Brighton Council
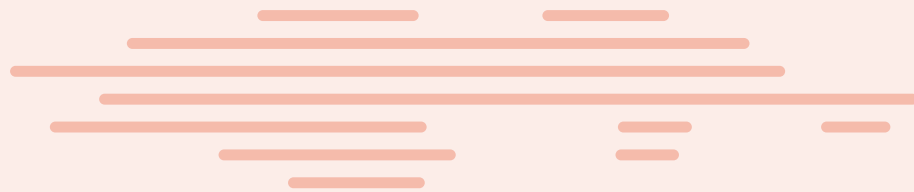
## Public Art Strategy

Brighton
going places

We acknowledge the traditional owners who once walked this country: the Mumirimina people.

The Mumirimina belonged to the Oyster Bay tribe. This was the largest tribe in Tasmania and covered 8000 square kilometres. kutalayna levee in Brighton was a significant meeting place where hundreds of generations of Aboriginal families hunted, gathered, corroboreed, camped and traded.

In the course of colonisation, dispossession of the Mumirimina was early, rapid and extensive.

We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community today as the continuing custodians of this land, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. Through our words and actions we strive to build a community that reflects and respects the history and hopes for all the people of Brighton.
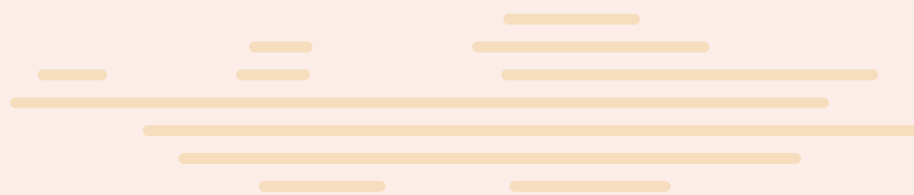
Purpose

Public art plays a critical role in the creation of vibrant and meaningful public spaces, and the development of diverse, tolerant, and proud communities. It is a way of connecting with and outwardly expressing a place's heart and soul. Public art projects can assist with memorial or historic acknowledgement but can also reflect on a community's contemporary values and visions of its future. A community feels culturally prosperous when its residents feel 'seen' and this should be the core guiding principle of public art projects in the Brighton Municipality.

Accumulated Knowledge, Tim Whiteley, 2012. Located at Jordan River Learning Federation, Bridgewater. Photo: Julie Stoneman.

Aims and actions

1

Recognise and celebrate Palawa/Pakana culture. With a large Aboriginal population, Brighton Council is in a unique position to support the Aboriginal community to connect with cultural practices and landscapes, as well as educating and connecting with the broader community. Aboriginal projects should reflect deep cultural traditions and express contemporary perspectives from Tasmania's first peoples.

Suggested action:

· **Aboriginal leadership**: facilitate a working group which includes an Aboriginal curator and Brighton based Palawa/Pakana Elders and knowledge holders (to assist in developing Aboriginal led projects).

2

Showcase and support local artists, cultural experts and creatives in the development of new skills and new work.

Suggested actions:

· **Research**: identify who the local artists, cultural experts and creatives are in order to understand how best to support them.

· **Funding**: generate opportunities for the development of artistic practice such as small development grants or opportunities to produce new work by locals.

3

Encourage collaborative projects including workshops or visits from creatives from further afield to create impactful projects. Collaborative relationships can be fruitful in broadening perspectives and developing the creative practices of locals.

Suggested actions:

· **Workshops and education**: support externals to run workshops, mentoring and education programs for local artists.

· **Artist residencies**: establish a residency program which invites artists to spend time with the Brighton community.

· **Outreach**: develop a communications strategy expressing opportunities for artists to work in Brighton and with the community.

4

Encourage existing arts and cultural events to program events and activities within Brighton.

Suggested action:

· **Pitch to target programs**: examples of established programs to approach include Ten Days on the Island, Festival of Voices, BigHart, Dark Mofo, Tasmanian Writers Centre, Contemporary Art Tasmania, to name a few.

5

Make public spaces and public vistas more engaging and attractive.

Suggested actions:

- **Capital works**: ensure aesthetics and arts are considered in council's own capital works programs and new developments.

- **Lobbying and partnering with others**: for instance, working with State Growth for highway installations and/or lighting on the Bridgewater Bridge, facilitating the painting of electricity boxes, working with Metro on interesting bus stop designs, and ensuring some common elements of community infrastructure are more engaging.

- **Prioritise**: target areas that may appear ugly or that have a high level of viewing by the public, for example the industrial estate or shopping centres and parks.

