



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

# BOTANICA

Contemporary Art Outside

2024 ARTIST BRIEF - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST



# OVERVIEW

Brisbane City Council's *Botanica: Contemporary Art Outside* is one of Queensland's premier outdoor events of site-specific contemporary artwork, taking place annually in the City Botanic Gardens.

Featuring artworks and installations from some of Australia's leading contemporary artists and designers, this open-air exhibition presents creative practice situated at the nexus of art and design practice, which seeks to inspire conversations about our built, natural and digital environments.

The 2024 event will be the sixth iteration of *Botanica* and Museum of Brisbane (MoB) is proud to be producing the upcoming program on behalf of Brisbane City Council. The inaugural *Botanica* took place in 2018 as part of the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games' official cultural program. Over this time, *Botanica* has been developing and growing audiences, reaching over 100,000 visitors to *Botanica* in 2023.

*Botanica* 2024 will take place across 10 nights in May and will include a program of tours and activations to further engage visitors with the installations and the ideas embedded in the works.

*Botanica: Contemporary Art Outside*, 2022. Photo Dave Kan





# CURATORIAL RATIONALE

## – Tactile adaptation

Infinitely adaptable, human touch and technology shape and influence our societies' futures and environments.

**Tactile adaptation** considers how human adaptation is intricately entwined with environment and technology.

'Adaptation' in biological systems refers to the process of adjusting behaviour, physiology or structure to become more suited to an environment.

Humans are skilled at adaptation. Over millennia we have evolved to become a dominant biological species by manipulating materials, developing tools and inventing technologies to aid our objectives.

Studies in evolution, palaeontology and domestication reveals the intricate relationships developed over extended timeframes between species, human behaviours, and environments.

With new frontiers exponentially expanding in machine-learning capabilities, and a rapidly changing natural world, humans must adapt more nimbly than ever before.

**Tactile adaptation** invites artists to consider human existence from biological, environmental, and philosophical perspectives, and contemplate the function of our eyes, hands and tools in our machine-learning embedded future.

We are at a significant point in time where the increasing digital realism of these technologies can amplify creative potential and simultaneously posing new challenges.

This is a moment to speculate on the nature of creativity and the future of touch, and to achieve a balance between harnessing and being affected by the tools we create.

Photo Dave Kan.





# CURATORIAL FRAMEWORK

## SUSTAINABILITY

*Botanica*'s location within the City's premier gardens surrounded by a dense urban skyline provokes conversations about our natural and built environment and provides a unique opportunity to profile sustainability.

Taking a light touch approach to its impact on the gardens, Brisbane City Council and MoB intend to develop *Botanica* into the most sustainable outdoor art event in Australia.

Materials and processes that are environmentally friendly, aware and sustainable are strongly encouraged. Artworks, ideally light weight and low impact, are required to be sensitive and suitable to an ageing and fragile natural environment. *Botanica* seeks artworks that are easily transported, installed and removed, and can withstand environmental exposure for the duration of the event.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Botanica is a night-time event, therefore artworks need to be aligned to a night-time delivery.
- Outdoor artwork activations within a large area must consider scale and participatory outcomes aligned to artworks are encouraged.
- Botanica is a multi-generational event, with attendees from young children to the elderly, therefore it is encouraged to present artworks that are accessible and able to engage a diverse audience.
- We strongly encourage applications from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), LGBTQIA+, disabled, emerging and local creatives and/or groups.

Keemon Williams, Ultra-Native Beast Sentinel (2023). Image credit Bec Taylor





# PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project will be delivered in three phases:

1. Expression of Interest (EOI)
2. Concept Design (detailed concepts, artist statements, images of proposed concept in-situ, detailed budget, installation methodology, timeline).
3. Commissioning (detailed design, fabrication, installation, event).

