opportunities for the city, the Council continues to provide the leadership and set the course in its projects, including the Eora Journey, and projects at Chinatown, Green Square, in the City Centre and along the Cultural Ribbon.

Strategies parallel to this one are guiding the implementation of works by Aboriginal artists throughout the city and by artists of Chinese descent in Chinatown. For the inaugural project of the Eora Journey with Curatorial Advisor Hetti Perkins, artist Reko Rennie worked with the local community of Redfern. For Chinatown, Lindy Lee's *New century garden* is in the planning stages, and will soon reconfigure a block-long expanse of Thomas Street between Ultimo Road and Thomas Lane. Curator Aaron Seeto is looking to Asia to develop public art programs and commissions in Chinatown that reflect Australia's economic alliances with China and other nations in the region.

The Cultural Ribbon was one of ten project ideas in Sydney 2030. The Cultural Ribbon is a harbourside cultural walking trail and includes public art to connect the trail to George Street and the city centre.

At Green Square, a curatorial advisor has been appointed to work with competition winners, architects Stewart Hollenstein, on a new library and plaza as part of the \$8 billion transformation of the area.

d. What other cities have done

There are numerous examples of cities across the world, that have improved local economies by implementing public art. Sited at the heart of Chicago's Millennium Park, *Cloud gate* (2004-06) by Anish Kapoor is the poster child for the city it transformed. Other convincing case studies have come out of Spain in the 1980s and 1990s, and from Abu Dhabi today. In Spain and the United Arab Emirates, the focus has been on making improvements for the longer term – as this plan recommends – implementing works of art as a lasting legacy.

Through art housed in the two buildings he designed for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, architect Frank Gehry was instrumental in the renaissance of Bilbao, Spain (1997) and in the complete remaking of Abu Dhabi. Successful case studies such as these underscore an economic imperative that Sydney cannot afford to ignore.

Also in Spain, based on examples of the public art program for the Barcelona Olympics in 1988, for Madrid Río in 2007-11, and *Metropol parasol* in Seville in 2011, we know what art can do for cities in terms of tourism, transformation and urban regeneration. Now that conditions in Spain have declined, municipalities can be relieved they undertook improvements when they did, since studies are showing that in the case of Barcelona and Bilbao, public art implanted decades ago, has lifted the human spirit and helped people to cope with the current crisis. When times are tough, art can help people recover their sense of pride and connection.

Other public art initiatives geared to the shorter term have also been undertaken by cities, for example, in Münster, Germany. Under the rubric of *Skulptur Projekte Münster*, Münster presented four city-wide sculpture exhibitions in 30 years, and developed a reputation for being an important location for presenting the latest trends in new sculpture and installation art. Temporary projects by Isa Genzken and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster were part of the 2007 iteration.

e. An audience ready for art

The past accomplishments of the City of Sydney have prepared the way for the approaches to and types of public art that are part of this plan.

In just one example of how the face of Sydney is changing through art, recent public art works have become highly popular photo opportunity spots. Caroline Rothwell's *Youngsters* in Barrack Street (2012) and Jason Wing's *In between two worlds* in Kimber Lane (2011) now rival the J F Archibald memorial fountain in Hyde Park and the El Alamein fountain in Kings Cross as Sydney's most popular photo-op sites.

Sydneysiders' genuine enthusiasm for public art in 2013 was also clearly voiced in forums held to discuss ideas for the City of Sydney's new cultural policy.



Day in day out, James Angus, 1 Bligh Street 2011



Untitled Isa Genzken Skulptur Projekte Münster Germany 2007

IV. Vision

a. The widest possible intellectual remit

To challenge preconceived notions of public art, the research for this plan has been rigorous and its recommendations are wide-ranging. Sydney's public art must aspire to match the excellence already achieved in Australian architectural projects and the uniqueness seen in our other cultural assets, such as our internationally-renowned cuisine.

A wide range of individuals with a wealth of knowledge and experience of cities were invited to provide feedback and contribute ideas on an informal basis as this plan was developed.

Complementing their contribution, the input of the City of Sydney's Public Art Advisory (PAAP) and Design Advisory Panels (DAP) – comprised of the leading Sydney-based thinkers on public art and design – has been invaluable.

b. Research and consultation for the plan

This plan attempts to set a framework to enable the Council to achieve a singular group of meaningful, relevant, and future-oriented works of art. These will in turn serve as a guide and inspirational primer to encourage further support for art by other government agencies and the private sector.

The plan builds on recent discussion papers and policy/guidelines documents by the City of Sydney's departments City Culture and City Design:

Council-endorsed discussion papers and policy documents:

- a. Gehl Architects, *Public Space and Public Life*, Sydney (2007);
- b. *Sustainable Sydney 2030: The Vision* (2008);
- c. *City Art Public Art Strategy* (2011);
- d. *Creative City: Cultural Policy Discussion Paper* (2013).

Culture and public art plans:

- a. *Chinatown Public Art Plan, Stage 2 Report* (2012);
- b. *Eora Journey: International Review of Contemporary Interpretation Practice* (2011);
- c. *Eora Journey: Recognition in the Public Domain – Implementation Plan* (2012);
- d. *Green Square Public Art Strategy* (2012);
- e. *Harbour Village North Public Domain Plan* (2012).

Relevant capital works projects in laneways:

- a. *The Fine Grain - Revitalising Sydney's Lanes* (2008);
- b. *Public Art Strategy, Laneways Revitalisation Project Southern Precinct* (2009).

Relevant partnerships:

- a. *Draft Public Art in New Development Policy and Guidelines* (2013).

Additionally, a number of unpublished internal documents were consulted.

c. Reclaiming the city centre

In 2006, urbanist and architect Jan Gehl of Gehl Architects was invited to conduct a review of the public spaces of the city. Gehl's seminal study, *Public Space and Public Life, Sydney* (2007) described a lively and engaging place underpinned by environmental objectives that public art would address and make manifest.

In a structural sense, George Street would be closed to traffic and given back to the people, and light rail would help them get around in a quieter and cleaner city, relieved of the noise and

emissions of cars. The three squares of Central, Town Hall/Sydney Square, and Circular Quay would continue to be key to the proper functioning of the city with new, modern infrastructure.

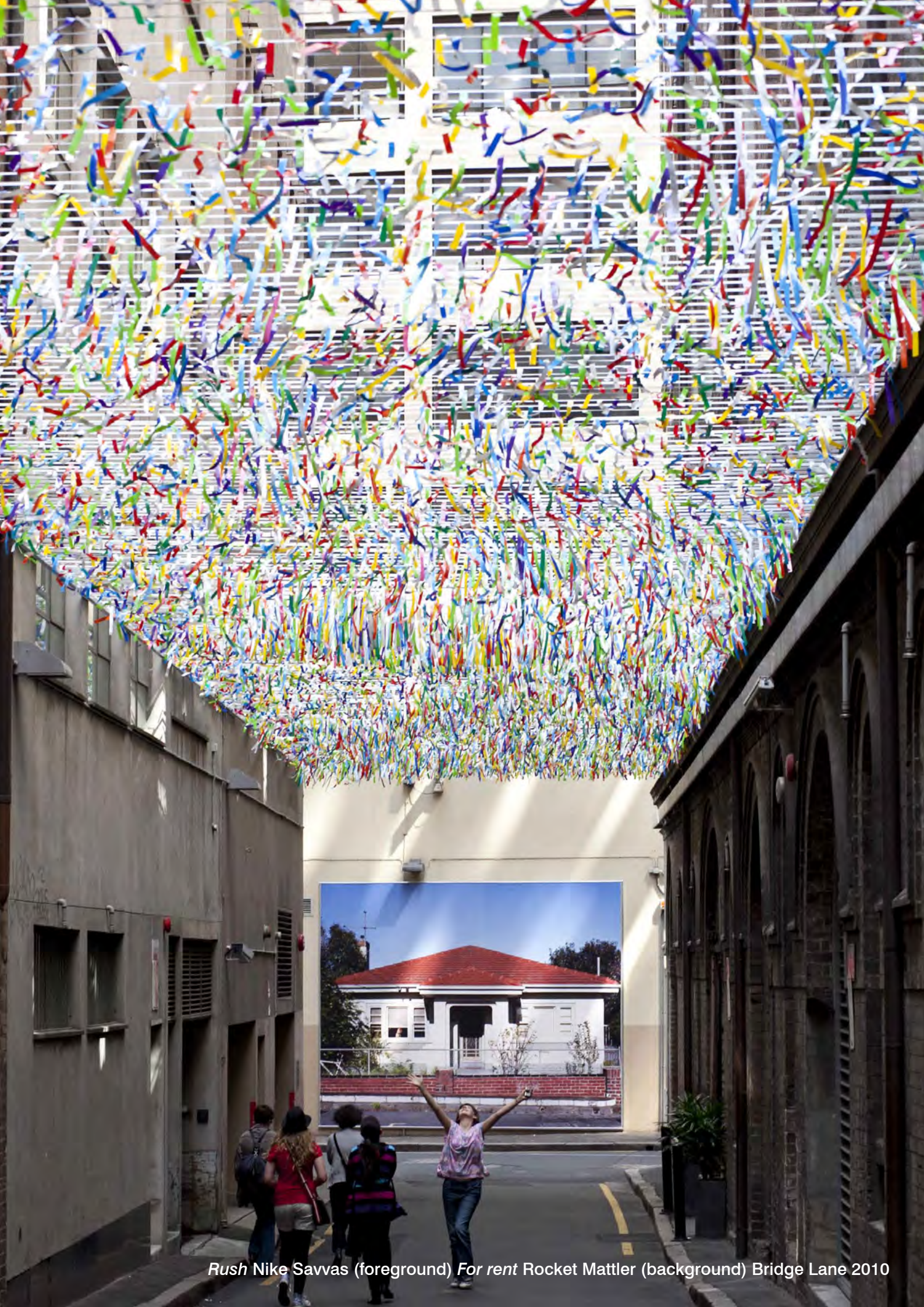
d. Sustainable Sydney 2030 (2008)

With Gehl's recommendations as a foundation, Sustainable Sydney 2030 was adopted by Council in 2008, committing the City to a vision for a more liveable city – 'Green, Global and Connected' – with artists playing a central role in the city's transformation into a sustainable, lively and engaging place.

e. City Art Public Art Strategy (2011)

The structure and recommendations of this plan are aligned with Sustainable Sydney 2030 and it incorporates the guiding principles of the City of Sydney's Public Art Strategy (2011).

Celebrating Aboriginal stories and heritage, supporting local artists, promoting best-quality public art, supporting partnerships to facilitate opportunities for public art, and engaging the public remain as important now as when these plans were developed.



Rush Nike Savvas (foreground) For rent Rocket Mattler (background) Bridge Lane 2010

THE STRATEGY

V. Guiding Principles

a. Transforming Sydney with a legacy of permanent public art works

The City of Sydney is committed to realising permanent works of art that have the potential to become familiar touchstones for the public. The aim is to transform the city centre with a legacy of art that possesses a gravitas and landmark quality equivalent to that of our great civic buildings and spaces.

b. Supporting events and temporary works of art

In the short-term, during the light-rail construction period, events and temporary works of public art will help relieve any inconvenience caused and nurture the audience for the exciting permanent art works to come. In the long-term, popular seasonal programs such as the Laneway Art Program and Art & About will continue to enliven the city. The year's cultural calendar will be enriched with the contributions of the City's many partners including Vivid, Sydney Festival, Biennale of Sydney and Kaldor Public Art Projects (Kaldor PAP).

c. Allowing quality, diversity, inclusivity and fairness

It is essential to explore a mix of possible artist contributions. Consideration should be given to the singular works of art being done by female artists in the Middle East today, and in parts of the world such as Africa and South America – an affirmation seldom seen in past art initiatives in this city. By casting a wide net and insisting on a superior level of quality and ability among artists, diverse and iconic new works of public art will add another, dynamic layer to the impressive array of works realised by Council to date.

This plan proposes working situations that will benefit all artists regardless of their cultural background, whether they are based locally or elsewhere, and a structure for artists to collaborate in. The inaugural project of the Eora Journey is one example of this. In Reko Rennie's *Welcome to redfern* at 36 Caroline Street, Redfern, an outstanding outcome was achieved when an exceptional artist worked with relatively inexperienced local youths to achieve something of lasting value for the whole community.

d. Working with our history, our stories and our existing public art

Tradition, our history, and our stories can be referenced and reconfigured in the contemporary city. Site-specific installations such as Janet Laurence and Fiona Foley's *Edge of the trees* on the site of the First Government House, tell an important story, becoming and remaining relevant and meaningful by magnifying the ideas that founded the city.

The City of Sydney is a multicultural city of villages that remain as dynamic as its past. Art will give prominence to important places in the city, past and present.

By being open to approaches from any era and place, there is much to be learned from world-class public spaces, whether a 19th-century French park or a modernist one like the Museum of Modern Art Sculpture Garden from 1953.

Equal in richness to Sydney's history is the tapestry of public art already in existence in the city. The connections between older and newer works of art will be explained and communicated so people can enjoy them more. New works of public art can be placed thoughtfully and strategically, without overcrowding the city.

e. Considering children

Most important of all is the consideration of children who represent the future of our city. We hope that the public art created under this plan will engage and inspire children and young people, enhancing and changing their lives in positive ways.

In Sydney 2030, noted film and theatre director Neil Armfield spoke of nurturing the 'little fish', be they children or creatives:

'But who's looking after the breeding grounds, the grasses at the end of the creek, where you find the little fish feeding, the place from which a culture can grow with safety and with strength? This is what needs our attention now.'

Every one of us has a story of how we came to art, perhaps as a result of having seen a large-scale outdoor sculpture that creates a lasting impression.

f. Looking to the future, remaining flexible and being open to change

Crucial to the success of this plan is flexibility, the ability to look to the future and to be open to change to sustain people's interest in art over the decades. One way of achieving this is to implement the art works over time. This will create anticipation, suspense, and a sense of the unexpected – key factors in visual stimulation, audience development and appreciation.

g. Ensuring amenity and sustainability

Comfortable seating, shade and plantings go hand in hand with sustainability, creating spaces people will want to spend time in. Sydney 2030 set out ten targets to be achieved by the year 2030 to make the City of Sydney more sustainable, including the reduction of greenhouse gases by 50 per cent, and the capacity of the City to meet up to 100 per cent of its electricity demand by local electricity generation, and ten per cent of its water supply through local water capture.

Artists today are working in line with the latest research on sustainability. Many attempt to reduce their own carbon footprints, electricity and water usage by developing new, more efficient ways to produce their art. In some cases, artists are directly addressing themes of sustainability in their art, for example, by making works that are patently anti-petrol consumption or supportive of cycling and greening.

h. Creating partnerships

With thought to efficiency and the possibility of sharing responsibility and funding, both existing and new works of public art in the collection of the City of Sydney will inspire the commissioning of new projects – by the City and other government agencies, and by the private sector. This will continue to enhance the experience of Sydney as a city with a dynamic and vibrant heart.

Guided by the City of Sydney, government and corporations will be inspired to contribute financing and in-kind resources to become partners in the transformation of the city centre. There can be a special role for the private development companies in transforming the higgledy-piggledy lane networks throughout the northern, central, and southern parts of the centre – the result of early modernisation in the city.

Imagine a city, visible to the public by day and by night from the street below as musicians and artists are ensconced in new, affordable rehearsal rooms and studios in existing and new glass towers along the spine of George Street. What a way to activate the street!



Welcome to Redfern Reko Rennie and local Aboriginal Youth 2013

VI. Opportunities

a. Use our distance as a chance to be original

In many ways, Australia's physical distance from other parts of the world can achieve outcomes that are original, unexpected and surprising. Distance facilitates freedom from the temptation to copy strategies that have been successful elsewhere, or to borrow techniques of urban regeneration that would be inappropriate within the Sydney context.

b. Involve artists for successful outcomes

'By 2030 I would love to see our artists getting the kind of public recognition we give to our sports stars and celebrities. Let's get more artists to help visualise our public spaces and institutions – public and private.' Elizabeth Ann Macgregor in *Sustainable Sydney 2030*

Artists can inform a project in ways other thinkers and specialists cannot, and they will be involved early in discussions about art for George Street and the city centre and help guide this process.

The City of Sydney's recently published Creative City Cultural Policy Discussion Paper talks about Adelaide's Thinkers-in-residence program, which has been in existence since 2003. Two or three artists – visionaries in the field such as Beijing-based Ai Weiwei, New York artist Josiah McElheny, and Rosemarie Trockel from Cologne – are examples of the calibre of artist that could be invited to assume leading conceptual roles from the outset. If they are able to allocate the time, artists like these could become the City of Sydney's first artists-in-residence.

As the various projects start to be rolled out, artists experienced in place-making will be engaged in mentoring younger, less-experienced practitioners. Similarly, Australian artists will work side-by-side with internationally-based artists, providing opportunities to learn, collaborate and network.

c. Use art to make the city more legible and easier to navigate

The process of transforming the city through public art provides the opportunity to make the city more legible and easier to navigate. The intention is to address the public spaces along George Street and the east-west connectors, and in the squares and the lanes – to realise their latent potential, rather than resorting to meaningless gestures and objects.

Another important question is: what can art do that other kinds of architectural and urban design approaches cannot? Given the complexity of the challenge, artists, architects, landscape architects, and urban designers working together will have the greatest chance of devising solutions that are, in equal part, visually exciting, and informed by a knowledge of cities and the built environment.

d. Try a variety of art types and approaches

There is a role for both monumental-scale works of public art that are strong and bold and effective tools for place-making, and small, even delicate, works of art that will add texture to the urban experience. Ephemeral and temporary works of art will feature intermittently in different places at any time of day or night. Channeling the Sydney street productions of Barry Humphreys from the 1950s, and more recent street interventions like Emma Pike and Sarah Langdon's *The amazing rolling picture show* (2012) – that incorporated video projects by 12 artists playing on two rickshaw viewing screens in a new lane, every Thursday night – the intention is to explore the challenges offered by the unexpected.

e. Share initiatives with government agencies, arts groups, and other countries and leading cities

The city will gain more sites and opportunities for art with the implementation of light rail in partnership with the State Government of New South Wales.

For 40 years, the Biennale of Sydney has brought works of art of great interest and significance to Australia on a temporary basis. The odd Biennale installation may have remained behind after the close of the show as a permanent work of art in the city. Some of these, such as Jimmie Durham's *Still life with stone and car* in Hickson Road, Walsh Bay – the physical remnant of a performance that took place in the forecourt of the Opera House in 2004 – are quite exceptional. But until now, none of them has remained behind with the advantage of any forethought.

This will change next year when, in partnership with the City of Sydney, a specially-commissioned work for the Biennale will remain as a legacy work of public art and be included in the City's permanent art collection. This is an exciting new initiative that will be part of the next three Biennales.

City-to-city collaborations will be investigated as another way of sharing works of art. Sydney has established contacts that could lead to the siting of existing public art initiatives from cities such as London (The Fourth Plinth and Artangel) and New York (High Line Art and Public Art Fund) – contacts that could be tapped for project-sharing.

f. Develop local public-private initiatives

The City of Sydney will continue to lead by example, inspiring retail and property development partners to commission works of art for the public sphere to complement what the City is able to do. Works of art in forecourts and lanes in the northern, central, and southern parts of the city centre, will not only be good for business, they will benefit all city dwellers and visitors.

g. Consider other opportunities

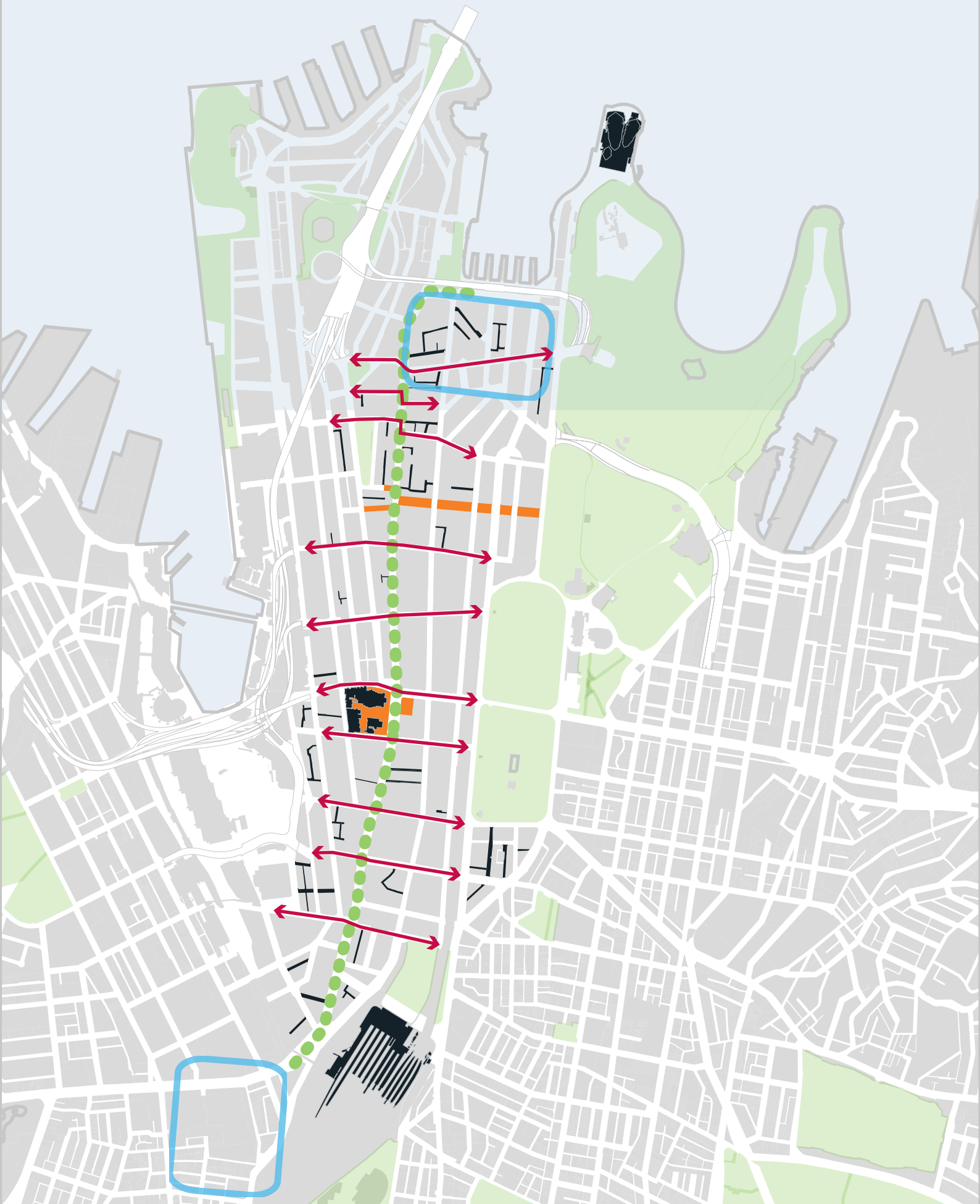
This is the opportunity for Sydney to 'get wired'. The City of Sydney can capitalise on the period of light-rail construction to implement the sort of infrastructure and equipment it has long wished it had in place, in order to present cultural events and works of art in new media, easily and at a reasonable cost.

Big Bambú (ビッグ・バンブー): 止められない、止めた
メトロポリタン美術館 ニューヨーク、アメリカ
Big Bambú: You Can't, You Won't and You Don't
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US
2009-2010 Photo © Doug + Mike Starn



Untitled Doug and Mike Starn Metropolitan Museum of Art New York 2011

Map of priority sites



- George Street
- ↔ E-W Connectors
- Laneways
- ▭ Partnerships
- Squares



VII. City Centre Urban Structure

George Street = Spine

East-west connectors = Ribs

Important intersections = Vertebrae

Squares = Rooms/heart and other organs

Lanes and streets off George Street = Circulatory system

a. A strong spatial identity

In devising this plan, attention has been paid to the underlying geography and topography of the city – north-facing to the harbour, with fresh water in the form of the Tank Stream, and ridges running from the north, coming together in a raised plain in the south – a spatial identity still retained today.

Following the logic of actual physicality, art will address the ‘spine’ of George Street. The ‘ribs’ crossing it are the six or more important east-west connectors. The ‘vertebrae’ are the important nodes or intersections. The succession of squares or ‘rooms’ where people like to be are analogous to the heart and other organs of the body. The network of lanes resemble a circulatory system that is woven together to provide unity, legibility, connection, and ‘liveability’ – a city with rhythm, a beating heart.

b. The three squares

As underscored in Sustainable Sydney 2030, the City of Sydney in the 20th century has come to revolve around the three main squares – Central, Town Hall/Sydney Square, and Circular Quay.

c. A transformed city - liveable and legible

During successive periods of modernisation, the city has lost a sense of coherence. In line with the vision of Sustainable Sydney 2030 and the recommendations of Gehl Architects, closing George Street to traffic and implementing light rail will make the city more liveable. Taking Gehl’s vision even further by eventually demolishing the Cahill Expressway and Western Distributor, would again expose the city’s innate structure and make the city legible and easy to navigate.

