“TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE & INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC ART IN URBAN DESIGN & REDEVELOPMENT”

REPORT BY

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A recipient of a 2003 Churchill Fellowship
Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia

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Signed

Dated
“In the 70’s public art was about art in public places. Today, it’s about the art of making places”

Jack Mackie, public artist
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1. PRECIS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1.1 Precis

This report details the findings from a 2003 Churchill Fellowship visit to Spain, United Kingdom (UK), United States Of America (USA) and Canada to investigate the role and integration of Public Art in Urban Design and Redevelopment.

Specific objectives of the Fellowship included:

- Attendance at a major conference on Public Art & Urban Design in Barcelona, Spain.
- To study examples of interdisciplinary design in selected urban city centre redevelopments.
- To study examples of collaborative cooperation and interdisciplinary approaches to Public Art & Urban Design between the public & private sectors.
- To study the mechanisms to establish and maintain the working dynamics of multi-disciplinary design teams.
- To research new areas of education and advocacy including Public Art Mentorship programs.

1.2 Acknowledgments

My Fellowship and the invaluable experiences I gained would not have been possible without;

The many individuals and organisations I visited, their willingness and generosity to share experiences and information, particularly those in private practice was far beyond all expectations.

The financial and tangible support of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust. It is with gratitude that I wholeheartedly thank the Trust for bestowing this opportunity and honour. Many thanks to Its Chief Executive Mr. Paul Tys, the selection committees and the Executive Officer, Ms. Meg Martin.

The commitment of my employer Parramatta City Council;

- The Right Worshipful Lord Mayor, Councillor Paul Garrard and Councillors for their faith, support and interest for innovation in the field of public art.
- Senior Management for encouraging staff to pursue opportunities to develop and extend their own professional expertise to meet the needs and demands of the local government sector.
- Ms. Susan Gibbeson - Attractive City Manager, and my work colleagues from the Outcomes Unit for the encouragement and appreciation.

The encouragement and assistance offered to me by my Fellowship referees, Councillor David Borger, Ms. Jenny Bisset, and Mr. Michael Rolfe.

Artists, Susan Milne and Greg Stonehouse for their ongoing association, dialogue and discourse.

And importantly, all my family for their continual support – particularly;

- My wife, Julie for her constant love and dedication, and for making this opportunity possible.
- My infant son, Joshua for his patience and stamina in enduring sixty-eight days of travel across several continents, and for his understanding in developing this report.
- My father, Dennis Overton (Churchill Fellow 1995), my lifelong mentor.
- Michael & Margaret Hennell for their hospitality – “home away from home”.

Role & Integration of Public Art in Urban Design & Redevelopment  Andrew Overton - 2003 Churchill Fellow    Page 3 of 31
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Contact Details

Name:  Andrew Overton  (BA) Visual Arts, (Grad Dip.) Gallery Management
Position:  Project Officer – Public Art, Parramatta City Council
Address:  PO Box 32, Parramatta NSW 2150
Contact  Ph. 9806 5475, Fax. 9806 5929, e-mail: aoverton@parracity.nsw.gov.au

2.2 Fellowship Objective

The primary objective of the Fellowship was to investigate the role & integration of public art in urban design & redevelopment. Urban renewal in Australia is currently a key topic. In this present climate of significant change and regeneration to our city centres it is critical to further develop a knowledge base and understanding of interdisciplinary approaches to public art, urban design and public space.

2.3 Fellowship Highlights

The Fellowship provided for a unique opportunity to study and visit a broad cross section of current practice across four countries. Highlights included the opportunity to see first hand the impressive results of a number of large redevelopment projects that have occurred over the past 3 years. These include; the “Phoenix Initiative” - Coventry, “Heart of the City Project” - Sheffield, Bristol City Centre, Seattle Civic Precinct, and Vancouver Waterfront Redevelopments.

The ultimate highlight results out of the chance partake in critical discussion and to build networks with fellow art/design professionals worldwide. This came through the many interviews and site visits along with attendance at a major conference in Barcelona.

2.4 Major Findings

The findings of this report have implications for the entire broader industry sector; arts, design, architecture, and education. More importantly, there is considerable evidence that all three tiers of government in Australia need to show increased interest in and leadership to issues concerning the changing built environment, interdisciplinary design advocacy and training/education.

Presently, in United Kingdom, Europe, USA and Canada, there is solid documentation of the creation and delivery of policy that has placed good design for the built environment as a major agenda item. Unquestionably, the United Kingdom have benefited by the large funding streams through Lotteries funding and Millenium Trust in recent years that has driven a massive program of opportunity and regeneration on a scale that is unprecedented anywhere in the world. Furthermore, the strong history and acceptance of collaborative design practice and public art in regions like Washington State in the USA continue to be a strong source of inspiration and a solid knowledge base for developing the sector worldwide.

It should be also noted Australia continues to benchmark well in the sector. The social and inclusionary focus on engaging diverse communities in a respectful and meaningful way remains to be a strong asset for Australia.

2.5 Implementation of Research

This knowledge gained overseas will be used in a very tangible & practical way through the development & implementation of major public art /urban design processes in the Civic Place Masterplan, and a number of other associated redevelopment plans currently being undertaken in Parramatta over the next 3-5 years.

The further dissemination of information to the broader industry sector will come through working partnerships with such organisations as NSW Ministry for the Arts, Western Sydney Organisation of Councils (WSROC), and NSW Local Government & Shires Association. The information, report case studies and recommendations will also be disseminated to peers and the broader community via articles, website, network meetings, presentations to other local authorities and agencies Australia-wide.

It is my desire that this will further encourage debate around interdisciplinary design practice, the involvement of artists, and in expanding training/professional development opportunities in this field.
3. PROGRAMME

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Dr. Antoni Remesar  
CER POLIS  
University of Barcelona  
Mr. C. Grandas  
Senior Urban Designer  
Council of City of Barcelona  
Site Visits – Forum Site 2004, the regeneration of the neighbourhoods of Poblenou, Bessos, and Barcelona Waterfront. |
Director  
Public Art Forum  
Mr. Nick Slater  
Visual Arts Officer  
Arts Council of England - West Midlands  
Ms. Julia Ellis  
Projects and Partnerships Manager  
Midlands Architecture and the Designed Environment (MADE)  
Mr. Nigel Edmondson  
Urban Design Manager  
Birmingham City Council  
Site Visits - Custard Factory, Millennium Square, Centenary Square, Mailbox, ThinkTank, & Bullring Retail Redevelopment |
| 10 Oct 2003 | West Bromwich – England | Ms. Emma Chetcuti & Ms. Angela Foy  
Public Art Co-ordinator  
The Public - West Midlands  
Site Visit – X-Ray Factory, Smethwick |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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| 12 – 15 Oct 2003 | **Coventry – England** | **Mr. Christopher Beck**  
Project Director  
The Phoenix Initiative  
Coventry City Council  

**Ms. Samantha Wilkinson**  
Chair – Public Art Forum  
Public Art Consultant – SWPA Ltd  
Site Visits – Phoenix Initiative, Priory Visitors Centre, Electric Wharf Project, and Coventry Canal Art Trail |
| 16 – 18 Oct 2003 | **Sheffield – England** | **Ms. Jacqueline Yallop**  
Public Art Consultant – Sheffield  

**Mr. Paul Swales**  
Public Art Consultant – Sheffield/Wakefield  

**Mr. James Arnold**  
Urban Design & Conservation Team Manager  
Planning, Transport & Highways  
Sheffield City Council  

**Mr. John Mothersole**  
Landscape Design Manager  
Planning, Transport & Highways  
Sheffield City Council  

**Ms. Jennifer Hallam**  
Visual Arts Officer  
Arts Council of England  
Yorkshire  
Site Visits - Sheffield 1 Project, Sheffield/Yorkshire – Public Art Program, Sheffield Station Upgrade, WinterGarden, Millennium Galleries, and Persistence Works |
| 21 – 24 Oct 2003 | **Manchester – England** | **Ms. Martell Linsdell**  
Course Tutor/Public Artist  
MA Art As Environment  
Manchester Institute for Research and Innovation and Art and Design (MIRIAD)  
Manchester Metropolitan University  