6

Reflect Brighton's community perspectives. Whether produced by locals or creatives from elsewhere, projects should aim to connect with local residents who should see themselves reflected back through the development process and finished artworks.

Suggested action:

- **Support**: provide community liaison support for artists wanting to engage with locals.

7

Support a wide range of projects of artistic excellence, from a diverse range of creatives. Projects may also challenge ingrained community attitudes and express new perspectives. Artists should be supported to work critically and openly.

Suggested action:

- **Diverse advisors**: establish a small public art advisory group which includes diverse experts from both Brighton and further afield to advise on appropriate projects.

<< *The actions above (and their implementation) are summarised in Appendix 1* >>

Commissioning models

There are several models for commissioning public artworks each with strengths and weaknesses. It is in the interest of Brighton Council to reduce administrative costs as much as possible so each approach should be considered carefully for the context of each project.

Invitation

A project brief is developed and distributed to a limited number of artists determined by an advisory group. The artists are asked to respond to the brief and where relevant present examples of their art practice. From these proposals, a preferred artist is selected and engaged.

Pros: By limiting the number of applications and targeting appropriate artists, administration costs will be reduced, and proposals will be more relevant.

Cons: The artists approached will be a product of biases of those on the advisory group. This is a less democratic model of selection.

Expression of interest / Grants

This is a public call out for project submissions and artists who respond to a series of questions and criteria. Usually, this process would have several rounds and a group of shortlisted artists will be paid to develop a full concept proposal.

Pros: The most democratic approach with the potential of surprise/unforeseen outcomes. Casts the net wide and lets artists know Brighton Council is 'open for business'.

Cons: Requires an effective marketing campaign, artist outreach and administrative management.

Curatorial model

A curator approaches the council for permission to develop a project with an artist, or a curator is engaged by the Council to find an appropriate artist for a specific brief.

Pros: The experience of a curator behind a project limits the risks taken on by the council and by the artist. They manage expectations of all parties involved, consider the appropriateness of the project from all aspects. They are a middleman/translator negotiating between council and artist making sure all parties achieve their required outcomes.

Cons: The curator will be opinionated and drive the concept, requiring complete trust from the council.

Artist led model

An artist approaches the council directly for permission to develop a project in Brighton.

Pros: Less parties involved, so conversation may be streamlined.

Cons: Artists are not necessarily the best placed to communicate directly with stakeholders, trouble shoot bigger picture issues or manage timelines.

Funding options

Project partners

Project partners can work with councils in a variety of ways including financial, logistical, special expertise or in-kind support. Council should explore options within the community, educational, museum and private sectors.

Percentage of art from Capital Works Budget

A dedicated Public Art Budget could be established by allocating an annual percentage of the annual Capital Works Budget. This would be similar to the State Government's model of a percentage of the budget for a new capital project having to be set aside for art.

Council program budget allocations

Council could also simply establish a budget amount each year for the types of projects identified in this strategy. Budget allocations should include funds for: the engagement of public art project advisory groups, administrative costs associated with public art projects, ongoing maintenance and conservation of public artworks, marketing and promotion of programs and final projects.

Developer public open space contributions

Under Section 112 of the *Local Government (Building and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993*, subdividers of residential land make a financial contribution to Council when a subdivision does not provide a portion of land for public use. These 'public open space' contributions assist Council in improving and maintaining areas of public open space in the municipality.

Negotiated developer agreements

Where appropriate, building and commercial development projects should be encouraged by Council to include public art as part of the overall project concept.

Grants from state and federal agencies

Grants are available from state and federal agencies such as *Arts Tasmania* and the *Australian Council for the Arts* along with others.

Private art benefactors, foundations and bequests

Develop relationships with likeminded philanthropic individuals and organisations. Be prepared for these organisations to be strongly opinionated and direct with the allocation of their funds.

Project timeline and management

The establishment of a project management plan is fundamental to successful public art outcomes and should include:

- **Project establishment**

  The establishment stage identifies existing, potential, and speculative public art opportunities.

- **Commissioning model**

  Consider which commissioning model is most appropriate.

- **Integrated planning**

  Integrated planning involves the identification of all key stakeholders; artist, curator, development of relevant working parties; and a consultation plan to identify the parameters of the work. At this stage, the project brief and budget can be developed.

- **Research and consultation**

  This stage involves the artist and or curator undertaking all necessary research and stakeholder consultation to inform the development of the final project.

