

# **Tadashi Kawamata**

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Tadashi Kawamata, *Tree Hut*, 2013, wood, dimensions variable  
Place Vendôme, Paris, site-specific installation, Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain, 2013



Tadashi Kawamata, *Favela Café*, 2013, wood, dimensions variable, installation view, Art Basel, Switzerland





Tadashi Kawamata, *Chairs for Abu Dhabi*, 2012, chairs, armchairs, sofas, benches, stools and metallic structure  
600 x 700 x 600 cm, Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Abu Dhabi





Tadashi Kawamata, *Hut*, 2010, wood, dimensions variable, installation view, Centre Pompidou façade, Paris





Tadashi Kawamata, *Huts*, 2010, wood, dimensions variable, installation view, Centre Pompidou façade, Paris





Tadashi Kawamata, *Toronto Project*, 1989, wood, dimensions variable, installation view, Mercer Union

## **THE INITIAL STAGE**

During and for the purposes of the initial stage, the consultant will:

- (a) review architectural plans and elevations for the project;
- (b) work in conjunction with the Principal to set the artwork budget which among other matters must:
  - (i) apportion prospective expenditure to various stages of the services; and
  - (ii) formulate a timeline for each stage of the services;
- (c) make presentations to and liaise with the Principal or such other person or committee of people as the Principal reasonably appoints about:
  - (i) the kind of artwork likely to be most suitable for the site having regard to architectural plans and elevations, structural constraints and availability of services for the project and the requirements of authorities;
  - (ii) viable locations for the artwork as part of the completed project; and
  - (iii) the identity of artists best suited or placed to deliver or create the artwork in accordance with the public art strategy, if applicable, or otherwise in accordance with the quality, time and budget restraints required by the Principal
- (e) recommend to the Principal a shortlist of not less than four suitable artists to be invited to participate in the competition stage of the services.

## **THE COMPETITION STAGE**

During and for the purposes of the competition stage, the consultant must:

- (a) liaise with artists nominated by the consultant and approved by the Principal to participate in the competition to be conducted by the consultant for the purpose of selecting the artist to be commissioned to procure or create the artwork;
- (b) manage and co-ordinate the competition between participating artists including:



- (i) providing participating artists with relevant information and documents to allow competitive proposals for the artwork to be submitted;
  - (ii) establishing clear guidelines and parameters to be observed by participating artists for the purpose of or when preparing and submitting competitive proposals;
  - (iii) setting suitable time limits for the preparation and submission of competitive proposals by participating artists; and
  - (iv) arranging for participating artists to be paid a participation or proposal fee as set by the Principal and as reflected in the artwork budget;
- (c) receive, consider and report to the Principal on competitive proposals submitted by participating artists;
  - (d) recommend acceptance of one or more of the competitive proposals either on an interim basis subject to receipt of refinements or further submissions from selected artists or on a final basis.

During the competition stage, the invitation to participating artists to submit a competitive proposal to the Principal for the artwork must state that if the artist is successful and is eventually commissioned to procure or create the artwork, the artwork contract between the Principal and artist will require the artist to meet, pay or bear the following costs or expenses:

- (a) cost of conceiving, designing, devising, developing, creating or producing the artwork through all phases of research, prototyping, manufacturing, construction, assembly, administrative, legal or accounting controls, storage, crating, shipping, rigging, erecting, installing or displaying on site whether directly or indirectly incurred;
- (b) taxes and duties of whatever kind and however levied or imposed on the artwork or on one or more of the processes by which the artwork is procured or created;
- (c) licence fees and fees payable to third parties referable to creation or procurement of the artwork including fees payable to other artists or art galleries and their representatives;
- (d) airfares, travel and accommodation expenses incurred by, for or on behalf of the artist in connection with the artwork other than expenses of the kind which the Principal expressly agrees to pay;
- (e) cost of consultants, contractors, subcontractors and the like engaged by or on behalf of the artist for the purposes of or in connection with the artwork;
- (f) premiums payable for insurance to cover the artwork against the risk of loss or damage from commencement of the artwork contract to the date of final handing over of the artwork to the Principal;

