

OSK PROPERTY ENRICHES ICONIC SOUTHBANK PRECINCT WITH PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION BY TROY EMERY

APRIL 2024

OSK Property, the team behind the \$2.8 billion Melbourne Square development, is set to establish a new cultural icon with a major new public art installation by esteemed Melbourne artist Troy Emery.

In collaboration with consultancy firm Urban Art Projects (UAP), OSK Property conducted a contest to produce a large-scale installation for Melbourne Square's public-facing Art Wall. Highly visible from the adjacent Westgate Freeway and Southbank surrounds, the vivid artwork was designed in accordance with UAP's artistic vision of 'Together, in Nature'.

UAP engaged eight talented local artists to present concepts for the artwork, briefing them to create a piece that inspires connection to community and the natural environment, informed by the site's rich architectural and historical contexts.

This is underscored by Melbourne Square's proximity to the city's infamous Arts Precinct, sitting alongside cultural institutions like the National Gallery of Victoria, Buxton Contemporary and Victorian College of the Arts.

OSK Property's CEO Chong Boon Woon says the work will "[create] a visual link forward between the project and the neighbouring arts precinct".

Three materially diverse and culturally attuned works were shortlisted for OSK Property's review, with Troy Emery's bold 'Guardian Lion' installation ultimately selected for the project.

'Guardian Lion' is a laser-cut aluminium wildcat, stretching a grand 15.4m x 18.7m. Composed of ten brightly coloured panels, the cat stands poised to "protect" its community, while greeting guests "like a friendly neighbourhood cat".

Troy Emery is a Melbourne-based contemporary artist, renowned for his evocative patterned textile works, and wildcat motif- his 'Guardian Lion' the grandest of all. Emery's work has been exhibited domestically and internationally, finding success in subverting the traditions of figurative sculpture.

Emery drew inspiration from the watchful spirit of traditional Chinese and Japanese lion-dogs, as well as the 'Grampians big cat' of Victorian folklore, allegorically representing nature as "mysterious and exciting".

The work injects lurid colour and character into Melbourne, utilising the Art Wall's grand scale to draw visual attention from afar. Each panel of the cat's geometric ripple is lined with LED lights, illuminating the work for visibility at any time of day.

Emery's work was selected by OSK Property for its dynamic interplay with the site and its surrounds. "The intense spectrum of colour in the work [is] an antidote to the greys and browns of the cityscape", Emery says, while offering "animal companionship" to its viewers.

Emery's astute commission promises to deliver warmth and cultural vibrancy to the dynamic Melbourne Square development, solidifying its status as a landmark of Melbourne's arts scene.

"We are immensely proud to enrich the cityscape with this public art installation and hope it becomes a beloved landmark and source of joy for the residents, community and visitors alike", Chong Boon said.

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OSK Property is set to unveil Emery's 'Guardian Lion' on 11 April 2024, in attendance by Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece.