

Canal to Creek

WestConnex | Transurban

THE WESTCONNEX PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



VISUAL ARTS & DESIGN
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

TOM MISURA

KANGAROO SEATS | STAGE 5 WORKSHEET



Tom Misura
Kangaroo Seats

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

VOCABULARY - Installation, public art, interactive, sculptural, fauna, stylised, kitsch



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - ARTWORK

As part of the WestConnex Public Art Program – Canal to Creek, **Kangaroo Seats** was chosen from a range of submitted artwork proposals by a selection committee. The work is an outdoor installation of three sculptural kangaroo inspired seats that are made from stainless steel for its durability. All three kangaroos have a reflective finish and have been painted in parts with a coloured epoxy paint. Each kangaroo is painted with a different primary colour red, blue or yellow.



Kangaroo Seats was designed to fulfill the need for public seating and was inspired by local fauna (the kangaroo) to activate a pre-existing site - Tallawalla Street Reserve in Beverly Hills. It draws upon nostalgic reflections of this iconic Australian fauna and the artist describes his early memories of 'Skippy' the Australian TV program after newly arriving in Australia and the show helping him to learn English.

The site is an integral component of **Kangaroo Seats** and has influenced Misura's design in three key ways:

- Materials - stainless steel selected for durability in outdoor park setting and epoxy paint for water resistance and protection.
- Functionality and use - informed by demographic and user need investigations.
- Design and subject matter - sculpturally constructed to be part of the park landscape but unique enough to draw attention.

How has the display of *Kangaroo Seats* added to the site's value?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - ARTIST



Tomas Misura
Splash
 Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi Beach Sydney (temporary outdoor exhibition)
 2010
 (Photo: Roger D'Souza <https://sculpturebythesea.com/the-clitheroe-foundation-emerging-artists-mentor-program/>)
 Date accessed: 5/1/2021



Tomas Misura
Kangaroo Seats
 Canal to Creek
 2020

Tom Misura is a trained blacksmith who has had multiple entries in Australia's largest annual outdoor sculpture exhibition - Sculpture by the Sea. In 2010, Misura won the kids choice prize for the sculpture of a giant stainless-steel paint tube squirting red paint towards the beach titled *Splash*. He works at the intersection of art, design and sculpture. Misura has a preference for hand-made design and fabricated objects without resorting to computer design processes.

For the Canal to Creek proposal, Misura completed research into the local area of Beverly Hills (where ***Kangaroo Seats*** is situated) and found that there were many local residents who were immigrants to Australia. This fact resonated with Misura and his own experience of being an immigrant which led him to shape his sculpture into the iconic and internationally recognisable kangaroo shape.

Watch the video interview of the artist.

What else do you learn about him?

Why does he prefer hand-made fabrication techniques?

My current work has explored the possibilities of fusing traditional metalworking techniques with new materials into a contemporary sculptural language... I am interested in the dynamics of sculpture and its impact on human emotions

– Tom Misura



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - WORLD

Beverly Hills is a suburb within the greater metropolitan area of Sydney. As part of the WestConnex Public Art Program – Canal to Creek, this contemporary artwork helps to activate and engage local audiences to an existing but newly connected and rejuvenated space.

The artwork depicts the sculptural form of local fauna which is currently lost to the site, the kangaroo. Wollie Creek exists in its natural form from the intersection of Georges River upstream to Bexley North, where the waterway then transitions into a man-made causeway built around 1940. Historical maps suggest that the causeway follows the original path of the creek and connects most of the sites nominated to the west. The creek provides a link back to the natural history of the area.

How does *Kangaroo Seats* connect to broader trends in the art and design world?



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK - AUDIENCE

In what ways might an audience respond to *Kangaroo Seats*?

Consider physical, intellectual and emotional responses and the variety of intended/unintended and active/passive audiences there could be.

INVESTIGATION QUESTIONS - FRAMES

- Explain the importance of colour and subject matter in *Kangaroo Seats*?
- Do audiences respond emotionally to *Kangaroo Seats*?
- Does *Kangaroo Seats* have any cultural references?
- Does *Kangaroo Seats* quote from other artworks or ideas?



EXTENDED RESPONSE

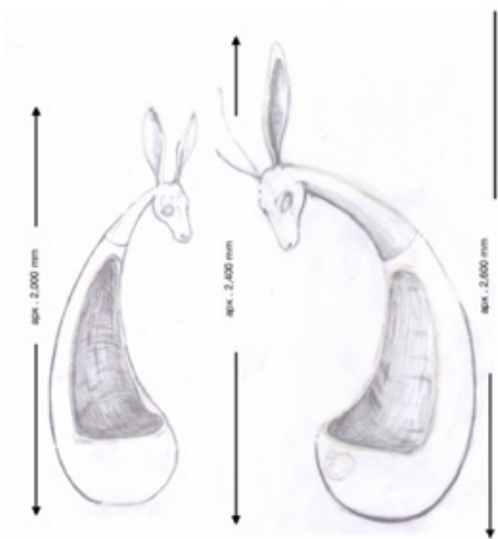
Explain how Tom Misura's artmaking practice blurs boundaries between art and design.

ARTMAKING TASK

In pairs, design your own piece of public furniture for a local site or the school playground based on an iconic Australian fauna or flora. Include the following details in your Visual Arts diary:

1. Site photos showing a variety of aspects of the location
2. Research of other artist-designed playground furniture
3. Sketches of a number of your furniture design ideas
4. Consider materials suitable for public furniture
5. Include a short artist statement for your final design. In your statement have two separate headings **Ideas and Intentions** and **Choices, Materials & Actions**

For this task use the materials you have access to. These could include pencils, textas, paint or clay.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Consider translating your hand created work to a 3D digital form using a digital platform you are familiar with or take the opportunity to learn a new creative software. Talk to your teacher about what software you can access at school and look up online tutorials to teach yourself how to use it.