



## 1. Introduction

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has invited Guildhouse to deliver a quality public artwork in the form of an interpretive artwork installation on the (exterior) western wall of the iconic Queen's Theatre building, Adelaide.

The Queen's Theatre is the second oldest theatre building in Australia and holds significant heritage value. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet undertakes asset management for the Theatre.

The opportunity is for a wall-based interpretive artwork on a Besser brick wall which can include 2D and 3D wall elements - there is a requirement for the integration of LED lighting elements to create a day/night presence.

Thematically, the artwork is required to be a genuine reflection of the significance of the Queens Theatre site.

## 2. Queen's Theatre History

Founded by brothers Vaiben and Emanuel Solomon, the Queen's Theatre is the oldest surviving theatre building in mainland Australia. It cost an astonishing £10,000 and attracted dismal forecasts from the local press. The opening performance of Othello took place in January 1841. At the time the Queen's Theatre seated 1,000. Performances were short-lived, by August 1841 the company was dismissed and in 1842 the Solomon brothers were looking for other ways to make money from the site. In 1843 the Colonial Government took over the building for the Resident Magistrates Court and Supreme Court.

In 1850 the law courts moved to new premises in Victoria Square. The Queen's Theatre was remodelled with a new Georgian facade and re-opened in December 1850 as the Royal Victoria Theatre. A year later it closed again, due to a mass exodus of South Australians to the Victorian goldfields. In 1859 more renovations were undertaken and another attempt made to operate a theatre from the site. However, competition from the newly-opened Theatre Royal on Hindley Street in April 1868 effectively sealed its fate, and the Queen's Theatre closed its doors yet again later that year.

Between 1868 and 1973 the building was adapted for a variety of non-theatrical uses. It operated as the City Mission between 1872 and 1876, and as Formby's Horse Bazaar from 1877 until shortly after the turn of the twentieth century. Between 1908 and 1928, the sales yards, livery, stables and forge owned by J.W. Shannon utilised the premises. It changed hands three more times between 1933 and 1973, operating as McPherson's Store and Warehouse, Dalgety's Factory and Store, and McPherson's Showroom, respectively.

Proposed development of the site during the late 1980s prompted an archaeological excavation that uncovered extensive sub-surface remnants of the former Queen's Theatre. These features included dressing rooms and the orchestra pit.

**guildhouse**



The site's heritage significance prompted the South Australian Government to negotiate for its ownership during the 1990s and, upon acquiring the property, initiated efforts to conserve its surviving heritage architecture. Today, the shell of the original theatre still stands within the 1850s facade of the Royal Victoria Theatre.

Since 1996 the building has once again been used as a venue for performances, but also frequently hosts non-theatrical events such as markets, corporate functions, and art exhibitions. Strict conditions have been put in place to preserve the historic character of the building. The History Trust of South Australia managed the Queen's Theatre from 18 August 2003 until 1 July 2010. It was then taken on by Arts South Australia, and is currently managed by GWB McFarlane Theatres.

Researched and written by Catherine Manning and James Hunter, History Trust of South Australia

**Further reading:**

<https://sahistoryhub.history.sa.gov.au/places/queens-theatre>

<https://www.thequeensadelaide.com.au/>

<https://losttheatres.net/queens> - Mary Moore, theatre design consultant on Visualising Lost Theatres, created the stage sets of the Queen's Theatre, as well as the designs for the auditorium of the Queen's Theatre

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2hxt8gkkl> – Models created by Ortelia.

### 3. Process

Each step of the commissioning program aligns with best-practice process for commissioning public art as outlined in Arts SA's [Public Art Commissioning Guidelines](#).

- There will be an Expression of Interest call out process.
- A selection of five artists will be chosen from the Expression of Interest pool of artists by a Guildhouse representative and DPC.
- The five artists will be invited, contracted and paid to go on to Concept Design stage.
- The artists will then be invited to present their concept designs to a selection panel made up of project stakeholders, a Guildhouse representative and an artist from the Guildhouse Artist Advisory board.
- Following the concept design selection process, one artist will be selected and contracted to go on to the Detail Design stage, undertaking the detail design documentation to a suitable level for a design construction project.
- Once the Detail Design package has been approved, the artist will be contracted to move into the Commissioning stage.

