

ATTACHMENT A

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**PUBLIC ART LEGACY PROJECT,
CITY OF SYDNEY / BIENNALE OF SYDNEY
(2014-2016) SUMMARY**

PUBLIC ART LEGACY PROJECT CITY OF SYDNEY | BIENNALE OF SYDNEY PARTNERSHIP

Background

In May 2011, the City of Sydney (City) Council endorsed a new Public Art Policy and the City Art Public Art Strategy, providing a framework to deliver on the Sustainable Sydney 2030 vision of a lively and engaging, cultural and creative city. On 25 June 2012, Council endorsed the Public Art Legacy Project, allowing the City to partner with the Biennale of Sydney to the value of \$150,000 per annum, or \$300,000 per Biennale two-year cycle, to acquire or negotiate the long-term loan of a work of public art from each of three successive Biennales (2014, 2016 and 2018).

The Biennale of Sydney is proud to have delivered two site-specific works to the City of Sydney's Public Art Collection.

Janet Cardiff (Born 1957 in Brussels, Canada) and George Bures Miller (Born 1960 in Vegreville, Canada)

City of Forking Paths, 2014

Commissioned for the 19th Biennale of Sydney, *You Imagine What You Desire*, 2014, curated by Juliana Engberg (Australia)

Experienced on a smart phone or mobile device, *City of Forking Paths* leads people on a fictional journey through physical surrounds at dusk. Against the backdrop of real streets, the artists invent fictional scenarios and incidents drawn from the layers of history embedded in the landscape for users to discover. Starting at Customs House in Circular Quay, the work weaves a trail through The Rocks.

Agatha Gothe-Snape (Born 1980 in Sydney, Australia)

Here an Echo, 2015-2017

Commissioned for the 20th Biennale of Sydney, *The future is already here – it's just not evenly distributed*, 2016, curated by Stephanie Rosenthal (Germany)

Goth-Snape produced an ambitious project that evolved in various forms over a two-year period of research and development. Over this time the work manifested as public performances, walks, conversations and correspondence. This process informed 14 phrases that now appear in perpetuity in Wemyss Lane, Surry Hills. Documentation of the artist's process and dialogue has been published in a limited-edition artist's book that is now in the collection of City of Sydney and available online in a digital format on the City Art website.

The Biennale's contribution to cultural tourism

The Biennale of Sydney has established itself as a leading cultural authority and organisation over a 45-year history during which it has actively forged space for artists and art in the city through the delivery of temporary exhibitions. The Biennale of Sydney has invited international and Australian artists to produce significant works that have responded to the city – its history, geography, society and culture – and which are embedded in the cultural memory of its communities.

Through supporting national and international works of the highest quality, the Biennale attracts Sydneysiders, state-wide, interstate and international tourists, enhancing the City's reputation and promoting connections with other internationally regarded cultural and creative cities and institutions. The Biennale of Sydney's activities help enhance our city's integrity as a cultural destination. It attracts local and international visitors. In 2016 for example, 245,000 Biennale visitors were tourists, 110,000 of which were from overseas, 84,000 from interstate and 50,000 from NSW, outside of Sydney. Total visitation to the 20th Biennale of Sydney (2016) was 643,000.

In terms of economic impact, independent audience research on the 2016 Biennale of Sydney, conducted by StollzNow Research, found that the exhibition added \$40M to the economy of Sydney. \$36.8M was 'new revenue' coming from interstate and overseas visitors, demonstrating the event's significant contribution to cultural tourism and the local economy.

50 percent of the Biennale of Sydney's audience are first-time visitors, suggesting engagement of new audiences. 40 percent are under the age of 35, demonstrating engagement with arts and culture across diverse age groups, with a high level of youth experiencing arts and culture through Biennale channels. 81 percent of visitors rate their satisfaction of the Biennale as Excellent or Good, indicating that the exhibitions and programs are a positive experience for attendees. And importantly, admission to the Biennale of Sydney is free for all to enjoy, making content accessible to the broadest possible audience and removing potential barriers such as socio-economic status, disability or geography.

Benefits of the Legacy Project to the City of Sydney and the community

The Legacy Project nurtures a sustainable and culturally vibrant city. The commissioned artwork has an ongoing presence and a lasting physical place in the city for the enjoyment and benefit of both its local communities and visitors. The project is also an opportunity for the City to maximise on the Biennale's capacity to engage the best local and international artists to undertake a commission that becomes a permanent fixture of Sydney's Public Art Collection.

The Legacy Project partnership provides an opportunity for significant community, social and cultural benefits through supporting the City's plans to develop a Cultural Ribbon, which will include significant public artworks at key points along the City's cultural institutions and harbourfront.

The Legacy projects also expand the notions of what is expected from permanent public art, remaining accessible to communities while celebrating the cultural and social diversity of Sydney. In the production of *Here and Echo*, 2015-2017, for example, community engagement was instrumental. Each day for 3 months Agatha Gothe-Snape would walk from the Domain to Wemyss Lane in Surry Hills accompanied by different audiences – locals, collaborators, stakeholders, art audiences, Biennale audiences and invited guests. Over the 3 months, at least 300 people joined the walk with members of the public engaging with the artist, performers and artwork.