- (g) rents, licence and storage fees for premises used or occupied by, for or on behalf of the artist for the purposes of or in connection with the artwork except in the case of storage fees which must be paid by the Principal if construction of the project and the readiness of the site to accept delivery of the artwork is delayed beyond the date for completion and delivery stated in the artwork contract;
- (h) cost of tools, equipment, machinery and manpower deployed by or on behalf of the artist to erect, install, display or secure the artwork into final position on the site;
- (i) cost of supervising delivery of the artwork to the site and its erection, display or securing into final position on the site;
- (j) cost of repairing, remedying, rectifying or making good defects or deficiencies in the artwork due to faulty materials or workmanship apparent either when first delivered to the site or subsequently becoming apparent or arising within a predetermined defects liability period commencing on final positioning of the artwork on the site;
- (k) cost of repairing, remedying, rectifying or making good damage caused to the artwork in the course of delivery to the site or during its storage, erection, installation or final positioning on site;
- (l) cost of preparing and producing instruction manuals for the maintenance and upkeep of the artwork and its constituent parts.

### **COMMISSIONING OF ARTIST STAGE**

During and for the purposes of the commissioning of artist stage, the consultant will:

- (a) advise the Principal on suitable provisions to be included in the artwork contract having regard to the artwork budget, the public art strategy, if applicable, and the need to integrate the artwork with the architectural design and construction of the project;
- (b) negotiate on behalf of the Principal with the artist about the final form and contents of the artwork contract;
- (c) keep the Principal fully informed of negotiations with the artist in relation to the artwork contract; and
- (d) oversee formal and timely entry by the Principal and artist into the artwork contract.

### **CREATION OF ARTWORK STAGE**

During and for the purposes of the creation of artwork stage, the consultant will:

- (a) closely monitor progress made by the artist in the development or creation of the artwork to ensure compliance with the artwork contract especially as regards:



- (i) the conception, configuration, dimensions, colourings and finishes of the artwork;
  - (ii) stipulated staged time limits for completion of the artwork;
  - (iii) parameters set out in the artwork budget;
- (b) liaise with the Principal and its nominated representatives or contractors to prepare the site in readiness for delivery, erection, installation or display of the artwork;
- (c) liaise with the artist to ensure that the artwork is completed or oriented in a manner permitting convenient and effective receipt on site for erection, installation or display in accordance with the Principal's preparations.

#### **FINAL DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION STAGE**

During and for the purposes of the final delivery and installation stage, the consultant will:

- (a) liaise with both the Principal and artist to co-ordinate timely, safe and secure delivery of the artwork to the site;
- (b) review arrangements made by the Principal and artist to have the artwork delivered to the site;
- (c) oversee the erection, installation, display or securing into place of the artwork on the site as part of the project;
- (d) oversee repair and rectification of the artwork by the artist if the artwork is defective, deficient or incomplete or is otherwise damaged in the course of delivery to or while on the site.