- **Implementation**

  This stage encompasses approval of final designs, public exhibition where necessary, monitoring of timeframes and budgets, fabrication checks and approvals, maintenance detailing, and installation.

- **Evaluation and promotion**

  Following the installation of the work, the evaluation stage involves examination of the artwork and assessment of achievement of key principles and goals and community responses.

Appendix 1: Action and implementation summary

#	Action	Responsibility	When	Support
1	Facilitate a working group which includes an Indigenous curator and Brighton based Palawa/Pakana Elders and knowledge holders to assist in developing a strategy for Aboriginal led projects	Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, Development Services	Early to mid-term	Reconciliation Tasmania, community contacts
2	Identify local artists, cultural experts, and creatives	Development Services, Whole Organisation	Early	Brighton Community News (BCN), Council Website, arts organisations, Centacare Evolve, community contacts
3	Generate opportunities for the development of artistic practice such as small development grants or opportunities to produce new work by locals	Development Services, Corporate Services	Mid-term then ongoing	
4	Support externals to run workshops, mentoring and education programs for local artists	Development Services	Mid-term then ongoing	
5	Establish a residency program which invites artists to spend time with the Brighton community	Development Services	Mid-term to later	
6	Develop a communications strategy expressing opportunities for artists to work in Brighton and with the community	Governance	Early to mid-term	
7	Pitch to target programs (such as Ten Days on the Island, Festival of Voices, Dark Mofo, Tasmanian Writers Centre, Contemporary Art Tasmania)	Development Services, Governance	Mid-term	
8	Ensure aesthetics and art are considered in Council's own capital works programs and new developments	Development Services, Asset Services, Corporate Services	Early then ongoing	Brighton Structure Plan 2018
9	Lobbying and partnering with others (for instance, working with State Growth for highway installations and/or lighting on the Bridgewater Bridge, facilitating the painting of electricity boxes, working with Metro on interesting bus stop designs)	Development Services, Asset Services	Early then ongoing	Brighton Structure Plan 2018
10	Prioritise target areas that may appear ugly and/or have a high level of viewing by the public (for example the industrial estate or shopping centres and parks)	Development Services	Early then ongoing	Open Space Strategy 2012, Brighton Structure Plan 2018
11	Provide community liaison support for artists wanting to engage with locals	Development Services, Governance	Early to mid-term	BCN, Council Website, Centacare Evolve, community contacts
12	Establish a small public art advisory group which includes diverse experts from both Brighton and further afield to advise on appropriate projects	Development Services, Governance, Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group	Mid-term	

Appendix 2: Definitions and case studies

Council should aim to accept a broad and changing definition of the term 'Public Art' and encourage a wide range of projects with diverse associated outcomes. Projects may take place over long or short timeframes, be permanent or temporary. They may feature local creatives or rely on the expertise of others who are based further afield. They may tell stories or reflect on the local community or speak more broadly to global concerns.

Below are examples of the kinds of projects Council should consider supporting and promoting, however this list is by no means exhaustive and Council should retain an attitude of openness and adaptability when it comes to assessing projects.

Permanent public art

Permanent public art works are often proposed at the same time as other development projects. For example, they are incorporated into the design and brief of a new green space or property development. This is the most cost-effective way to incorporate them into the urban landscape, as cost is a major consideration with these kinds of works. They must be made out of durable materials, adhere to long term safety standards, and will have ongoing maintenance costs.

There are some stand out benefits to investing in permanent works. These kinds of works become embedded beacons for the community and permanently transform spaces. They can become recognisable features for visitors, and acknowledge fundamental stories of a place and its community. The appropriateness of location and the importance of the ideas explored in the work are two crucial factors when considering permanent works - they need to remain relevant for future residents.

CASE STUDY:

Shell wall, 2015 by Esme Timbery and Jonathan Jones. Barangaroo, Sydney.

https://www.barangaroo.com/the-project/arts-and-public-program/shell-wall-2015-by-esme-timbery-and-jonathan-jones/

A seven-storey shell wall was created by Bidgigal/Eora Elder and artist Esme Timbery in collaboration with contemporary Wiradjuri artist Jonathan Jones in 2015. It was the first permanent public artwork to be revealed in the major Barangaroo development in Sydney. This work reflects the culture of the traditional owners, the Gadigal/Eora people, while recognising the radical changes to the landscape brought about by the contemporary city of Sydney. The work continues the important tradition of shell work, which is unique to the Sydney Aboriginal community of La Perouse, but it is done in a contemporary way.