Public art picks up where road closures and infrastructure improvements leave off and is an important part of any plan for urban renewal. Public art offers legibility. A single brief put to teams of artists and architects could reinforce the spatial identity of the city, achieving a group of works of public art that will unify George Street, tie in the important east-west connectors, give prominence to the three main squares, and sequentially incorporate historical and other significant contextual aspects – effectively magnifying the ideas on which the city was founded. Imagine an after-dark wander through Sydney a decade from now: when it will be possible to move through and across the ‘city of villages’, connecting the dots ... moving from one visually engaging and historically-compelling work or site-specific installation to another. Welcome to Sydney, a city activated by public art as never before!

d. A light touch

In the best case, the thinking, planning and care taken in the transformation of George Street and the city centre through sensitive urban design improvements and public art, will be so subtle and finely-integrated that it may not be readily apparent in the final outcome.

This is very much along the lines of a story told by Craig Dykers of Norwegian architects, Snøhetta – recently engaged to redesign New York’s Times Square – about a friend who had a sheepdog. The dog, whenever its owner had a party, would surreptitiously herd the guests. It would tap at their ankles or their knees until, by the end of the evening, everyone at the party was in one corner. The dog would be content, but the amazing thing was that nobody actually realised what had been happening.

What Dykers took away from this was the message that, as architects/planners/curators, we have to try to be like the sheepdog at the party, manoeuvring with a light touch.

THE PLAN

VIII. Priority Sites

a. George Street (Spine)

The brief

Implementing art on George Street presents a fascinating challenge given its relative narrowness and the demands that will be placed on the public space at street level to satisfy the many, possibly conflicting, requirements of commercial activity, light rail and pedestrian safety.

Objectives

The primary objective is to implement art that will unify the street, lending it a focus. The city's loss of coherence in modern times is perhaps most apparent in George Street. Partially closing George Street to traffic will instantly transform it, making it quieter, calmer and safer. Some wonder if it might possibly become a dead zone without passing cars, the activity at its edges and the presence of people. The excitement of public art has the potential to endow it with a more positive energy.

Approach

In light of the demands that will be placed on the public space at street level, the best possible approach to public art is to unify the length of George Street from Central, to Town Hall/Sydney Square to Circular Quay, by opting for a single, highly-focused approach.

The idea is to present an artist brief as an open expression of interest, circulated to artist-led collaborative design teams who the City considers have the greatest chance of devising solutions that are in equal part exciting and informed by knowledge of cities and the built environment.

Recommended types and positions for public art

Art placed high up

There is much visual distraction and competition for space at street level in George Street. To overcome this, works of art could be placed high up as a way of skirting and remedying the problem.

Works of public art placed above the mid-level line of retail signage on either side of George Street – along the roof line of buildings or higher still – will be more readily visible to people, encouraging them to look up. The parachute jump of the lookalikes of James Bond and the Queen at the start of the London Summer Olympics was sure to be fascinating to people – we like to look up. Other examples include: Janet Echelman, *Tsunami 1.26*, 2011, Town Hall Square, Sydney; Pipilotti Rist, *Die freiheit in und ueber uns*, 2010, Vienna; and Rachel Whiteread, *Water tower*, 1998, New York City.

In Gormley's work, *Event horizon* (2012), figure sculptures were placed both in the streets and on the rooftops of the cities in which the series was shown: Placing some sculptures at the street level on either side of the street and others high up, would set up a dynamic spatial relationship among the works, and much like unwrapping a parcel, add to people's feeling of discovery as they walk along George Street.

Art in the void spaces along George Street

George Street presents void spaces between buildings that could be animated with site-specific works of art. Doris Salcedo's installation, *1,550 Chairs stacked between two city buildings* for the 8th International Istanbul Biennial 2003, called people's attention to war through the compression of material into a narrow, empty space. *Balloon* (2007) by architect, Junya Ishigami manipulated the void space between buildings in a different way. It was made of a reflective material that picked up the detail of the walls on either side of it, helping it to blend into its

surroundings. Only on second glance did one notice that it was soft, not hard – not another building, rather, an ‘insertion’ into the space, that was provocatively too large for it.

The examples by Salcedo and Ishigami show how George Street could be unified through a sequence of void spaces activated by art in different ways. After dark, the individual works could be lit in a consistent way to link them as parts of a single project which would, in turn, unify the street.

History

To highlight the history of George Street, artists could make a work of art consisting of historical images of what particular buildings looked like in past times, realised as a series of billboards spanning between, or set on the roofs of buildings along the street.

Musicians’ practice rooms and artists’ studios

There would be ways to create visual excitement at the mid-level of George Street without relying on actual art objects. For instance, the street could be animated through the presence of musicians’ rehearsal rooms and artists’ studios within the office buildings along George Street, visible to passersby on the street.

Light art

The length of George Street could be unified and activated by a work of art utilising lighting in its own right. Sydney-based Australian Aboriginal artist Jonathan Jones has made many singular works of art using light, and in *Luminous handrail*, realised for a new island park in Hoboken, New Jersey, architect James Carpenter has articulated a place of repose utilising light.

During a recent visit to Sydney, one international artist put forward the concept of a lit path extending the length of George Street. The path would be organic and meandering in feel: the opposite of a conventional, straight-lined approach to the street – more like a ‘yellow brick road’ – that can be expected to be of great appeal to children and people of all age groups. Such a lit path would function as a link among the major squares along George Street where the other iconic works of art proposed by this plan will be commissioned.

Repetition of eccentric pavilion elements

A work of art relying on the repetition of elements could serve to unify George Street. Another concept put forward by the artist was that of a dozen wall-less pedestrian pavilions reminiscent of influences such as Australian Victorian columns and architects like Henri Labrouste, to be set down at intervals of one per block along the length of George Street. The work the artist has in mind would be a form of a folly in the grand tradition that would provide amusement. In the project *Personal pavilion*, Petra Blaisse created a ‘moving sculpture’ comprised of a hundred or more people carrying umbrellas made of a material that would reflect the sky, blurring the boundaries between earth and sky and the body and its surroundings.

Bold forms of sculpture incorporating seating

A sculpture that appears and re-appears as a recurring leitmotif along the 2-kilometre length of George Street would unify, and provide an element of surprise and visual excitement to the experience of walking the street.

Bold forms could appear intermittently to dip below, and intermittently to rise above the pavement, to animate the street and provide markers to help people navigate. A work of this type could incorporate seating. *The ego and the id* (2008) by Franz West is a sculpture that dips and rises, incorporating seating. Tobias Rehberger’s project, *Garages for bicycles*, commissioned for Projects for Mulhouse, France (2007-09), is comprised of forms that seem to emerge organically from the ground.

Artist-designed street furniture and play equipment

The comment has been made that unusual and playful street furniture might be commissioned to articulate the light-rail stops along the street. Such works would delight children. Iconoclastic seating by Berlin-based artist Jeppe Hein has been implemented on both a temporary and permanent basis in cities like New York. The form of Hein’s *Modified social benches* (2005-08) is



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1,500 chairs stacked between two city buildings Doris Salcedo Istanbul Turkey 2003

derived from normal park benches, altered to make the act of sitting on them a conscious physical endeavor. Such works of art are practical – easily inserted into a streetscape without interfering with the operation of light rail.

Art-trees and interventions of actual vegetation

George Street will be planted with up to 200 trees as part of its transformation, creating a rare green spine at the heart of the City. In the period before those trees have grown, or perhaps in parts of the street where, for reasons of infrastructure, trees can't be planted, artists could be commissioned to make art works evoking trees. The history of contemporary art is replete with examples of trees made by artists, in the work of the Constructivists; and contemporary artists Yayoi Kusama, Roxy Paine, Giuseppe Penone, and Robert Pulie. Since 2000, the projection of animated, talking heads on trees has been an important component of the practice of New York-based, Tony Oursler. Or perhaps greenery could be introduced in the form of large-scale artwork-topiaries like Fiona Tan's *Inujima* (2010).



The ego and the id Franz West New York 2008



Modified social benches Jeppe Hein New York 2005



Auditorium Franz West Kassel Germany 1992

b. East-west connectors (ribs) and important intersections (vertebrae)

The Brief

There are six or more important east-west connectors that cross the 2-kilometre expanse of George Street between Central and Circular Quay:

Hay Street

Park Street – Town Hall/Sydney Square – Druiitt Street

Market Street

King Street

Hunter Street/Curtin Place – Margaret Street – Wynyard Walk

Bridge Street – Grosvenor Street – Kent Street underpass

Just as the spine of George Street follows the line of the valley between the city's two north-running ridges, so too do the multiple east-west connectors conform to the underlying structure of the city, following the earliest Aboriginal walking tracks and connecting harbour to parkland. At certain points along George Street the views afforded by the connectors are stunning, providing a welcome relief from the built environment.

All six connectors present remnants of the years following settlement, which are perhaps most prevalent in Bridge and Grosvenor Streets. Bridge Street, for instance, is lined with grand buildings that remain today, including the Department of Lands, Department of Education, and the Chief Secretary's Building. Bridge Street also contains Sydney's oldest park – Macquarie Place, a type of urban sanctuary rare in Sydney – comprising monuments of a significance equal to that of the buildings in the street. As it proceeds west across George Street and up the slope of Grosvenor Street, the Bridge Street – Grosvenor Street – Kent Street underpass connector abuts other icons of early colonial Sydney in Lang Park and the three churches of Church Hill.

Focus on three of the connectors and the important intersections

When briefing artists, this plan recommends focusing on the three connectors that present the greatest potential to be activated through public art.

Park Street – Town Hall/Sydney Square – Druiitt Street

The connector comprising Park Street – Town Hall/Sydney Square – Druiitt Street will be of even greater importance to the city with the funding of capital works for Town Hall Square at a future date. The difference in tenor between Town Hall Square and Sydney Square – the one being active, the other, tranquil – presents one of the more fascinating design challenges in the city centre, and the connector is one of those offering iconic Sydney views extending from the park to the harbour.

Bridge Street – Grosvenor Street – Kent Street

Public art commissioned for the Bridge Street – Grosvenor Street – Kent Street connector could address the city's history and some of its finest examples of architecture, old and new, including the Museum of Sydney (MoS) and First Government House Place. Any new work of public art for this particular connector will benefit from the opportunity to reference such a significant contribution to the built form of the city. Designed by Richard Johnson of DCM Architects (1995) on the site of the Governor's first house (1788), the MoS is adjacent to a consummate work of public art, *Edge of the trees* (1995), a sculptural installation by Janet Laurence and Fiona Foley. In its use of Aboriginal language, *Edge of the trees* will be seen as an important precursor to the work by Jenny Holzer at 8 Chifley Square which will incorporate the writings of Indigenous authors.

Following the construction of the Western Distributor in 1972, Kent Street has become a jumble of noisy roadway and nondescript buildings providing a significant challenge to urban design and public art.

Hunter Street/Curtin Place – Margaret Street – Wynyard Walk

The possibility exists to unify the Hunter Street/Curtin Place – Margaret Street – Wynyard Walk connector by implementing two works of public art by a single artist.



Concrete trees Jan and Joel Martel



Flowers that bloom at midnight Yayoi Kusama Japan 2009



Infinity Polka Dot Tree Sculpture Yayoi Kusama Japan



Idee di pietra (Idea of stone) Giuseppe Penone Germany 2012

Important intersections

Some of George Street's most important and dynamic intersections lie along the three connectors that are the focus of this plan. The intersections are large and capacious, offering the opportunity for public art to be equally imposing. The most important of them will not be closed to traffic presenting an added challenge to artist-architect teams attempting to activate them without obstructing traffic flow.

Approach

An artist or artist-led team can work in relation to the history of one of the connectors. A second alternative would be for artist-architect teams to focus on block-long sections of a particular connector to create an array of different art approaches placed contiguously along its length. A third alternative is for public art to be made on a micro-scale, expressed through multiple small works of art that will personalise and add texture to the city. A fourth alternative is for landmark public art at one of the important intersections.

Objectives

A sequence of block-long art interventions along one of the connectors, would simulate the experience of an outdoor exhibition and provide the public with an array of different approaches to a particular urban landscape.

A series of small related works of public art scattered along the connector would build in an experience associated with the thrill of discovery.

Public art could direct our gaze to views of the harbour and the park at either end of the connectors, and mark and distinguish important corners and major intersections – 'vertebrae' – where the connectors – 'ribs' – cross the 'spine' of George Street.