# 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





# 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.

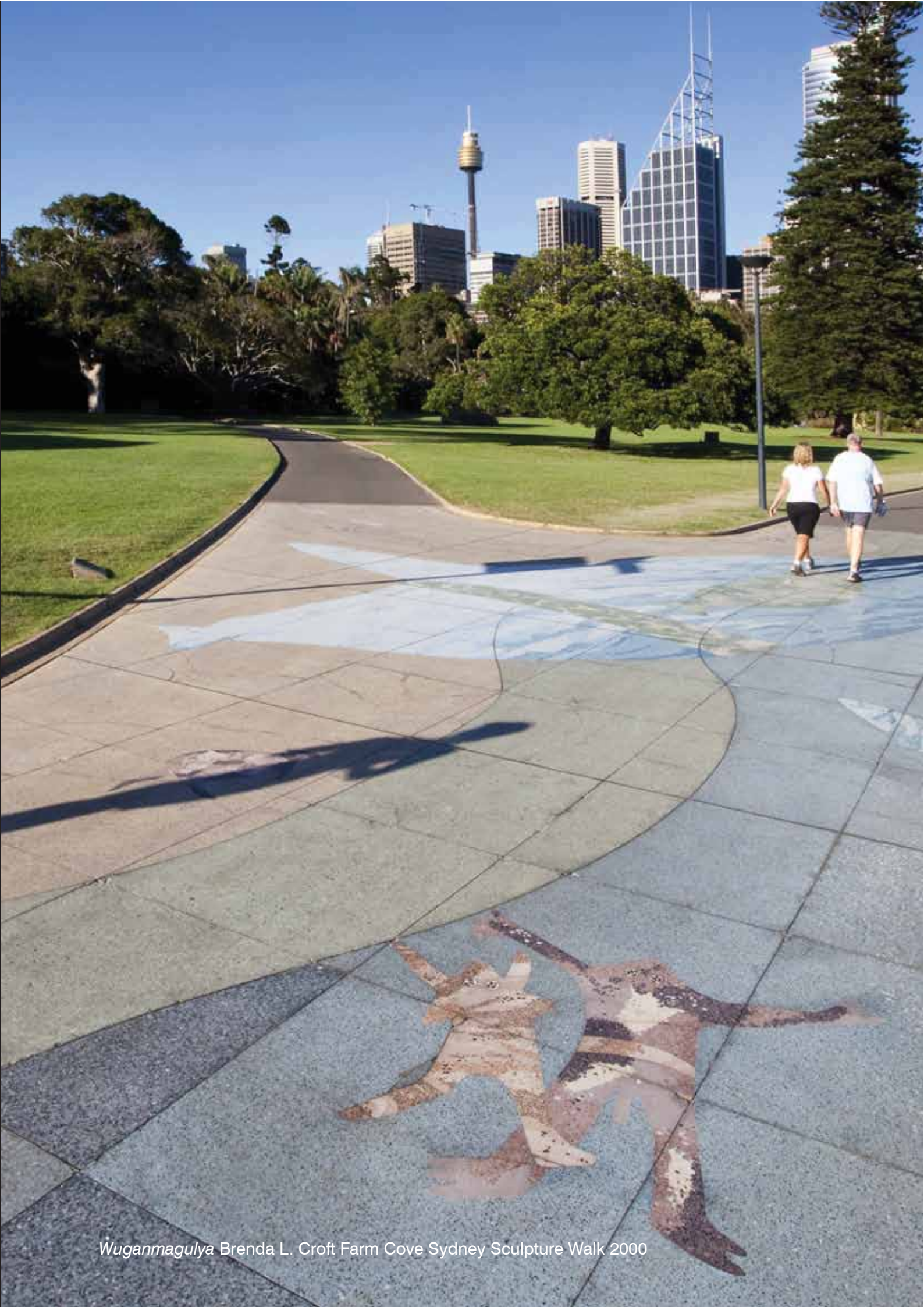
The plan allows us to carefully choose the right list of qualified artists and keep their project briefs broad to allow these artists to best respond to our sites. The briefs will seek inventive, state-of-the-art projects that also have an element of surprise.

