

April 9, 2014

News release > Art at the heart of City Centre project

MORE than 30 expressions of interest from talented artists across the country and internationally were garnered for the first phase of the public art component of Mackay Regional Council's \$18 million City Centre Revitalisation Project.

Today (Wednesday, April 9), council shortlisted four of the 32 applicants; they now have until May 23 to create a miniature version (known as a maquette) of their masterpiece and submit it to council for consideration and public consultation.

The successful artist – to be announced late July – will have his/her iconic piece of art installed on the Wood and Victoria streets roundabout.

Shortlisted applicants (in no particular order) are as follows:

- Cane Fire by The Niche Art
- Coral Cane by CREATIVEMOVE (Sebastian Di Mauro)
- Day Moon Night Sun by Damien Butler
- Rondo by Artventure.

Festival, Events and the Arts portfolio councillor Chris Bonanno said he was excited by the high calibre of submissions received during this process.

"The contemporary pieces selected by the panel are innovative, eye-catching and create a sense of place; keep in mind, however, they are 3D and designed to be viewed from a distance and at all angles," he said.

"It will be interesting to hear feedback from our community members as to which they feel best represents our region.

"Public art enhances the aesthetic value of our built and natural environment and it's our vision that this installation will be something residents will be proud to have as a reflection of our vibrant city – its history and its future."

Applications were assessed on previous experience (including the fabrication and installation of major public realm works), the description of and meaning behind the works, and the visual representation of the artwork supplied.

Cr Bonanno said communication with community stakeholders on how the current Horizons artworks in Victoria Street could be relocated, re-purposed or the story of this project retold, were under way.

"We'll also provide opportunities for people to be actively involved in a community art project as part of the City Centre redevelopment," he said.

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Project Manager Jim Carless said every effort would be made to ensure the timely installation of the public art component, in line with the major construction project.

The City Centre revitalisation will be under way in July; the project involves the installation of new pedestrian UrbanStone footpaths, stormwater drainage system upgrades, new outdoor seating, drinking fountains, refuse bins, bike racks, streets lights and trees for shade in Wood Street (between Gordon and River streets) and Victoria Street (between Sydney and Gregory streets).

As part of the redevelopment, the exterior of the old Pioneer Shire Council building in Wood Street will be restored, starting at the end of the month.

The entire project is jointly funded by Mackay Regional Council and the Federal Government through the Regional Development Australia Fund.

To receive regular project updates, subscribe to the City Centre Revitalisation Project eNewsletter at www.mackay.qld.gov.au/enewsletters.

For more information on the project, email citycentreproject@mackay.qld.gov.au or call council's Community Engagement team on 1300 MACKAY (622 529).

Shortlisted public art descriptions

- **Cane Fire by The Niche Art**

“An important element to emerge from consultation was cane fires – the region has historically been known for cane fields which are burnt at sugar harvest time. At an impressive six-metres tall, the proposed sculpture has a dynamic swirling form, representing the energy inherent in cane fire as it ignites and twists into the evening sky. The proposed public art will be made up of reflective marine-grade stainless steel elements, arcing upward like shafts of light in a fire. The vitality of this sculpture will be enhanced through the use of lighting and innovative digital technology, using wireless and mobile phone technology, the viewer will be able to interact with the public art to create lighting effects. Water will be incorporated into the art, spray mists will diffuse the form accentuating the reflective nature of the material and the interactive lighting effects,” the company’s artists Glen Manning and Kathy Daly wrote in their submission.

- **Coral Cane by Sebastian Di Mauro (CREATIVEMOVE)**

“Sugar cane is a key agricultural product and industry in the Mackay area and surrounds. The most distinguishing feature of the Mackay district is its close proximity to the Great Barrier Reef. The form is fabricated from stainless steel/cast white brass, hence, the exterior is silvery in colour. Through the mesh apertures in the work, viewers will see either the lush turquoise blue interior reminiscent of skies and oceans, or the intense orange of cane burning or sea anemones,” artist Sebastian Di Mauro, said in his submission.

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- **Day Moon Night Sun by Damien Butler**

“The sculpture will work with the many vistas afford to its location to produce a second, or a mirage, of a sunset on the city landscape (double sunset). By working with photochromic material that will react to available light of the day and working with the surrounding buildings and plants, this sculpture will act as a place to meet. This work also has the potential to incorporate water into it through the use of mist; this would add extra atmospheric qualities to the piece,” Damien Butler wrote in his submission.

- **Rondo by Artventure**

“There is a remarkably beautiful pattern within the xylem and phloem of cane. This becomes the matrix of a bespoke mesh that is a key element of the sculpture. The various shapes of cane knives create the formal structure. Images relating to the Kanakas are embedded in the mesh through laser cutting and additive elements. From consultation with the Maltese community, the mesh will contain images important to this immigrant group. Another section of mesh can be devoted to the graphics of music, as a tribute to the role of the site as a band rotunda. Burning cane will be embodied in the work as a night time light event. The reflection pond with its programmed internal lighting will be the key allusion to the blue water river, while the use of glass and light within the sculpture will expand the reference,” Artventure’s Paul Johnson wrote in the company’s submission.

For further information:

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