**Mr. Andrew Gale**  
Senior Lecturer, Engineering & Project Management  
Manchester Centre for Civil & Construction Engineering (UMIST)  
University of Manchester  

**Mr. Roger Milburn**  
Managing Director - Manchester Office  
Ove Arup & Partners Ltd |
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<tr>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>21 – 24 Oct 2003</td>
<td>Manchester – England (cont)</td>
<td>Mr. Mike Wilton</td>
<td>Associate Director Ove Arup &amp; Partners Ltd Manchester Office</td>
<td>Site Visits – URBIS - Manchester, Piccadilly Gardens, Exchange Square, Printworks Imperial War Museum North, and Salford Quays</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 – 30 Oct 2003</td>
<td>Bristol – England</td>
<td>Mr. Alistair Snow</td>
<td>Senior Public Art Officer Bristol City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Jonathon Banks</td>
<td>Legible City Manager Bristol City Council</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Site Visits – Bristol Public Art Strategy, Redevelopment of Civic/Leisure Precinct @ Bristol, Broadmead Redevelopment, Pero’s Bridge, Royal Hospital Art Program.</td>
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<td>Ms. Beliz Brother</td>
<td>Lead Artist Seattle City Hall Project</td>
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<td>Site Visits – Justice Centre, Police Headquarters, City Hall, waterfront redevelopment, Seattle Art Museum, King County – Cultural Development/Public Art Program, and Sound Transit Public Art Program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Nov 2003</td>
<td>Bellevue – Washington State, USA</td>
<td>Ms. Mary Pat Byrne</td>
<td>Art Specialist Department of Planning &amp; Community Development City of Bellevue</td>
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10 – 13 Nov 2003

Vancouver – British Columbia, Canada

Mr. Bryan Newson
Public Art Program Manager
City Programs
City of Vancouver

Ms. Barbara Cole
Senior Public Art Consultant
Vancouver

Site Visits - Public Art/Urban Design Projects, Coal Harbour, Downtown, Yaletown & Concord redevelopments.

14 Nov 2003

Richmond – British Columbia, Canada

Mr. Kari Huhtala
Senior Planner
Policy & Planning
City Of Richmond

Site Visits – City of Richmond Public Art Program & City Hall Redevelopment

15 – 17 Nov 2003

Whistler – British Columbia, Canada

Site Visit – Whistler Township
Public Art Program
Winter Olympics 2010

18 Nov 2003

North Vancouver – British Columbia, Canada

Ms. Lori Phillips
Public Art Program Co-ordinator
Arts & Culture Commission of North Vancouver

20 Nov 2003

Surrey – British Columbia, Canada

Ms. Lianne Payne
Public Art Program Co-ordinator
City of Surrey

Site Visits – Guildford Town Centre
4. INTRODUCTION

“The nature of design and art in the public domain is a collaborative endeavour, one that builds on multiple expertise, working between the boundaries of disciplines to create new connections. This requires team attitude and abilities, recognising that there will be a need for cooperation as well as compromise”

Urban renewal in Australia is currently a key topic. No where more apparent is this than in Western Sydney as the region is currently undergoing significant change and expansion in its urban landscape to cater for its increasingly growing and diverse population.

The object of most regeneration to-date in the region and for that matter Australia has been through programs and infrastructure supporting social and economic improvement. However, a constantly variable component of the many redevelopment projects, which have been undertaken, has been the connection and application of culture.

New urban planning requires the thinking and employment of a range of expertise across multiple disciplines and interest groups. The boundaries to team collaboration should not be exclusively limited to the domains of profile professions such as architects, landscape and urban designers.

At present in Australia there is currently very limited opportunity that begins to offer best practice examples of cross-disciplinary and collaborative approaches to redevelopment. Whilst, recently there has been some evidence of more stimulating urban policy on the cultural agenda, to-date there has been what one could only describe as sporadic support and nurturing for creativity and collaboration in broader design processes particularly in the Local Government Sector in Australia.

More and more as an arts administrator and project leader of unique and collaborative public art projects involving engineers, artists, design professionals, and architects the process of concept development and for that matter, project management has been a difficult task to balance.

My employer, Parramatta Council has implemented an active Public Art Program since 1994. The program has included both ambitious large-scale permanent artworks and dynamic temporal public art projects. A major catalyst for the desire to undertake such a fellowship resulted out of the realisation of forward managing Council’s own public art program, which is set to undergo its largest development phase over the next 2-5 years. Primarily this will result through the recent adoption of a number of large-scale urban design redevelopments that will redefine Parramatta as Sydney’s 2nd CBD.

The $700M Civic Place Master Plan is ambitious and almost unprecedented in New South Wales in its scale and aspirations. It addresses some three hectares of central business district land, offering the bold opportunity to link existing historic, retail, civic and spiritual places. It builds on the $100M investment that the NSW Government is making in the development of the Public Transport Interchange by creating a gateway to the city.

Arts & Culture has been identified as core component of the Masterplan and associated works. This will involve developing a range of public art strategies for multiple sites through design themes and elements. Civic Place when completed will become a major focus of civic and public space in Parramatta.

In this context, the fellowship has provided a unique and critical opportunity to study the integration and interdisciplinary approaches to public art into major urban design masterplans and city redevelopments. How consideration has been given to the diversity of site features, characteristics, the connections between people, the sites and art.

The sites and cities visited have tangibly provided a broad cross section of examples of close cooperation in public art/urban design strategies between both the public and private sectors. The many interviews and discussions undertaken have also provided a solid basis to inform best practice principles for implementation into an Australian context.
Furthermore, the fellowship has enabled the investigation of a number of unique training/professional development opportunities via the study of both new formal education curriculum and more practical learning opportunities through public art mentorship programs.

Inasmuch as the fellowship provided for an opportunity to view some new practice, it also reinforced that there continues to be several common denominators that influence debate surrounding the rationale of culture and the built environment worldwide. This comes from various perspectives of all contributors including artists, architects, public and private administrators and academics. Essentially these hinge around the following topics;

**Role Definition**

Some of the major difficulties lie in the definitions of arts practice - where does public art sit in the layers of professional practice? – Has public art been forced to talk too many other languages and be overburdened with the rigid methods of the design process? Where now are the boundaries for artists to challenge? Are they constantly being led and marginalised?

There is some evidence in the UK and USA, that many artists find the boundaries of public art in its present form too authoritarian. Most of the general discussion from interviews on this issue centred on the prescriptive nature of project briefs, the rigours of working with local authorities and the level of increased accountability in current climates dictating real issues such as public liability.

The very virtue of employing an artist is to tap into their creativity, originality and resourcefulness in generating exciting contemporary concepts. More importantly it is to be realistic about expectations that artists/planners can deliver on. Yes artists are often investigative and analytical but should not be simply asked to just “fix” problems.

These notions are not at all foreign. Ongoing debates in Australia since the early 90’s have centred on whether artists working in this field should have the same status and obligations as other professionals such as architects, urban designers etc. This has still remained contentious with role definition of artists in design teams continuing to change and evolve. Several factors continue to influence discussion;

- The acceptance artists to the development of new skills and acceptance of greater professional obligations/responsibilities by artists
- Respect of commissioners/bodies to the status of artists
- The recognition of community value (social, cultural, economic, and environmental) that artists can bring to the work of public environments and placemaking.

Whilst it would be wrong to suggest that there has not been any solid examples of leadership on these issues in Australia there still remains considerable work on promoting best practice models and codes of practice to the sector.