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)**

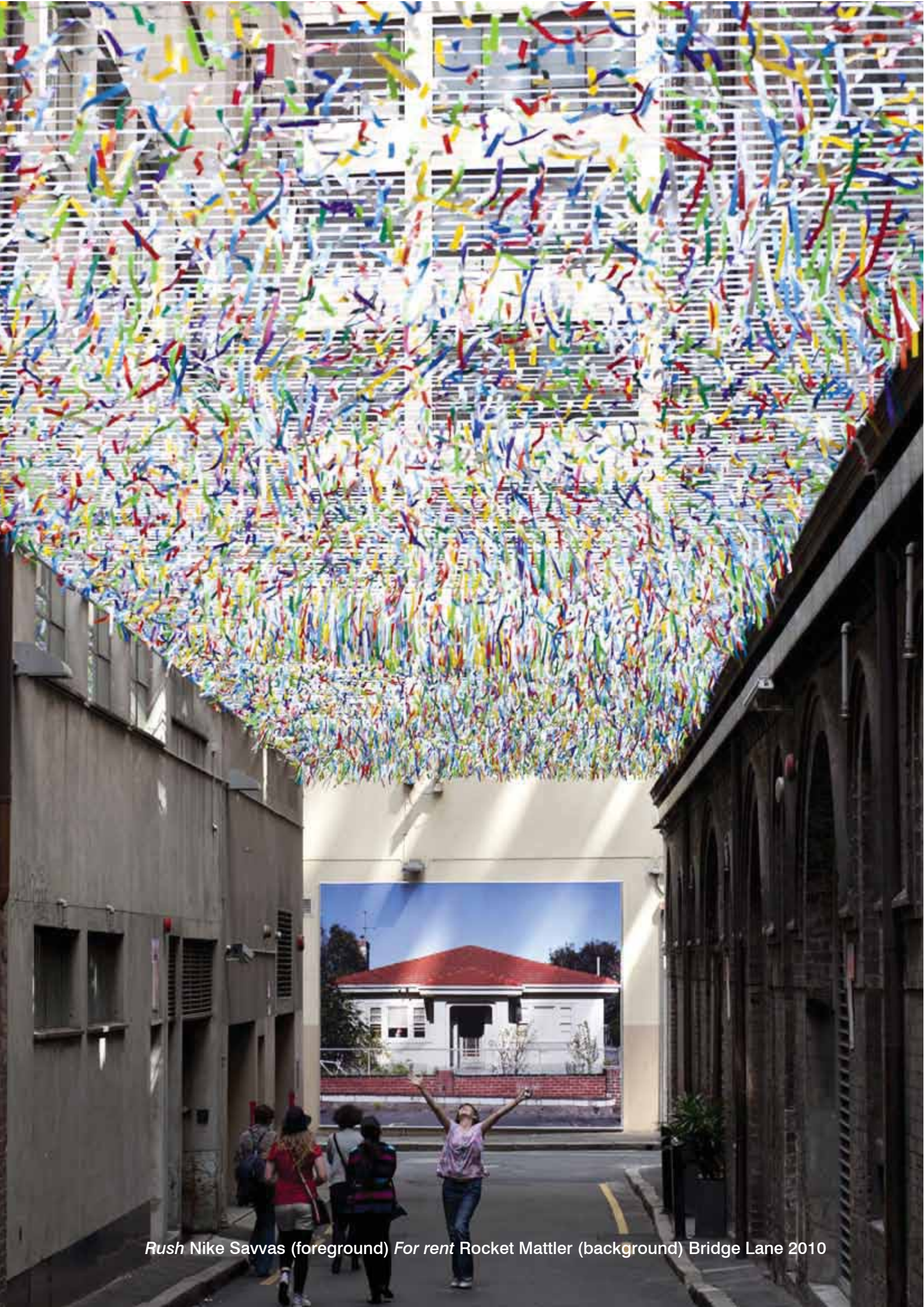
With Gehl's recommendations as a foundation, Sustainable Sydney 2030 was adopted by Council in 2008, committing the City to a vision for a more liveable city – 'Green, Global and Connected' – with artists playing a central role in the city's transformation into a sustainable, lively and engaging place.

