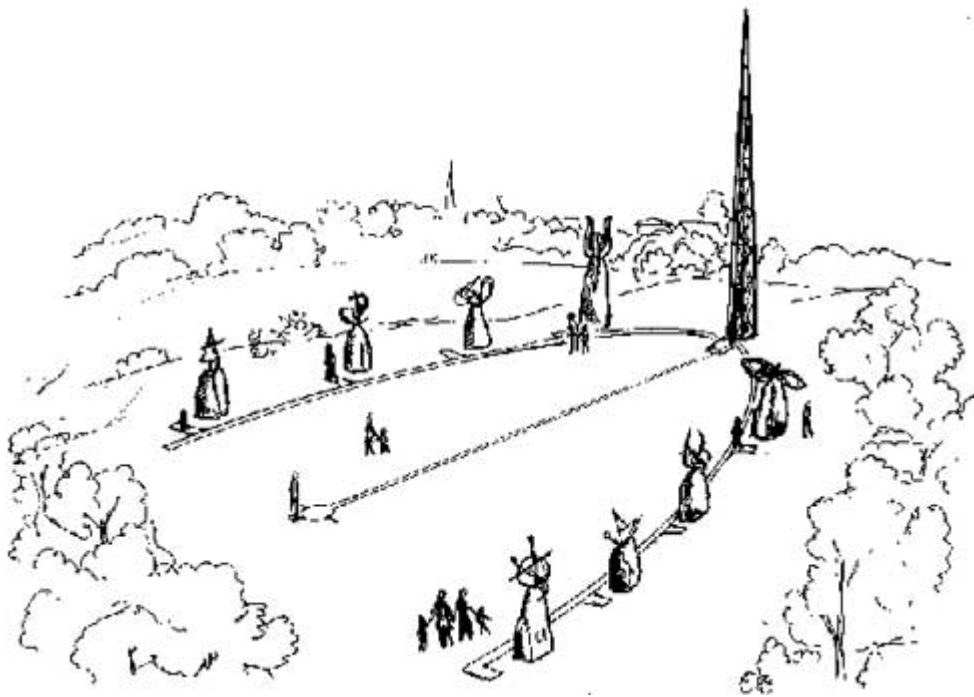


Expression Of Interest

Constellations of the South Sculptures

Expression Of Interest (EOI) for the 'Constellations of the South' sculpture project



Project title: Expression of Interest (EIO) for the 'Constellations of the South' sculpture project

Location: The Glen, Uralla, NSW

Closing date: 5PM (AEST), Monday 04-04-2022

Submit EOIs to: council@uralla.nsw.gov.au



Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 The Glen upgrade overview	3
2.1 Constellation of the South art project	4
Background	4
Next steps	7
2.2 The two existing sculptures	7
The Constellation of Carina - Carl Merten	7
The Constellation of the Southern Cross - Joan Relke	8
3.0 Art Brief	10
3.1 Process and timeline	10
3.3 Materials	13
3.4 Contracts	13
4.0 Attachments.....	13

1.0 Introduction

Uralla Shire Council is calling for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from sculptors and artists to develop one of the six sculptures as part of the 'Constellations of the South' project at The Glen in Uralla. This project is one part of a broader park upgrade at the Glen and is funded by a grant from the NSW Government's Public Spaces Legacy Program.

The Constellations of the South is an art project initiated by local artists Carl Merten and Joan Relke, the Uralla Arts Council, and the Phoenix Foundry. The project consists of eight sculptures, of which two have already been completed.

The key objective for the Constellations of the South is to create a "unique and inspired blending of astronomy, sculpture and history both as a community asset and attraction to visitors, to be enjoyed for generations." (Carl Merten, 2021)

Uralla Shire Council invites public artists from across Australia to submit a Proposal for the Constellations of the South sculpture project (the Project) in Uralla, in accordance with the Brief outlined in this document. The sculptures are to be an aesthetic, well made work that represents one of the circumpolar constellations visible in Uralla's night sky. The sculptures are to maintain the integrity of the finished installation and are required to be suitable for an outdoor public environment.

Artists' submissions will be evaluated by a jury panel consisting of a combination of experienced sculptors and Council staff.

Artists will be selected based on consistency with the objectives of the Constellations of the South, professional experience, and their ability to complete the commission within the available timeframe and budget.

The Project is being managed by Civile on behalf of Uralla Shire Council.

2.0 The Glen upgrade overview

Uralla Council has been successful in receiving approximately \$2M in funding from the NSW Government's Public Spaces Legacy Program for upgrading Pioneer Park, Rotary Park and The Glen. The Glen, one of the three parks, contains the Constellations of the South sculptures by local artists Joan Relke and Carl Merten.