The community enthusiasm and support for the Legacy Project was evident on Thursday, 10 August 2017, at the launch of *Here and Echo*. The launch was attended by approximately 150 people including: the artist, local Wemyss Lane residents and property owners, project contributors, representatives of all three levels of government, City of Sydney staff (City Design), City of Sydney Public Art Advisory Panel, Biennale Board Directors, Director and CEO and staff members, patrons and partners.

The Honourable Lord Mayor Clover Moore described *Here and Echo* as: 'a whimsical and intriguing work that draws attention to a site that might not otherwise attract notice, connecting with the residents of Sydney and revealing their stories. The success of events like the Biennale shows there is enthusiastic public support for contemporary art in Sydney – people want to be inspired, challenged and delighted by art, and Agatha's project succeeds on all fronts. The City is committed to making Sydney the sort of place where ground breaking art is encouraged and appreciated'.

Benefits to the Biennale of Sydney

The Legacy Project is a commissioning model that allows for generous dialogue between the selected artist, the city and the Artistic Director and exemplifies how the Biennale works as a conduit between artists, the public and the landscape of Sydney. The Biennale of Sydney recognises the Legacy Project as a chance to invest in an artist's practice over an extended period and build lasting relationships between their practice and the cultural life of the city, whether they be an international or local artist/s.

The Legacy Project also deepens the Biennale's relationship with the local community, strengthening its local and international profile as a leading contemporary art event. By expanding on the concept of what public art is and where contemporary art can be, the partnership adds value to the Biennale's other exhibitions and programs confined to a two-year cycle. The public endorsement of this co-commissioning project by the Lord Mayor and the City of Sydney in media, speeches, and publication forewords, for example, increases the Biennale's credibility to local residents, current and prospective, local and international supporters. By hiring temporary contract staff to assist with the delivery of the project, the Biennale also benefits by improving the professional development of arts administrators. Moreover, the partnership helps weave the Biennale into the permanent tapestry of the City's cultural life.

For the Artistic Director of each exhibition – a world-renowned curator – the Legacy Project model allows them to work with an artist in Sydney and produce a work that remains in this city beyond the presentation of the three-month Biennale exhibition. The Artistic Director examines the local space which hosts the broader exhibition of Australian and international work. Both Artistic Directors of the 19th and 20th editions have embraced the chance to expand upon and examine key concepts of their curatorial premise in a site-specific and locally relevant context, resulting in timely and poignant works that last beyond the constraints of a three-month temporary exhibition.

Importantly, the Legacy Project addresses the mission of the Biennale of Sydney by engaging audiences with contemporary art, promoting cultural exchange and inspiring audiences to experience art, themselves and their world in new and creative ways. More specifically, the project assist the Biennale:

1. to invigorate Australian visual culture, to create links between Australian artists and the art world, and to present innovative art exhibitions and programs which enrich our lives, challenge our thinking and stimulate our creativity;
2. to encourage a spirit of experimentation and investigation and aim to generate enthusiasm for the creative expression of fresh ideas and interest in the imaginative use of new techniques and media; and
3. to offer unique opportunities for the public to engage directly with new art from all parts of the world.

The diverse and unexpected forms that each of these works have taken demonstrates the Biennale of Sydney's commitment to presenting challenging and unique experiences of contemporary art.

Benefits to the Artist

The Legacy Project supports artists to develop and present innovative, high quality and experimental work while fostering international cultural exchange within the Biennale's global context. Artists are given the opportunity to support cultural activity, community participation and interaction. They step beyond the traditional spaces for artistic expression, provoking thought in the public sphere.

The value to an artist of being granted the Legacy Project commission cannot be understated. The experience, endorsement and exposure through publicity and media have all proven to be of huge benefit to the participating artists, whether they be of the international calibre of Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller or local talent Agatha Gothe-Snape. Partnerships of this merit that award an artist with the opportunity to experiment and push boundaries of perception about the potential of Public Art are rare. Being selected for the Legacy Project is an honour and a privilege for artists. The media and online engagement alone is significant (in 2017, this included coverage across nine media outlets, and within the Biennale and the City's social media channels, reaching 73,879 unique profiles, achieving 14,660 views and 1,181 engagements (likes, comments or shares).

The project provides an opportunity for an artist to engage with the Biennale over an extended period that would not otherwise be possible. The Biennale team works alongside the artist as their project and broader practice develops. Both of the works delivered through the Legacy Project have been made specifically for the urban landscapes they now inhabit, and are created during generous periods of research and development that allowed the artists to examine and understand how people experience Sydney, as locals and passing visitors, and where cultures and ways of thinking intertwine.

In 2016 the Legacy Project supported local artist Agatha Gothe-Snape at a pivotal point in her career. Gothe-Snape produced an important public work, *Here and Echo*, which has helped established her as one of the most important Australian artists of her generation and contributed to her rising international profile.

The Legacy Project ensures a greater diversity of artists, both emerging and experienced, are contributing to shaping Sydney's public domain as a cultural and creative city. It is a project that delivers great benefit to the City of Sydney, its community, the Biennale of Sydney, and the participating artists.