

PUBLIC COMMISSIONS



Night Companion, Expo Tower 1988.

FINE ART STUDIO

5 BUDD STREET COLLINGWOOD
MELBOURNE VICTORIA 3066 AUSTRALIA
TELEPHONE - +61 (0)402 006 933
EMAIL - robert@fineartstudio.com.au
WEB - www.fineartstudio.com.au



***Vessel*, Exhibition Centre, Tokyo Japan, 1989**

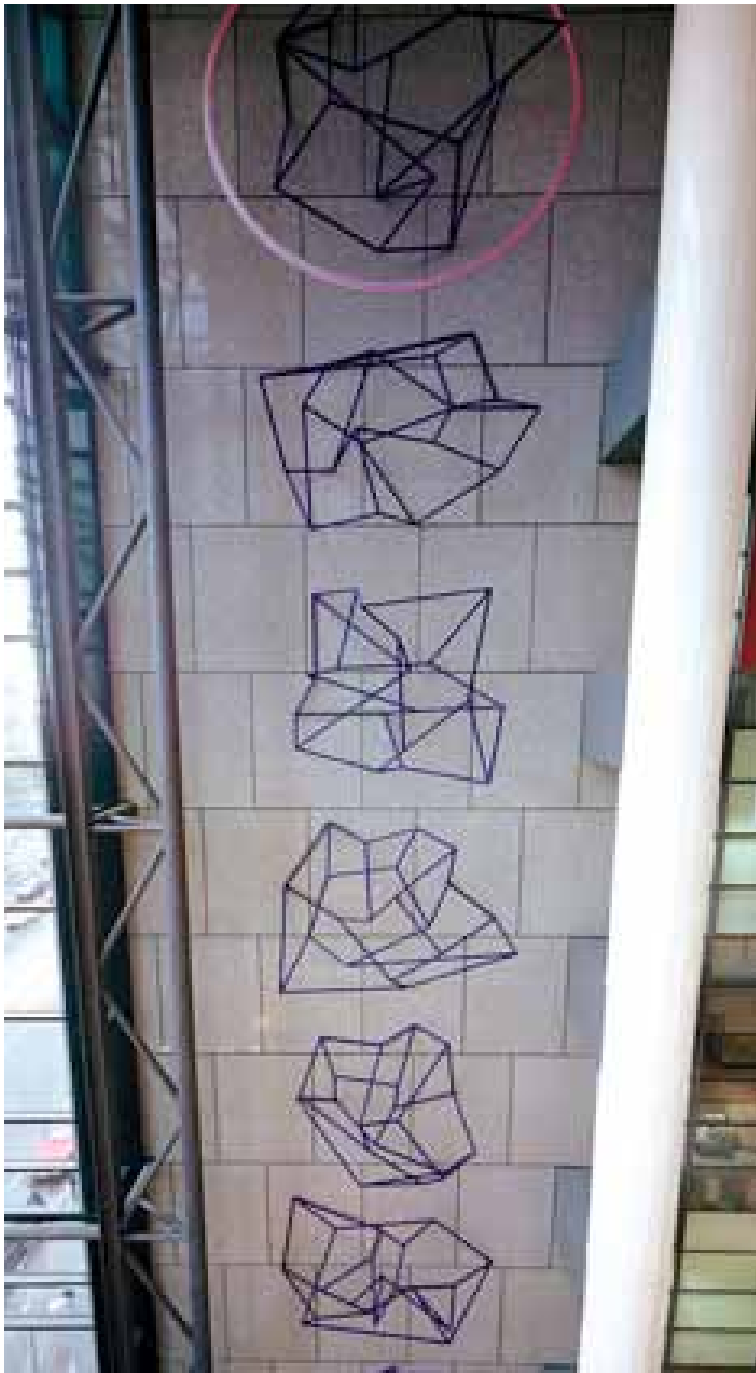
Commissioned in 1988 for architect Fumihiko Maki's New Exhibition Centre in Chiba, Tokyo, the four metre painted steel truncated cube, is an elusive play of perspective geometry and minimalist form. On approaching the sculpture, it appears to change from a cube to a rhomboid. Inspired by Albrecht Durer's 1514 etching, *Melancholia*, *Vessel* is a container of "amusing physics".