The Constellations of the South sculpture project consists of eight sculptures with interpretations of the constellations, and two sculptures have been installed to date. A key component of the upgrades to the Glen includes the completion of the remaining six Constellations of the South sculptures.

The Concept Design Report of the project is attachment to this document and provides more detail on the site context and the proposed upgrades to The Glen.



Figure 1. Satellite photo of the site location (The Glen)

2.1 Constellation of the South art project

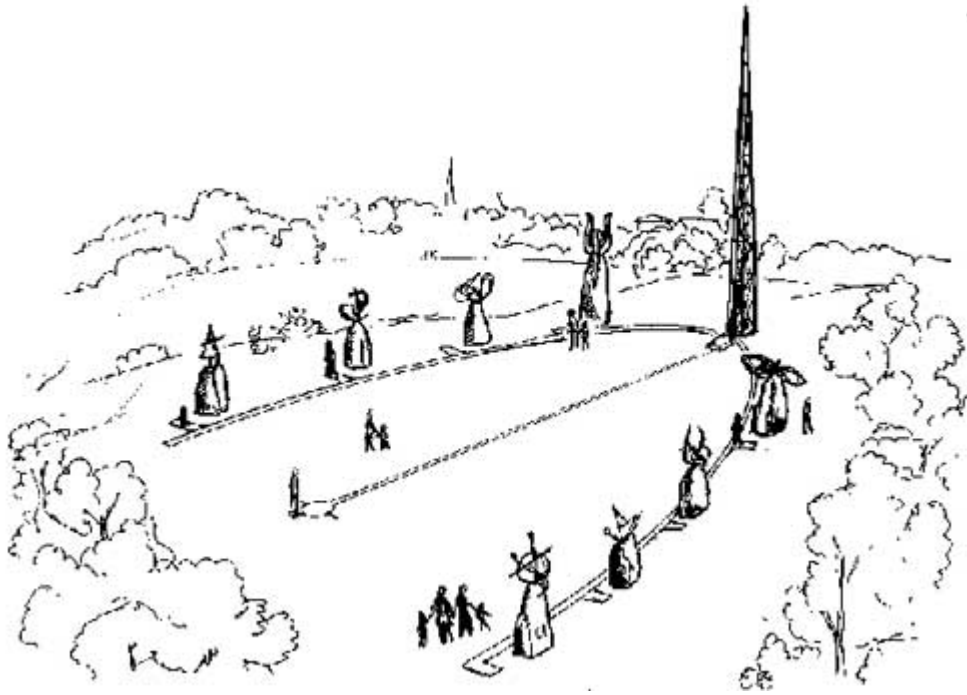
This information is a summary of information provided by Carl Merten, the instigator of the art project. More information is available at the following link and it is strongly recommended to review this website before submitting an EOI:

<https://sculptors.net.au/sculptors/Constellations%20of%20the%20South/index.htm>

Background

The Constellations of the South was launched approximately twenty years ago after receiving a grant from the Third City of the Arts and the generosity of volunteers, which resulted in the first two of eight sculptures being erected at The Glen.

The project will incorporate an obelisk in stainless steel, sited to the axis of the Southern Constellations at the Summer Solstice. Arranged in a parabolic arc, with the obelisk at the centre, will be 8 granite boulders, each positioned to locate selected constellations in the southern sky.