Recommended types and positions for public art

Art synonymous with the ground plane

Public art doesn't have to be tall and vertical to be bold and attain landmark status – rather, it can be played out on the ground plane with equal impact. Art of this type has been demonstrated to transform city centres, endowing them with landmark quality and transforming them into places people like to meet and gather.

Pipilotti Rist's and Carlos Martinez' seminal work of public art, *Stadtlounge (City open-air lounge room)*, 2005, was made by pouring a red soft coating (similar to that used for squash courts) across large areas of the centre of St Gallen, Switzerland, covering everything in its wake. Photographs posted to the web demonstrate how this work of art has created a strong sense of place in St Gallen. It is well-loved: On a 2011 visit to the city, seven years after the work was initially commissioned, its condition indicated it was appreciated and well-maintained, and new sections were being added – a testament to the success and viability of the work.

Addressing 1-2 blocks of a connector

A work such as Nike Savvas' ceiling of multi-coloured bunting, entitled *Rush* (2010) transformed Bridge Lane as part of the City's Laneway Art Program in 2010-11 (curator: Barbara Flynn), and would be one way of addressing a 1-2 block expanse of one of the connectors.

Art on a micro scale

Small works of public art scattered along one of the connectors could be implemented gradually over time to create anticipation. Children especially would marvel at the transformation affected as such works would progressively appear over time, prolonging the excitement. Serial works of art on a micro scale have been successfully implanted in cities by artists Tracey Emin and Tom Otterness.

Paving treatments

Interventions with the palette of the city in the form of paving treatments that would appear to 'spill out' from the frontages of willing retail partners at the intersection of the connectors and George Street, would make for a more memorable experience of walking in the city centre. The pattern of



Edge of the trees Janet Laurence and Fiona Foley Museum of Sydney 1995



render *Untitled* art work Jenny Holzer 8 Chifley Square 2013

the paving could possibly be extended to encompass entire facades of buildings, with the effect of making such works even more spectacular. The concept behind Tobias Rehberger's 2009 proposal for 1 Bligh Street was to apply a dazzle camouflage pattern used by the British navy in World War I to the grand public stair which, in that instance, for obvious safety reasons (trip danger), couldn't be realised. Such a work would be highly effective if realised on a flat surface.

Towers and art gateways

Works of public art that take the form of a tower or gateway can be erected, as an alternative way of marking the important nodal points where the east-west connectors cross George Street. Towers and art gateways are monumental in scale and highly visible, with the capacity to serve as markers and assist with navigation.

Examples of gateways abound in the art of Alexander Calder, including his seminal gateway sculpture, *Teodelapio* (1962) in Spoleto, Italy. In the hands of living artists, the tradition could be given a meaningful update for our times. Artists who make art gateways today include Roxy Paine and Jaume Plensa.

The city has long held a fascination with gateways that have been erected on a temporary basis to herald important events throughout its history, including on the occasion of the 1988 Bicentennial Celebrations, documented in the book, *Shaping sydney: public architecture and civic decorum* (1999) by Chris Johnson, New South Wales Government Architect (1995-2005).



Stadtlounge (City open-air lounge room) Pipilotti Rist with Carlos Martinez St Gallen Switzerland 2005

c. Squares (rooms - similar to the heart and other organs)

The Brief

The main squares

Sydney 2030 underscored the importance of the three main squares of Central, Town Hall/Sydney Square and Circular Quay, to the well-being and efficient functioning of the city centre, with George Street being the central spine connecting them.

The three main squares are key transport hubs and meeting places of an impressive scale and level of activity – places that can be endowed with even further significance and landmark quality through the intervention of public art.

The City of Sydney is owner of Town Hall Square and partial owner of Sydney Square, which argues for focusing on art for one or both of those squares. The other two main squares are owned by a number of other government agencies – Central by the State Government of New South Wales, and Circular Quay by Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (SHFA) and including parts owned by the City of Sydney.

Other challenges arise from the fact that the three main squares, as transport interchanges, cater to a large and diverse cross section of the city's population and, for that reason, present complex issues related to circulation and amenity, probably best addressed by teams comprised of artists working together with urban planners, architects, and landscape architects, bringing a depth of experience to the task.

Central

The two artwork-towers at Railway Square – part of the larger work, *Material world* by Marilyn Fairskye – were commissioned by the Council in 1999.

Town Hall/Sydney Square

Paired with Town Hall Square, Sydney Square has inspired a raft of design solutions over the last 20 years. Sydney Square has the potential to be a dignified place of respite in our city and still meet its functional requirements.

Circular Quay

There is no direct street link today between Circular Quay and George Street, which can appear to drift off as it narrows and turns toward The Rocks, skirting Circular Quay. The light rail project offers a unique opportunity to reconnect this public space to George Street.

The smaller squares of Barrack Street and Regimental Square

In this plan, public art finds fertile ground in the smaller squares. In the central city, it is in the smaller, more intimate and tranquil squares where people tend to stop and linger. Barrack Street and Regimental Square are two such smaller squares, and shifting the metaphor from the body to the home, can be thought of as comfortable 'rooms' just off the 'main entrance hall' of George Street. They have a natural intimacy attractive to people who habitually gather in them already. Barrack Street and Regimental Square are of great interest also by virtue of their location at the geographic heart of the city, midway along George Street and in close proximity to Martin Place.

Regimental Square is an active pedestrian through-way between George and Kent Streets. At its centre on the George Street side is a memorial to commemorate the campaigns of the Royal Australian Regiments in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam. This memorial by Dennis Adams OAM, is maintained with great diligence by the Royal Australian Regiment Association.

Approach

An artist might propose a bold public artwork with a scale and presence sufficient to command one of the main squares, or alternatively, address the fast pace of the city by transforming one of the main squares into a more orderly, more attractive, and quieter place to gather.



Conjoined Roxy Paine Madison Square Park New York 2007



Crown Fountain Jaume Plensa Millennium Park Chicago 2004



Teodelapio Alexander Calder Spoleto Italy 1962

Town Hall/Sydney Square

It is logical to treat Town Hall Square and Sydney Square as a pair, with Town Hall Square cast as Sydney's living room, active and dynamic, and Sydney Square as a more tranquil, oasis-type of space bordered by the two elegant heritage buildings of St Andrews Cathedral and Town Hall.

Circular Quay

Discussions with SHFA should be initiated about the possibilities for art for Circular Quay as part of the proposed masterplan. One possible approach would be to commission a monumental-scale work of art that would stand in First Fleet Park and vault over the Cahill Expressway to create a visual connection between Circular Quay and George Street. Perhaps such a work of public art could be owned and maintained jointly by the City and SHFA.

The smaller squares of Barrack Street and Regimental Square

Perhaps the most effective way to further increase the amenity of the smaller squares along George Street is to 'green' them, with a look to other successful urban parks around the world where this approach has been taken. For example, this plan proposes to effect a wholesale change in Barrack Street by softening the pavement and implementing permanent plantings comprised of native flora to create a small corner of controlled natural 'wildness' in the city. Landscape architect, Piet Oudolf's approach to the urban landscape – as demonstrated in his design for the planting on the High Line in New York City – is to create dynamic plantings that remind people of meadows and pastures. As a way of achieving the impression of a meadow or pasture, one approach that has been recommended is to allocate over time the budget for the City of Sydney's existing Living Colour initiative to Barrack Street to facilitate its greening.

The greening of such new-style urban parks could be undertaken by creative teams comprised of local specialists of exceptional talent – such as a representative from The Royal Botanic Gardens, an artist, a landscape architect, a florist – and possibly with the input of a landscape architect based offshore. Against the background of the new park created by this team, local experts could help spearhead programs to incorporate plantings to feed the city.

Further, the urban design component of the new parks could perhaps adapt an existing successful urban design for Sydney. Three examples – sublime in their sophistication and beauty – are the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) Sculpture Garden, New York, and the French parks of the Jardin du Luxembourg and the Jardin des Tuileries, Paris.

The formula behind the success of the MoMA Sculpture Garden is based on four principles:

- setting the garden slightly below the level of the surrounding paving which insulates it from traffic sounds;
- the use of light-coloured paving, contributing to the impression of a special space, different from its surroundings;
- water introduced as a shallow canal to cool and animate the space, in a natural way;
- plantings placed to frame views of the sculptures.

In the French parks, traditional figure sculptures are often set against a lush background of foliage in a way that suggests the close relationship between artifice (things made by man) and nature. The French parks especially are primers for how to soften a city and make it more humane and liveable, whether that's through art, or through putting down a ground cover of crushed stone that sounds wonderful and alive with every footfall.

Objectives

A common objective of urban planners, architects and artists would be to bring greater order and attractiveness – and a modicum of calm – to the three main squares.

Public art can reinforce the close symbiotic relationship between Town Hall Square and Sydney Square.

Public art can forge a much-needed link between Circular Quay and the northern end of George Street.



Plantings evoking a meadow *Oudolf garden Hummelo The Netherlands*

The urban improvements and green initiatives being proposed for the smaller squares will bring a welcome refreshed quality to Barrack Street, for example, that people will embrace. The objective is to enable all the open spaces along George Street to function to their full capacity as inviting and comfortable public spaces, enhanced with an added focus – a compelling public artwork.

The opportunity exists to establish a focus on Australian art for Barrack Street and Regimental Square. Alternatively, since figure sculpture continually resurfaces as a relevant contemporary form, works by international artists could be included, loaned from Germany, US, UK, China, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, as a way of bringing diversity of artistic vision to the city.

Recommended types and positions for public art

The main squares

Sydney's three main squares are large enough to accommodate vertical sculptures, which would engender landmark quality in direct relation to their quality as works of art. Similar landmark sculptures in the other two main squares would serve to link the three of them. Large-scale vertical sculptures abound in the work of many contemporary artists, including Claes Oldenburg/ Coosje Van Bruggen (*Clothespin*, 1976, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania); Jean Miro (*Dona i ocell*, 1983, Barcelona); and Jonathan Borofsky (*Walking to the sky*, 2005, Dallas, Texas). Artists who employed actual cars in their tower-like sculptures include Arman (*Merry go straight*, 1990, exhibited *Skulptura Montreal 95*).

Town Hall/Sydney Square

There are very few places from which the public can survey the city. Being above street level is exciting for people: elevation provides relief from the heat of summer and from the crowds at rush hour and on busy shopping days. Artists today are designing towers and lookouts that allow people to spend time 'in the air' in delightful ways. A tower project for Town Hall Tower would provide a lookout onto the paired squares of Town Hall Square and Sydney Square. Japanese-born artist, Tatzu Nishi has worked in cities around the world, creating simulated lounge room environments around existing city towers that are open to the public. Recent examples include Nishi's *War and peace and in between* commissioned by Kaldor Public Art Projects (Kaldor PAP) for the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney in 2009, and *Discovering Columbus* at Columbus Circle, New York, auspices of Public Art Fund, 2012.

A sympathetic, grand-scale glass box similar to IM Pei's *Pyramide du Louvre* or the Apple Store, Fifth Avenue, New York could be placed atop the existing entrance to the underground station at the east end of Sydney Square, replacing the unsightly balustrade with a more beautiful construction.