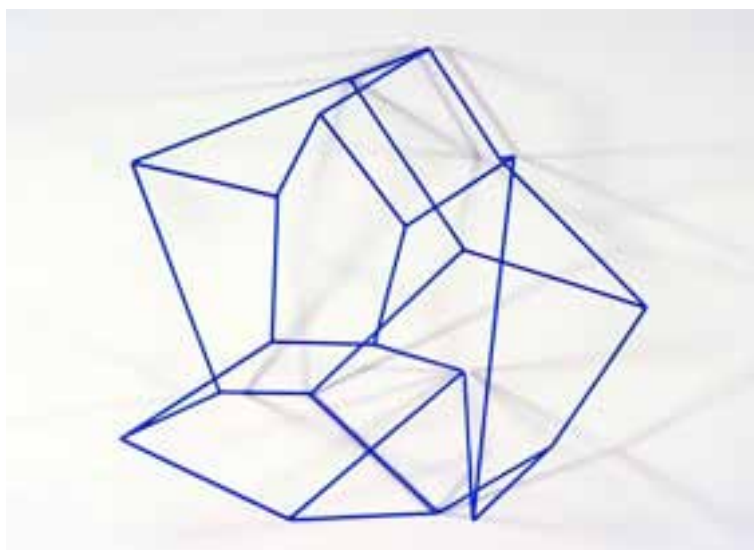
***Axiom*, Commonwealth Law Courts, Melbourne, 1998**

Axiom consists of seven structures, each containing twenty nodes and thirty edges, their shape changing in an ascending order. The top structure is surrounded by a circle of fibre optic light that imperceptibly moves through seven colours of the spectrum.

Commissioned for the atrium of the new Commonwealth Law Courts, Melbourne, Owen explores the symbolism of geometric shapes, numbers and colours in the creation of a metaphor for the meaning and application of the law. The brief required a work that was appropriate to all cultures, hence his use of the universal language of geometry. The word Axiom means “self-evident truth; established principle; maxim; rule; law”. In designing this sculpture, Owen sought to emphasise “clarity and purity of form to provide a visual metaphor for the process of transformation and change that was both transparent and complex”.



Axiom, Commonwealth Law Courts, Melbourne 1999.



Model for *Axiom*, Melbourne 1999.

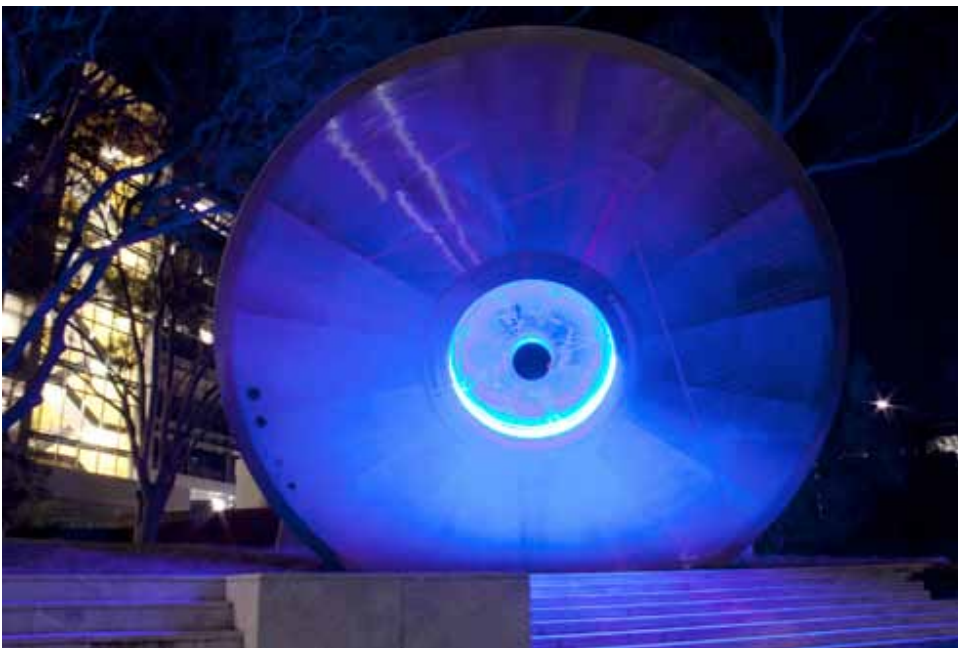


Photography: John Gollings

***Discobolus*, Olympic Park, Homebush Bay, Sydney, 2000**

Robert Owen's winning design for the Hellenic tribute to the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games is a unique sculpture installation celebrating the Greek origins of the Olympic games. Funded by the Hellenic community of Australia, the public art project featured a seven-metre diameter, eight-ton stainless steel and glass sculpture, an olive grove, cypress trees and marble architectural fragments.