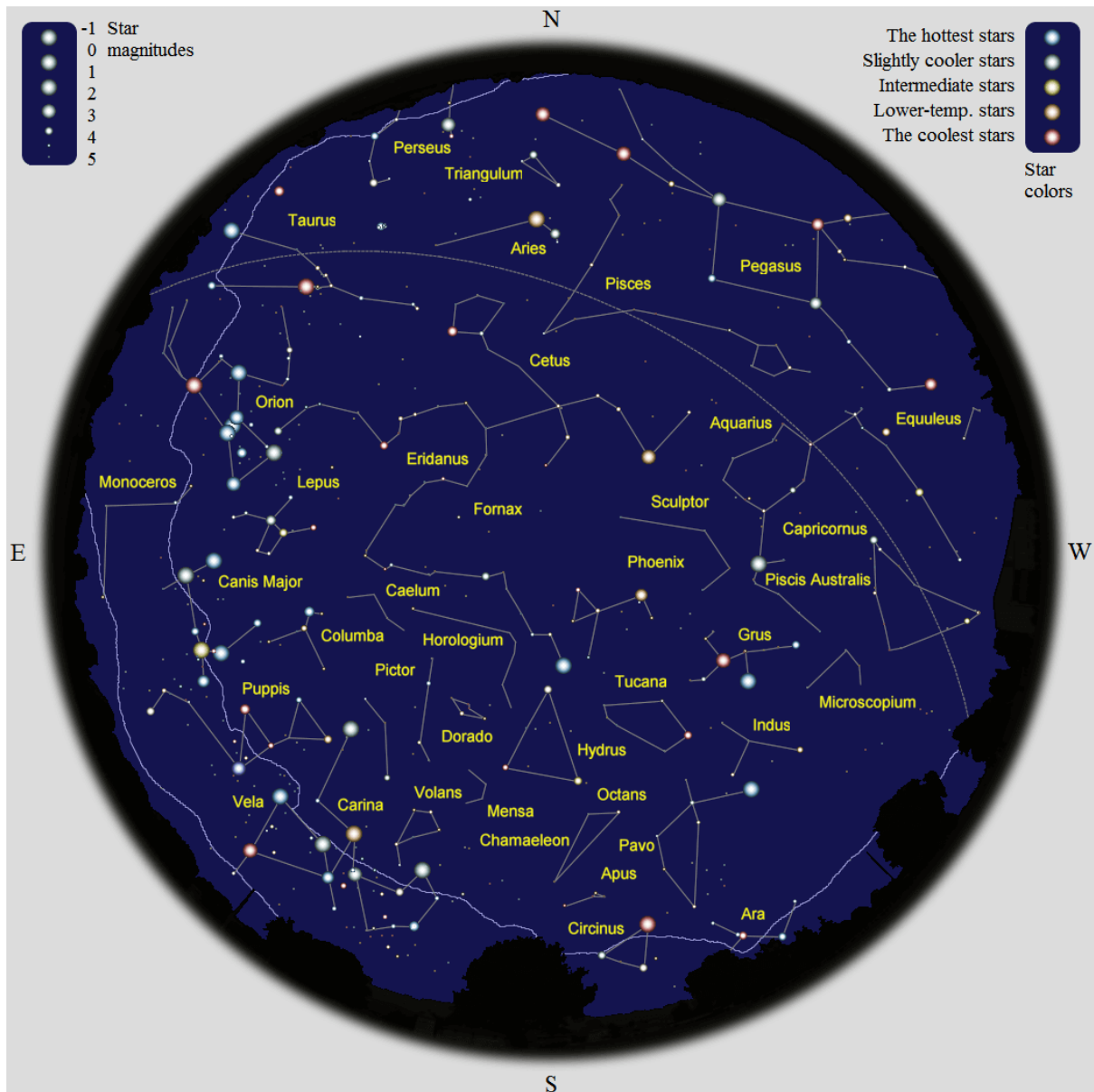


Each of the eight sculptures is to represent a constellation of the Southern Circumpolar Constellations (or similar indigenous astronomical element). These constellations can only be seen from the southern hemisphere and circumnavigate the South Celestial Pole. They remain above the Earth's horizon.

In the European tradition there are a large number of classical European constellations which make up the Constellations of the South. Further information can be found at the following website on the various constellations which make up the Constellations of the South in the European tradition:

<https://www.constellation-guide.com/constellation-map/southern-constellations/>

A star map of the southern constellations is also included below.



Southern Constellations Star Map (from http://www.nightskyinfo.com/maps_images/html/sky_map_south.htm)

Alternatively, the sculptures can represent an indigenous story of the southern sky. Amongst First Nation culture's astronomical traditions varied across the country, especially between different language groups and there are significant differences with the European traditions of the constellations. Further information on indigenous astronomy can be found at the following links

<https://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2009/07/27/2632463.htm>

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/scienceworks/visiting/melbourne-planetarium/fact-sheets/first-peoples-of-australia-astronomy/>

As part of the EOI sculptors are to choose a constellation or a traditional indigenous part of the night sky as inspiration for their sculpture.

If the chosen constellation could be viewed at certain times within or visually relating to the sculpture that would be considered an advantage. Examples of how this has been achieved with the existing sculptors is further outlined below and on the Constellations of the South project website.

The idea as expressed by Carl Merten is for the project to be a ‘world first’, with “*all the potential of becoming a Southern version of a contemporary Stonehenge or similarly famous Northern hemisphere icons. During the night, each chosen constellation is seen within or indicated by a sculpture. By day the site provides a special place and space for concerts, performance and theatre.*”

Next steps

Markers and large boulders have been placed at the locations of where the sculptures should be erected. The first step in completing the Constellations of the South project is to erect the boulders in the identified locations and this is currently being undertaken.