### 4. Commission Terms and Conditions

- Candidates must be Australian citizens, based in South Australia
- The decision of the selection panel is final and binding
- The artist must hold appropriate licenses, lift tickets and insurances
- To meet safety and compliance requirements of the project, the chosen artist will be required to submit proof of Public Liability \$20,000,000 and Products Liability \$20,000,000 [insurance](#)
- Must comply with all relevant Australian Standards and building codes, and
- Must comply with South Australian Work Health and Safety Act

## 5. The Work of Art



### a. Artwork Vision

Adelaide is well known for its public art projects and this interpretive artwork will be an important addition to Adelaide's public art offering.

Public art offers an opportunity to create intrigue and attract people to places. It is envisioned that the interpretive artwork will bring a dynamic new sensory experience which is designed to inspire, engage, and educate, by day and by night.

The overall vision for this artwork is for a genuine interpretation of the history of the Theatre site that will enhance the area, provide a focal point for visitors and offer significant ongoing benefits to the Theatre, SA Arts sector and general public.

### b. Themes and Approach

- The artwork must genuinely interpret the history of the Theatre site. Schedule 1 has some examples of directions an interpretive artwork might take.
- There are no rules, the opportunity is for an open-ended interpretation, but the conceptual underpinnings must reflect the Queen's Theatre as a site of significant cultural and historical value.
- The artwork must incorporate LED lighting elements into the design. This will allow for a truly integrated response to the site, increase security and create a day/night presence.
- The use of 2D and 3D wall based elements is encouraged.
- There may be an opportunity to incorporate imagery of artefacts from the site. DPC is currently working with Grieve Gillet Anderson regarding the development of a Conservation Management Plan for the Queen's Theatre. As part of that work, they have identified artifacts that originate from the Queens' Theatre from the mid-1800s. DPC is investigating the artifacts to ascertain their condition and heritage value. Whilst the physical objects themselves are unlikely to be available for incorporation, there might be an opportunity work artefact imagery into the concept, for example.
- The artist should consider the integration of concept elements (i) with each other and (ii) with the site and surrounding area, for example, its relationship to other parts of Theatre, the footpath on the western side, surrounding buildings, Playhouse Lane and the general nature of the area.

In addition, the artwork should:

- Advance the profile of the walkway
- Nurture excellence and experimentation in contemporary Australian art
- Be engaging for all age groups, cultures and abilities and reflect inclusivity and diversity
- Expand the audience for contemporary art, and
- Be visually appropriate and of a scale relevant to the site.

c. Artwork Location, Specifications, Site Information and Considerations



- The proposed interpretive installation must be on the Queen's Theatre western wall
- The brick and render wall is located along Eliza Street, Adelaide SA 5000, situated between the Wingfold Tower building and the Queen's Theatre – see the area indicated in red in fig. 1
- The western wall is made of Besser bricks and has no heritage value
- The artist will need to consider the narrow nature of the walkway and any associated safety concerns when designing wall based sculptural elements.
- The approximate area outlined for the artwork is 27.5m in length, see fig. 2
- The height of the wall is between 4.6 – 6.9m (varying), see fig. 3
- The artist is invited to design their artwork to fit within this area – however it is not required to fill the entire space
- Wall remediation will be carried out and paid by DPC prior to fabrication stage, to include the removal of extraneous parts, pressure wash, patching, base coat and colour topcoat. The artist will have an opportunity to specify the base wall colour during Detail Design stage. The timing of the application of an anti-graffiti coating will depend on if the chosen artist wishes to incorporate any painted mural elements into the artwork.
- Any development, Heritage, SCAP and DEW approvals for the installation will be the responsibility of Guildhouse
- Guildhouse will advise on the requirement of City of Adelaide Council work permits and pedestrian management. The artist shall apply for the permit and organise pedestrian management. The costs will be covered by the artwork commissioning budget. All logistics are to be organised by the artist
- Site access will be during normal hours and unrestricted
- The electrical metering and supply are the responsibility of DPC
- The timber bench seating will be removed

