

Item 2.

21st Biennale of Sydney / City of Sydney (2018) Public Art Legacy Project

File No: S103805

Summary

In May 2011, Council endorsed the City Art Public Art Strategy as an action of Sustainable Sydney 2030 to create a 'lively and engaging city' and 'a cultural and creative city'.

Guiding Principle 6 of the Strategy recommends the support of stakeholder and government partners to facilitate public art opportunities.

In line with this principle, in June 2012 Council resolved to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Biennale of Sydney to acquire a work of art commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney thus entering the City of Sydney's Public Art Collection, up to the value of \$300,000 per Biennale, subject to Council approval. Council approved an extension of this partnership with the Biennale of Sydney in February 2018.

This report details the proposed artwork for the Biennale of Sydney and City of Sydney's third Public Art Legacy Project for the 21st Biennale of Sydney, which took place from 16 March 2018 – 11 June 2018.

Since the appointment of Mami Kataoka, the Artistic Director for the 21st Biennale of Sydney in 2016, City Design Staff have been working with the Biennale of Sydney and other key institutional stakeholders to progress the selection and terms for the third legacy public artwork for recommendation to Council.

The Artistic Director and the Biennale Chief Executive Officer presented the proposed Biennale Legacy Artwork Project to the City of Sydney's Public Art Advisory Panel in 2018. A revised proposal was presented to the Panel in February 2019. The Panel has recommended the proposed artwork to Council for endorsement given the artist's and the artwork's global significance.

This report recommends Council endorse the proposed 21st Biennale Public Art Legacy Project outlined in confidential Attachment A and confidential Attachment B, to allow the project to proceed as per the terms outlined.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the acquisition of the Public Art Legacy Project proposed by the Artistic Director of the 21st Biennale of Sydney, Mami Kataoka, and recommended by the Public Art Advisory Panel, as detailed in confidential Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) the artwork enter the City of Sydney's Public Art Collection as a Biennale of Sydney / City of Sydney Public Art Legacy Project of the 21st Biennale of Sydney; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a Public Art Legacy Project Acquisition Agreement with the Biennale of Sydney.

Attachments

Attachment A. Proposed Public Art Legacy Project for 21st Biennale of Sydney (2018) (Confidential).

Attachment B. Additional Information for the Proposed Public Art Legacy Project for the 21st Biennale of Sydney (2018) (Confidential).

Background

1. In May 2011, Council endorsed the City Art Public Art Strategy to provide a framework to deliver on the Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision of a "lively and engaging City" and a "cultural and creative city".
2. On 25 June 2012, Council endorsed a Partnership with the Biennale of Sydney, for a Public Art Legacy Project – to allow the City of Sydney to partner with the Biennale of Sydney to acquire, or arrange the long term loan of, a work of public art to the value of \$300,000 per Biennale from each of the next three Biennale's as a trial project.
3. Following Council's resolution, the Biennale of Sydney and the City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to work together for the 19th, 20th and 21st Biennale's to ensure a legacy artwork remains in Sydney beyond the period of the exhibition.
4. Over three Biennales (2014, 2016 and 2018) the Public Art Legacy Project program aimed to commission a new artwork from each Biennale. Selected artworks would be located in the City of Sydney for an extended period, beyond the three month period of the Biennale, from a minimum of two years up to a maximum of 25 years.
5. The following legacy artwork projects now make up part of the City Art Public Art Collection:
 - (a) 2014 - The City of Forking Paths by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller commissioned with Artistic Director, Juliana Engberg.
 - (i) Filmed in-situ in Sydney by the artists over a three month period, this site-specific, audio-visual artwork leads the viewer through the city. Using rich imagery and audio material recorded in three dimensions, the experience blurs reality and fiction, fantasy and history to create an experience that was unique to Sydney in 2014, yet timeless in its power to immerse the participant in the city.
 - (ii) This artwork is now part of the City Art Public Art Collection. The artwork has gained widespread attention and has been enjoyed by Sydneysiders and local, national and international visitors alike. Since launching in April 2014, devices have been borrowed from Customs House and downloads for Apple and Android devices have been recorded. Bookings for the recent Summer Series City of Forking Paths Tours have been fully subscribed.
 - (b) 2016 - Here, An Echo by Agatha Gothe-Snape commissioned with Artistic Director, Stephanie Rosenthal.
 - (i) This artwork by a Sydney-based artist, was developed prior to, during and following the 20th Biennale of Sydney through a series of engagements with the public. This process of social interaction with the artist and collaborators saw the artwork unfold throughout the 2016 Biennale. Drawing on the idea of audience participation, time and place, to allow the project to come to life, Here, An Echo makes a unique contribution to the City Art Public Art Collection and provides a new way to engage with the city through public art practices.