Discobolus is based on the original discus thrower, Castor, who has metaphorically thrown the discus from ancient Greece to the 21st Century, to land in Homebush Bay for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. The classical discus has transformed into a giant CD-ROM – a modern symbol of information technology and culture. Etched on one side of the sculpture is the CD label, which tells the story of the artwork in both English and Greek. Olive and cypress trees, symbols of peace and immortality frame Discobolus, and the architectural pieces (a circle of stone, stepped podium and five fluted column fragments depicting the five Olympic rings) recall the original Olympia.



Discobolus - detail night view



Discobolus (detail), Hellenic Tribute - Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, 700 cm diameter.



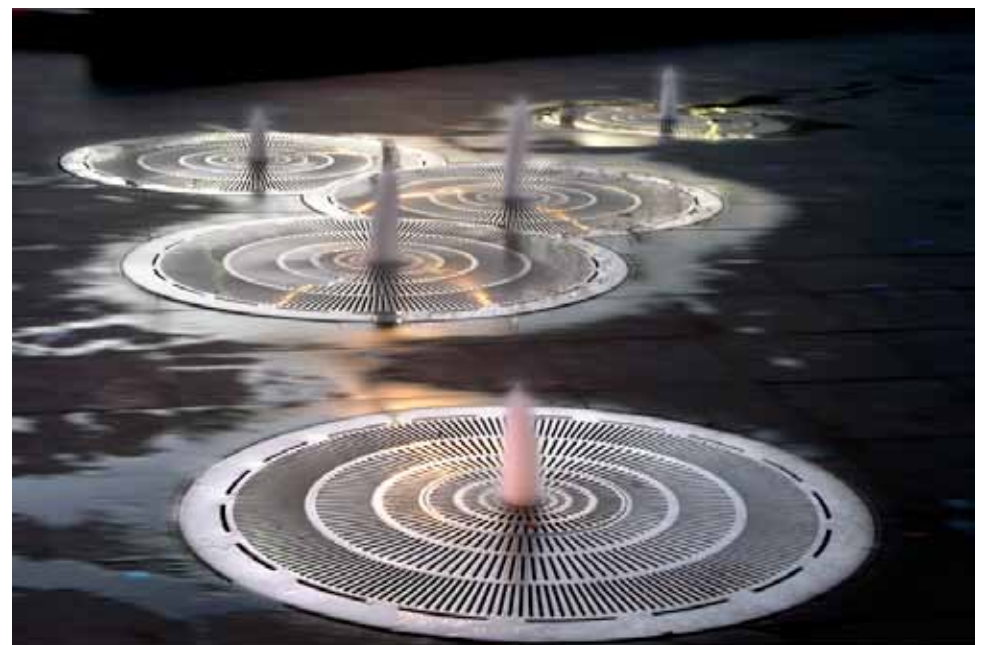


Memory Pond, Grattan Plaza, Prahran, Melbourne, 2002

A project in collaboration with Landscape Architects Taylor Cullity Lethlean, commissioned by Stonnington City Council, Melbourne in 2002. Memory Pond is based on the idea of a sculptural installation that emphasises connectedness to the site through an integration of the individual components into the total landscape design. Memory Pond received the Victoria and Tasmanian AILA Merit Award for 2003.

"I was interested to learn that the general area of Grattan gardens was originally a billabong before European settlement. It was a rich source of food gathering (mussels, fish, eels, duck eggs) and ritual for Victoria's aboriginal peoples. In recent times, a regular market provided a community centre for gathering and exchange and, over the years, the wider area has developed into a lively commercial and cultural precinct. There is a conjunction of the social behaviour of the two food gathering activities, and between the crafts used in pre-settlement, such as fishing scoops made from folding a round mat, and the present day market offering similar indigenous mats and baskets".