#### **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.

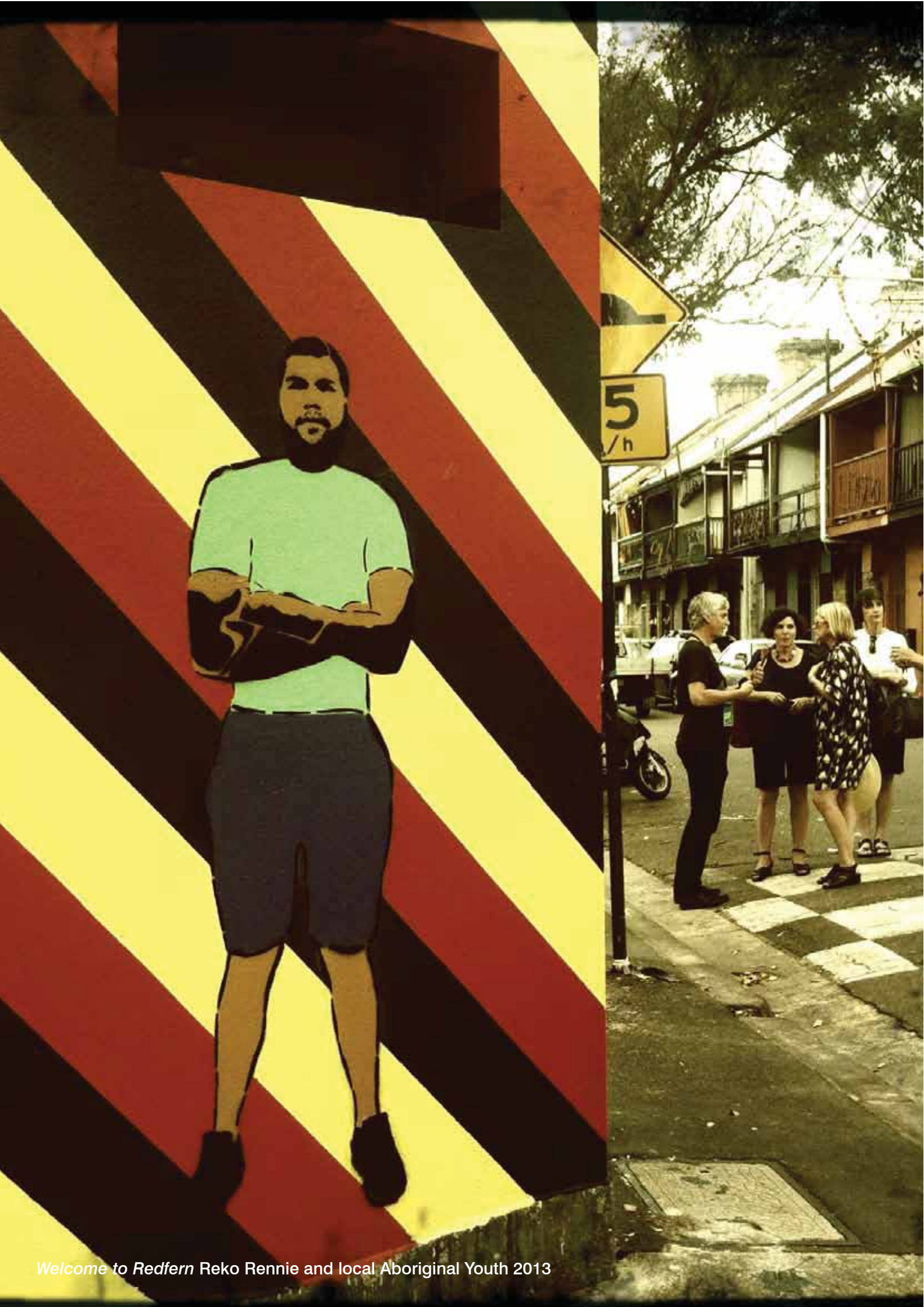
Artists today are working in line with the latest research on sustainability. Many attempt to reduce their own carbon footprints, electricity and water usage by developing new, more efficient ways to produce their art. In some cases, artists are directly addressing themes of sustainability in their art, 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