- (c) 2018 - The artwork proposed for the 21st Biennale of Sydney is the subject of this report and is outlined in Confidential Attachment A and Confidential Attachment B.
6. In February 2018 Council extended the City's existing agreement with the Biennale of Sydney, for the acquisition or long term loan of artworks, commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney, for each of the 2020, 2022 and 2024 events, that would enter the City of Sydney's public art collection, City Art, for a total of \$930,000 (excluding GST).
 7. The Biennale of Sydney invites its Artistic Directors to create a major visual art exhibition showcasing ground-breaking contemporary art from Australia and around the world. Hosted across a number of Sydney's leading cultural venues, including Cockatoo Island, the Biennale of Sydney has extensive local and international appeal, and is widely viewed as the model of all other modern Biennale's across the globe.
 8. The three month exhibition is accompanied by a free public program designed to engage the audience in creative thought, discussion and participation with artist talks, performances, forums, family events, guided tours and other special events.
 9. In 2016, 110,000 visitors to the Biennale 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. (Source: StollzNow Research).
 10. In 2016, 50 percent of Biennale audiences were first-time visitors. 40 percent were 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 rated their satisfaction of the Biennale as Excellent or Good, indicating that the exhibitions and programs are a positive experience for attendees. (Source: StollzNow Research).
 11. In 2018, the Biennale of Sydney attracted visitation of more than 850,000, the highest level in the Biennale's 45-year history. This reflects the important place that the Biennale holds in the life of Sydney, Australia and in its engagement with the world, and the strong position it holds on the global stage.
 - (a) 52 per cent of the Biennale's audience identify as culturally diverse;
 - (b) 23 per cent are international visitors (21 per cent report the Biennale as the main reason for their visit to Sydney);
 - (c) 46 per cent are under 35 years of age;
 - (d) 51 per cent of visitors attended for the first time;
 - (e) 53 per cent visitors from Sydney (40 per cent from Western suburbs and Inner West, 22 per cent Northern Suburbs, 16 per cent Inner City, 12 per cent Eastern suburbs, 7 per cent Southern Suburbs);
 - (f) 16 per cent visitors from interstate; and
 - (g) Audience satisfaction was consistently high with 87 per cent visitors rating the Biennale "excellent" or "good" and appealed to first time and experienced visitors.

12. The Legacy Public Art Project allows the City of Sydney to capitalise on this hugely popular cultural event, which is part of the cultural landscape and the history of Sydney, by retaining a work of public art for the continued enjoyment of visitors, workers and residents beyond the three month period of the exhibition.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

13. Sustainable Sydney 2030 is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 1 - A Globally Competitive and Innovative City - The proposed artwork supports this direction through its unique international contribution to the cultural landscape of Sydney, subsequently delivering world-class cultural opportunities and leading in effective global cultural partnerships.
 - (b) Direction 2 provides a road map for the City to become A Leading Environmental Performer - The proposed artwork confirms the City's commitment to being a leading and cultural performer and acknowledges the leading role creative practitioners play in engaging and encouraging communities to engage with global environmental and social challenges.
 - (c) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling - The expression of concepts of green, global and connected inherent to the proposed artwork encourages people to experience the city and its people through alternative means, including engaging with more active forms of transport such as walking and cycling.
 - (d) Direction 5 - A Lively and Engaging City Centre - The proposed artwork empowers the City's residents and audiences to engage with concepts of social change through positive creative actions. This proposed artwork brings creative activity to the City Centre and allows people to engage with an artwork that creatively shapes the public domain of the city and people's experience of it.
 - (e) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - The proposed artwork will allow the residents, workers and visitors to engage with the legacy of memory and enhance the character of the city through public art. It will create alternative means for people to learn about Sydney's creative past and the opportunities it offered major international artists.
 - (f) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City - The proposed legacy artwork responds to this direction by acknowledging the role the City has played in creating an opportunity for artists and their collaborators to intervene in public space. The inclusion of the proposed artwork into the City's Public Art Collection is a demonstration of the leading role the City plays in cultural leadership and partnerships.