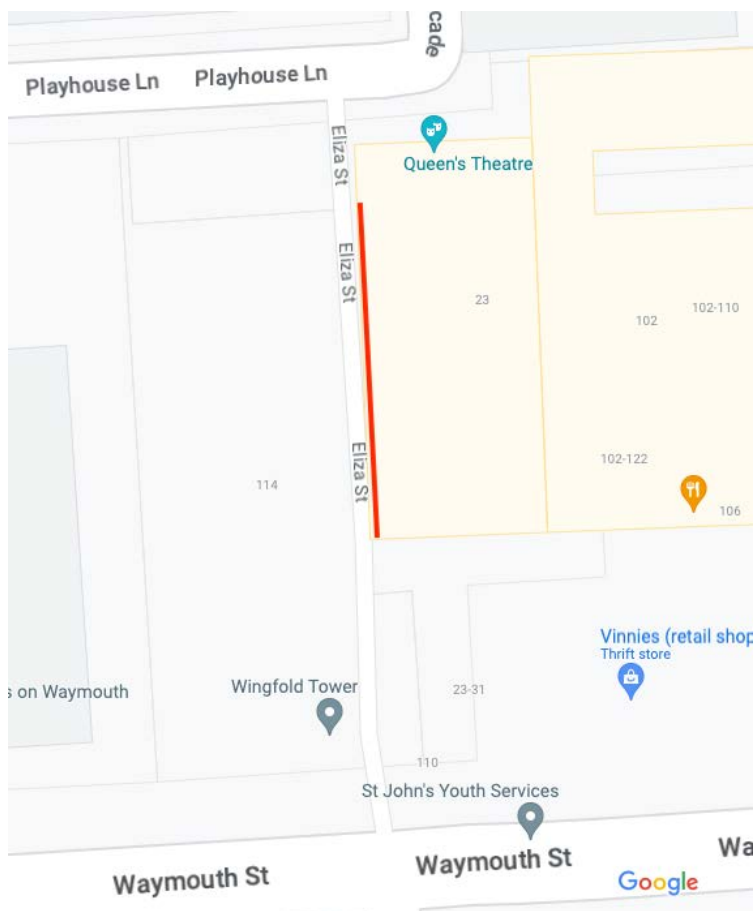


fig. 1



fig. 2 The wall in its current condition



fig. 3 The wall from Waymouth Street





fig. 4 The wall from Playhouse Lane (artwork can be included in this section)