Based on water, light and language, the installation acknowledges historical memory and the flow of time. The site is reminiscent of a billabong. The fountains form an association with water lilies drifting on the water's surface and the paving lights indicate the stars that would have once left their reflection there. The patterns of the fountains are derived from basket weaving, the bubbling water flows like a 'well spring' and the five word phrases, placed around the site, offer moments of meditation on place, action and silence.





Webb Bridge, with Denton Corker Marshall, Melbourne Docklands 2003.

Webb Bridge, Docklands, Melbourne, 2003

The winning submission for a new sculptured bridge came from artist, Robert Owen in collaboration with Denton Corker Marshall, architects. The design developed out of a desire for a symbolic and poetic demonstration of reconciliation and indigenous history provided a source of its inspiration.

The bridge is an analogy of Koori fishing traps and the gestural flow of the river below. The decommissioned rail bridge, symbol of European culture, is reconciled with the natural and indigenous past. The resulting structure suggests a new link between the old and new, past and future. A pedestrian/cycle bridge crossing the river Yarra within Melbourne Docklands, the scheme is not only a practical solution to the physical site, conditions and program requirements, but also demonstrates the Docklands Authority commitment to art and innovative architecture in the development of the precinct. As such, the project addresses aesthetic, historical and symbolic issues as integral components of its design. Webb Bridge won the prestigious RAIA Joseph Reed Urban Design Award 2005 and commendation for Urban Design in the National Awards.





Sound wall & 'Snake' Bridge in collaboration with Taylor Cullity Lethlean & Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, 2004.

Melbourne's Northern Gateway **Craigieburn Bypass, Melbourne Victoria, 2005**

The Federal Government as part of its commitment to delivering a new freeway connection to Northern Melbourne, undertook a competition for the design of a gateway element and noise attenuation features. Robert Owen in collaboration with Taylor Cullity Lethlean, Tonkin Zulaikha Greer won this competition in 2003.

The winning design, comprised of walls, bridges and landscape was informed by a poetic reading of the site and a freeway environment largely experienced at speed. In particular the design explores how otherwise static objects begin to exhibit dynamism or are activated by the traveling motorist.

Two wall types, (*a rural and urban experience*) were developed each distinctive and responding to their adjacent condition.

The 'Curtain Wall' (*a snake peeling it's skin*) a long sinuous steel ribbon is fluid in its form, dynamic and experiential. Used robustly, it transforms along its length from a lightweight screen to sculpted landform and ultimately a pedestrian bridge that frames the view to the City of Melbourne.





The 'Scrim Wall' (*vertical venetian blinds and lace curtains*) by contrast is located alongside a residential interface and is composed of patterned acrylic panels and repeated louvers. The material provides a translucency whilst the louvers create a sequence of micro climates to the linear park behind the wall. Each louver is rotated slightly to create a constantly changing driving experience.

At night the Scrim wall is illuminated transforming the intensity of traffic via electrical impulses to become an ephemeral lighting system.

Awarded AILA Excellence in Landscape Architecture and Excellence in Design 2005, and the RAIA Joseph Reed Award for Urban Design 2006.



Curtain light wall in collaboration with Taylor Cullity Lethlean & Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, 2004.





Digital Showers

Triptych

8 - 10 Kavanagh Street South Bank, Melbourne, 2007

RI Investment Trust and Stable Group in collaboration with Geyer Design and Nettleton Tribe architects

Triptych suggests a picture or painting. The building is situated in an arts environment, on a triangular footprint and embodying ecological sustainable design.

