

Christchurch-Adelaide Sister City Committee
In association with the Art & Industry Biennial Trust

Press Release – November 2002

New Artworks Commemorate Sister City Relationship

A touch of Adelaide comes to Halswell Quarry with two spectacular sculptures inlaid with eucalypt pods and designed by Adelaide artist Karen Genoff.

Entitled *The Spheres*, the sculptures will act as entrance markers to the Christchurch-Adelaide Sister City Garden at the Quarry, signifying the sister city relationship between Christchurch and Adelaide. It is seen as the first stage of a public art exchange between the two cities; it is anticipated that in the future a Christchurch artist will make a public art work for Adelaide.

Karen Genoff's project was chosen from a shortlist of Adelaide artists put forward by Richard Brecknock from Adelaide-based urban art consultancy Brecknock Consulting. The Christchurch-Adelaide Sister City Garden Public Art project at Halswell Quarry was developed and managed by Deborah McCormick, Director of the Art & Industry Biennial Trust and member of the Christchurch-Adelaide Sister City Committee.

Karen Genoff's sculptural entrance markers for the Christchurch - Adelaide Sister City Garden take the form of two bronze spheres, 600 mm in diameter and covered with a pattern incorporating eucalypt pods collected from around the Adelaide Parkland and Linear Park Environs. The markers aim to capture something of the beauty, geometry and symmetry of two particularly striking eucalypts, *Eucalyptus Erythrecorus* and *Eucalyptus Cornuta*. Whilst these eucalypts are not strictly indigenous to Adelaide they are abundantly planted throughout the Parkland Environment, Linear Park and the suburbs around Adelaide where they attract many native birds.

The markers are mounted at viewing height onto plinths made from the local Halswell Quarry stone. The sculptures are designed to be touched and their detail and surface patterning explored.

Speaking from Adelaide, the artist said that the Spheres project was "one of the smallest I have ever worked on but to date represents one of the most challenging because it has meant translating the fragile and ephemeral into bronze. It represents my eighth public commission and my second international commission."

The work draws upon the artist's experience growing up in the Adelaide suburbs with its parks and gardens. As a child Karen Genoff played among the Eucalypts that surrounded the football field at her school.

"The Eurythrocorys we played with, small red falling stars, little treasures to be gathered, wondered at and incorporated into numerous games, and then forgotten," recalls the artist. "The point Eucalyptus caps of the Cornuta served as witches' fingers to taunt and to tease. There was a wealth of learning and engagement to be had beneath the boughs of such trees; the leaves, fruit, flowers and capsules all providing rich material for a child growing up in suburban Adelaide." Genoff also sees the work as marking the entrance to a 'wirra' – the Kurna word for 'bush.' The word connotes the recreation of the original natural environment of a place – as the Adelaide garden can be said to do.

The Kurna people lived on the forest plains where Adelaide now stands.

Genoff's work will be unveiled by Christchurch Mayor Garry Moore and Councillor Bob Angrove from Adelaide City Council on Monday 18th November 2002, 11.00 a.m. at Halswell Quarry.

The Spheres were commissioned by the Christchurch-Adelaide Sister City Committee. The committee acknowledges the major support of Christchurch City Council's Parks and Waterways Unit and the assistance of the Art & Industry Biennial Trust, Arts South Australia and Adelaide City Council.

About the Artist

Karen Genoff lives and works in Adelaide. She graduated with a Bachelor of Education in Fine Art at the University of South Australia in Underdale and works part time as an art teacher. Karen has enjoyed a professional Arts practice for 26 years and has many solo exhibitions and public art projects to her credit. There have been several large public commissions in and around Adelaide and she also represents her country with work near the Australian Embassy in Tokyo.

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