Process notes:

- Inclusion in the program is a competitive process, whereby artists, designers and architects are invited to submit an EOI.
- MoB will review the EOIs in consultation with Brisbane City Council and external stakeholders via a Curatorium.
- Shortlisted artists will be invited to proceed to a Concept Design stage and enter into the Concept Design contract. The fee for the Concept Design phase is a flat rate of \$500 + GST.
- The Concept Design submissions will be reviewed by a selection panel and considered in the context of the broader program.
- Selection and approval from MoB is required to progress to the commissioning phase.
- The fee for the commissioning phase is per the approved budget presented in the Concept Design phase.

Botanica: Contemporary Art Outside workshop, 2022. Photo Dave Kan





# PROJECT FEES

PHASE	DETAILS	FEES
Phase 1	Expression of Interest	N/A
Phase 2	Concept Design	AUD\$500 + GST
Phase 3	Commissioning	AUD\$5,000 - \$40,000 + GST per artist per site, subject to an approved Concept Design and the terms of the <i>Botanica</i> Commissioning Agreement

Noa Haim and Adriaan de Man, Light Lilies (2023). Image credit Bec Taylor





# KEY DATES

## EOI PHASE

EOI submissions open	Tuesday 22 August 2023
EOI submissions close	Monday 18 September by 5pm
EOI outcomes advised by	Friday 22 September 2023

## CONCEPT DESIGN PHASE

Botanic Garden artist site visit	Tuesday 26 September 2023
Concept design phase	26 September - 16 October 2023
Concept designs due	Monday 16 October by 5pm
Concept design outcomes advised by	Friday 27 October 2023

## COMMISSIONING AND EVENT PHASE

Commissioning phase	November 2023 - May 2024
Installation	May 2024 (dates TBC)
Event	May 2024 (dates TBC)
De-installation	May 2024 (dates TBC)

Christian Reitano, Lyn Nagayama, Shelby Lee, Where Are We Going (2023). Image credit Bec Taylor





# SITE SELECTION

*Botanica* will take place within the perimeter of the City Botanic Gardens, with the main activation shown in the picture adjacent.

As part of the EOI, artists are recommended to nominate a preferred location or type of landscape setting for their artwork.

Final artwork locations will be determined in consultation with the Gardens' team and *Botanica* staff. Every effort will be made to accommodate the successful artists' first preference, however all concepts are subject to Heritage and Gardens approvals.

The final locations will also be determined within the context of audience flow and access as well as to ensure a dedicated space for each artwork.

If you are unsuccessful in securing your preferred site, we will discuss other site opportunities with you to find a suitable alternative.

Site suggestions:

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Main concourse platform     | 11. Alice Street forest       |
| 2. Weeping Fig Boardwalk       | 12. Upper lagoon              |
| 3. Formal flower garden        | 13. Path next to upper lagoon |
| 4. Bottle Trees                | 14. Lower lagoon              |
| 5. Heritage Fig Tree           |                               |
| 6. Camelia Garden armature     |                               |
| 7. Second formal flower garden |                               |
| 8. Bamboo grove                |                               |
| 9. Death Valley                |                               |
| 10. Soundshell Hill            |                               |

Images of these locations can also be found [HERE](#).