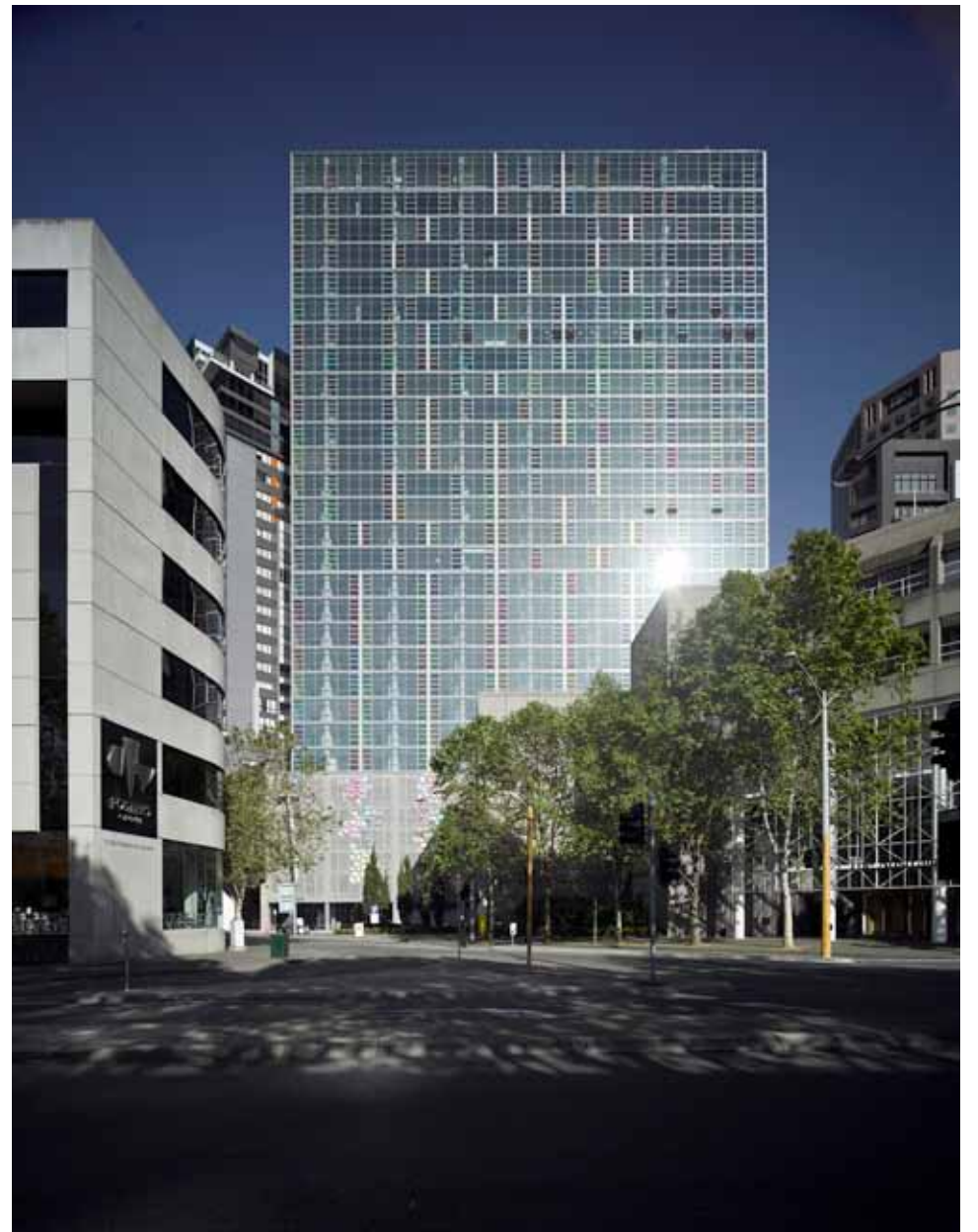
Digital Showers is the name attributed to the artwork integrated into the Triptych Building suggesting through metaphor and allegory the visual outcome of this concept.

A summer shower leaves a trace of spectrum colour on all the windows that open and close on the East and North facade of the building. This summer rain runs down these windows and 'soaks into the earth' represented by the car park cladding. This cladding is a pattern derived from cellulose; a porous carbohydrate forming the cell walls of all plants, through which water and nutrients are transported. The pattern is scaled to different sizes for use in different contexts throughout the building.

Triptych won the UDIA Environmental Excellence Award, 2011 and Best High Rise Development in Victoria.



Digital Showers in collaboration with Nettleton Tribe Architects and Geyer Design, 2010





Digital Showers
is strange Weather.
Imagine
the
Sun
leaving
a
trace
of
colour,
through
its
agent
Raindrop
on
all
the
Windows
that
open
and
close.