**Skills**

The above processes in part have contributed to list of new essential skill levels being required by artists to work in the public domain. This generally has led to only small pool of qualified artists who have the skills required for larger commissions. Public authorities and developers continue still wary of artists’ capacity and many projects continue to become lost opportunities through not being able to adequately resource the talent required.

The shortage does not only marginalise itself to qualified artists, but also to equipped project managers/arts professionals with the skills to direct and lead interdisciplinary teams.

The solution lies in the development and provision of specialist education, which focuses on public art. There are currently very few examples of this in Australia for established artists and administrators to access. Furthermore additional work needs to be done to address the critical and theoretical issues relevant to public art practice even at an undergraduate level. Often, even the smaller and more pragmatic issues such as the practical aspects of commissioning are not often being debated or considered.
Interdisciplinary Practice

While teamwork and interdisciplinary work are closely identified practices they do not share all of the same features. Effective cross-disciplinary collaboration requires skills over and above those needed to organise a team. These opportunities exist primarily in being able to work together on an equal footing (as in the research phase), identifying common criteria for success, and importantly emphasising the importance of each participant's expertise.

Timing is always crucial. It has always been widely promoted that “the team” needs to brought together at the earliest stage of the project in order to ensure that the overall design is in fact created through a process of true collaboration. Codes of practice models have often advocated for a selection committee made up of the project architect and other design professionals being used to select “the artist/planner”.

Recent work in the UK has indicated a diametrical shift to question this practice whereby artists have been to this point time considered more as a sub consultant in the design team process. New practice begins to allow for the artist/planner to have some access and discussion involving the appointment of other design professionals in a more collaborative manner. Furthermore, there has been some healthy debate about the introduction of design charters that have the ability to help guide teams, and emphasise the focus and role of each profession in the project.

Once again, further education via cross disciplinary events and dialogue between professional associations that advocate for disciplines involved in the design and maintenance of public environments needs to be more apparent in Australia. The UK and USA continue to be leaders in this area.

Overview

Certainly, in the cities I had the opportunity to visit there is a feeling that the public appetite for the cross over of exciting, contemporary architecture, urban design and art is growing and there is a refreshing approaches taken by the broader industry to imaginative and engaging design.

This report details a number of key sites that were visited that placed an emphasis towards collaboration through the establishment of integrated design teams that has included artists. These examples offer considerable experience in the establishment and methodology of broad interdisciplinary teams, the involvement of civic bodies, architects, contractors, academics, designers and artists to deliver on a shared vision.

The results are varied as the environments to which they have grown out of, but have all made contributions away from mediocrity and blandness. Importantly, particularly in the United Kingdom, there have been recent tangible attempts to work in a socially engaged manner to include the community on a lateral level on large regeneration projects.

Unquestionably, the United Kingdom has benefited by the large funding streams through Lotteries funding and Millenium Trust in recent years that has driven a massive program of opportunity and regeneration on a scale that is unprecedented anywhere in the world. Whilst some of these results are questionable, the level of debate, interest, forums and education surrounding this critical topic continues to be a much more lasting legacy than some of the physical interventions and improvements.

Furthermore, the strong history and acceptance of collaborative design practice and public art in regions like Washington State in the USA continue to be a strong source of inspiration and a solid knowledge base for developing the sector worldwide.

The following report details a sweep of projects and organisations I had the opportunity to visit and that can best illustrate a broad cross section of current practice across the world. This by no means implies it is a showcase or “best of” sample, or devalue the other cities and sites I had the pleasure of visiting, but to offer range of projects that can be used as primary source material to educate and inform.

I have elected to cateogrise them under broader headings though any number of these examples could be seen as being less loosely defined because of they’re collaborative nature.
5. REPORT

“Cultural expression is a powerful urban regenerator”

5.1 COMMERCIAL/RETAIL REDEVELOPMENT

In the United Kingdom since the turn of the millennium there has been a revolution of sorts in the design of some retail environments. Certain positive planning policy has brought the importance of shopping environments back into the heart of the city centres. The emphasis is now is how to use retail environments to weave these centres back together, to restore items such as historic street patterns, to take out unnecessary infrastructure, to prioritise public transport nodes and to create a diversity of architectural responses.

In part, the retail industry has recognised that there is a need to create destinations where people have real experiences and real choice. More importantly there has been key organisations championing for better public buildings and spaces that have brought about cultural change not only through influencing the current planning system but by encouraging consumers to demand more in the way of quality approaches.

This has been the domain of CABE (Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment) and partner funded organisations such as the regional Architectural Centres, and local authorities demanding more and encouraging clients to opt away from the lowest cost, lowest risk option. Some interesting current examples exist;

**Birmingham (England) – “Bullring”**

Opened in September 2003, and built at a cost of over £500 million, Bullring brings 26 football fields worth of shops, boutiques and restaurants into the centre of the City. It reintroduces some of Birmingham’s traditional streets and creates a stimulating, glass covered environment where you can shop, eat or just be.

*Simply, Bullring brings together a stunning mix of contemporary architecture, art and historic buildings, which has brought about a complete change to the face of Birmingham.*

The Developer partners Birmingham Alliance invested £2 million in a major program of artwork for Bullring’s public spaces. The program, which was designed to attract the creative talents of artists and designers from across the UK to contribute to the new public realm for Bullring, was co-ordinated by arts consultants FreeForm Arts Trust. Working with Bullring’s architects, a program was created which aimed to enrich the key public spaces within the scheme, and has brought new landmark artworks to the city centre.

Art works include a series of sculptural light wands designed specifically to announce Bullring’s entrance at Rotunda Square, the Light Wands take the form of three coloured carbon fibre masts rising 20, 25, and 30 metres in height to resemble glowing plant like structures.

Another work is a massive 120 sq m glass mural so vivid it is visible both day and night. The installation is the work of glass artist Martin Donlin, who won a national competition to find the most inspirational design. Brilliant colours have been achieved by screen printing the images onto transparent and opaque enamels, visible both inside and out. A closer inspection reveals delicate hand painted detail.

From observation most of the new artworks have set out to be iconic in nature, however the desire to be “slick” has not necessarily meant that the works have been a true response to the rich history of site and the City.
It is a further observation that Birmingham as a city has somewhat underestimated the strength of their identity of industrial iconography, with more and more of what the fabric of what made Birmingham unique is being gentrified. This of course is transposed with the cutting edge design of new Selfridges building which is now a dominant part of the Birmingham skyline.

Manchester (England) – “Exchange”

“Bomb to Boom” as many people have described it, Manchester has undergone one of the most extraordinary regeneration experiences of any city in Europe in the last 4-6 years. Whilst Barcelona is another good example, it is the speed to which Manchester in terms of totally changing its brand, identity, its image and construct.

One unfortunate catalyst was IRA bomb blast that destroyed the centre of the city in 1996, but more positive one’s have resulted out of the City’s subsequent bids for the Olympic and Commonwealth Games.

Whilst not suggesting Manchester's approach is the ultimate model for the regeneration of city centres, one important key project has been Exchange Square, built at a cost of more than £4 million and opened at the end of 2000. It is a key element of Manchester's Millennium Quarter, with the centrepiece of the rebuilt area a new £85 million Marks and Spencer store.

The Square, designed by US designer Martha Schwartz, provides a vibrant, popular and active space for shoppers, tourists and city workers and a setting to other Millennium Quarter attractions including the new City Park, Urbis and the Triangle shopping complex.

This is generally considered as a playful new space which provides delight throughout the day and evening with rows of lights gently changing colour, a water feature following the historic watercourse of Hanging Ditch, and 20 metre high pop art windmills spinning round and round.

Bristol (England) – “Creative Renewal”

Bristol, like a number of other leading UK cities is also going through a major period of redevelopment. The Harbourside, Broadmead and Temple areas are three main sites undergoing substantial change.

Work includes proposals for new shopping and leisure facilities, office accommodation, roads, two new bridges, streets and open public spaces. These are all having an enormous impact on the physical appearance, the economic and social vitality of the city centre.

