

MEDIA RELEASE, 20 March 2013

Quarter of a million dollar bequest brings the gift of art to Bridgetown, Western Australia



Sydney artist Damien Butler's sculpture 'Kaleidoscope' will be installed near the new library in Bridgetown. Please note this is the artist's impression of the work in situ, professional images will be available after install.

Bridgetown will soon be home to a large scale public artwork titled *Kaleidoscope*, thanks to a \$250,000 bequest from former local Dr Henry Schapper.

Dr Schapper, a renowned academic, author and visionary in agricultural economics, entrusted Artsource to commission a public artwork as a gift for his beloved town.

Following a nationwide open tender process, Artsource commissioned Sydney artist Damien Butler. His striking 3 x 2 metre sculpture *Kaleidoscope* is due to be installed on 4 April on the banks of the Somme Creek near Bridgetown's new library.

"When I first visited Bridgetown, I was taken aback by the beauty of it and I really wanted the artwork to be a vehicle to spark people's curiosity and heighten their sense of place," Butler explained.

"I used a locally sourced Jarrah and stainless steel mirrors to complement the natural surroundings and encourage people of all ages to connect and interact with the site," he continued.

"Dr Schapper was an inspirational man who was passionate about agriculture and about the land. I feel very lucky to be able to work on this project and to help realise Dr Schapper's vision for Bridgetown."

Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes CEO Tim Clynch, who was a member of the bequest artwork selection panel, echoed Butler's praise of the late Dr Schapper.

"Dr Schapper's bequest has already had an impact on Bridgetown. It has raised the profile of public art in the community and was the catalyst for the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes to prepare a Public Art Strategy, identifying ten areas or precincts suitable for the implementation of public art projects," Clynch said.

Clynch explained *Kaleidoscope* would serve as a point of interest at Bridgetown's new Shire Library, which is expected to be finished within 6 weeks.

"Damien's artwork has strong synergies with the design concepts of the new Shire Library, currently under construction less than 50 metres from the site of the proposed sculpture."

"The selection panel was attracted to Damien's concept of playing with the light and colours which reflect from Somme Creek. The Somme Creek precinct has some very important environmental values and the proposed sculpture will fit into those very well."

Kaleidoscope represents phase one in the fulfilment of Dr Schapper's bequest, with the remaining funds directed towards community projects involving south west artists.

In late April, Artsource will implement phase two of the tender process. As a response to *Kaleidoscope*, artists will be invited to include their own concepts for the nature trail and other sites identified in the public art strategy.

Artsource is hopeful Dr Schapper's bequest will set a precedent for more philanthropic donations towards art projects in Western Australia, which bring invaluable and resounding benefits to our communities.

- ENDS -

About Artsource

Artsource is Western Australia's peak representative body for visual artists. A not-for-profit organisation in operation since 1986, Artsource works to expand and improve the sustainability and profile of artists through practical services and support. For more information please visit www.artsource.net.au

ALL ENQUIRIES, INTERVIEWS + IMAGES:

Ros Brennan, Marketing Coordinator, ros@artsource.net.au, (+61 8) 9335 8366