Digital Showers in collaboration with Nettleton Tribe Architects and Geyer Design, 2010





Snake in the Grass
Gawler Bypass Arts Project, South Australia, 2011

Gawler Bypass Arts project, Adelaide SA in collaboration with Architects Taylor Cullity Lethlean for Dept. for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, Government of South Australia.



Photography by John Gollings

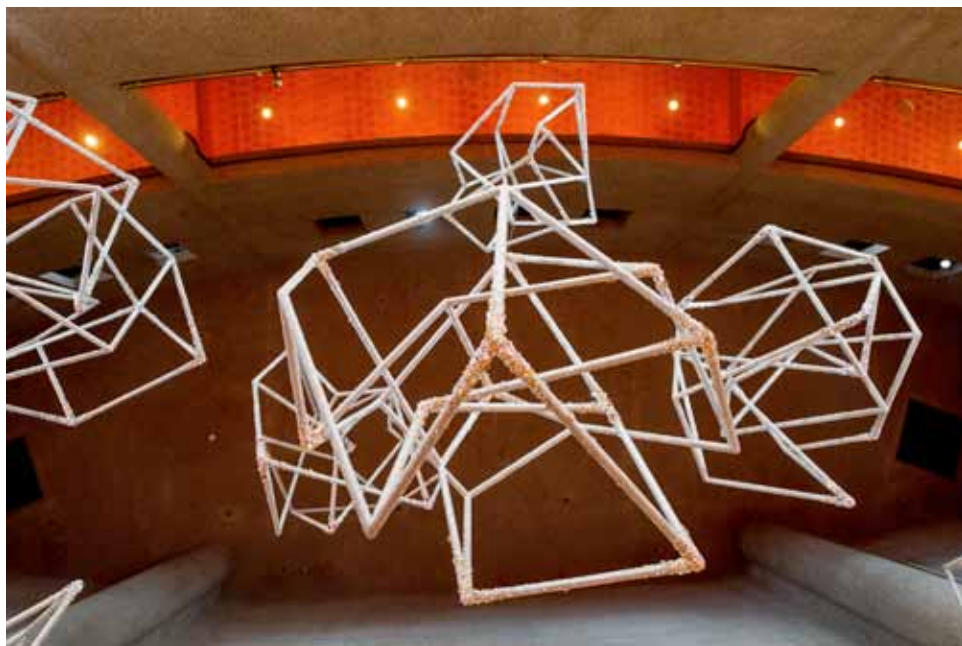


Displacement
Reverse perspective earth work
Gawler Bypass Arts Project, South Australia, 2011

Gawler Bypass Arts project, Adelaide SA in collaboration with Architects Taylor Cullity Lethlean for Dept. for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, Government of South Australia.



