EDUCATION KIT

Section 1: Sculpture by the Sea, a Case Study
Sculpture by the Sea: An Overview

“The idea of Sculpture by the Sea was simple... to stage a large free to the public sculpture exhibition along the spectacular 2km Bondi Coastal walk for the people of Sydney and its visitors to enjoy.”
David Handley, Founding Director

Sculpture by the Sea's mission is to provide a major, free to the public, sculpture exhibition that transforms beautiful and popular coastal locations into temporary, large-scale outdoor exhibition spaces for all to enjoy. The exhibition aims to broaden audience engagement and understanding of sculpture. Sculpture by the Sea continues to grow each year in both scale and diversity, providing more opportunities for a wide range of local, interstate and international artists to showcase their remarkably varied outdoor works.

HISTORY

Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi

In 1995, Sculpture by the Sea's Founding Director, David Handley, was living and working in Prague. During this time, he visited an outdoor sculpture park in Klatovy, Northern Bohemia, and felt inspired to begin something similar in Australia. Upon his return to Sydney in 1996, David took the Bondi to Tamarama coastal walk and noticed a myriad of natural plinths in the landscape. With this inspiring location at hand, and the idea of creating an outdoor, free to the public, visual arts event, Sculpture by the Sea was born!

The first Sculpture by the Sea exhibition was held in May, 1997. Featuring 63 sculptures spread along the Bondi coastal walk, the exhibition was installed, staged and de-installed in one day. This inaugural outdoor event was organised in 10 weeks and produced by a team of volunteers who worked tirelessly alongside David to help realise his dream. Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi now features over 100 sculptures created by local, national and international artists, with an estimated 500,000 people attending each year.

Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe

In 2005, Sculpture by the Sea established its annual sister exhibition at Cottesloe, one of Perth’s most popular beaches. This expansion to Western Australia transformed the stunning beach precinct into a picturesque sculpture park, with 38 outdoor works framing the Indian Ocean and its beautiful back drop of beach sunsets. The annual exhibition has grown in scale and popularity each year, with an ever-expanding showcase of sculptures produced by a broad selection of local, interstate and international leading and emerging artists. This year, 2015 marks the 12th exhibition at Cottesloe Beach as well as celebrating a ten year partnership with Alcoa of Australia supporting our schools education program.

Sculpture by the Sea, Aarhus - Denmark

In June, 2009, the first ever international Sculpture by the Sea exhibition was established as a biennale event in Aarhus, Denmark. The exhibition was instigated after The Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Denmark (Prince Frederick and Princess Mary) visited the Bondi exhibition in 2000 and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The exhibition runs along the city’s coastline, past the Queen’s summer residence and into the forest.
The Selection Process

Each year Sculpture by the Sea receives over 700 submissions for its exhibition in Bondi and Cottesloe. So how does Sculpture by the Sea decide which sculptures will be part of the exhibitions?

APPLICATION CRITERIA

What information must applicants provide in their entry form for Sculpture by the Sea?

Artists can submit details of existing artworks for consideration, however many artists propose ideas for new works for each exhibition. To support these proposals artists may include an artist statement, illustrated designs or sketches, explanations of how the sculpture will be realised along with images of previous works. Artists are required to consider safety, ease of installation and removal, the environment and the ability of their artwork to withstand sun, extreme winds, rain, salt spray and playful children.

CURATORIAL PANEL

Who decides which sculptures are selected for the exhibition?

Every year, Sculpture by the Sea invites a small panel of distinguished guests to judge the artists’ submissions and select the sculptures to be included in the upcoming exhibition. The members of the Curatorial Panel for Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2015 are:

• Prof. Sasha Grishin, Emeritus Professor, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia
• Dr. Michael Hill, Head of Art History and Theory, National Art School, Sydney, Australia
• Dr. Nien Schwarz, Artist & Senior Lecturer, School of Communications and Arts, Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia
• Bruce Slatter, Head of School, School of Design and Art, Curtin University, Perth, Australia

How do the curatorial panel decide on which sculptures to select?

A number of issues are taken into consideration during the selection process and can vary for each submission. Issues can include; the conceptual strength of the piece, an artist's previous experience and proven ability to successfully exhibit in an outdoor setting and the placement of works at different sites along the coastal walk.

FINAL APPROVAL

What happens after the curatorial panel have made their selections?

The applicants are contacted as to whether their submission was successful, usually around 20 percent from the 700 submissions are selected. “Yay, I’m in! Oh no, I have to make it now!” is not an uncommon response. Following this initial selection process, each sculpture must gain approval from the local council as well as meet the requirements regarding public safety and security as specified by Sculpture by the Sea’s Site Manager. Once artists have obtained approval from both Sculpture by the Sea and the Council, they are provided with a formal letter of authorisation to install and exhibit their work.

INVITED ARTISTS

Do all artists who exhibit in Sculpture by the Sea have to apply?

In 2000, Sculpture by the Sea broadened its selection process by inviting leading local, interstate and international artists to exhibit their work. Invited artists have included Sir Anthony Caro OM; Phillip King CBE (England); Fletcher Benton (USA); Kozo Nishino, Keizo Ushio and Haruyuki Uchida (Japan); Steinunn Thorarinssdottir (Iceland); Ron Robertson-Swann OAM; Ken Unsworth AM (Australia); Chen Wenling, Sui Jianguo and Wang Shugang (China). Exhibiting artists may be invited to show their work in another Sculpture by the Sea exhibition, fostering their careers.
Behind the scenes: Producing Sculpture by the Sea

While the artists are busy making their sculptures, the Sculpture by the Sea Team is working hard to make sure that everything is ready for the opening day.