There was a strong commitment by both the NSW state government and Lendlease (the developers) to ensure that both Aboriginal stories and public artworks were central to this major urban redevelopment. By establishing this at the beginning of negotiations, the resulting works benefited both the community and developer.
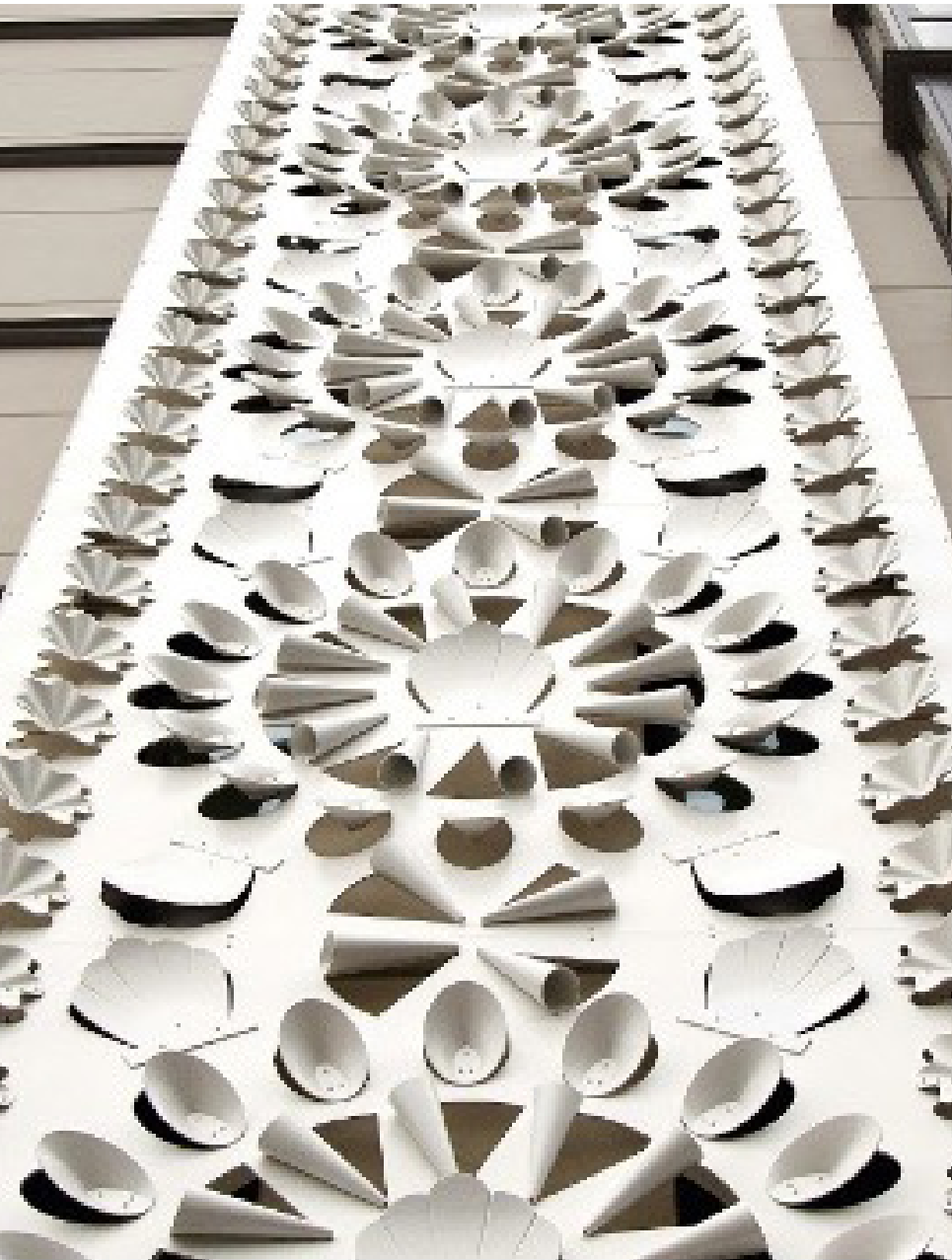
Temporary projects

Temporary projects often (not always) have lower budgets than permanent works, though can sometimes have greater impact. A captivating temporary project can remain in the minds of residents and visitors for even longer than a permanent work – which can sometimes end up becoming 'part of the furniture' or become damaged without sufficient maintenance budgets. With the hype of a project which has a limited lifespan, audience attendance can be more concentrated which can result in a festive/energetic atmosphere.