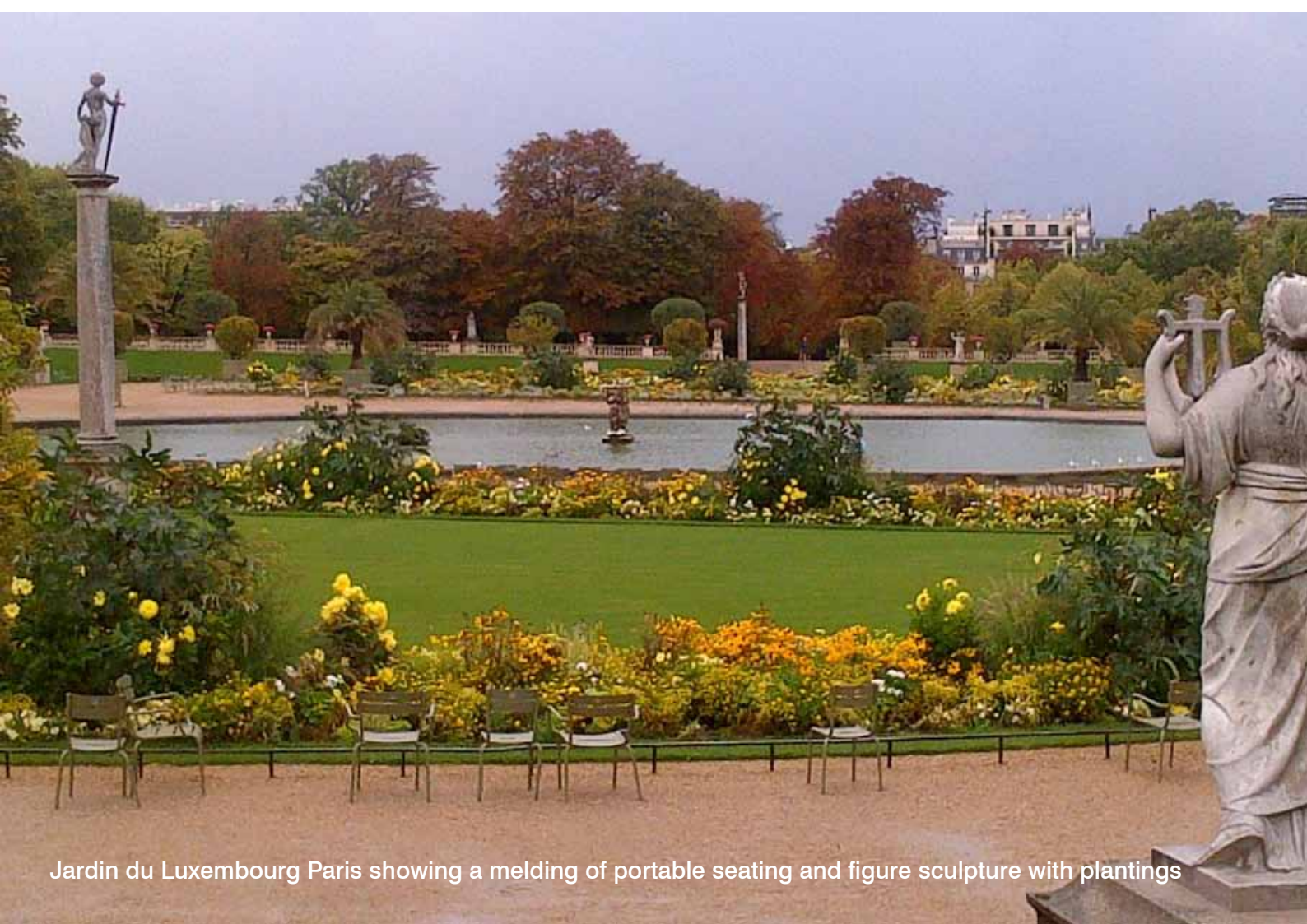
The position of Sydney Square between the two heritage buildings of St Andrews Cathedral and Town Hall creates the optimal acoustic conditions for a work of art using sound. A sound work would represent a 100% non-material overlay that would retain the openness of the square. Artists such as Susan Phillipsz, Aboriginal artist Christian Thompson, and the collaborative pair Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller have made highly evocative works of art employing sound.

An inclined or sunken square-within-the-square, purpose-designed by an artist-architect team, would reconfigure the centre of the square. Sited slightly below ground, sound would be muted, and a quieter, more private space in the heart of the city established. *Square depression* (1977-97) – the work by Bruce Nauman set into the ground in front of the Natural Sciences Building on the campus of the university of the city of Münster, Germany – represents the kind of approach that would lend a focus to Sydney Square. The Nauman work is a rhomboid square depression with the perimeter at ground level and slightly above the eye level of a person standing at or near the centre. The piece is about the confrontation of private experience with public exposure. In another example, the use of cork to line their pavilion for the Serpentine Gallery last year, enabled artist Ai Weiwei and architects Herzog & De Meuron to create a similarly insulated, quiet space, optimal for taking 'time out'.

Reviving a proposal of Jan Gehl's for Sydney Square, the pavement of the square could be allowed to undulate, taking on a life of its own and effectively becoming a work of public sculpture



Museum of Modern Art Sculpture Garden New York



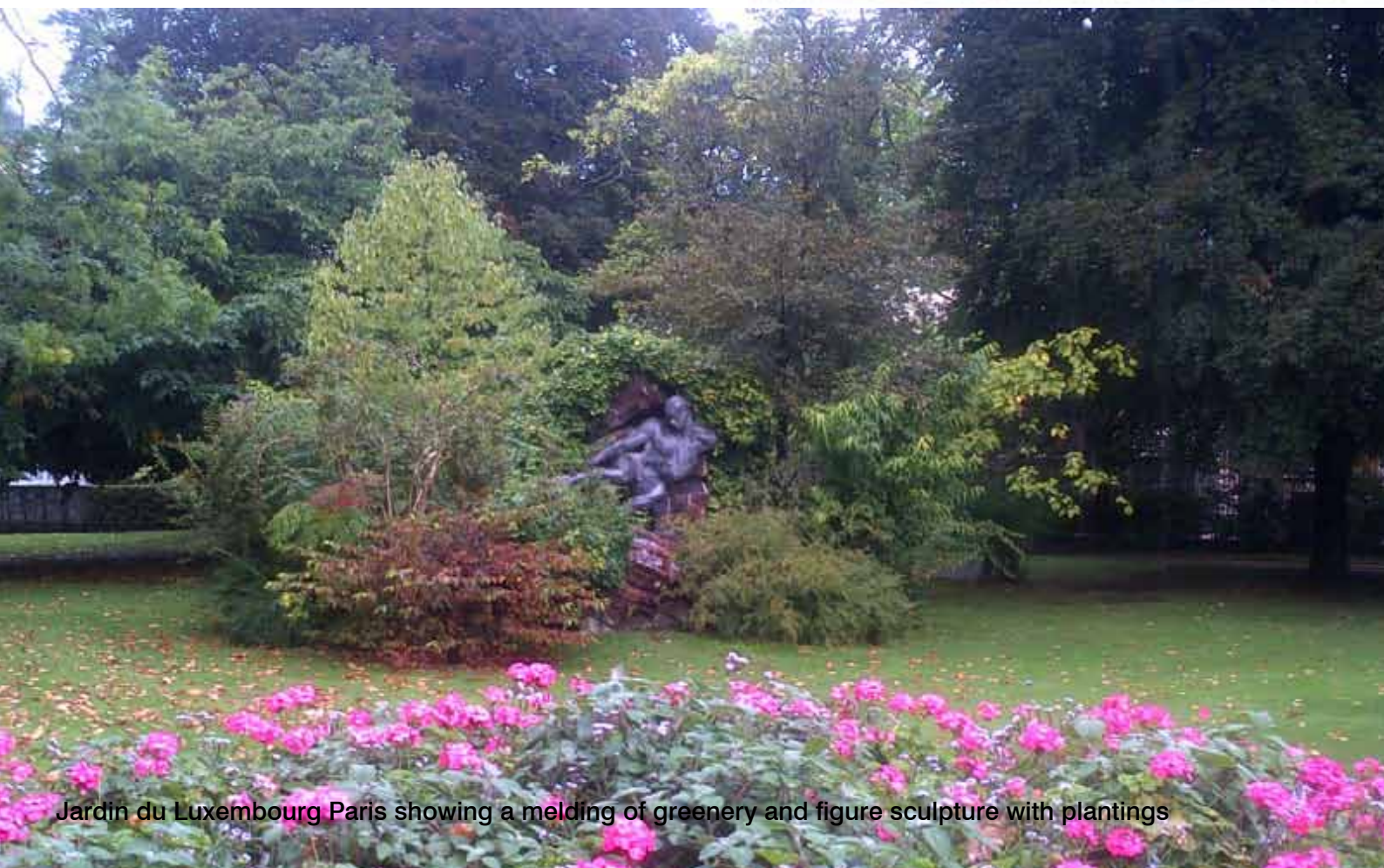
Jardin du Luxembourg Paris showing a melding of portable seating and figure sculpture with plantings



Bending Woman Sam Harrison 2007



Boy with Frog Charles Ray Venice 2009



Jardin du Luxembourg Paris showing a melding of greenery and figure sculpture with plantings

in its own right. In their project for Oslo Opera House in 2008, architects Snøhetta made paving that functions as both footpath and roof. Steep inclines make for an experience that is thrilling, akin to that of climbing a mountain, made safe through the use of the ha-ha. The proposal to treat the pavement of Sydney Square as a public sculpture is inspired by Snøhetta's Opera House, along with many other models including the wondrous, undulating organic surfaces of Antoni Gaudí's Park Guell, Barcelona (1900-14), and Jean Dubuffet's *Jardin d'email* (1968/1974) at the Kröller-Müller Museum, The Netherlands.

Sydney Square could be successfully activated by the implementation of a fountain placed at the centre of the square, looking to models such as the spiral fountain at Darling Harbour; Tanner Fountain, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, by Peter Walker; and the leaf-shaped fountain at Belo Garden, Dallas, Texas, by George Hargreaves.

'Seating as art' at Sydney Square: The square could be crowded with artist-designed sofas and chairs that people could move around and arrange as it suited them. As part of the brief, artist-architect teams would be asked to design a dedicated storage system for the seating so that it could be easily packed up and stored on site at the end of the day. With a look to the major international art exhibitions such as *documenta* and the pedestrianisation of Times Square, artist-designed seating would introduce a level of comfort and non-hierarchical informality that would help people to relax in the heart of the city. Word would get around that Sydney Square was the place to meet, gather, 'chill', with people working, shopping and walking in the city being drawn to the square. Even before the advent of social media, at *documenta 9*, 1992, the word got around, and Franz West's sofas covered with Persian carpets became the de facto main gathering place for the 100 days of the exhibition.

A narrow, glass-fronted 'viewing pavilion' such as the one designed by Snøhetta to view reindeer at Hjerkin, Norway (*Norwegian wild reindeer centre pavilion*, 2011), is the type of cross-pollinated architecture-public art solution that could be optimal to encompass only the northern edge of Sydney Square that is owned by the City. It is the narrowness and frontality of the Snøhetta pavilion that makes it such a good model for Sydney Square. Additionally, the warmth, quiet and comfort of the interior has proven to be so inviting to people that some of them have been 'outed', doing sleepovers in the pavilion!

Other artist-made structures including tents, canopies, and awnings could be erected to demarcate a particular zone of Sydney Square for special events. Examples include Daniel Buren's 2012 project for Grand Palais, Paris, and *The cupola* (2011) by Ilya/Emilia Kabakov.

Circular Quay

With footings in First Fleet Park, a partial bridge-like structure could soar above the Cahill Expressway, establishing a strong visual connection between George Street and Circular Quay and providing a fitting and much-needed 'ceremonial' entrance to the city at its northern end. Such a structure wouldn't attach to the Expressway, allowing for the Expressway's removal should the decision be taken to demolish it at any stage in the future. On the roof of New York's Metropolitan Museum, Doug and Mike Starn made a partial bridge-like structure of bamboo – a cross between a bridge and a tower that people were allowed to climb.

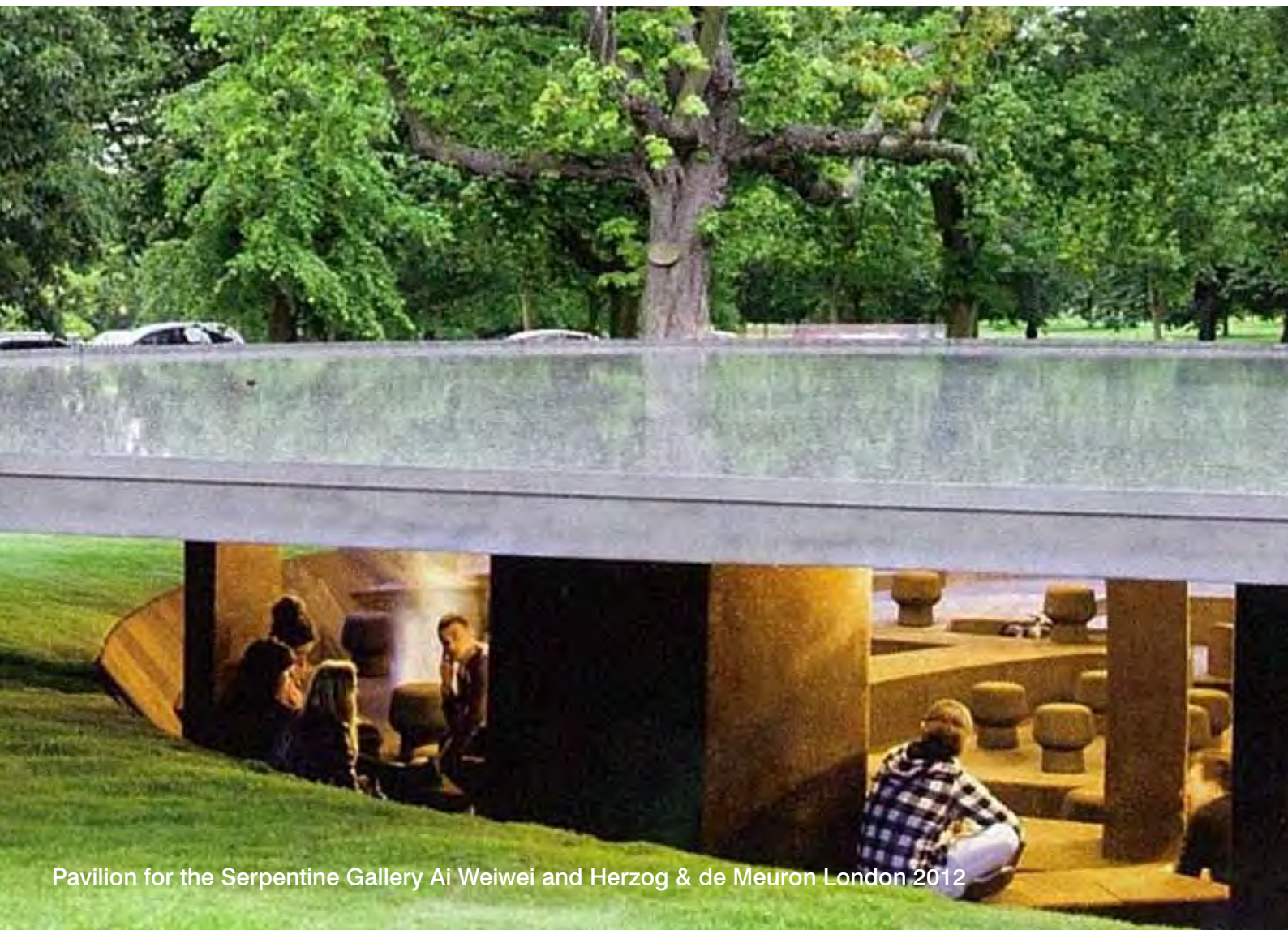
The smaller squares of Barrack Street and Regimental Square

In the smaller squares, the traditional types of mostly 19th and 20th-century statuary in the Jardin des Tuileries and the Jardin du Luxembourg can be given a relevance to a contemporary context. Building on the existing pair of *Youngsters* by Caroline Rothwell in Barrack Street, art by other Australians working in the tradition of figure sculpture such as Sam Harrison and Linda Marrinon could be sited amidst native plantings and new paving and seating. A park combining plantings, paving, seating, and public art in beautiful and innovative ways is one of the most exciting means to create memorable places in the revived city centre. From time to time, works by international artists could be included, broadening the context. Among the many international artists working figuratively are Katharina Fritsch and Thomas Schütte in Düsseldorf, Germany, and Charles Ray in Los Angeles.

On the model of Gaëlle Villedary's compelling work, *Red carpet* (2011) in Jaujac, France – as a symbol of the renewal that will take place – public art could take the form of a modest connector



Square Depression Bruce Nauman Münster Germany 1977-97



Pavilion for the Serpentine Gallery Ai Weiwei and Herzog & de Meuron London 2012

in the guise of a grass path running along George Street, for example, between Barrack Street and Regimental Square, to connect two or more of the parks that will become green art-parks. To adults, the path will be an amusing non sequitur, wonderfully out of context on the footpath, while also reinforcing the central message of Sydney 2030 to green the city. Making the path narrow will add to its novelty and absurdity, and make it beloved, especially of children. Maintenance would be easy, given the narrowness of the path, with only a modest strip of grass to keep green.

In keeping with the gravitas associated with Regimental Square, one of the Australian war artists could work sensitively with and respectful of Australian servicemen and women. The proposal is for a time-based work to be projected overhead either on a dedicated suspended screen or on the façade of 343 George Street located at the south edge of the square, which is owned by the City of Sydney. Shaun Gladwell's projection work, *Figure/firearm study*, 2010 from the artist's tenure as Australian War Artist in 2009, could be presented at Regimental Square, on the model of Doug Aitken's *Sleepwalkers*, a multi-screen, narrative projection sited in the Museum of Modern Art Sculpture Garden in 2007. Locating the screens for such works above the space successfully keeps the contemporary work at a respectful distance from the monuments positioned at the street level in Regimental Square and allows for easy movement through the square.

d. Laneways

Given the success of the City of Sydney's various temporary laneway art projects over the past seven years the opportunity should now be taken to integrate high quality permanent public art in the City's laneways and other city spaces as part of the City's capital works projects already underway. For more details refer to section IX below.

These small but significant works not only provide moments of surprise and delight but can act as a catalyst for the private sector to undertake their own improvements and retail and small bar initiatives in these hidden spaces of the City.



Sleepwalkers (detail) Doug Aitken Museum of Modern Art New York 2006

e. Temporary art

The Brief

Though the primary focus of this plan is to ensure the realisation of a permanent legacy of works of art, temporary art works and projects are a way of providing change, variety and flexibility as key aspects of revitalising the city, which will be critical during and after the implementation of the light rail on George Street.

Approach

The basic approach recommended by this plan applies across all media used by contemporary artists. Thus, building on the exemplary history of the City of Sydney's temporary art initiatives and an impressive roster of artist commissions for the lanes since 2007, the goal is to come up with a dynamic group of artists whose work is of a temporary or ephemeral nature.

Performance is one such art form: a touch of lightness in the tradition of the French flâneur. While the works may seem amusing and informal, artists working in performance today proceed with serious intent, often with the aspiration to create cathartic moments that have a lasting impact on the audience.

Instead of presenting performance art within the confines of a room or an institution as was done recently in the context of Kaldor PAP's *13 Rooms*, artists would present their works on the street and use the city as a whole as their rehearsal room. One can imagine the Brisbane-based collaborative duo Sarah Clark and Nicole Beaumont devising an interactive project in response to a particular topography or site in the city. Or an artist such as Francis Alÿs might design an art-walk such as *The green line* in Jerusalem in 2004. Partnerships with Kaldor PAP, Sydney Dance Company, and Bangarra Dance Theatre, would enable the artists to tap local talent.

Some people say Sydney has become too much of an 'events-city'. Performance art could counter this criticism by making art an integral part of the life of the street and the everyday. In artist Tino Sehgal's projects, for example, performers are trained and the scripts they deliver attempt to challenge perceptions of life and the everyday.

Performance art also includes community-based initiatives – Theaster Gates, for instance, and the *Project for Huegonottenhaus, 2012, documenta 13, Kassel, Germany*.

Objectives

Performance art can be used to activate the city centre over the period of light-rail construction, which is anticipated to take three years, providing a welcome distraction for the public and counteracting any inconvenience that may be caused.

Performances taking place in the street, in parks, and within shop fronts, will create a platform for the interaction of artists with the public. Through such interactions, people will see that art can be refreshingly non-material and ephemeral. Such artist-interventions could have an impact on people's lives, by encouraging them to be more imaginative and daring, and possibly to become more socially and physically active.

By utilising local talent, visual artists, actors and dancers based across the wider Sydney community will be able to showcase their talents in the central city.

As architect Ken Maher of the City's DAP has commented, a key part of this plan is to encourage the crossover between performance and music, and the commissioning of performance work and collaborations would achieve this.

Performance works would be staged at non-festival times so they become part of the everyday fabric of the life of the city.



IX. Capital Works Projects

a. List of the lanes/streets with capital works projects underway

Central and Wilmot Streets
De Mestre Place
Abercrombie Lane
Bridge Lane
Tank Stream Way

b. Lane with capital works project pending

Curtin Place

c. Other urban spaces with capital works underway

Kent Street underpass (also addressed as an east-west connector in section VIII).

d. General remarks about public art for the lanes

The City of Sydney has an exemplary record of sponsoring imaginative works by Australian artists in the lanes of the central city as part of the City's Laneway Art Program, 2007-2012. Many notable works were realised on a temporary basis in the annual October-January timeframe shared with the City's other popular initiative, Art & About. Some of the most memorable were by Brook Andrew, Diego Bonetto/Tega Brain/Mark Gerada, Mikala Dwyer, Richard Goodwin, Rocket Mattler, Caroline Rothwell, Nike Savvas, and Simon Yates.

This plan recommends maintaining a balance between permanent works of public art in the lanes and exciting new commissions of temporary works with funding from the private sector. Reserving some of the lanes for such temporary projects would afford artists the opportunity to create new works in response, especially to the much-loved and inspiring historical lanes.

The involvement of the Curatorial Advisor City Centre in the capital works projects for the seven lanes currently slated for refurbishment has, in the early stages, varied from project to project, with some concepts having been more fully developed than others. Preference now is being given to two of the seven lanes – Central Street and Tank Stream Way – which offer the best opportunities to dovetail with the larger strategy for George Street and the city centre.

Public art placed at the George Street ends of the lanes contiguous to George Street can be every bit as effective in transforming George Street as works placed directly in George Street itself.

e. Generally recommended types and positions for public art in the lanes

The narrowness of the lanes tends to emphasise, and sometimes to exaggerate, the physical attributes of the spaces they present. Certain types of works of public art function well in spaces that are markedly tight and narrow, and this plan focuses on such physical attributes as a way of maximising the power of site-specific art works.

Ephemeral works and art set into the ground represent two possible approaches. Ephemeral works utilising sound are suitable for tight spaces – where flexibility and ease of movement needs to be maintained. From 1977-1992 – and following its reinstatement in 2002 – Max Neuhaus' *Sound sculpture* for New York's Times Square has provided people with a magical experience of sound emanating from the most unexpected of sources, a grille in the middle of a traffic island in the street.

Art set into the ground creates a private space that will reveal its contents only as you look down into it. One of the most notable examples of the type is Micha Ullman's holocaust memorial,

Bibliothek (Library), evoking the 10 May 1943 burning of books by the Nazis at August-Bebel-Platz, Berlin where Ullman's work is now sited. Works of art set into the ground are well-suited to the display of elements and artefacts that people find engrossing. Such subterranean displays can be lit from within and realising more than one of them in sequence, creates a trail of focal points at the street level.

f. Central and Wilmot Streets

The Brief

The City of Sydney has undertaken a community consultation with the Sydney Korean Business Association (SKBA) in connection with the redevelopment of Central and Wilmot Streets.

The proposition of the Sydney Korean Business Association is to create a 'Korea Town' for Sydney in Central Street, the Korean equivalent of Chinatown. The idea is to erect a gateway, commission a mural and install special lighting in Central Street. In the words of the SKBA, the elements proposed would be a 'fusion of traditional and contemporary' – incorporating craft traditions that still exist within Korea. In answer to questioning, the craft traditions being described were said to still exist and the add-on architectural finishes proposed would be made in Korea and installed in Sydney by traditional specialists.

The question raised by such consultation as that with the SKBA, is to what extent national or ethnic representatives should intervene in city and public art planning. Perhaps the solution is to focus on a more modest structure – for instance, an installation similar to the Red Lantern Information Kiosk in Chinatown by Frost* Design/Lacoste + Stevenson Architects and artist Pamela Mei-Leng See – might be more appropriate and effective than a gateway. Alternatively, the illusion of a gate could be created by laser display or specialist lighting by McGregor Coxall, urban designers and landscape architects for the capital works.

According to this plan, public art needs to be sensitively placed and where it will have the greatest impact on the transformation of the city centre as a whole.

Central and Wilmot Streets for instance possess a certain intimacy by virtue of their narrowness, but are of limited architectural distinction or physical interest when compared to all the other possible sites for public art in the city centre. Rather, they're more like 'clean slates' for transformation, which could reinforce 'brand Korea', should the City of Sydney decide to act upon the community consultation recommendation.

Currently Central and Wilmot Streets have high incidences of antisocial behaviour, which means that any street improvements and works of public art will need to be robust in order to be enduring. There are examples of similar situations in other cities where the incorporation of public art has decreased the incidence of vandalism and increased public appreciation of such confined areas. In order for such an outcome to occur, the works of public art and the artists invited to complete them have to be thoughtfully selected. The local SKBA could be asked to monitor the area with more diligence once it is transformed but the streets will need to include amenities that everyone will respond to, respect, and appreciate.

Approach

Central Street

Central Street presents the opportunity, more than other central city location being addressed by this plan, for an artist based ex-Australia – in this case, one of Korean descent, to collaborate with or mentor a locally-based Korean artist. Korea has numerous, internationally-respected artists. The Korean Cultural Office at 255 Elizabeth Street <http://koreanculture.org.au/major-events/exhibitions> mounts art exhibitions and could assist the City to identify local Korean artists.

An alternative proposal for Central Street would be to focus on the long wall at the northern end, which could accommodate an after-dark time-based work. Wilmot Street has a suitable vertical wall close to George Street upon which a mural could be placed – a public work as part of the overall vision for George Street.

Other non-material, non-art approaches could equally create a focus on Korea – for example, the suggestion of McGregor Coxall to pipe in K-pop and emphasise food culture and the smells associated with Korean cuisine.

Wilmot Street

If the preferred approach to public art for George Street is to site a variety of projects in the void spaces along its length, then a mural-type work of public art realised on the vertical wall in Wilmot Street that is visible from George Street could be a key location within the total scheme.

Objectives

One objective of the SKBA is to transform both Central and Wilmot Streets into a Korean dining and entertainment precinct, involving the relocation of the Korean restaurants that currently exist in the city centre.

The objectives of this plan and of the City of Sydney are

In Central Street

To achieve a mix of traditional and new Korean art to lend a Korean identity to Central Street.

In Wilmot Street

To analyse the physical ‘givens’ of what could be described as a relatively nondescript lane and to assess whether public art might address them and be integral to the transformation of George Street.

Recommended types and positions for public art

Central Street

A special role for a Korean artist is proposed: someone qualified to work in collaboration with the local SKBA to guide the implementation of public art, suggest cultural programming, contribute to the design of street furniture and mobile food carts, and influence and oversee the addition of traditional Korean architectural details in the ‘Dan Chung’ style to the existing building stock in the street.

New York-based artist Do Ho Suh would be an example of an artist well-suited to such an undertaking. As artist-advisor – based in equal part on his career achievements and the inventiveness of his work – Do Ho Suh’s close relationship to the aesthetics of his native country would sit well with the local Korean community.

Wilmot Street

An artist such as Yayoi Kusama creates large-scale murals that would be appropriate to both the Wilmot Street vertical wall and the sightline from George Street.

g. De Mestre Place

The Brief

De Mestre Place is one of the lanes located immediately off George Street. It faces Wynyard Station, one of the city’s most active transport hubs and is situated directly across George Street.

De Mestre Place is one of two main entrances to the Hunter Connection, which contains a food court attracting large lunchtime crowds. Pedestrians using De Mestre Place have to take care since the lane doubles as a driveway used as an access road by food purveyors and Australia Post, which has a retail office in the Hunter Connection. The signage dominates and, potentially, will be in competition with any works of public art.

In the next two years, improvements to Wynyard Station and the construction of new infrastructure by the State Government of New South Wales to connect Wynyard Station with the new development at Barangaroo, could have the effect of reorienting the central city westward towards Barangaroo. The impact on De Mestre Place is an unknown factor.

Approach

Art could be sited either on the long expanse of the existing corrugated concrete wall (north elevation) – as was done by artist Jan van der Ploeg in 2010-11 as part of the City's Laneway Art Program that year – or on a dedicated billboard structure to be installed high enough to be visible above the inclined driveway that forms the ground plane of De Mestre Place.

De Mestre Place is the former site of Kerry & Co Photographers, a respected photographic establishment in the city founded by Charles Henry Kerry (1857-1928) who was employed by the State Government of New South Wales in 1890 to travel the state and photograph Aboriginal Australians. In recognition of the history of the site the opportunity exists to not only consider Kerry's contribution but to commission an Indigenous artist to complete a project.

Objectives

De Mestre Place is visible from George Street and any work of public art commissioned for it will function as an integral part of the scheme for George Street. A billboard work of public art lifted above the roadbed would mark and draw people into the Hunter Connection.

Recommended types and positions for public art

Commissioning an Aboriginal artist would provide a meaningful connection to the history of De Mestre Place and afford an opportunity for project-sharing between this plan and the City's Eora Journey. If the project does not proceed as a permanent work it could be left for temporary art.

People tend to relate to figurative art, and preferencing an artist or artists working with portraiture can be expected to provide a type of image that large numbers of people actively using this busy section of George Street would readily identify with.

h. Abercrombie Lane, Bridge Lane, Tank Stream Way

The Brief

Abercrombie Lane, Bridge Lane, and Tank Stream Way are three of Sydney's most beautiful and historically-intact lanes, gems that form part of a loose network of lanes extending from Circular Quay to George Street at the northern end of the city.

There is a history of exciting art projects that have been realised for Abercrombie and Bridge Lanes and Tank Stream Way as part of the City's Laneway Art Program, 2007-12, including Brook Andrew's *Donut* in Bridge Lane (2011-12).

The compression and twists and turns of this trio of lanes make for an exciting experience of discovery, with walls and vistas that come dramatically into view as one rounds every corner, a potential for drama which the temporary works implemented as part of the City's projects exploited well. Two of the three entrances into this trio of lanes are relatively unassuming, compounding what would be the thrill of the discovery of a very special space populated with singular works of art as would be realised by this plan. In particular, the west-facing expanse of wall in Tank Stream Way has wonderful sightlines from the west end of Bridge Lane, and the arch one passes through upon entering Bridge Lane from Bridge Street at the northwest, is historically significant.

The Thai Airways building at 75 Pitt Street encompasses the west-facing wall of Tank Stream Way – this plan recommends the City of Sydney enter into dialogue with Thai Airways to discuss the possibility of joint ownership of any permanent work of art realised for the wall.

Approach

Two permanent works of art positioned at a sufficient distance from each other would articulate the T-configuration of Bridge Lane and Tank Stream Way.

Given their broad appeal and capacity to inspire artists, the entirety of Abercrombie Lane, and the east to west-running expanse of Bridge Lane, would be reserved for future temporary projects by

artists, in line with this plan, which promotes balance between permanent works of art providing important touchstones for the public, and a dynamic rotating selection of new temporary works of art.

Objectives

Taken together, the 11 or so lanes in the loose grouping at the northern end of the city, possess the potential to serve as a link between George Street and Circular Quay, providing a fitting entry to the city from the north. In the future, the City of Sydney will want to look to securing the financial commitment of the private development sector to transform the northern lanes to provide what would be such crucial improvements to the city centre. With this future wish list in mind, this plan recommends implementing model public works of art in Bridge Lane and Tank Stream Way in the short term in order to 'bed down' this important trio of lanes with art that will raise the bar and inspire the City's private sector partners to enter into public-private ventures in order to transform the northern lanes.

To achieve the legibility of a true network, the amenity of the lanes will need to be significantly improved. Public art can contribute significantly to the process of improvement, by helping to create legibility and by making the lanes more attractive places for people to walk through.

Recommended types and positions for public art

Tank Stream Way

A photographic, billboard-type work of public art commissioned for the west-facing wall of Tank Stream Way (the exterior wall of the building, 75 Pitt Street, owned by Thai Airways), would command the east end of this clutch of lanes, exploiting the drama and sightlines of the position. Rocket Mattler's billboard work *For rent*, commissioned for the City's Laneway Art Program, 2010-11 quickly accrued landmark quality, serving as the backdrop for a TV ad and becoming the most tweeted of all the works in that year's show.

People tend to relate to figurative art. An imposing billboard-type application in such a highly visible position offers the opportunity, for example, to present a rotating selection of the work of a single artist in depth, perhaps one of the world's most-respected image-makers. Commissioning an international artist of the calibre of Thomas Struth, Cindy Sherman or Jeff Wall would be an option. For 35 years, Berlin-based Struth has chronicled cities by photographing them from the centre of the street, and since the 1980s, developed his practice in the direction of portraiture, including some of the finest portraits by any artist working today. Alternatively, a selection of five or more of Sherman's photographs of herself in various female guises – a feature of her practice since the 1970s – could be presented in rotation on a single billboard surface or as a sequence of multiple billboards set edge-to-edge in an L-configuration on both the west-facing and south-facing elevations of the Thai Airways building.

Bridge Lane

The arch one passes through upon entering Bridge Lane from the northwest is a space with good acoustics that would be well-suited for a sound installation. If two works are realised across Tank Stream Way and Bridge Lane, the position of the arch at the northwest would afford the sound work a discrete space at an appropriate distance from the photographic work of art at the east end of the lane.

Susan Phillipsz, recipient of the Tate's Turner Prize in 2010, is an artist working with sound, who often sites her works under bridges with similarities to the arch in Bridge Lane. Based in Berlin, Phillipsz nevertheless enjoys strong ties to Australia where she has exhibited in the Biennale of Sydney and realised a permanent work of public art this year for the Glenorchy Art & Sculpture Park (GASP), Hobart.

Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller are a collaborative artist team working with sound, who could be commissioned to make a new work for the arch space. The two produced a sound work sited in the Auepark, Kassel, Germany, as part of *documenta 13* in 2012 that through the minimal means of sound only, evoked the history of the complexity of events that might have occurred in a European forest throughout the ages.



Donut Brook Andrew (foreground) *Untitled* Barry McGee (background) Laneway Art Program 2011

i. Kent Street underpass

The Brief

In recognition of the primary function of the underpass to carry people from one point in the city to another, an important role public art can play is to assist people to find their way into, and through the space.

Traffic noise is an unpleasant feature of the Kent Street underpass that public art could attempt to counter. Local residents who participated in the community consultation are requesting amenities such as play equipment.

Approach

Kent Street underpass can be addressed by an artist-architect team looking at the larger east-west connector extending from Bridge Street – Grosvenor Street – Kent Street underpass.

Alternatively, the underpass can be addressed through its own distinct public art brief.

Objectives

The objectives are three: to help people navigate to and through the space; to improve the amenity of the space by insulating against the traffic noise; and to take the wishes of the local community into account in the final design of any works of public art implemented in the underpass.

Recommended types and positions for public art

A work of art placed above the underpass and employing lighting components would be visible from a long distance and effective in helping people navigate to the Kent Street underpass space. Hans Peter Kuhn is a Berlin-based composer who has created sound and light installations in spaces similar to Kent Street underpass. For instance, his work for a pier in the Hudson River in New York City was visible from a long distance and helped with navigation. Kuhn contributed a sound and light work as part of the visual art component of the Adelaide Festival in 2000.

A large-scale, painted mural-type work of art using bold colour would brighten the space and help people navigate through it. Australian painters Gemma Smith and Sally Gabori would be qualified, having made impressive works of art on a monumental scale in important public spaces, for example, the Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law, Brisbane.

An elevated 'art walkway', observation tower, or other structure – possibly a café, soundproofed and lifted above the space – would afford people a view and a moment of respite from the sounds and smells of this highly-trafficked part of the city. Many artists interested in the relationship between art and architecture, including Vito Acconci, Siah Armajani, Sam Durant, Mary Miss, and Tatzu Nishi, have made elevated 'art structures'. Some of these structures, by Durant for the exhibition *documenta 13*, for example, have been evocative of social concerns and local histories.

Following Berlin's lead – where 'beaches' have sprung up in the centre of the city – an imitation 'Bondi Beach' could be simulated by dropping sand in the underpass space. Similarly irreverent initiatives – such as a kayaking pool in the shadow of an overpass – have sprung up in London in recent years.

Art that takes the form of either seating or play equipment will satisfy the wishes of local residents who participated in the community consultation – the ones likely to embrace such amenities as a welcome addition to the space. 'Sculpture-seating' was a type of art mined by Franz West whose works remain the benchmark for this form of user-friendly or interactive public art. Examples are *Drama (model)*, 2001 and other sculptures shown in the retrospective of the artist at the Baltimore Museum of Art in 2008-09. Berlin-based artist Jeppe Hein makes idiosyncratic seating that children love, proposed for the light rail line in George Street in Section VIII, above. Play equipment has been designed by many artists, including Sydney-based Mikala Dwyer.

X. Other City of Sydney public art projects relevant to plans for public art for the city centre

a. List of the other public art projects underway currently in the city

Eora Journey
Chinatown Public Domain Improvement Program
Green Square
Cultural Ribbon
Biennale of Sydney Partnership

b. Events

This plan encourages the liveliest possible continuous program of events, talks, public art tours and a wide range of artists' interventions.

The City of Sydney's existing initiative, Art & About, creates high quality events that provide a wide range of opportunities for artists and for the public to engage with. Future programs could be developed to enliven the city during the construction of light rail.

c. Future City of Sydney artist-in-residence program

The Brief

To complement the City's public art programme an artist residency could be offered on a permanent/ongoing basis, possibly in a building owned by the City, or in one offered for use by the private sector.