THE TEAM

From the first exhibition, produced by David Handley and a team of dedicated volunteers, the Sculpture by the Sea Team has grown to include thirteen full time-staff and three part-time staff. During exhibition the number of staff more than triples along with the huge team of volunteers who give their time to make the exhibition run smoothly. Sculpture by the Sea INC is responsible for producing the Australian exhibitions while Aarhus, Denmark is produced by Sculpture International.

Sculpture by the Sea’s team includes Exhibition Coordination, Site Management, Education, Design, Sales, Sponsorship, Philanthropy and Finance all under the leadership of David Handley and the Sculpture by the Sea Board Members.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

The year begins with only two months until the first exhibition at Cottesloe so the team hits the ground running. By this time the artists for Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe have been selected and Site Management are busy working on the logistics of transporting and installing the works. The Education team are preparing resources, developing programs and taking school bookings while Design are getting the exhibition catalogue together. In March the Sculpture by the Sea team relocates to Cottesloe, Western Australia for the first exhibition of the year. The call for submissions for Bondi receives a huge response each year. Exhibition Coordination collates the proposals for the selection process, and the Curatorial Panel are brought together to select the works for the exhibition. The artists are then notified if their application has been successful.

In July, Design begins putting the exhibition catalogue together and includes information such as artist information, images of sculptures, dimensions and materials for each work, essays, letters, advertisements and sponsor logos. At this time call for submissions for Cottesloe begins.

Come August, Education are busy confirming the details of the program, contacting artists who will be working with students, and opening school bookings.

In early September, Site Management are coordinating the logistics of all the interstate and international artworks on their way to Sydney. Through our port and roads, they must determine the right sequence of the approximately 110 artworks and the necessary trucks, cranes, excavators, forklifts, and contractors and crew to carry out a successful install. Finance, meanwhile, are managing the accounts.

Image of all the sculptures for this year’s exhibition on display in the Sculpture by the Sea Office. Photo Jacqueline White.

Cottesloe Exhibition, Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2013. Photo Jarrad Seng
Activity Questions

- How is Sculpture by the Sea promoted? Discuss the ways in which people might hear about Sculpture by the Sea? Which would be the most successful and why?
- What type of audience does the exhibition aim to attract? How might this audience differ from those who visit galleries and/or museums? Do audiences need art galleries to view artworks?
- Write a review of this year’s Sculpture by the Sea, exhibition. Compare and contrast your review with that of an art critic. How does the critic influence and inform the opinion of audiences in relation to both the exhibition and individual artworks? How have audience interpretations and responses to artworks caused debates in the art world?
- Read the ‘Behind the Scenes’ information. List who is involved in putting the exhibition together?
- Collaboration is the action of working with someone to produce or create something. Staff at Sculpture by the Sea work very hard to coordinate and put together such a large-scale exhibition. Discuss the importance of collaboration in completing an exhibition like Sculpture by the Sea. What are the advantages and disadvantages of working as a team? How do these factors impact the overall exhibition?
- What is the function of an Exhibition Catalogue?
- What resource encourages children to engage with the exhibition?
- How does the Education Kit effect your understanding and experience of the exhibition and artworks?

Look at page 3
- Download the Sculpture by the Sea application form. Complete the form proposing your artwork for the exhibition.
- What do you think are the most important aspects to consider in creating a work that responds to the Bondi - Tamarama environment?

Look at page 6
- Consider the significance of art awards, prizes and/or commissions to artists’ success in the art world. Do you think that winning a prize at Sculpture by the Sea would affect an artist’s career and/or practice? Do you think the competition for prizes can influence what artists’ create?
- Research artist awards and prizes in exhibitions both nationally and internationally eg. The Turner Prize, The Scarlett Award, The Blake Prize, Western Indigenous Art Awards. Compare and contrast their criteria and the awards.

Then it is October and momentum is gathering. The first trucks pull onto site a bit over a week before we open and it is time for Site Crew to install the exhibition’s site infrastructure and assist artists with installing their sculptures. In one week everything is in place: the sculptures along the coastal walk, our temporary buildings and Sculpture Inside. Once we open Site Crew are responsible for running the site, and Education are working with artists, artist educators and the over 2,400 students who will participate in the Education Program.

Once the exhibition opens, the Sculpture by the Sea team begin to prepare planning for the de-install process. The exhibition receives thousands of people visiting each year, with that number growing to over 500,000 people in recent years. For our Site Managers and Site Crew this means all the hard work starts, again. Everything that came in must go out.
Artist Awards and Prizes

Each year, Sculpture by the Sea generates a range of awards and subsidies to recognise the achievements of a number of exhibiting artists. We also strive to support and provide assistance for our artists, who front many of the costs associated with exhibiting, such as materials and freight. This is all made possible through the generous support of our corporate sponsors and private patrons.

The EY PEOPLE’S CHOICE PRIZE

The EY People’s Choice Prize was $2,500, as voted by visitors of the exhibition.

KIDS’ CHOICE PRIZE

Sculpture by the Sea awarded a $2,000 prize to the sculptures that received the most votes from our youngest art critics.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SCULPTOR SCHOLARSHIP

The winners of the Western Australian Sculptor Scholarship (2015) received $10,000, and an invitation to exhibit in Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi 2015.

Wendi Zhang (China), mi no 5, Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2015. Photo Clyde Yee

Stormie Mills (WA), #thestormiemillsproject, Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2015. Photo Gareth Carr

Kim Perrier (WA), ashes to ashes, Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2015. Photo Jessica Wyld

Norton Flavel (WA), lucky country, Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2015. Photo Gareth Carr