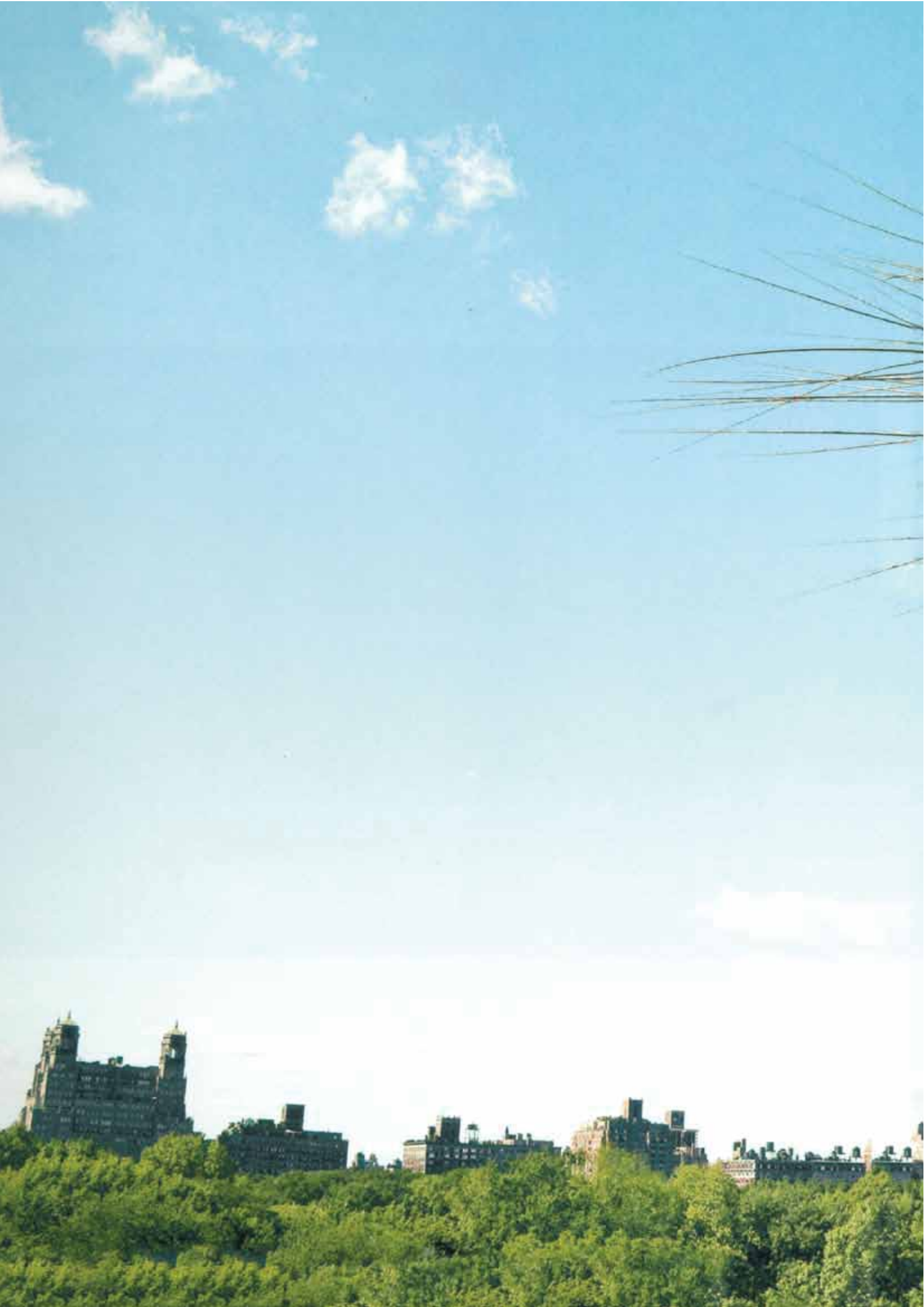
The process of transforming the city through public art provides the opportunity to make the city more legible and easier to navigate. The intention is to address the public spaces along George Street and the east-west connectors, and in the squares and the lanes – to realise their latent potential,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