Many projects both currently being planned and those have already been implemented (see below), have involved the integration of artists. Further, the recent adoption of a public art strategy by Bristol City has laid a fresh and solid framework for the city to move forward with its art planning initiatives.

The Public art Strategy seeks to demonstrate Council's commitment to the development of public art and encourages the commission of artists and artworks for the public realm as a part of the planning process.

The meeting and site visits with staff provided an opportunity to share projects along a common coherent framework. A range of recent projects include;
@Bristol

"At-Bristol" is a new educational visitor attraction at the core of a 450 million pound urban rejuvenation scheme covering 11 acres in Bristol city centre. The Harbourside regeneration project was assisted by a substantial grant from the National Lottery via the Millennium Commission and includes one of the largest public art commission programs in the South West region with works by eight artists integrated into the buildings and the public spaces surrounding them.

The majority of artworks are themed around reflection and exploration. One of the most striking examples, which traverses the depth of Millennium Square is a dramatic integrated light piece by light artist David Ward. Zenith is inspired by an analemma - the line traced by the sun recorded at noon over the course of a year, as used in the past by navigators, explorers and astronomers. 52 runway-landing lights have been used in this piece, and are programmed to trace a constantly changing orbital path across the square.

Many lessons have been learnt from the commissioning body At-Bristol, a non-arts organisation. This included commissioning process and the subsequent repair and maintenance of the work, especially given the well-used public location of the attraction and the high number of visitors.

Pero's Bridge

Another interesting commission involving the private sector and the City was the development and construction of a new footbridge during 1999. Pero’s Footbridge crosses St. Augustine’s Reach and link's Queens Square with the new Millenium Square across the water.

The bridge is named after Pero, a slave who worked under leading 18th century Bristol merchant Mr. John Pinney, and was a design collaboration between artist Ellis O’Connell and engineer’s Ove Arup.

The project proved to be inevitably difficult, because of the opposing visions of the two clients: the City was interested in creating something spectacular and of real quality. The developer was primarily interested in meeting their obligations on cost and within the agreed time frame.

That aside, the work has become an interesting landmark for the city centre that also provides an important access route across the city.

Broadmead Retail Redevelopment

Broadmead is Bristol’s main retail area, in which developer’s Bristol Allaince is proposing to expand by building a significant amount of new retail space. The development is enormous in scale and will be made possible by realigning a section of the City’s inner ring road.

A Public Art Strategy for Broadmead as been prepared by Sam Wilkinson of SWPA Ltd with both a local and national advertising campaign organised to invite artist s to submit expressions of interest. The approach to commissioning artists within the new Broadmead development has four main aims;
• to create work of significance – innovative, high quality and challenging;
• to create interventions and elements unique to Broadmead and contribute to the identity of the development
• To create opportunities for a wide range of artists to work in a variety of ways, across the lifetime of the development
• To make meaningful links with residential communities local to Broadmead

The first artists are already in place. Artist Nayan Kulkarni has been working with Chapman Taylor Architects to create a new "outdoor roof" and pedestrian bridges for a significant public square.

Further commissions will include artists working on car parks and newly created open spaces with landscape architects, urban and lighting designers.

There is also a program of temporary installations/commissions that will take place over the construction period, and further projects, which include process and participative work to engage with local residents, and all those who shop and work in the city centre.

5.2 RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT

Collaborative design process in recent residential development in Australia has been deficient for a number of years. Little examples exist of quality integrated public art, nor any major potential of public art as a part of the social investment in delivering city and neighborhood renewal.

Recent examples in both the UK and Canada are beginning to offer and promote the benefits of collaborative good design, urban planning and integrated public art.

Coventry (England) – “Electrifying”

One of the highlights of the fellowship was the opportunity to participate in a site visit to a new development that has placed an emphasis on innovation and connection to its site.

Electric Wharf is a canalside development project in Coventry, England. Essentially, it involves the conversion of disused, industrial Victorian buildings, namely the former Electric Light Works power station and depot, into IT business spaces and live/work loft style units.

Electric Wharf is an important ingredient of a much wider urban plan for the regeneration of the canalside area of Coventry. The developers and architects have had a shared vision to wanted to integrate artists within the design process from the start. They believed this could introduce valuable insights and question first ideas and proposals, ultimately arriving somewhere different and unpredictable.

This has resulted in the developers, architects and artists are working consciously to produce a place and not simply a constructed space. They have responded to the existing buildings, spaces and context. In practice, each artist has a particular role, but works collaboratively to contribute to the design framework.

With a budget in access of 1.4 million pounds and a range of stakeholders and partners, the project has the benefit of working over a considerable timeframe from early 2001 to its expected final completion date in late 2004. The program is and continues to be a nice balance of permanent and temporal public art works woven into the fabric of the site.

Working from this holistic design framework several different artists are involved. These include Coventry and internationally renowned light artist Esther Rollinson who will explore the obvious
connections to the site’s former history through a highly integrated light artwork. The program also includes the work of artist and archaeologist Charles Gallagher who has documented the site as it changes, and using trace remainders of the site’s past functions as an important image base for his works. Other artist teams have also been engaged to work collaboratively with the surrounding communities to contribute to the design process.

In all it is a very refreshing approach being undertaken driven by good lateral thinking, social inclusion and collaborative work ideal and practices.

**Vancouver, British Columbia (Canada) – “Waterfront Transformation”**

Since the late 1970s, the City of Vancouver has embarked on an ambitious transformation of its many downtown waterfront areas from industrial and rail uses, with the goal of adding some 25,000 mid to high-density dwelling units. The City's strategy was to attract people to the downtown area, providing an alternative to the suburbs by creating lively, mixed use urban lifestyles with a high level of amenity.

As an integral part of this transformation process has been the introduction of policy that prescribes that private-sector developments which require rezonings greater than 160,000 ft² are required to contribute $.95 per buildable (FSR) foot to public art. This results in fairly large commissions, which may be in one or several sites.

Though private developers sponsor the commissions, they are often on public land and title is transferred to the City upon completion. Ten percent of the project budget is also allocated to the Public Art Maintenance Reserve for the ongoing maintenance of the artwork. Developers are required to contract an experienced consultant to coordinate the competition and jury selection and to abide by public art guidelines. The Public Art Committee reviews the art sites, budget allocations, and jury/artist selection procedures.

The program is an excellent example of public and private collaboration in creating very distinctive environments. The private development commissions in association with the City add considerable value, distinction, and identity to these new developments, often reconnecting new buildings and residents to historic neighborhoods.

Further work with the promotion of “Program” champions from the private sector to help and be key advocates to the Private Development program has gone a long way into securing and a continuing solid investment from the private sector.

Collectively these contributions are changing the look and feel of Vancouver, particularly in the Downtown, Coal Harbour, and north shore of False Creek districts. Two of these areas (waterfront sites) are worthy of mention, these are;

**False Creek**

Following the 1976 Expo, the large site on the northern side of False Creek was sold off to make way for the Concord Pacific Place development, a massive project that when complete will provide 8,500 residential units and 2.6 million square feet of commercial space.

The City of Vancouver required the development to follow an official development plan, which stipulated that it had to provide a package of benefits over and above the basic infrastructure requirements. These include 17 hectares of parkland, a continuous walking and bike system, a community arts centre, a public art program and 20 percent social housing requirement. At this stage, over three-quarters of the project is complete.

A solid example of site specific public art comes through the recent work of Alan Storey titled “Coopers Mews”. Taking it's source elements from the railway and a cooperage that inhabited the area until the 1960s, the artwork starts with a galvanized steel...
track that runs overhead and wanders through the tall buildings between Pacific Boulevard and the False Creek seawall, west of Cambie Street Bridge.