This EOI invites sculptors to submit a proposal to develop the one or more of the remaining six sculptures to complete the Constellations of the South. Based on this EOI, artists will be selected to prepare one or more sculptures for the project.

2.2 The two existing sculptures

To date, two sculptures have been erected at The Glen and the following section provides an overview of the existing two sculptures developed by sculptors Carl Merten and Joan Relke. The following text is based on descriptions of the works from the artists.

The Constellation of Carina - Carl Merten

Carina, graced by the presence of the brilliant Canopus, is the main part of the former constellation representing the Argo. Carina is crossed by the Milky Way, and the star Canopus stands out: it is a supergiant, and its spectral class indicates that it should be yellowish, though most people will certainly call it white. Canopus is the furthest star to the right in Carina.

The Ancient Greeks saw Carina as the keel of the Argo, the ship which took Jason and the Argonauts to Colchis in search of the Golden Fleece. At the time of the Ancient Greek civilisation, c500 BCE, the constellation of the Argo sat on the southern horizon as a ship would sit on the sea. Because of the precession of the equinoxes, today this constellation can no longer be seen from the northern hemisphere, and is now one of the southern circumpolar constellations, seen only from the southern hemisphere.

Artist’s statement

As you pause to look up at this sculpture, you have also entered into a visual dialogue with the absent artist ... something is communicated about the purpose, motivations, aesthetics and creative energy used to express a personal, yet shared vision.

In making this work, I’ve drawn on astronomy, myths, mathematics, and music.

The initial concept was sparked during lunch with Charles Rudd at the Coachwood and Cedar hotel, Uralla, NSW, reflecting our shared interest and experience of astronomy.

The mythic tale of the Ship Argo features strongly in our Southern night sky. Carina is the main section of the now-dismembered constellation Argo, appealing to my interest in boats and sailing. The other mythic element is contained in the form, reflecting the first Australians’ perception of the Milky Way as a cosmic serpent.

Mathematically, we try to unlock the mystery of existence. Measuring vast distances by the speed of light, using the brilliant Canopus to guide our space probes and satellites, we listen to the music of the stars, the hum of the universe, and wonder if we are alone.

This sculpture is created to exercise our awareness. From the Earth underfoot we lift our eyes, our minds, and our souls to contemplate our place in this tiny speck of matter set in the brilliant vista of stars in our galaxy, itself only a fraction of the infinite continuity of deep space.



Figure 2. The constellation of Carina sculpture (photo by Carl Merten)

The Constellation of the Southern Cross - Joan Relke

The Southern Cross (Crux) is the best known and most represented star group in the Southern Hemisphere. The group's distinctive shape is easily located because of its brightness and close proximity to each other. It can be seen all year round from almost anywhere in Australia. As a southern circumpolar constellation, it is not visible in the northern hemisphere.

The Southern Cross contains four bright stars so situated that they depict the extremities of a Latin cross. Thousands of years ago these four stars were an object of reverence in the Near East. In the Biblical days they were just visible at the horizon. But despite its visibility to the ancient civilisations of the northern hemisphere, no Greek or Roman myths or legends are associated with it. Today it is no longer visible at latitudes north of 25 degrees.

The constellation was again discovered in the early sixteenth century by European navigators and explorers who used it to steer by and also to calculate the time of day. Australian Aborigines have many stories to tell using the stars of the Southern Cross, and those from Central Australia see it not as a cross, but as an eagle's footprint. Had the Christian Cross not been associated with it, we might see it today as a kite, flying through the night sky.

Artist's statement

Central Australian Aborigines saw the footprint of an eagle in the Southern Cross. Thousands of years ago these four stars were an object of reverence in the Near East. In the Biblical days they were just visible at the horizon and were last seen from the latitude of Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. Still today, Christians see their sacred symbol in the shape of this constellation. Now it revolves in the Southern Sky, a circumpolar constellation, barely dipping below the horizon. Visible

even on a moon-lit night, these stars form a provocative pattern. Perhaps it is a cosmic kite, fluttering across the night sky, its tail, the pointer stars, trailing behind.

As a sculptor, using the solid materials of the earth, I created The Spirit of the Southern Cross to bring this constellation closer to us. She reaches up from her earthly home to grasp the rising constellation as it moves along its trajectory through the night sky. As it passes between her hands, she grasps it, momentarily connecting earth and sky - the world of mortals and the heavenly realm. She holds it like a cat's cradle, taut between her hands, before releasing it back to heaven.

Sitting on top of a 4 metre high boulder, the Spirit of the Southern Cross reaches up to catch the cross between her hands as it passes overhead.