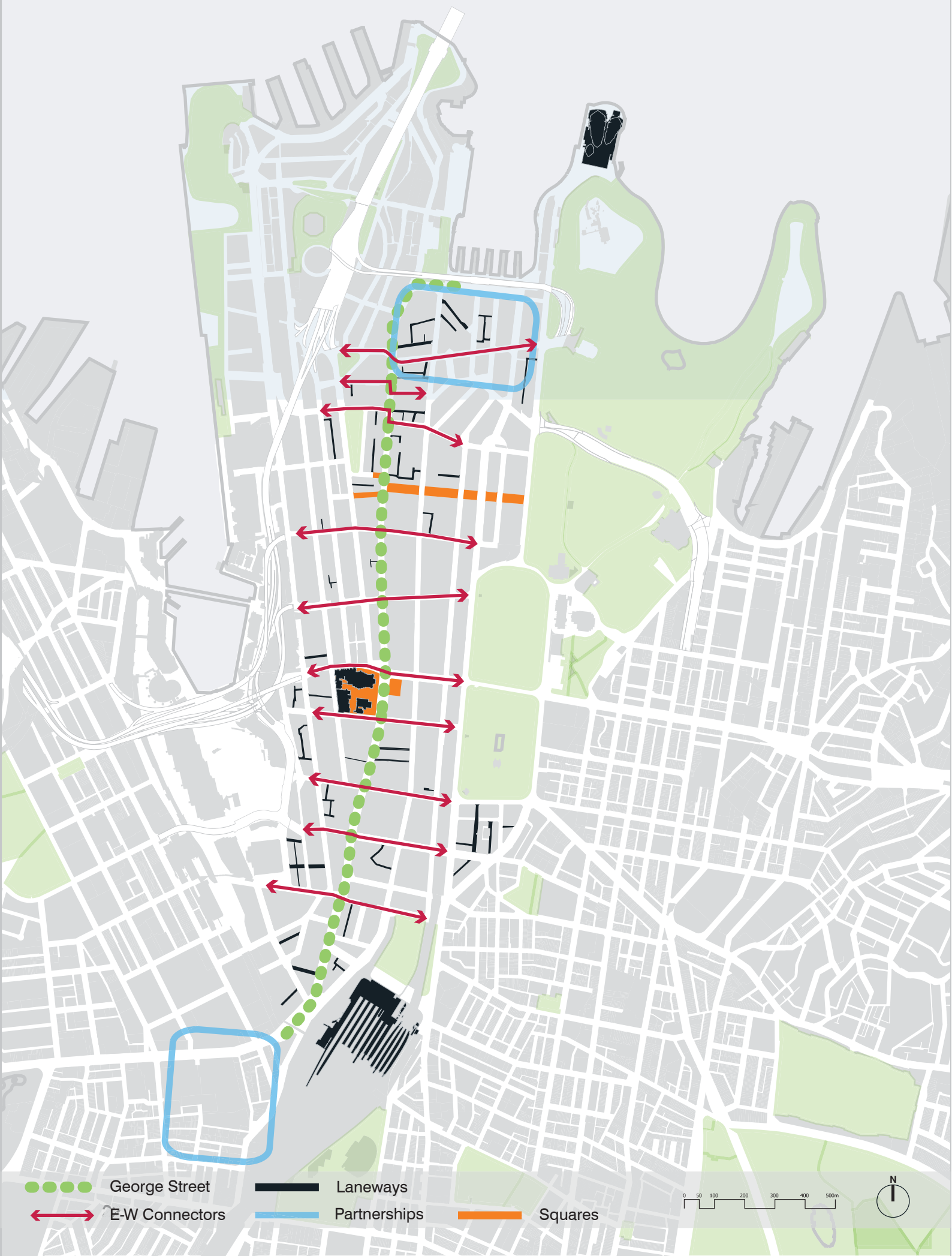




*Untitled* Doug and Mike Starn Metropolitan Museum of Art New York 2011



# Map of priority sites





## 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



*Balloon* Junya Ishigami Tokyo Japan 2007



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.





TUTUCU  
TAKIMLARI  
**KESICI**  
TAKIMLARI  
OLCÜ  
ALETLERİ  
KESME  
SIVILARI  
**C.N.C**  
KATERLERİ  
SERT  
MADEN  
UCLARI  
SERT  
MADEN  
FIREZELERİ

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



### **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 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).

## **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 – Drutt 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 – Drutt Street**

The connector comprising Park Street – Town Hall/Sydney Square – Drutt Street will be of





*The ego and the id* Franz West New York 2008



*Modified Social Bench #4* Jeppe Hein 2005.



*Auditorium* Franz West Kassel Germany 1992



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.

#### **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.