

Item 12.12

Notices of Motion

Reinstating Removed or Damaged Women's Artworks

By Councillor Scott

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note:
- (i) in March 2023, Council voted unanimously to identify new opportunities to commemorate significant women and to support increased equality of gender, First Nations and cultural diversity within the public art realm;
 - (ii) Anne Graham's 'Passage' fountain in Martin Place has a non-operational misting mechanism;
 - (iii) City staff identified this work as needing to be reviewed and have plans for its reinstatement in the 2024/25 financial year;
 - (iv) the following artworks by women have been removed from public display in the City of Sydney:
 - (a) Robyn Backen's 'Archaeology of Bathing' (1999-2019), as a part of the Sydney Sculpture Walk, which reflects the history of bathing from the original Domain Baths for Ladies;
 - (b) Debra Phillip's 'Viva Voce' (1999-2019), as a part of the Sydney Sculpture Walk, acknowledging the historical and contemporary importance of the area as a site of public oratory and celebrating the importance of free speech and public debate; and
 - (c) Lynne Roberts-Goodwin's 'Tankstream' (1999-2019) that marked the course of Sydney's first water supply;
 - (v) these three works formed part of the Sydney Sculpture Walk, which consisted of ten public art works commissioned by the City in 1999 and mostly located on the Royal Botanic Gardens;
 - (vi) it was an important collection of innovative, site-specific art works which addressed the social, cultural and historic aspects of each location, and all but two of the works were created by women;
 - (vii) the City's collection of public art and cultural heritage is carefully managed and maintained, in addition to:
 - (a) regular basic cleaning;
 - (b) specialised maintenance;

- (c) annual structural certification;
 - (d) carrying out repairs and corrective maintenance; and
 - (e) a comprehensive conservation program;
- (viii) since the establishment of the current public art program in 2005, the City has led the way in commissioning art works that reflect the great diversity of voices and stories in our communities;
- (ix) this leadership is evident in the City's permanent collection (where, for example, 80 per cent of works commissioned since 2005 have been created by women), in temporary art commissioned by the City, and in work commissioned by others within the Local Government Area;
- (x) the City ensures all public art commissions are open to all artist and genders, placing emphasis on specific cultural sensitivity and awareness where required;
- (xi) staff conduct regular reviews to ensure works are properly cared for, and also identify works which may require deaccession;
- (xii) Margel Hinder's Bronze Sculpture and Fountain in Denis Winston place, while not owned by the City, is also not operational; and
- (xiii) Hinder's sculpture commemorates the legacy of Denis Winston and celebrates human scale, diversity in housing, landscaped spaces and sculpture as essential to the pleasures of urban living;
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) undertake an audit of the art around the City of Sydney to ensure it is operational and maintained; and
 - (ii) investigate opportunities to reinstate women's art, and ensure the City applies gender and diversity lenses to future City art projects commissioned.

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