CASE STUDY:

The Last Resort, by Anri Sala, 13 October – 5 November 2017, Observatory Hill, Sydney

http://kaldorartprojects.org.au/project-33-anri-sala

Celebrated French-Albanian artist Anri Sala transformed the Observatory Hill Rotunda, a site with expansive views from the most elevated point in the city. Audiences were invited to step beneath a gravity-defying ensemble of custom-built drums, to experience their rhythmic, live response to a contemporary interpretation of a Mozart Concerto. Set against the sights and sounds of Sydney Harbour below, a musical dialogue animated the relationship between sound, place, time and history. For residents, this project transformed part of their everyday landscape. It created new connections with their neighbourhood, and this change of perspective will be remembered each time they pass the rotunda.

Installation

Installation works are built in three dimensions and can incorporate sculpture, sound, performance, video as well as two dimensional elements. These works can be site specific, or not, but always aim to transform an entire space, with audiences experiencing the work from within.

CASE STUDY:

Discovering Columbus by Tatzu Nishi, Sep 20 - Dec 2, 2012, Columbus Circle, New York

https://www.publicartfund.org/exhibitions/view/discovering-columbus/

Japanese artist Tatzu Nishi is known for his temporary works which transform our experience of monuments, statues, and architectural details. His installations give the public intimate access to aspects of our urban environment, radically altering our perceptions. For this project in the United States, Nishi chose to focus on the historic statue of Christopher Columbus.

The marble statue, which rises to more than 75 feet atop a granite column, was designed by the Italian sculptor Gaetano Russo. It was unveiled in 1892 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas. Nishi's project re-imagines the colossal 13-foot-tall statue of Columbus standing in a fully furnished, modern living room. Featuring tables, chairs, couch, rug, and flat-screen television, the décor reflects the artist's interpretation of contemporary New York style.

Site Specific

Asking an artist to create something site specific, is a great starting point for a public artwork. The term 'site specific' does not just relate to the physical environment, but it can also relate to the people who interact with it, and the history of the site. This means that local residents may feel more connected to these kinds of works and they may remain meaningful for years to come. Often without a connection to a site, public artworks can feel 'cut and pasted' or irrelevant to locals.

CASE STUDY:

A Subtlety **by Kara Walker, 2014, Domino Sugar Factory, Williamsburg**

A Subtlety was the first large-scale public project by African American artist Kara Walker. It was developed in the sprawling industrial relics of Brooklyn's legendary Domino Sugar Factory, which was due for demolition. Walker's physically and conceptually expansive installation—a massive, sugar-coated sphinx-like woman—responded to the building and its history. The work was a Homage to the unpaid and overworked Artisans who refined America's sweet tastes from the cane fields to the kitchens of the New World.

Performance

Performance works can span the visual and performing arts. These kinds of works are often event based and temporary projects but can also be recurring. Music, dance and acting can all form the foundation of a performance work.

CASE STUDY:

*Junjeiri Ballun - Gural Gaureima (Shallow Water, Deep Stories)***, by Sofie Burgoyne, Gabriel Comerford, Thomas E.S Kelly, Isabella Stone and Rachel Arianne, 19-21 October, 2018, Queen River, Queenstown**

https://theunconformity.com.au/events/junjeiri-ballun-gurul-gaureima-shallow-water-deep-stories/

Junjeiri Ballun - Gural Gaureima (Shallow Water, Deep Stories) was a performance project developed by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal dancers which ran along the Queen River, one of the most polluted rivers in the world. The dancers performed the roles of four native Tasmanian animals, acknowledging both the cultural significance of the waterway and the contemporary state of it. It considered ways of acknowledging and responding to environmental disasters while considering First Nations perspectives.

Socially engaged projects

Socially engaged projects are created through the artist's interaction with a community. This can be a community which is different to their own, or one that they are part of. Discussions with the community shape the project, which can result in a physical artwork, performance, or event, but can also remain in the form of conversations or workshops. These kinds of projects are often overlooked as 'public art' but are very successful in creating meaningful connections between a community, site, and the resulting artwork.

CASE STUDY:

*Abundance: Fruit of the Sea, Bounty of the Mountai*n by Keg de Souza, 2016

http://www.kegdesouza.com/portfolio/abundance-fruit-of-the-sea-bounty-of-the-mountains/

Abundance: Fruit of the Sea, Bounty of the Mountain was developed in the fishing village of Kou on Teshima Island, Japan, for a major art event, the Setouchi Triennale, which receives many international visitors. It was developed with locals who process nori, both traditionally and commercially, and its aim was to educate visitors about the changing culture of the Island and the gentrification of tradition.