- (g) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design - The proposed artwork and, more broadly, the City's partnership with the Biennale of Sydney, supports the idea of sustainable practice through capitalising on the creative expertise and engagement that the Biennale of Sydney creates on a bi-annual basis in the city. The artwork will remain in the public domain for future residents and visitors to encounter well beyond the 21st Biennale of Sydney.
- (h) Direction 10 - Implementation through Effective Governance and Partnerships - The legacy artwork will be commissioned through the City's partnership with the Biennale of Sydney as a key cultural organisation. As a global city, it is the City's role to support partnerships such as this. These partnerships enable the possibility for the exchange of creative thinking with international peers, essential to ensuring that Sydney remains dynamic and open to new ideas.

Organisational Impact

- 14. The Biennale of Sydney partnership and the delivery of the Legacy Public Art Project by the Biennale of Sydney will be supported by City Design and City Greening and Leisure staff. The artwork's integration into the City Art Public Art Collection will be supported by other staff as required (from City Projects, Public Domain, City Operations and City Engagement).
- 15. Delivery of the artwork will be achieved through partnering with the Biennale of Sydney, which is an established organisation with a proven history of delivering high profile public art projects to tight deadlines. This offers the City an efficient and economical method of realising this Legacy Artwork Project, as was the case with the artworks delivered for the 19th and 20th Biennale of Sydney events.
- 16. The Biennale of Sydney will manage the development and delivery of the artwork in consultation with City Staff according to the agreed program. Following permanent installation, the artwork will be transferred to the City of Sydney and become an asset that will be maintained as part of the City Art Public Art Collection.

Social / Cultural / Community

- 17. One of the most important aspects of the Public Art Legacy Project Program and indeed of the City's Public Art Collection is the access it provides to works of art of international significance. This project proposes a significant artwork for the residents of Sydney and for visitors from around the globe.
- 18. The proposed artwork provides the opportunity for significant community, cultural and social benefits through engagement with key cultural institutions beyond the Biennale of Sydney partnership.
- 19. The public will be able to understand the artwork and its significance through plaques installed in close proximity; and through the accompanying documentation captured by City Art and available to the general public online through the City Art, the Biennale of Sydney and other key cultural institutions.

Environmental

- 20. This artwork further builds on the sustainable aspects of the partnership agreement with the Biennale of Sydney allowing artworks to remain in place for a longer period of time beyond the period of the three month exhibition. The proposed artwork takes an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable approach to the making of public art.

Economic

21. Independent audience research conducted during the 2016 Biennale of Sydney 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.
22. Independent audience research conducted during the 2018 Biennale of Sydney by StollzNow Research found that the exhibition added \$36M to the economy of Sydney. \$32.9M was revenue from interstate and overseas.
23. The proposed artwork will attract cultural tourism to Sydney and encourage the exploration of this area of the City through public art.
24. The opportunity to retain a Legacy Artwork from the 21st Biennale of Sydney is an opportunity for the City to capitalise on the Biennale's past and future successes.

Budget Implications

25. There are sufficient funds for this project in the Major Public Art "Iconic Places" project budget held within the City's 2018/19 capital works budget and future year forward estimates.

Relevant Legislation

26. Attachment A and Attachment B contain confidential commercial information which, if disclosed would:
 - (a) reveal a trade secret; and
 - (b) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.
27. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise the ability of Biennale of Sydney and Council to announce the artwork and preserve the commercial position of the Biennale of Sydney.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

28. The 21st Biennale of Sydney ended on 11 June 2018.
29. The 22nd Biennale of Sydney will start in March 2020.
30. The proposed artwork will be delivered according to the program as outlined in confidential Attachment A and confidential Attachment B.

Options

31. Not to proceed with the proposed artwork is not recommended. The proposed artwork is by an internationally renowned contemporary artist and uniquely capitalises on the objectives of the Legacy Public Art Project partnership by reflecting the significant history of the Biennale itself and the City's natural environment.

Public Consultation

32. In the lead up to the opening of the 2018 Biennale of Sydney, the Artistic Director chaired several public talks at the Art Gallery of New South Wales as part of her archival research.
33. The proposed artwork has been reviewed by the City of Sydney's Public Art Advisory Panel, who recommend it to Council for endorsement.
34. Key national institutional stakeholders have indicated support for the project.
35. Given the longstanding and existing process to develop the artwork, the artwork takes on a level of community consultation that is inherent and essential to its realisation.
36. All legacy elements of the artwork will be subject to appropriate planning approvals.

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