Cement and wood planks are interspersed with grass to create a walkway underneath the overhead track. Overhead, five wooden barrels are lined up as if on an assembly line. When the boardwalk planks are stepped on, the barrels emit steam creating a sound like a calliope on which you can play a tune.

Other projects include “Lookout” by Noel Best and Chris Dikeakos. The work comprises of two glass-roofed pavilions located in seawall “lookouts” that provide shelter and viewing portals to False Creek. Stainless Steel walls with cut out silhouettes and words refer to the activities that have occurred on the site since human occupation. Also, 13 cast bronze chairs are placed throughout the site in careful relationship to sandblasted text in the glass balcony surrounds.

**Coal Harbour**

Located on the former Canadian Pacific Railway site, Coal Harbour is a huge redevelopment project that commenced in the early 1990s. As with Concord Pacific, the City of Vancouver made approval conditional on a package of public benefits, including approximately 30 hectares of parkland, a continuous waterfront walking and bike system linking Canada Place to Stanley Park.

Further benefits included the provision of 20 percent social housing, and a number of community and cultural initiatives. Once again a public art program is a prominent feature.

There are several pieces that are highly integrated, including the work of artist Bill Pechet that occupies the exterior of a residential building along Coal Harbour Quay. It is made of stones, plaques, and objects cast in bronze that refers to the history of the area and act as a puzzle.

Other work includes “Weave” by Douglas Senft completed at the end of 2002. The work is highly integrated into both the building facade and associated public areas.

“Weave” tells a story of some of Coal Harbour’s history: a collection of bronze rings outline the breadth of old growth trees, steel benches support First Nation, Spanish and English words; and aluminum tree grates reference the area’s aviation history.

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**5.3 PUBLIC BUILDINGS, SPACES & URBAN DESIGN**

“if you always do what you have done the future will look a lot like the past..”

**City of Coventry (England) – “Phoenix Rising”**

An another highlight of the fellowship was the opportunity to meet with the project director leading an ambitious 60 million pounds city centre regeneration project in Coventry, England.

The Coventry “Phoenix Initiative” was seen as an opportunity to regenerate the historical quarter of the city centre and to link the city’s two major visitor attractions, the Cathedral and the Museum of British Road Transport. It also allowed for the creation of another by uncovering the ruins of Coventry’s first Priory and Cathedral dating back to the 11th Century.

Early on in the Masterplan stage (late 90’s), the extensive use of public art was proposed to weave together the different elements of the site and to introduce creative and imaginative use of form and materials to add value to the overall design. An art budget of over 1 Million pounds was dedicated.

The brief was to create a metaphorical journey, and an actual pedestrian route, through the centre of the city with the theme of reconciliation between history and the future. Beginning with the past, represented by the bombed-out shell of the Cathedral, with the new Cathedral rebuilt alongside, the
journey would pass through the fringes of the city centre and end near a new Garden of International Friendship, symbolic of the anticipated future.

Working to this brief, the artists introduced into the design process have brought an imaginative, informative, provocative combination of works. These centre mostly a broad range of highly integrated works that occupy public space, more private areas

Key works include a piece by artist Chris Browne reflecting the history and archaeology of the site, which is Priory Gardens. The artwork is set off by the theme of a Kofa Tree designed with artefacts and collected relics into the ground. The artwork reveals the layered story and history of the site.

Another major integrated piece is the work of Francoise Schein set in the paving of the newly created Millenium Place. Some 50 metres long by 15 metres high it is a series of blue LED light lines representing the time zones of the world.

The project also includes a stunning spiral footbridge that is encased in blue glass fins and lit from within the base, a water large feature and a landscape based artwork using plantings and white gravel in a pattern taken from a medieval floor tile. Another interesting inclusion was site wide text interventions by writer David Morley with a resulting publication.

More controversial pieces exist with the work of Jochen Gerz, particularly the “Future Monument “ sited at the junction of Millenium Place and Lady Herbets Garden. The work consists of a 14 foot high glass obelisk illuminated from within surrounded by inscribed glass plates set into paving. The community of Coventry across a wide range of ages and backgrounds were asked a question “who have been the enemies of the past?”. The eight most quoted answers appear inscribed onto the plates in the form of “to our friends from…. “ demonstrating how Coventry has successfully turned enemies into friends.

The project provides some valuable references, particularly with how members of the design team - architect, landscape architect and public art consultant had a shared understanding and gave considerable time to developing a trusting relationship.

**City of Sheffield (England) – “Heart of the City”**

Regeneration activity and its success, both commercially and in design terms, have been seen as crucial for confidence within and outside the City of Sheffield. Along with east Manchester and Liverpool, Sheffield became a pilot for a series of urban regeneration companies designed to bring councils, public agencies and business together in a single regeneration enterprise. But rather than redevelop the city in the piecemeal fashion a Masterplan was developed to guide future development.

Since its early inception in 1995, a Masterplan titled “the Heart of the City project” has had a single vision to kick-start the economic and physical regeneration of the city centre. Along with the adoption of a Public Art Policy in the late 1980’s, Sheffield City has sought to encourage the commissioning of public art as a part of the design of major developments. It has played a key role in regeneration activity to the city centre core.

The Council sought, and has been granted over a period approximately 6 years public funding in excess of £41million pounds to build new public areas within the city centre. Primarily these have been
delivered through large projects such as the Peace Gardens, Millennium Galleries and Winter Garden.

A high profile award-winning project has been the Peace Gardens. The scheme was one of six Millennium Projects in the UK and was aimed at providing a popular green space for residents in the heart of the city centre. The project involved a collaboration of three artists who were experts in stone, ceramics and metal as well as landscape artists and planners.

The Peace Gardens has become a jewel for the city, further complimented by the recent development of Winter Garden, and the Millennium Galleries.

A further new key component of Sheffield's regeneration is the £50+ million pounds is a Masterplan that will transform the station and its surroundings into a world-class gateway to Sheffield. The project includes a collaborative artwork titled the 'Cutting Edge' Sculpture. The proposed Cutting Edge sculpture was conceived and designed in Sheffield for Sheffield and draws on the city's unique traditions and aspirations. It seeks to confirm that in the 21st century Sheffield still stands at the forefront of metal design.

Forming the centrepiece of the new station square, Cutting Edge will be a simple, elegant blade of stainless steel which will sweep through the landscape changing its shape in a series of curves. Approximately 90 metres long, it will have dramatically different ends; at one end it will be circular and a metre high; at the other it will rise to a height of 4.5 metres in an elliptical form.

Still in fabrication the work has the presence to provide a stunning gateway feature for both pedestrians and arriving visitors.

**City of Seattle, Washington State (USA) – “Art, Justice and Informed Citizenry”**

For almost thirty years, the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs (City of Seattle) has built its public art program with a goal of providing people with a variety of artist experiences as they go about their daily lives.

This has been achieved over this time through a 1% for Art Program legislated by the City of Seattle. They have commissioned large-scale artworks for prominent public settings and woven artwork into buildings, streetscapes and infrastructure and have the envious reputation of being an industry leader in this field for a number of years.

Recent work has concentrated on the Civic Centre Masterplan. A vision and a set of principles were agreed upon as a starting point for the plan. Primarily, the Civic Centre is based on a 100-year vision, optimising public access to events and city services, and creating varied and comfortable public spaces belonging to the citizens of Seattle.

The grouping of new public buildings include a Justice Centre incorporating a new Police Headquarters and Municipal Courts, and a new City Hall. In essence they are an extension and affirmation of the urban strategies outlined in the Masterplan. The Courts component is complementary to the council chambers, a terminus for the open public space and the activity therein. This is achieved through both the consistent use of high quality materials and finishes and the linking of both sites with a poetic water feature.

**Justice Centre**

The Justice centre was completed in 2002 at a cost of $68 Million, with an art budget just over $1 million. The artwork was developed by the team of lead artists, Pam Beyette, Michael Davis, Norie Sato and Richard Turner.
The team collaboratively developed the conceptual themes, and directions for artwork in each of the major buildings. Design ideas and concepts were created collaboratively by the team, and also in concert with the architects, landscape architects and with the cooperation of the agencies involved.

The art program has been described as a subtle, poetic collection of artworks that enhance the building and stand witness to the activities within it.

The artworks in the police lobby addresses the complexity of police work while expressing the mission of the department, “to protect and to serve”.

It also attempts to reference the relationship between off-duty and on-duty officers and the symbolic and metaphorical meanings involved in their life, and the common relationships between them and civilians.

The artworks incorporate both the north and south walls of the police lobby. Using stone and bronze as major materials, it ties the work to the building and creates a distant relationship to the artwork in the courts lobby.

Whilst in the municipal courts, the focal point of the lobby is the 24 ft. sculpture, comprised of two conical forms, one suspended directly above the other so that the point of the hanging cone and that of the standing cone almost touch each other. Together the two forms begin to suggest the ongoing dialogue between compassion and justice. The suspended cone is delicately balanced so that it responds to air currents and vibrations. It hovers above the standing cone, constantly seeking a still point and alignment. The lower cone rises solidly from the lobby floor. The aligned cones are also the centre for the concentric arcs that spread across the lobby.

Other more discrete artworks appear in the Court’s building elevator lobbies and one high on the wall overlooking the Jury Assembly Room. These are a fine collection of thought provoking works in their own right.

City Hall

The Seattle City Hall completed in late 2003, houses the Mayor’s Office, City Council and its chamber, city Attorney’s offices and other departmental offices. The Total Building Size is approximately 200,000 square feet across 7 stories and 2 lower levels.

I had the pleasure of meeting with Ms. Beliz Brother, who was nominated the lead artist on the Civic Centre Design team. A large percentage of the work was undertaken early during the conceptual design phase of the building to develop an appropriate art program.

Working under the guise of Artist-in-Residence, Ms. Brother was able to develop an art plan that incorporates integrated and site specific artworks as well as opportunities for temporary display of artworks into the design of the building and future public plaza.

Essentially, the design of City Hall represents Seattle’s unique and open relationship to its
government. The Council Chamber form is visible from the building exterior and from the interior public areas. The Chamber is clad in titanium that changes its visual qualities with different daylight conditions. The building’s organisation also aligns with the Justice Centre across 5th Avenue.

Some of the permanent works include the impressive “Blue Glass Passage”, fully integrated into the building and stands as a functional artwork. It acts as a suspended walkway between the office tower and the council chamber and is formed with blue laminated glass panels with a thick wooden handrail that invites resting and a viewpoint to orientate yourself to the outside.

Another prominent work is a wall installation by Vancouver artist Eric Robertson. A 16 metre long mixed media installation the work draws inspiration from “Paddle to Seattle”, an event that brings together many Pacific Northwest tribal groups. The artwork also makes connections to Seattle’s renowned aerospace industry.

Library

To complement the above projects, the city has also embarked on another huge project to replace the Central Library, which housed a collection of over 900,000 books and other materials.

The new Central Library is currently under construction is set for completion in mid 2004. Dutch architect Rem Koolhass in a joint venture with locally based LMN Architects of Seattle has designed the Library.

The building’s design is innovative, which includes features such as a unique “book spiral” which will allow patrons unprecedented access to the library collection. The crystalline steel and glass structure of the library contains five platforms each devoted to a different programmatic cluster. Four open spaces are housed among these platforms, where library patrons can meet, search the web or read.

Once again there is a solid art program that will help define the new facility. This has already begun through a temporal art program, that is intended to provide the public with insights into the development of the new building, and to further promote discussion about the place a 21st century library holds in a democratic society.

Titled the “Peephole Series”, the works include an audio art walk sound installation, the installation of four toy peephole theatres into the construction site, animated cartoons, to a series collectable bookmarks all designed by artists.
5.4 ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION

More important than the physical nature and aesthetics of completed collaborative artworks and projects is the support and ongoing dialogue available to continually debate and examine best practice.

No where is this more evident than in both the UK and USA. Certainly the UK has come along way in a considerable short period of time. This has been primarily assisted by the creation and delivery of new national policy that has placed good design for the built environment as a major agenda item over the past 4 years.

The introduction and influence national bodies such as the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) have brought about a new set of common goals and a strong connection of professional associations advocating them across the country. This has only further been reinforced recently by development during 2003 with the establishment of CABE Space at the request of the British Government, following recommendations of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce. The agency is publicly funded by the office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Simply, CABE Space aims to bring excellence to the design and management of public spaces in Britain’s towns and cities. CABE Space works with local authorities and other bodies responsible for public space to help them think and act holistically about their open spaces and what it means for their residents’ health and well being. Primarily this has in it early beginnings involved CABE working with people and organisations skilled in landscape design, public space management, community development and regeneration.

CABE Spaces’ brief covers a broad spectrum from highlighting standards and best practice, to policy and research, to campaigned and advocacy and importantly professional skills development.

The obvious and sustainable benefits of what this work can carry are self-evident. The ability to work together to increase public and professional awareness of the importance of good quality public space, along with creating a more lasting inheritance through improving the skill levels and training standards within the professions responsible for the planning and design and management of public space.

In many respects there has been a solid attempt in the UK for a number of years about raising awareness of architecture and the designed environment. Projects undertaken by the network of regional Architecture Centres in the UK have led the way as early as 1999 with medium term projects of 3 years or more being delivered into the educational curriculum that have encouraged design both as activity and process.

Notably this includes the “breaking boundaries” project of Kent architecture Centre that had a major focus on design process including research and investigation of public space and production of artwork. Importantly the project forged new partnerships particularly in practical impact of students and teachers working with artists in new ways.

Other worthy areas or pockets of activity currently exist with links to other UK Architecture Centres particularly with the collaborative work of three organisations the West Midlands of England.

West Midlands (England) - “Collaboration, Investigation and Dialogue”

A shared belief of collaboration, investigation and dialogue currently exists in the organisations of:
- Midlands Architecture and the Designed Environment (MADE), the architecture centre for the West Midlands Region,
- Public Art Forum (PAF), the national organisation for developing public art practice,
- and The Public, the region’s organisation for the development and advocacy of socially engaged public art.

The resources and knowledge and more importantly the shared philosophy of these three organisations have recently begun to bring an important focus back to the broader debate of interdisciplinary practice and value of social/cultural engagement in regeneration practice.

The initial seed of activity for collaboration was the commissioning of an artists and architects practice to produce a visual intervention within the locality of Birmingham’s International Convention Centre for
the National Urban Summit held in late 2002. This resulted in some 200 carved pumpkin heads being placed within the public areas of the convention centre. Attended by some 1,600 delegates the intervention was a creative and innovative attempt to engage the not only the visiting audience by focussing the attention on the role of creativity in regeneration practice but also to locals offering an interactive experience through a temporary transformation of the public realm.

The Urban Summit event 2002 raised even more possibilities for what artistic practice can bring to regeneration. Hence, The Public, PAF and MADE have continued to investigate issues of creativity and regeneration as part of an ongoing strategic collaboration and produced an important publication as a further outcome of that work. Titled “the value of the arts in regeneration practice”, the publication brings together a broad cross section of regional case studies that show art engaging with people to contribute positively to place.

It is important to place each organisation to give a clearer understanding of what they individually bring to this collaborative practice. Through interviews and site visits it was obvious that whilst collectively they have begun to achieve considerable ground, each organisation also continues to have a unique individual focus which has enabled them to deliver on a variety of important projects.

MADE, Birmingham (England) - “Cross Discipline Interaction”

MADE covers the West Midlands region of England. MADE is committed to promoting best practice in architecture and the built environment. The organisation seeks to engage with communities that design, procure, use and enjoy buildings and the spaces around them. MADE has grown into an influential and active centre promoting best practice in architecture and the built environment.