The figure is 3 metres from the tip of her long hair to the tip of her fingers and is made of cast aluminium, which can be seen at night and also by day from the passing highway. The ideal time to see the Southern Cross held in her hands is midnight on the autumnal equinox.



Figure 3. The Southern Cross Sculpture

3.0 Art Brief

3.1 Process and timeline

Submission of EOI

EOIs for the Project should be submitted via email to council@uralla.nsw.gov.au by 5PM (AEST), Monday 04-04-2022. Files larger than 15mb should be sent via WeTransfer, Google Drive, or similar.

The artist's submissions should include:

1. preliminary idea(s) / vision
2. proposed approach to realisation of the sculpture
3. portfolio of relevant previous work
4. Fee proposal

Artists and sculptors are strongly encouraged to address the selection criteria in their EOI submission. The selection criteria for the EOI phase include:

1. Preliminary ideas

Provide a preliminary idea and vision statement for the sculpture, including an outline of how the idea is consistent with the themes of the Constellations of the South. The preliminary idea should preferably include a response to the site's context.

The preliminary ideas could be expressed through

- sketches
- physical model (including photos of a physical model)
- 3D computer visualisation or similar
- in written form or
- by any other means suitable to communicate the sculpture

It is preferred that preliminary ideas are expressed in a combination of visual format and written format to communicate the idea.

The written format should include a statement including the constellation, themes expressed, materials and its relationship to the Constellations of the South project.

2. Approach and methodology

Submissions are to include a description of the proposed working methodology and approach for creating the sculpture.

Submissions which incorporate a methodology which includes the local community will be well received. Uralla has a vibrant and welcoming arts community (including Uralla Arts) and community engagement in the development of the sculptures will be well regarded. Potential community engagement may include talks, presentations to schools and the public, and working with local businesses.

3. Experience / portfolio

Provide an overview of previous work to demonstrate experience and capability.

4. Cost/fee

Provide a preliminary cost estimate of the realisation of the sculpture, including fees, fabrication, and installation.

Selection of artists

A panel will review and assess all submission and select artists based on the selection criteria outlined in this document. The panel will consist of members from Uralla Arts, Council and others as appropriate.

Six large granite boulders will be installed on site, which will form the base of the sculptures. Each selected artist will be allocated a granite boulder on which they are to develop their sculpture(s). Artists will be sent photos and dimensions of the boulders.



Figure 4. Photo of the project site (The Glen), facing north



Figure 5. Photo of the project site (The Glen), facing south



Figure 6. Photo of the landscape context – The Glen is characterised by its natural landscape features and vegetation

Concept Design Stage

The selected artists will develop concept designs of their proposed sculpture. During the Concept Design Stage artists will further develop their preliminary ideas in keeping with the project's broader vision and intent (as outlined in section 2).

The concept design stage will include:

- Sketches, clay maquettes, 3D models, or other media to explore and visualise their vision.
- Written artist statement outlining the vision for the sculpture
- Fabrication and installation methodology
- Timing and requirements for completion and installation of the sculpture

Concept Designs should be completed and submitted by 30th of June 2022.

The artists will present the Concept Design to the Panel for discussion and prior to progression to the next stage (Hold Point).

Fabrication

Following the completion of the Concept Design, the artist will proceed to fabricate the sculpture. Where possible, artists are encouraged to work with local businesses and the community. The Phoenix Foundry is in Uralla, and they might be able to assist in fabricating the artworks and the supporting plaques.

Installation

The boulders will be installed by Council. The sculptures will be installed in accordance with the artist's proposed and accepted methodology, as outlined in the Concept Design proposal. The fixture details of the sculptures to the boulders need to be signed off and certified by a structural engineer. Potential structural engineers can be provided to sculptors if required by Cville.

The sculptures of the Constellations of the South project are to be all be completed and installed by 31 December 2022.

3.2 Materials

Robust and durable material suitable for outdoor public art with minimal public surveillance should be used. Materials should generally be in keeping with the existing and future composition of the space, in relation to The Glen and the Constellations of the South.

The two existing sculptures are cast in a non-oxidising aluminium alloy suitable for outdoor sculpture. The sand-cast sections were locally produced by Phoenix Foundry and MIG welded by a local business using similar alloy combustibles shielded with Argon.

It is encouraged to work with local businesses where possible.

3.3 Contracts

Successful submissions will be required to enter into a contract with Uralla Shire Council. The contract will outline the obligations, insurances and resources available.

4.0 Attachments

Refer to attached Concept Design Report for more information on the project.