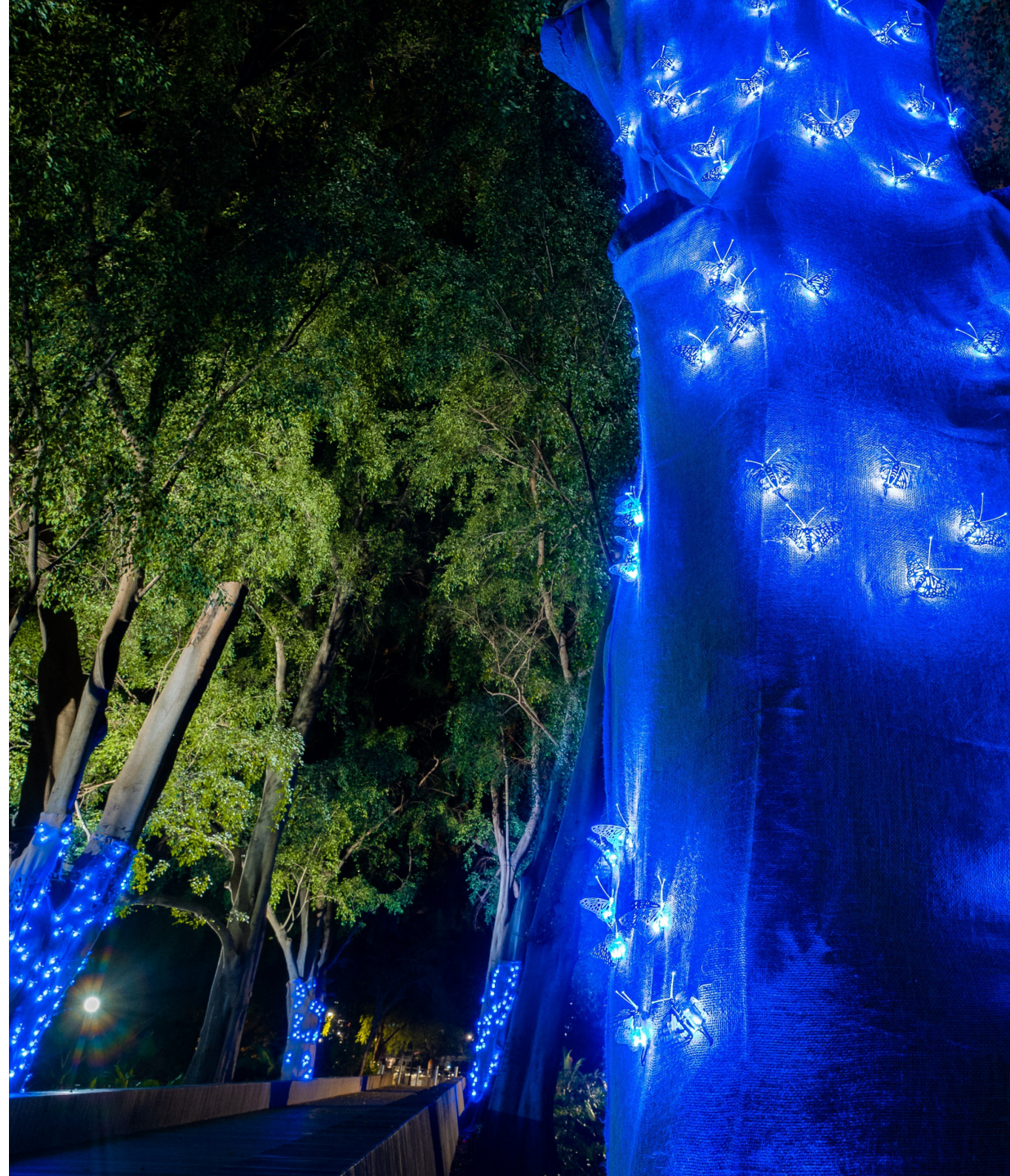
# SITE BACKGROUND

The City Botanic Gardens was added to the Queensland Heritage Register on 3 February 1997. It remains the premier public park and recreational facility for the capital of Queensland; a role it has performed since the early 1840's.

- The City Botanic Gardens is a heritage listed botanic garden located on Gardens Point in Brisbane's CBD.
- It is bordered by the Brisbane River, Alice Street, George Street, Parliament House and Queensland University of Technology's Gardens Point Campus.
- The Gardens include Brisbane's most mature Gardens, with many rare botanic species. In particular the Gardens feature a special collection of cycads, palms, figs and bamboo.

Artists selected to continue to the Concept Design phase will be provided with additional documents containing a more comprehensive history and understanding of the cultural significance of the City Botanic Gardens site.

Lyn Haddon, Blue Butterfly Effect (2023). Image credit Bac Taylor.





# SITE CONSIDERATIONS

## Lighting and Electrical

- As *Botanica* is an evening only event, all artworks require a strong evening presence. Lighting of the artwork needs to be considered and included in the overall artwork design and budget.
- *Botanica* is moving towards becoming 100% carbon neutral and asks artists to consider their environmental impact, including electricity supply.
- Artworks with low impact or sustainable energy sources (where possible) will be highly considered.
- Where required, *Botanica* can supply electricity to your proposed site. Wi-Fi is also available in the Gardens.