MADE's strategic position is at the interface of art, architecture and urban form - promoting new thinking about architecture and the designed environment through projects, propositions and collaborative practice. It was expressed that they are currently enjoying an “arms length independency” and this is reflected through their considerable array of consultancy opportunities and active research work. Projects have included such things as championing good design, selecting design teams, producing public art strategies and community liaison.

Currently, MADE is working towards a number of other groundbreaking projects carried out with a variety of partners. This new work includes the establishment of Cultural Diversity Panels, establishing new ideas and projects in contemporary design embedded through the ethnic mix of the region. Furthermore other pilot projects with CABE begin to question and investigate the current model for the design and construction of fast food outlets. The project aims to engage artists as a part of the promoting a good design process with social and participatory inclusion.

The success and current focus of MADE can be essentially attributed to the enthusiasm shown by staff who highly value the role of arts/artists in regeneration practice. Whilst the current Director has just been appointed to Birmingham City Council to the role of City Design Projects Officer, there is evidence that the organisation will continue to flourish from the platform to which their facilitating and networking between relevant disciplines has been built.


Public Art Forum describes themselves as an organisation who works to provide an important link between arts practice and public space, including the built and natural environments as well as public services and infrastructure.

Public Art Forum was established as an unincorporated membership association in 1987. Following an organisational review in 2001-2 the Forum transferred to company status in April 2003. There continues to be an active program that encompasses research, experimentation and importantly debate. Working nationally, the Forum's underlying aim is to encourage new thinking, influence policy and inform others about current public art practice.

It also continues to support work done by other national agencies undertaking advocacy, development and resourcing of professional practice for artists.
The Public, West Bromwich (England) - “Pioneers and Leaders”

The Public, formerly known as Jubilee Arts until June 2003, has been carrying out pioneering community arts practice for nearly 30 years in West Bromwich and surrounding region. Through its history it has been at the forefront working with diverse groups to create a range of innovative projects in order to communicate a wide variety of issues relating to social and cultural inclusion to regeneration and education to wider audiences.

The Public has been a major driving force in the regeneration of its immediate area, and is set to expand very rapidly in the very near future. This has come about with the recent announcement of the largest community arts development in Europe through the completion of a new building which will open in West Bromwich in 2005.

The Public Building represents an investment of £40 million funded through an innovative partnership between the Government Office for the West Midlands through the European Regional Development Fund, Sandwell Council, Arts Council England through the National Lottery, the New Deal for Communities Fund and Advantage West Midlands. It will provide the focus for a £250 million regeneration of the town, already under way, including a new sports academy, a major new shopping centre, a state of the art community health centre, a library, and new communications including bus, rail and road links.

One project I was fortunate to visit was a partnership with The Sozo Collective who commissioned artists from across the region to transform an old Commercial X-Ray Factory in Smethwick.

The project, re:Location, culminated in a public exhibition entitled ‘Radioactive’. Artists responded to the physicality of the building and explore experiences of home and community in relation to the work environment.

Built in the early 1900s, Commercial X-ray occupied the building for 50 years. Other occupants have company Gamma Rays Ltd as well as Morris Motors, & commercial photographers.

This rich connection of layers of site history and architecture, with artists responding broadly to their current environs made for an interesting intervention that not only creatively explored regeneration practice but also gave capacity to the local arts community in giving them a venue to work and interact with together.

Other Providers

Public Art South West, Exeter (England) – “Online”

Public Art South West is another major service provider for the sector is based out of Exeter in the South West of England. The agency funded by the Arts Council of England takes a lead role initiating a range of strategies for public art development in the region. Work includes working in partnership with the public and private sectors with the aim of providing multiple opportunities for artists to contribute in diverse and innovative ways to the environment.

Recent projects and initiatives have included a re-launch in June 2003 of a unique web site. Public Art Online (www.publicartonline.org.uk) has been specifically designed for anyone and everyone involved in public art whatever their discipline and whether new to the field or experienced professional.

It contains practical guidance, case studies from around the world, a links section, news, information and current research, and covers all aspects of working with and commissioning artists, whatever the context. This is fast becoming a well-used resource with over 8,000 hits a month being recorded.
Manchester (England) – “Collaborative & Conceptual”

Another highlight of the fellowship was an opportunity to examine first hand a unique interdisciplinary approach to teaching conceptual design for structures for public space in Manchester, UK.

It revolves around an innovative learning process through a program of collaborative projects for Master of Arts - Art as Environment students from the Manchester Metropolitan University and Master of Engineering - Civil Engineering students from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, in the UK.

The primary aim is to create Artists and Engineers, who design the public environment, who understand the challenges of an inter-disciplinary group and a sympathetic to each other’s discipline’s constraints and language. The collaboration is a joint conceptual design project with common learning outcomes.

The students undertake collaborative design projects with the involvement of ARUP, a leading international design consultancy, who provide free consultancy and have a significant interest in the findings.

In all three projects have been undertaken since September 2001, with a variety of collaborators which has made way for a collaborative, problem based approach to the professional formation of artists and engineers. Most of the focus of these projects have centred on the mechanisms of exploring inter-disciplinary collaboration and thought process to conceptual design by the students.

Importantly, the process has had a chance to explore models of action research and a basis for a methodology for learning and teaching. The strengths of the program lie in enthusiasm and shared vision of the current drivers of the project. Engineer Andrew Gale (UMIST), artists John Hyatt, Martell Linsdell (MIRAD) and Roger Milburn (ARUP North West) and colleagues have sought to breakdown the stereotypical institutional, disciplinary ‘glass walls’ to create inspired and sympathetic practitioners.

Whilst they were keen to point out that the their working method is transferable and could be used to support collaborative dialogues elsewhere, they stressed “the academic leadership and direction of this model of inter-disciplinary working is unlikely to be learnt from reports, rather it is better that the approach be transferred through experimental learning”.

Another obvious strength was the ability to draw on multiple resources inside and outside of the participating universities. This involvement allowed for a significant expansion of knowledge and experience, for example ARUP, the project’s industry collaborator.

ARUP too have benefited enormously from the collaborative framework. Their Manchester office was completely refurbished around 3 years ago. In order to create an environment that was both functional and interesting they worked with both an architect and artist. It further illustrated to senior staff how engineers, architects and artists approached a project in different ways. The result is a studio populated with examples of design and artwork, and also includes an art gallery, where both regular exhibitions of artist work, and staff is displayed. The interaction and experience has continued onto other projects.
University of Washington, Washington State (USA) - “An Interdisciplinary Curriculum”

Recently there has been the development of an independent, but interdisciplinary, degree-granting program for undergraduates and graduate students out of the University of Washington Campus, Seattle. I was fortunate to discuss the outline with one of the tutors for 2004, Seattle artist Beliz Brother.

The School of Art, Departments of Architecture and Landscape Architecture launched a Public Art Curriculum in November of 2000 at the University of Washington Campus, Seattle. This is the only interdisciplinary curriculum of its kind offered to all students, but designed specifically for students in Art, Design, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture.

Now in its third year, the interdisciplinary coursework includes a broad mix of theoretical investigation, design studio and community design/build projects. The objectives of the curriculum are best described by the values the course literature embodies;

“Public Artists must understand the physical and social context in which the work will exist. This context represents a complex layering of many considerations and specialised points of view. As listeners, translators, and builders, public artists draw on the expertise and talents of multiple disciplines.”

An integral part of the course outline involves a three-way Design/Build Collaborative. Three separate projects over the curriculum’s history have resulted in approximately forty-five students, both undergraduate and graduate, collaborating on practical projects. These project have included design proposals for a monument to Thomas Jefferson in a dramatic waterfront state park in Long Beach, to executing a large-scale public artwork for the Tukwila Elementary School, and a design/build project created for University Heights Community Centre.