A structure was made in collaboration with the local residents using stale nori sheets from their homes, that change colour over time. These were sewn onto commercial fishing nets. Local recipes were gathered through a cooking workshop with Kou residents, ending in a communal meal. The recipes were turned into postcards and packaged with local dehydrated ingredients. These recipes were purchased through a vending machine with proceeds going to the community, attempting to establish a local micro economy.

Collaborative projects

Collaborative projects can be a great way of bringing experts together to create meaningful works. For example, bringing together a highly regarded contemporary artist to Brighton to work with a community knowledge holder could result in an impactful project which is both artistically brilliant, but connects deeply with the community.

CASE STUDY:

kipli paywuta lumi, Dave Mangenner Gough (Trawlwoolway), Anna Leibzeit (Koorie), Samatha Rich (Wiradjuri), Tim Sculthorpe (Palawa) and James Tylor (Kaurna), 16 -19 January, 2020, Launceston.

Kipli paywuta lumi was a collaborative project between Tasmanian Aboriginal artists and cultural knowledge holders and Aboriginal artists/creatives from the mainland. The combination of voices and perspectives generated a project which was culturally Palawa, whilst being contemporary in its perspective and presentation.

An ochre path led visitors along a bush track towards a contemporary lina (bush hut). The lina was contemporary in design and materials, however, was based on traditional palawa design principles. Inside the lina, visitors experienced a soundscape created from field recordings and palawa kani language whilst feasting on foods and drinks indigenous to Tasmania.

Without the collaborative process between cultures, a project like this would not have been possible due to the specialised skills which were required for each element.

Sound

Although sound works do not physically change the aesthetics of a place, they can evoke emotion and feelings of connection in very powerful ways. Sound works can be pre-recorded or performed live. They can exist embedded into place through speaker systems or can be temporary and event based.

CASE STUDY:

So You Are Old by the Time You Reach the Island by Samson Young, 24 March 2016.

So You Are Old by the Time You Reach the Island was a time- and site-specific journey that wove together institutional histories of place with fictions and personal narratives. Small groups of participants participated in the project over the course of a six-hour walk. Each participant received a portable media player and headphones along with a bag holding various small objects, maps and instructions necessary to complete the journey. The sound elements of the work came from varied media including radio, live performances, phone calls.

Sculpture

Sculpture is a three-dimensional artwork, which is often stand alone. Permanent sculptures are often the most thought-of form of public artwork. They are a simple way of adding to a site, although do have a limited capacity in terms of audience engagement. Having said that there are clever ways to develop these kinds of works so that these restrictions are mitigated.

CASE STUDY:

Gilded Cage: Good Fences Make Good Neighbors by Ai Wei Wei, 2017, Central Park, New York.

https://www.publicartfund.org/exhibitions/view/ai-weiwei-good-fences-make-good-neighbors/

Created by multidisciplinary Chinese artist and activist, Ai Weiwei, Gilded Cage transforms the idea of the 'fence' into an abstract, golden cage-like structure. Using the fence as a metaphor, the artwork references structures of power and division to provoke discussion on issues relating to borders and immigration. Located at the southeast entrance to New York City's Central Park, the artwork sits in powerful contrast to the park as a democratic oasis, with its vast open areas, lush forests, and monuments and tributes to heroes and explorers. Gilded Cage allows viewers to walk into and around the work, inviting them to not only interact with the installation, but also consider the inherent dualities of the world we live in.

Projected works

Projected works use light or video to affect the surface they are projected on. They can use tailor made screens, or pre-existing structures like buildings. Infrastructure like projectors and sound equipment which is purchased to display these kinds of works can be easily adapted so multiple artworks can be displayed using the one set of technology over a series of events. Once technology is acquired, this makes a cost-efficient way of displaying artworks.

CASE STUDY:

Let me down by Claudia Nicholson, 2019, Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia, annual light commission.

https://www.mca.com.au/stories-and-ideas/pop-and-longing-claudia-nicholsons-2019-vivid-light-commission/

Annually, for Sydney's Vivid festival, the Museum of Contemporary Art commissions an Australian artist to create a video/light work which transforms the face of the museum. In 2019, tears, roses and butterflies adorned the facade of the museum before being dispersed through dust storms, water and fire in Claudia Nicholson's monumental light installation *Let Me Down*. Nicholson creates contemporary manifestations of Latinx cultural traditions, infusing them with pop culture references in a gesture of both longing and distance.