There are some outstanding examples in Australia and elsewhere, of artists who have called attention to important causes and made positive contributions to the improvement of society and cities in the course of a residency. Mierle Laderman Ukeles is a New York-based feminist and artist who, in a 1969 manifesto, proclaimed herself a 'maintenance artist' in solidarity with women in domestic roles revolving around the activities of cleaning, cooking, and child-rearing. Her public artwork, *Touch sanitation*, saw her shaking hands with more than 8,500 New York City Department of Sanitation workers and saying, 'Thank you for keeping New York City alive'. As artist-in-residence at Watford House in regional Victoria, Lyndal Jones converted the house into a giant ship to draw attention to issues associated with climate change and climate extremes in rural Australia – in particular, *Rehearsing catastrophe #1: the ark in Avoca*, which was part of her sound and video installation.

Approach

An international residency could provide a platform for the ongoing introduction of new artistic influences and approaches to the local Sydney art community. As suggested in Section VI, above, seminal artists of the calibre of Ai Weiwei, Josiah McElheny or Rosemarie Trockel could be interested to be the inaugural City of Sydney artist-in-residence.

Objectives

The artist-in-residence could be selected from one of the national groups making up the population of the city.



Collision and improvisation Gemma Smith Brisbane 2012

XI. Urban renewal projects by the State Government of New South Wales, SHFA, and The Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust with relevance to plans for public art for the city centre

The city centre is contiguous to other urban renewal projects currently underway, such as Barangaroo and Wynyard Walk to the west, and the redevelopment of the Darling Harbour Exhibition and Convention Centre to the southwest, that can be expected to contribute important works of public art and significant amenity to the city over the next five years. The Curatorial Advisor City Centre is keeping abreast of plans for those projects in an attempt not to duplicate approaches and artists.

a. List of the public urban renewal projects current by other government agencies

State Government of New South Wales

Barangaroo
Wynyard Walk
Darling Harbour South
Circular Quay Master Plan

Projects shared between the State Government and SHFA

Ultimo Pedestrian Network (UPN)

The Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust

Sculpture-sharing initiative with Sculpture by the Sea (auspices Balnaves Foundation)

XII. Partnerships with the Private Sector

a. List of urban renewal projects current by the private sector

AMP Precinct, by AMP Capital
200 George Street, by Mirvac Pty Ltd
University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) Master Plan
Central Park, Sydney, by Frasers Property Australia

b. General remarks about partnerships with the private sector

This plan seeks to put forward proposals for the transformation of George Street and the city centre that will be aided by partnerships with the development companies which have extensive property holdings at the northern and southern ends of the city.

At the northern end of the city, AMP Capital is in the planning stages of the development of a whole new precinct extending from Alfred Street at the north to Bridge Street at the south, and between Loftus Street at the west and Young Street to the east. South of the city centre, Frasers Property Australia is well-advanced in delivering a new precinct on the former site of the Carlton & United Brewery, bordered by Broadway and Abercrombie Streets in Chippendale, and contiguous to UTS and The Goods Line (formerly known as the UPN).

Some of Sydney's earliest commissions of public art in private development were the initiatives of the unique partnership between development company Lend Lease Corporation and architects Harry Seidler & Associates in the 1960s-1980s. The beneficiary of the first of these was American artist, Alexander Calder whose sculpture, *Crossed blades* was commissioned in 1967 for Australia Square, the first of Seidler & Partners Sydney high-rise office towers in the International Style. Public art projects with Josef Albers and Charles Perry followed at MLC Centre in 1975; with Frank Stella at Grosvenor Place in 1988; and with Lin Utzon at 9 Castlereagh Street (formerly Capita Centre) in 1989. The original tapestries by Le Corbusier and Victor Vasarely in Australia Square were removed in 1999. They had faded following presentation for 30 years on the walls of the cylindrical drum housing the building services in the ground floor lobby, and were replaced with a new wall-mural commission by New York artist Sol LeWitt in 2004. In 2006, two new works by Australian artist Robert Owen were commissioned as part of a later refurbishment of the MLC Centre, Martin Place.

Many of the major office towers constructed in Sydney in the 1990s and 2000s included public art – one thinks of Governor Phillip and Governor Macquarie Towers which were completed in Farrer Place in 1994 with significant works of public art sited in their grand and spacious foyers – but unfortunately, in these years, the lead of Lend Lease and Seidler was not followed, and rarely was public art sited outdoors in the public realm.

In the last five years, through the concerted efforts of the City of Sydney's Design Unit, City Projects, PAAP, and the City Planning Department, and with the assistance of independent art advisors working with the private development companies, the trend is changing. Over that time the amenity of the city centre has seen consistent improvement through the addition of significant works of public art sited in areas of the public domain contiguous to new office towers where they are readily accessible to the public all hours of day and night.

c. Martin Place business owners

The Brief

With the support of local business owners, Martin Place has the potential to be a wonderful site for public art, given its indisputable grandeur and its legacy throughout Sydney's history as the primary location for public gathering and public enjoyment. Of all the public spaces in Sydney, it is Martin Place that has the potential to become the main stage for public activity in the city, assisted through the implementation of appropriate infrastructure and amenity, which could include seating and public art. If according to this plan, the small squares of Barrack Street and Regimental



ST

KIMBER LN

FACTORY ST

ONE WAY
←

BEWARE
Security Controlled Area
Maple BOTTLE

In between two worlds Jason Wing Chinatown 2011

Square can be transformed into 'comfortable rooms' along George Street, then Martin Place will be the city's indisputable lounge room. Underscoring the appeal of Martin Place, Kaldor PAP has opted to mount two of its temporary public art projects there, by Michael Landy and Thomas Demand.

Approach

One way of introducing public art in Martin Place would be to identify a dedicated position as the site for a rotating display of public art. The position could take the form of a plinth on the model of London's The Fourth Plinth. If such a project is to be shared, artists could be encouraged to come up with ephemeral works of public art that could be more easily transported between, for example, London and Sydney.

Overseeing such a program could well be beyond the current scope of the City of Sydney in which case an organisation such as one modelled on New York's Creative Time could be founded to administer an ongoing roster of public art projects for Martin Place.

Objectives

Implementing art in Martin Place can potentially form the basis for the establishment of city-to-city collaborations with London, Paris, Beijing, Chicago, New York and others – with existing public art initiatives such as The Fourth Plinth or the many projects of Artangel, London, or High Line Art and Public Art Fund in New York that could possibly be shared.

Project-sharing would provide the opportunity for the people of Sydney to see a wide range of types of works of public art by practitioners drawn from among the 200 groups and nationalities that make up the population of the city.

d. New developments, city north:

The Brief

The proposal is to create a fitting entry to the city at its northern end through public art. Through public-private initiatives, the art program put forward for the city centre by this plan would be anchored.

Taken as a whole, the seven laneways at the northern end of the city encompass some of the most beautiful and well-preserved in all of Sydney, such as Abercrombie Lane, Bridge Lane, and Tank Stream Way (discussed in Section IX, above), and others that are more 'ad hoc' spaces, such as Underwood Street, Blue Anchor Lane, Bulletin Place, Macquarie Place, Reiby Place and Loftus Lane, that have been created over the years through the expansion of the built environment in the city centre. As the City's Laneway Art Program, 2007-12 demonstrated, artists are well able to meet the challenges of such oddball spaces, by making them viable and attractive, and creating an unexpected experiential dimension.

Approach

Through constructive partnerships with the development companies, which have significant property holdings at the northern end of the city, the area can be remodelled into a precinct for the enjoyment of art and culture through a wide range of initiatives that will provide an alternative to the dull tyranny of after-work drinks that is currently predominant.

This transformation will occur through the implementation of landmark works of art, satellite museums, publicly-accessible sculpture gardens on the roofs of low-rise buildings, and the re-introduction of the music industry in soundproofed and appropriately-refurbished street-level spaces.

Additionally, a rotating program of temporary works – sponsored by the development companies and curated by individuals identified by the City – will enrich the lanes, making them attractive routes for residents, tourists and other visitors to the city. *One day sculpture* (2008-09) is the type of project that could be appropriate to the northern lanes. As part of the project, in the course of a year, artists were commissioned to create temporary works lasting one day for city spaces across New Zealand.

Objectives

Anchoring the northern end of George Street with dynamic new art and cultural initiatives will help the initiatives proposed by this plan for the city centre to be successfully implemented.

As these public-private partnerships are established, this part of the city will be reshaped through public art, architecture and urban design into an appropriately fitting and exciting entrance to the city centre at its northern end. As the existing network of lanes extending from Circular Quay to Curtin Place and on to George Street is transformed into a more inviting space, residents and visitors alike will be enticed to walk further afield from Circular Quay, into the lanes and on to the rest of the city, in line with the recommendation of Jan Gehl based on his observations of Sydney over the course of frequent visits.

e. New developments, city south

The Brief

The many exciting new landmark public-sector initiatives at the southern end of the city – including the Dr Chau Chak Wing Building by Gehry Partners, the new home of the UTS Business School, and The Goods Line – lie just beyond the south end of George Street. As well, the private sector, White Rabbit Gallery and Central Park, are bringing public art and rich cultural offerings to the area.

Approach

The actual physical distance between these initiatives and George Street is not insurmountable: virtual links could be forged between them by ephemeral, non-material works of public art. Imagine works that might employ lighting, 'SMS'-ing, mapping, and the downloading of art in the form of storytelling onto one's personal device, on the example of Janet Cardiff's and George Bures Miller's work, *Alter bahnhof* (2012) for *documenta 13*, a story-telling work of art that is viewed on a personal device.

Objectives

Once George Street is connected in a viable way from north to south – bookended between a newly-articulated northern entrance to the city from Circular Quay, and the exciting new cultural precinct already forming at the southern end of the city centre – residents and visitors alike will be able to enjoy a walk from north to south along George Street, partaking in a veritable panoply of visual delights and cultural offerings as never before. The city will have changed in unprecedented ways through the concerted efforts of the City of Sydney, the State Government of New South Wales, SHFA, and the private sector.

f. Public art approaches for either the north or south ends of the city

As with the AMP Precinct at the north, the option exists to green the rooftops atop the low-rise grouping of buildings in Kensington Street, Central Park, transforming them into a network of free, publicly-accessible, rooftop sculpture gardens, with works of sculpture on loan from local institutions such as the Art Gallery of New South Wales or non Sydney-based institutions wishing to have a representation in Sydney.

Artists could be commissioned to design stairways, escalator or lift access to the rooftop sculpture gardens, on the example of Carsten Höller's work of art in the form of a slide, realised for the exhibition, *Carsten Höller Experience*, New Museum, New York, 2011-12.

Sydney was once a city of great music offerings and music clubs, which apparently have found it difficult to survive in the city centre in recent years, through a combination of rising rents and property values and an onerous regulatory climate.

In line with the City's Cultural Policy Discussion Paper, the proposal is to re-introduce the music industry to Sydney in the low-rise buildings of the AMP precinct and Kensington Street at Central Park. In both locations, priority could be placed on attracting architects and club operators under 40 to tender for the design and management of the clubs. At the AMP precinct, the presence

of The Basement nearby would assist in attracting clientele, and Kensington Street has a ready clientele in the increasing numbers of students attending UTS.

g. New developments, city centre

Other new developments currently being planned in close proximity to parts of the city centre are of great importance to the realisation of this plan. 151 Clarence Street which will face onto Barrack Street, is one such example.



Untitled film still #53 (detail) Cindy Sherman 1979

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James Angus, *Day in day out*, 2011. Aluminium, stainless steel, enamel paint, 959 × 2011 × 617 cm. Dexus CBus Property Group, 1 Bligh Street. ©James Angus.

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Janet Echelman, *Tsunami 1.26*, 2011. Town Hall Square, City of Sydney Laneway Art Program, 2011-12. ©Janet Echelman.

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Ai Weiwei and Herzog & de Meuron, *Pavilion for the Serpentine Gallery*, London, 2012. Zinc, cork, water, and structural elements. ©Ai Weiwei and Herzog & de Meuron.

Franz West, *Auditorium*, 1992. Iron, foam, carpets, 72 parts, 90 x 100 x 220 cm each. Installation *documenta 9*, Kassel, Germany. ©The Estate of Franz West.

Franz West, *The Ego and the id*, 2008. Aluminium, steel and lacquer, pink: 599 x 419 x 356 cm; multi-coloured: 625 x 528 x 432 cm. Exhibited: Doris C. Freedman Plaza, New York, auspices Public Art Fund, 2009-10. ©The Estate of Franz West.

Jason Wing, *In between two worlds*, 2011. Paint, engraved granite, LED lighting. Kimber Lane, City of Sydney. ©Jason Wing.

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city of villages