A first self-review was undertaken recently, and whilst some political, territorial and learning/teaching collaboration challenges were evident, The faculty have indicated that they are reasonably pleased. The initial experiences with cross-disciplinary work have shown that this is a surprisingly fertile area of growth and learning for the students. Students claim that they have learned a great deal from other disciplines, most especially through the close contact work involved in the studio experience.

Drawing on the rich traditions of the City of Seattle’s stimulating cultural policy and integrated public art projects, the University is clearly filling a niche regarding art and design education in the world today and at the forefront of interdisciplinary education.

Other examples

City of Bellevue, Washington State (USA) - “Mentor”

Another progressive example of professional skills development for public artists has been the development of a Public Art certificate program sponsored by the Bellevue Community College's Arts 2000 Continuing Education Program and run in conjunction with the Bellevue Arts Commission, and City of Bellevue Council.

The program, one of the first of its kind in the country, places working artists on design teams with established public artists to acquire the specialised skills needed for creating art in the public arena. Bellevue Public Art program takes the concept one step further; as a certificate requirement, students intern on a collaborative public art project with a mentor artist.

The students, all of whom are professional artists, get hands-on experience in the public art process from start to finish, including proposal writing, design development and presentation skills.

Whilst in its infancy the program continues to change through regular consultation.
6. CONCLUSION

The broad and wide reaching aims of this Fellowship proved to be ambitious to cover a complete study in the nine weeks available. However, Critical to the success of this Fellowship was the chance to partake in critical discussion and to build networks with fellow art/design professionals worldwide.

This came through the many interviews and site visits along with attendance at a major conference in Barcelona. The conference illustrated a strong level of critical and theoretical debate around public art and urban design, which does not happen on a regular or collaborative basis in Australia.

It is very much hoped that these important new connections and relationships will continue into the future that will only further provide for greater opportunities to educate and engage not only the industry sector but also the broader community in Australia about the benefits of interdisciplinary practice.

It should be noted Australia continues to benchmark well in the public art sector. Essentially, complements focussed on several areas including;

- The evidence of strong community cultural development practice tied to some projects in public art and the social and inclusionary focus on engaging diverse communities in a respectful and meaningful way remains to be a strong asset for Australia.

- The growing maturity shown by local government in Australia to advocate and implement exciting projects in the field of public art. This praise is further narrowed to the ability of such Council's such as Parramatta, Brisbane etc. who have and continue to embed broad cultural policy across all areas of governance including statutory planning documents which provide for the legal framework to which real progress can be made.

- The quality and detail of public artworks, the material, finishes and colour, the freshness of unique imagery and concepts, and the courage to be bold and exciting.

It is clear from the research gathered that all three tiers of government in Australia need to show increased interest in and leadership to issues concerning the changing built environment, interdisciplinary design advocacy and training/education.

An increase to public and professional awareness of the importance of good quality public space, along with improving the skill levels and training standards within the professions responsible for the planning and design and management of public space is essential in this period of substantial change.

The following key recommendations should not seen in isolation of each other, but rather implemented as a collaborative endeavour to further sustain interdisciplinary arts practice in Australia.
7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are broken up into the areas of Policy, Interdisciplinary Design Practice Advocacy, and Training, Education & Support.

**Policy**

**National**

At present at a National level there is little to no information being generated and distributed that highlight standards and best practice, from policy and research, to campaigns that advocate professional skills development in design.

Whilst there has been large investments recently in the areas of heritage & the natural environment, there continues to be no focus on the changing built environment. The Federal Government must begin to show leadership in this field to support the work currently being undertaken by other tiers of government.

**It is recommended that the establishment of dedicated agencies such as that of Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE) in the United Kingdom be implemented in an Australian context.**

**State**

Whilst recently the NSW State Government has begun to advocate for better design practice at present there is lack of a current policy that makes the inclusion of public art and design mandatory in NSW State Government capital works. While the NSW State Government acknowledges the importance of arts and culture, with the recent formulation of the draft cultural planning guidelines it is yet to achieve integration to all sections of Government.

The State Government is a major landholder and usually makes significant impact when they undertake capital works projects. A Public Art Policy would bring the State into line with the development of policy currently being undertaken by local government. It will also bring equity between high profile sites such as Sydney CBD and the Olympic Site that have been beneficiaries of large public art projects with other areas of Sydney and throughout the State.

A number of other state governments in Australia have adopted a Public Art Policy at state level with very good results. The most recent illustration has been the Queensland Government’s new public art policy “Art Built-in” which came into effect in 1999.

**It is recommended The NSW Ministry for the Arts should lead the development of a NSW State public art policy. This would maximise the social, cultural and economic benefits that will result from a heightened quality, experience and understanding of public places.**

**Local**

Recently there has considerable efforts been made by local government to facilitate cultural development, and in particular art in the public domain. Collaborative publications such as one recently produced by the NSW Local Government & Shires Association looking at best practice in Public Art have assisted in broader advocacy in the sector.

**It is recommended that there needs to be more collective avenues for the Local Government sector across Australia to showcase the many practical ideas, policy, planning documents and projects that continue to support interdisciplinary design practice and the arts.**
Interdisciplinary Design Practice Advocacy

There needs to greater opportunity for forums to debate broader topic of interdisciplinary practice. This can only come through greater interaction between professional bodies representing the interests of the planning, design and art sectors.

Whilst considerable efforts have been made recently to promote interdisciplinary practice with recent publications such as Urban Design Forum, there still needs to more work done on promoting and advocating cultural literacy amongst the broader design sector. Further chance to explore and debate both Australian and International current practice is a vital component to stimulating this discussion.

It was clear from recent work in the UK that there are multiple benefits in being able to share resources and knowledge amongst peak professional associations. It has had a positive effect on bringing an important focus back to the broader debate of interdisciplinary practice and value of social/cultural engagement in regeneration practice.

It is recommended that professional associations such as the Planning Institute of Australia look at the feasibility of forming a cultural planning chapter to better advocate for interdisciplinary practice involving artists.

Training, Education & Support

An area that is critical to the education process is to effectively engage children and young people at school in the mechanisms of the creative design process. Engaging in the arts can stimulate imagination, improve communication and critical thinking skills and foster creativity and adaptability.

Some of this responsibility should rest with the newly established National Education and the Arts Network (NEAN) comprising of a representative from every state, territory and commonwealth government department responsible for education and/or the arts.

“The Contemporary Principles of Arts Education” released in 2002 clearly recognises as a key focus “opportunities to build critical, cultural and symbolic capacities in creating a sense of meaning and connectedness with oneself, others and the environment.” Strategies to build collaborative learning practices into the broader education curriculum must be continually explored.

From an industry level, the Australia Council, as the federal arts funding body needs to explore improved opportunities in the education of interdisciplinary practice involving the arts through forging new partnerships. With the abolition of the “Community Environment, Art & Design” (CEAD) program there has been little advocation from the federal arena to supporting opportunities for innovation and experimentation in the design and development of public spaces.

The provision of opportunities for collaboration between artists, communities and built environment professionals in shaping our public spaces needs to be again supported as a priority area.

A further solution to improving education lies in the development and provision of specialist instruction, which focuses on public art and interdisciplinary practice. There are currently very few examples of this in Australia for established artists and administrators to access. Furthermore, there are limited courses promoting interdisciplinary design practice.

Additional work needs to be done to address the critical and theoretical issues relevant to public art practice even at an undergraduate level. Often, even the smaller and more pragmatic issues such as the practical aspects of commissioning are not often being debated or considered.

It is recommended that all opportunities be explored by tertiary institutions towards the establishment of more undergraduate and graduate training for artists wishing to work in an interdisciplinary and public environment.

Additionally, the exploration of vocational training for artists via public art mentorship programs should also be considered as a priority.
8. REFERENCES

The primary information was gathered through interviews and observations with the organisations and 
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Ms. Barbara Goldstein, Manager Public Art Program City of Seattle, USA
Ms. Beliz Brother, Artist, Seattle USA
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