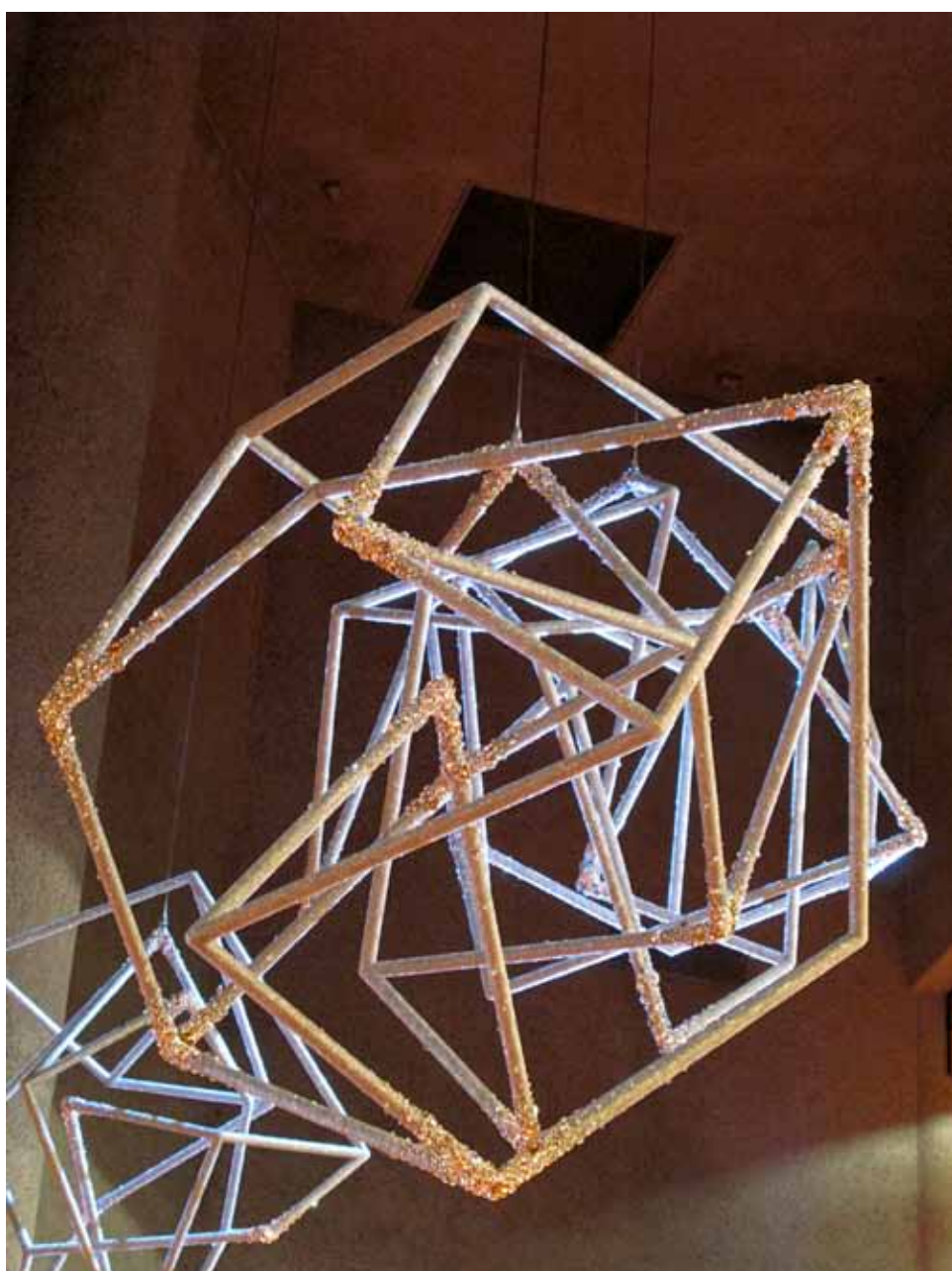
Photography by John Gollings



Silence
Arts Centre Melbourne Hamer Hall, Melbourne, 2012

Seven sculptures, 3770 x 6635 x 3973mm overall
 Stainless steel, Crystal Rock and Elements
 For Arts Centre Melbourne Hamer Hall St Kilda Road foyer

Silence provides another layer of meaning to Roy Grounds' and John Truscott's conceptual exploration of geology as a basis for architecture and design. The glimmer and glitter of crystals that comprise the work are an allusion to the magic of performance, the properties of silver and the mysteries of the earth; the sculptures' subtle movement adding to an amalgamation between the visual and performing arts. *Silence* is sensitive to the nature, function and conceptual design history of Hamer Hall as a space expressing transience and transformation, a subtle interconnectedness of matter and memory.



