

Public Art Consulting

# Public Art Billboard Program

Yarra City Arts

Curatorial statement

**A truly diplomatic piece of public art, created by the people, for the people.**

MARS Gallery propose to curate the Public Art Billboard through the involvement of the local community. The choice of artwork to be displayed on the billboard would be determined via a social media and print campaign which employs a ‘People’s choice’ voting system to determine the chosen artwork. As curators, MARS Gallery would administrate the entire campaign through distribution of flyers and posters around the Yarra area advertising the opportunity for an emerging artist to submit an artwork to be chosen for the billboard.

MARS Gallery would develop, monitor and update the dedicated page on a social media platform (for e.g. Facebook or instagram) where artists could upload their submission for the billboard. The viewer will be encouraged to use their smartphones to vote for their favourite work and to also provide feedback on the submissions. This social media page will be hosted for the entire length of the Billboard project. We see this ongoing social contribution to be a pertinent aspect of the project as it creates an opportunity for continued artistic discourse, conversation and community involvement.

Curating the project through the utilisation of social media, smartphone technology and a people’s choice voting process creates an opportunity for the community and the artists to be engaged in something which is truly relevant to today. The project provides a statement on societies engagement with technology to communicate and the relevance of digital processes in contemporary art. The initiative elevates the billboard project into a realm that provides a higher level of engagement and contribution from its audience.

Information about the work and the campaign will be produced and displayed via A3 information panel, as recommended by the council. The panel will inform the viewer that they may continue to contribute their feedback to the artist/s by making comment on the social media page for the duration of display of the billboard.

To advertise the Billboard Project’s social media campaign MARS Gallery would engage the services of ‘Mr Moto’, a local Collingwood business that specialises in print and distribution of posters and flyers throughout the Yarra area. MARS would design a flyer and ‘rock poster’ advertising the callout for artists to submit their work to be voted on by the public with the majority of votes determining the selected artwork. A second campaign will be launched later on in the year to determine the chosen artwork for the second round.

Once all content has been submitted to the social media platform (by the deadline) and the audience decides which image/artwork is the favourite by majority vote, this work will then grace the first round billboard. The initial campaign will decide which artwork is chosen for the first 2 billboard skins. For the second round of the billboard project MARS would again engage the services of Mr Moto to paste up rock poster and distribute flyers advertising the project and call out. We envision by round two of the project the campaign will have spread organically through the arts community and begun to produce its own momentum as an exciting project in which to be involved in.

We feel that by opening up the project to the vast community of emerging artists in Melbourne and by allowing the audience to ultimately choose the artwork we can facilitate a program that is engaging for the local community, innovative by way of the people’s choice voting system and an opportunity to open up exciting conversation about contemporary art.

Overview:

MARS Gallery curatorial experience

MARS [Melbourne Art Rooms] is a commercial contemporary art gallery specialising in exhibiting, promoting and building the careers of emerging and mid-career contemporary Australian artists. MARS is at the forefront of innovation in Australian contemporary art galleries in both design and programs. MARS Gallery has a commitment to best practice and transparency in the gallery process and the philosophy that art is for everyone. A diversity of art programs and services are offered including:

* Gallery/[exhibitions](http://marsgallery.com.au/exhibitions-on-now/)
* [Rent Art](http://marsgallery.com.au/rent/)
* Art consultancy and [public art](http://marsgallery.com.au/corporate-and-public-art-consultation/)project commissions
* Art pop-ups
* Art fair attendance
* Curating special events

MARS Public Art consulting

MARS Gallery specialise in working collaboratively with council planning departments and their arts units, developers and architects to bring art and creativity into major residential and commercial developments throughout Melbourne. In essence, MARS Gallery acts as the conduit between the developer, the architect and the artist.

MARS Gallery has a decade of experience working with respected Melbourne development firms and innovative architects on major pieces of public art all over Melbourne. As a prominent contemporary Melbourne gallery our knowledge of artists working across all mediums is extensive. We are accomplished at identifying and engaging both emerging and mid-career Australian artists, inclusive of works with growth potential, for approved developments. This fosters a sustainable arts culture while always adding to the project’s integrity.

Some of our most recent developer-artist collaborations include: Hamton at Fifty Albert Road in South Melbourne with Architect Ellenberg Fraser and at Eden in Abbotsford with Architect Rothe Lowman; Banco Group at the Gateway Building in Preston, Footscray Plaza in Footscray and Smith Street in Collingwood with Jam Architects and Rouse Street in Port Melbourne with Terry Harper Architects.

In 2013 MARS Gallery worked alongside The City of Yarra’s arts unit to create two pieces of public art on the hoarding of the Smith & Co. construction site. The first project was local Fitzroy artist Jacqueline Mitelman’s ‘Smith St Portrait project’. Assisted by Susan Dirgham, Mitelman set up a mobile studio in Smith St in early 2013 and captured the portraits of passers-by on Smith Street. Ten of those portraits were printed and pasted up by Mr. Moto to line the hoardings of one of the newest development sites in Smith St. The client commissioned the work to facilitate a project that inspired creativity, engaged the local community and supported a local artist.

Later that year, MARS Gallery worked collaboratively with developer HAMTON to facilitate the ‘Haven Art Installation’ competition. A ‘People’s choice’ voting system decided which two artists proposed sculptures would be commissioned and installed in their new residential developments, Eden and Acacia place located in Abbotsford. The two winners of the competition, Daniel Agdag and Mike Nicholls have now been commissioned to build and install their winning sculptures with in the development.