The Gardens major pathways are well lit at night by security lights to adhere to safety rated standards and these lights cannot be switched off. Evening site visits by the artists will be required to assess the lighting levels in the proposed site. The *Botanica* project team can also provide advice on the best methods to light the proposed artwork.

## Working in Lagoons

- The Lagoons are waist-deep in some areas and can be safely entered with appropriate protective wear (upon WHS and Garden's approval).
- Installation footings can be achieved in both the upper and lower lagoon through sunken weights.
- Artists will be required to consult with Gardens staff and attend a site visit to confirm appropriate placement.
- It remains the artist's responsibility to install the artwork, however it will require supervision from Gardens staff. Care needs to be taken to ensure no harm is caused to wildlife, as there are eels, turtles, lizards, wading birds and fish present in the lagoons.

## Working with Lawns

- Lawn areas may be painted with field marking paint and recovered via mowing.
- Pegging into the lawn is not allowed. Please consider alternative methods of stabilisation e.g. weights/sandbags.
- Objects placed on the grass for the duration of the event may need to be moved daily (where possible) to avoid damage to turf.

## Working with Heritage Trees

- All trees within the Gardens are heritage-listed and many are very old and fragile. Active engagement with trees such as climbing or swinging is not permitted.
- Artworks should be light weight and low impact and should not encourage user interaction, such as providing hanging or climbing opportunities.
- Tree root systems are predominantly located within the first 500mm of soil and thus easily subject to impact damage. Artworks should consider sight-lines to the artwork that does not encourage audiences to go under the trees.
- All artists engaging with trees will be required to consult with Brisbane City Council's approved arborist in the Concept Design and Installation phases. Arborists will advise on approved methods of attachment to trees which support the installation without posing risk to the tree: for example, light weight materials such as Velcro which give way under stress. Arborist fees will need to be considered in the artists' project budget.
- Recycled rubber and hessian may be recommended to provide cushioned support around artwork attachments to prevent stress impact. Some trees are more robust than others and artwork interventions will be assessed case by case.



# SITE CONSIDERATIONS

## Pavements, Steps, Structures

- Heritage stone walls and steps are fragile and must not be penetrated.
- No underground works or removal of pavement will be considered. Therefore, above ground footings are recommended.
- Interventions with existing structures require approval from the Gardens staff and will be considered provided there is no permanent alteration or damage. For example The Gardens Café, Camelia Garden armature, Weeping Fig Boardwalk.
- Interventions with existing public artworks or commemorative structures are not allowed.

## Security

- The Gardens are open 24 hours and have basic security camera surveillance.
- **Botanica will supply limited security staff to provide a basic level of roaming overnight supervision. However, there is no provision for dedicated 24 hour surveillance to any one artwork, so please consider artwork safety and security in the development of the concept.**
- There will be an option to use the site-office for storage, which is a gated area on-site. This is recommended for works that require nightly pack down. If significant pack down is required, the labour fees for this component must be considered in the overall budget.

## Access

- All major pathways within the Gardens will accept road vehicles.
- If an artwork requires transport and installation using vehicles/machinery, vehicles are not to be driven under trees or across lawns.

## Installation

- All care and consideration must be given to the environment into which the artwork is being installed and to the people who will be visiting the artwork.
- Artists will be required to attend an on-site meeting with the Gardens and project staff prior to the commencement of installation.
- A risk management plan will be required, this will be assessed by the technical team prior to installation.
- Botanica will supply a small technical crew to supervise and support during the installation and de-installation period. This equates to one technician for approximately 2 hours of support per site during the installation. However, **the artist is ultimately responsible for the transportation and installation of their own artwork within their budget.**

## Site Assessment & Recovery

- If artworks have the potential to impact the site, artists are required to provide a site recovery plan and specify a cost allowance for site-recovery within their artwork budget, proportionate and relevant to the project.