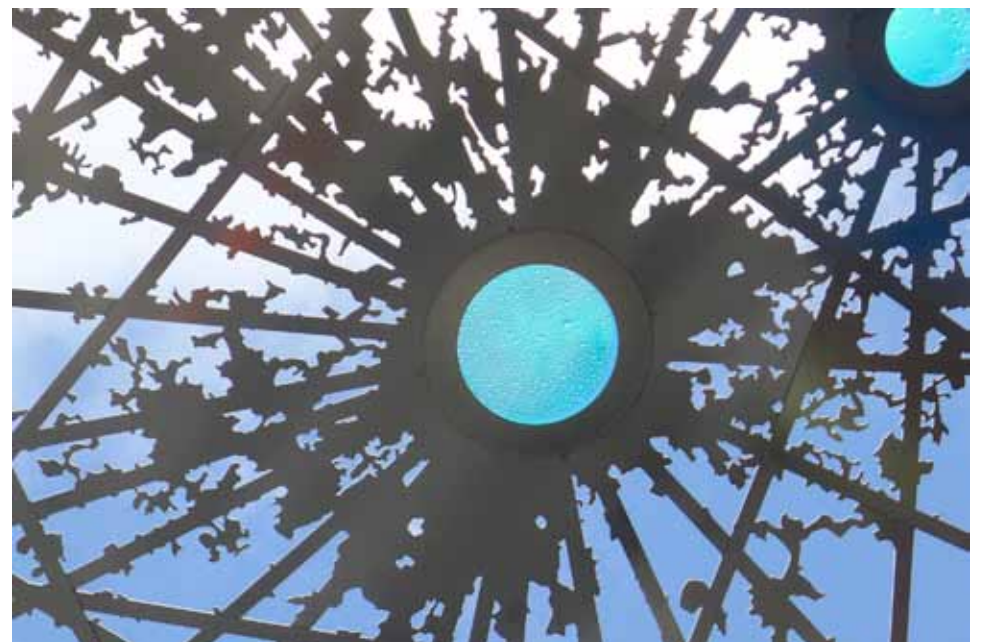
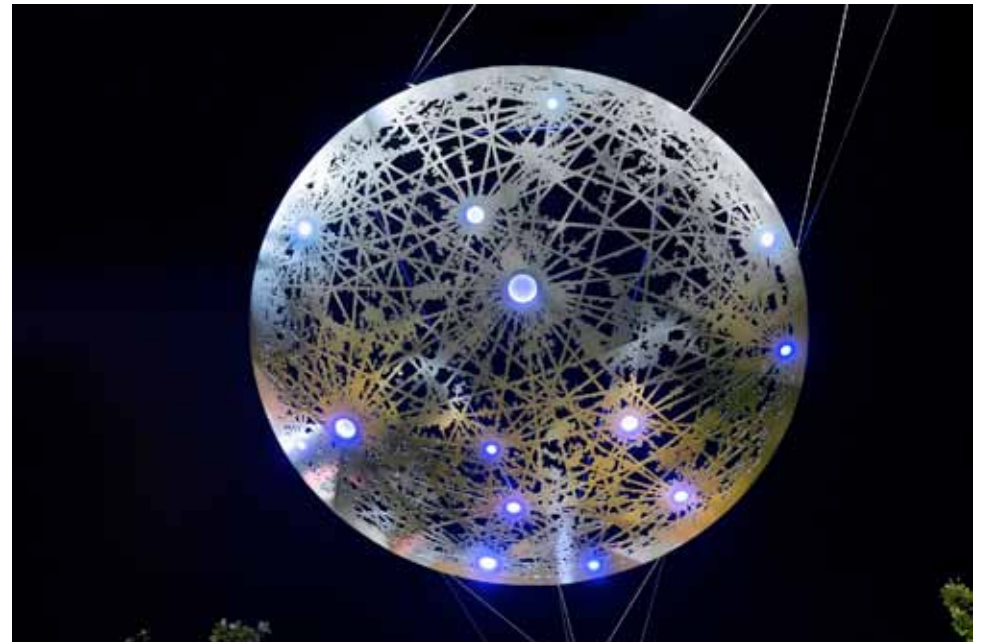
Photography by Peter Casamento



Under the Sun
Point Cook Town Centre, Victoria, 2014

Stainless steel, 6500 x 6500 x 550mm
 In collaboration with Joanna Buckley and Artery Cooperative Artists
 Commissioned by Stockland, Point Cook, Victoria
 Photography by John Gollings

Under the Sun is a relief structure that embodies a symbol of the moon floating over the earth, casting filigreed shadows in the sun. It considers the relationship between these celestial bodies to open a space for moments of perspective and wonder. The symbol of the moon draws a connection to the natural life and tides of the local Bellarine Peninsula Wetlands, and references the feminine in recognition of the important role of women in the Point Cook community.





Beautiful Stranger
Melbourne Festival Art Tram, Victoria, 2017

Beautiful Stranger is a continuation of the celebrated series 'Music for the Eyes', inspired by jazz, movement and light. It pays homage to the history of jazz in Melbourne, and extends art's capacity to translate mood and emotion through colour. *Beautiful Stranger* reflects chance encounters between Melbourne's vibrant multicultural communities that travel the trams everyday.



Photography by James.H.H.Morgan