**City of Yarra Public Art Billboard**

**Curatorial Statement**

**Glenn Manson**

The two artists chosen for the billboard both have a very distinct and unique artistic style.

**PHEBE SCHMIDT** is a Melbourne based photographer who confronts viewers with images that challenge society’s obsession with generic beauty.

Schmidt uses a bold pop style of photography often using pastel hues and a glossy finish that leaves the finished work resembling an advertisement. This style is purposefully chosen to comment on the advertising industries beauty ideals. Schmidt uses models and subject matter that don’t fit the ideal or the norm that is usually shown in glossy magazines and adverts. The works equally seduce and repel the viewer.

Using themes including beauty, gender, sexuality, food and the digital age in her work, Schmidt’s works demand attention and challenge the viewer to look at our society and our own ideals and standards of perfection.

**DREW PETTIFER** is a Melbourne Artist, Academic and Curator. Pettifer explores themes of gender, sexuality and identity in his photographic works.

In recent works Pettifer has explored the notion of male sexuality and gender. His works depict friends and lovers with the fetishized gaze turned on the male rather than the female. Often the male will not be a stereotypical male and often the gender is quite ambiguous thus allowing the viewer to see the blurred lines between genders. The works are also about recording intimate, personal moments between the photographer and muse, photographer and friend and photographer and lover.

Pettifer also produces works that challenge the concept of gender. The works feature androgynous models, blurred or removed genitalia or models in non-traditional gender roles or poses.

**Glenn Manson**

For over six years I was the Curator at Alcaston Gallery, a contemporary art gallery specialising in indigenous art. During this time I co-curated exhibitions in the gallery as well as assisting with external projects, exhibitions and art fairs. I have experience in co-ordinating exhibitions and art fairs in Australia and internationally including all logistics, budgeting, installation and artist liaison.

I have completed a Bachelor of Art and Design and the Australian Catholic University and a Masters of Arts Management at RMIT, Melbourne. During my time at RMIT I was selected as the Curatorial Research Assistant at Counihan Gallery, Brunswick for their annual collection exhibition.

I have also gained experience working in a fine art auction house where I was in charge of operations which included logistics and auction set up.

I have over seven years’ experience working in some of the best art institutions in Melbourne working alongside artists from all over the world and am extremely passionate about the City of Yarra billboard project.