## Duty of Care and Insurances

- Artworks will be exposed to external conditions and public interaction, therefore artists must exercise a Duty of Care in the design of their works.
- Artists must address the Public Realm considerations outlined in the following pages.
- If selected, artist will be required to maintain the following insurances for the duration of the project: \$20 million Public Liability insurance and \$1 million Professional Indemnity insurance.



# PUBLIC REALM CONSIDERATIONS

Artworks in the public realm are subject to inevitable deterioration and potential interference and interaction. Artworks should be designed, fabricated and installed with consideration to the intended method and level of public interaction or engagement, and the costs to maintain the integrity of the artwork for the agreed expected lifespan.

As part of a safety in design approach, consideration should be given to risk identification and assessment throughout the design, fabrication and installation/maintenance phases.

The 'safety in design' approach is outlined in the Safe Design of Structures – Code of Practice 2013 available on the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland website. The design is also recommended to comply with all appropriate Australian Standards, such as Australian Playground and Safety Standards, to ensure safety in public spaces.

Phoebe Paradise, Foundations (2023). Image credit Bec Taylor





# PUBLIC REALM CONSIDERATIONS

Previous iterations of *Botanica* have attracted large crowds. The volume of pedestrian traffic and potential engagement with each artwork is a significant factor in the design and placement of artworks for this event.

When creating artwork in the public realm the artist needs to consider safety, durability, scale, structural robustness and vandalism matters as follows:

- Ensuring safety for the public (all age groups) in all weather conditions
- Artwork contains no protrusions which may cause injury if accidentally collided with
- Artwork avoids entrapment of any part of a person
- Artwork has the ability to resist the rigours of weather, both structurally and in terms of appearance and be fabricated using quality materials and in a professional and artisan like manner
- Artwork is resistant to vandalism, both in terms of materials and design

- Artwork is low maintenance and has a minimum design life of 10 days
- Artwork does not overtly create disturbance to the natural wildlife
- Artwork does not create a confined space
- Artwork is structurally sound to perform its intended use
- Artwork does not encourage climbing

*Botanica* will provide one artwork invigilator per artwork for the duration of the event. This invigilator will assist in providing information to the public on how to engage with the work (i.e. instructing audiences not to climb, or encouraging audiences to touch or listen if that is the artist's intention or to assist patrons if there is a digital component etc).

To ensure patron safety and the longevity of the artwork itself, the artists should consider any additional measures such as signage or additional supervision as required, as well as overall design and placement.

Mel Robson and Ellis Hutch, Flow States (2023). Image credit Bec Taylor





# SELECTION CRITERIA - EOI

The following conceptual and technical criteria will be used to evaluate the EOI submissions:

## RESPONSE TO ARTIST BRIEF (75%)

- Response to curatorial framework and principles
- Response to site and context
- Sustainability

## EXPERIENCE IN DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY OUTCOMES IN THE PUBLIC REALM (25%)

### RATING SCALE

- 5 Excellent
- 4 Very Good
- 3 Good
- 2 Acceptable
- 1 Unacceptable

Slow Art Collective, Slow Botanica Pavilion (2023). Image credit Bec Taylor





# COMMUNICATIONS

## COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION

Artists will be engaged by MoB and the point of contacts will be:

**Lucy Quinn**  
Curator

**Tamara Hembury**  
Producer

Email: [botanica@museumofbrisbane.com.au](mailto:botanica@museumofbrisbane.com.au)

Produced by



Brisbane City Council acknowledges this Country and its Traditional Custodians. We acknowledge and respect the spiritual relationship between Traditional Custodians and this Country, which has inspired language, songs, dances, lore and dreaming stories over many thousands of years. We pay our respects to the Elders, those who have passed into the dreaming; those here today; those of tomorrow.

May we continue to peacefully walk together in gratitude, respect and kindness in caring for this Country and one another.

Soma Lumia, Vestigia Arborum (2023). Image credit Bec Taylor

