

'Engage' - Graham Bennett's sculpture for South Library

The artwork is titled 'Engage'

This sculpture will invite the viewer to:

- engage, observe or discover the human geographic, climatic, and cultural dimensions of the Library within the context of the district, province and time - past and present.
- consider the interplay of physical structures, social constructs, intellectual notions; dynamics of balance, change and reflection....

'Engage' - the elements:

Look to

- the river, big, braided, floodplain
- The river, small, local, encircling
- Mountains challenging Port Hills
- Kahukura
- Ever-changing winds

Observe

- The meeting and engagement of the minds
- Dynamics and relationships of spaces, structures, places and people
- Histories and futures

Reflect

- Mirror
- Throw back
- Speculate
- Learn

Graham Bennett

Artworks in Christchurch

Public Art in Christchurch City

Christchurch City Council is committed to an enlivened and creative city, in which the arts are widely recognised as being essential. In developing its arts policy and strategy, the Council recognised the key role of the arts in the city's social, cultural and economic development, and as a vehicle for urban renewal and city marketing.

The Council's prime role in relation to the arts and the natural and built environment is to act as custodian and manager, designer and promoter of an environment that will stimulate and inspire the arts. It aims to support the development of local artists, generate new employment opportunities, develop opportunities for arts expression and participation, and improve the quality of the built environment that we will leave behind for future generations.

Benefits of Public Artwork

Personal well-being

- Life satisfaction and perceived quality of life
- High self-esteem and positive self-image
- Reduced self-destructive behaviour

Education and learning

- Development of children and youth

Promoting understanding

- Of different cultures
- Of neighbours, history and the environment
- Highlighting the unique character of the location

Strong communities

- Develop community pride
- Increased community participation
- Reduce anti-social behaviour
- Celebrating innovation and original thinking

'Engage' has been funded by the Christchurch City Council's Artworks in Public Places Fund.

Each arts project has a steering group whose role is to guide the project and provide feedback or specialist information to the artist.

The project steering groups can have representation from the following areas:

- The local arts community – contributing arts expertise to ensure fair consideration and build credibility
- Local community board
- Local business association
- Neighbourhood/residents' group
- Tangata whenua

The members of the Pathways Home steering group are:

- Paul De Spa** - Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board member
- Lynne Havenaar** - Manager of the Malt House Theatre
- Nicki Moen** - Manager, Community Libraries
- Justine Lester** - South Library Manager
- Gavin Bishop** - Local resident and artist
- Bruce Harding** - Local resident and art enthusiast
- Bridget Blair** - Art Teacher and artist
- Gail Hume** - Art Teacher
- Diana Adams** - Artist
- Marlene Le Cren** - Arts Adviser, Community and Recreation Unit, Christchurch City Council

Project Development

A project brief was developed following extensive consultation with the project steering group. The group wished to highlight the importance of the history of the location both Maori and pakeha, the river, and the sense of learning. The details of the brief guide the artist in the creative process.

For more detailed information about the history of the location and current use of the site, please see the parallel text.

About the Artist

Graham Bennett is a successful artist, working nationally and internationally. Bennett's work is already well-known in the city. His Reasons for Voyaging sculpture provides a monumental entrance to the Christchurch Art Gallery, Te Puna o Waiwhetu. He also created A Tribute to Firefighters on the banks of the Avon River from materials sourced from the World Trade Centre site, and is gifted to the City of Christchurch. Graham also has artworks in Kurashiki, our Sister City in Japan, and in a number of private sculpture Parks in New Zealand. For further information visit www.bennettsculpture.info

Installation and Unveiling

The installation of the artwork will begin in April with an unveiling in early June 2006.



A model of Engage.



Three dimensions of Engage, artist Graham Bennett's sculpture to be installed at South Christchurch Library.



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