

MEDIA RELEASE

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KINGSTON TO BREEZE INTO THE PUBLIC ARTS SCENE!



Photo: Mayor Kay Rasheed & CEO Nat Traeger thrilled with the announcement of the Regional Arts Funding allocation for Council's "Sea and Breeze Art in Kingston" project.

Pictured at artist Silvio Apponyi's Analematic Sundial & Sculpture Park in Kingston.

Kingston is one of just 12 arts projects across regional South Australia that will benefit from the recently announced Australian Government's Regional Arts Funding allocation.

The Council's "Sea and Breeze Art in Kingston" project will realise the development of a Public Art Strategy that will help guide decision making and planning in relation to public artworks. There will naturally be a focus on planned urban re-development through the Main Street Stimulus Project which is set to commence in April 2020. It is anticipated the strategy will provide direction to Council in relation to themes and objectives for public art development over the next ten years.

In accepting the grant, CEO Nat Traeger said "we are very excited and quite frankly delighted to be awarded Regional Arts Funding for our 'Sea & Breeze Art in Kingston' project. Kingston is virtually a blank canvas, rich in culture and history, and our plans to develop a public art strategy will hopefully bring some hidden community characteristics to the surface, through public artworks."

Ms Traeger, who commenced as Kingston's CEO in July said she was motivated to seek funds to develop a public arts strategy due to

the obvious willingness and interest shown by the community. "So many individuals, community groups and businesses were aware of my advocacy and love of public arts, mental health and suicide prevention strategies" Ms Traeger said. "I have been encouraged by the number of suggestions, photos, projects and ideas that people want to talk to me about – it is obvious that all of that energy needed to be harnessed in a practical and strategic manner".

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The grant funds will see the engagement of Maz McGann (Play Your Part) who has a broad range of experience in leading the development of strategies and business plans for Councils and organisations, operating in a range of industries with specialist expertise in arts and cultural management.

Ms McGann is looking forward to working with the Council and broader Kingston community; “public art provides several positive outcomes, including improving the aesthetics of a place, adding to people’s sense of safety, showcasing the character and identity of the people and place and providing a focus point for visitors”, she said.

Mayor Kay Rasheed also welcomed the funding windfall, saying “public artwork can become income producing visitor attractions. Given that 800,000 vehicles drive through Kingston annually, we want to have innovative and creative main streets and places of interest to entice those visitors to stop, and not just pass through our town”.

However, whilst arts tourism is an obvious outcome, Mayor Rasheed also acknowledged that public art increases community pride, transforms dull and inactivated locations and can be transformative. “It can transform the object on which it appears, of course, but it can also transform the community in which it resides”.

The project will see a comprehensive community engagement campaign, with Council hoping to gather as many ideas and suggestions it can, through workshops, survey’s, on-line feedback and targeted business and community forums.

Council hopes the result will see works in addition to those already in place be developed. Kingston is already home to three of renowned artist Silvio Apponyi sculptural works, featuring the unique Analematic Sundial & Sculpture Park adjacent to Maria Creek. Additionally, Council has engaged mosaic artist Mike Tye to complete a statuesque public art on the external wall of its offices on Holland Street, with funding support from the former Kingston CWA.

Council would like to acknowledge the Australian Government’s Regional Arts Fund and Country Arts SA for recognising the importance that this project has to a small regional council like Kingston.

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