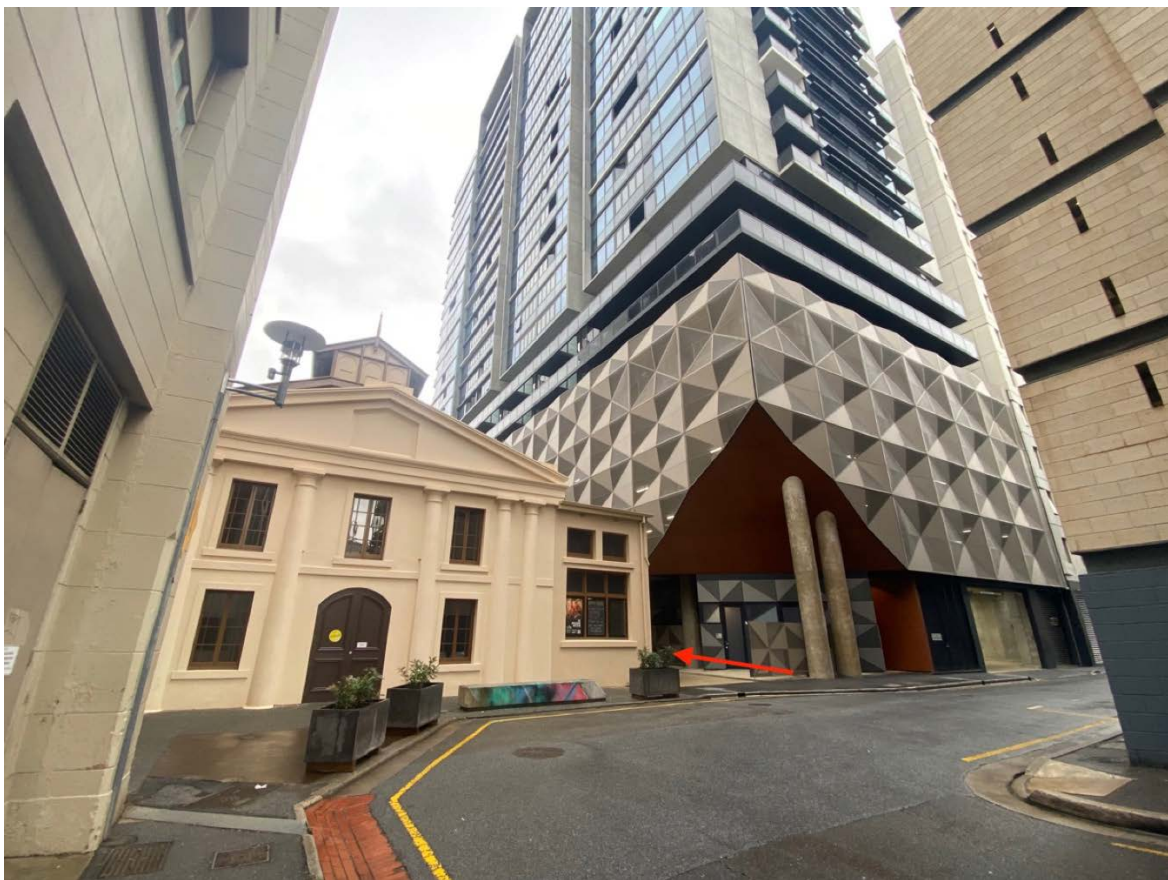


fig. 5 Approach from Playhouse Lane (Queen's Theatre to the left, Wingfold Tower to the right)



d. Materials

The commissioned work will use equipment and materials which:

- Are made of the most durable, robust, high-quality, low-maintenance available in consideration of the whole-of-life cost
- Consider lead times for fabrication and installation with material selections given possible supply chain issues
- Consider the environmental impact of the work over its lifetime
- Be structurally sound, durable and engineered with safety in mind
- Meet all relevant safety standards

e. Ongoing Maintenance

- The ongoing maintenance of the artwork will be the responsibility of DPC
- Artists will need to provide an artwork maintenance manual upon completion of the project
- The artist may be invited to provide maintenance works at an hourly rate
- Anti-graffiti coating will be applied by DPC to the wall after remediation and once the selected artist has decided a wall background colour and/or any painted aspects that are to be combined into the interpretive artwork

f. Budget

- The budget for each shortlisted artist to develop a Concept Design is \$1,500 + GST (if applicable),
- The selected artist's commissioning budget is \$155,000 + GST (if applicable), which includes all associated costs including:
  - Design Development
  - Artist fees
  - All materials required for artwork creation
  - City of Adelaide City Works Permit
  - Plant and equipment hire including ladders, scaffold, lift and fuel if required
  - Exclusion zone set up if required
  - Contingency
  - Any other associated costs with the creation of the artwork

- Budget breakdown:

Design Development fee	\$18,000 (payable upon detail design completion)
Commission fee	\$137,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$155,000 + GST (if applicable)</b>



## 6. Commissioning Timeline

7.

8. Deliverable	Period 2004		Notes
Guildhouse assesses all EOI submissions and selects five artists to go through to Concept Design phase	12 Feb	20 Feb	
Concept Design phase			
Guildhouse contracts five artists for Concept Design phase	21 Feb	23 Feb	
Site visits, briefings and Q&A for the five selected artists	26 Feb	29 Feb	Date tbc
Concept Design phase (5 public holiday days fall in the period)	1 Mar	21 April	
GH to prepare Concept Design Assessment documents	April	21 April	
Concept Design Presentations (5 artists)	22 April	24 April	Date tbc
Detail Design phase			
Contract signing with single artist for Detailed Design phase	29 April		
Detailed Design phase:	29 April	10 June	
Artist presents Detail Design; DPC sign off required	11 June	14 June	
Artwork Commissioning phase			
Contract signing with single artist and any subcontractors for Artwork Commissioning phase	17 June		
Artwork production - 5 months	17 June	10 Nov	
Artwork installation	11 Nov	15 Nov	
Closure			
Practical completion confirmation	18 Nov		
All documentation signed off		Nov 2024	
Launch of interpretive installation - In line with festival season		Feb 2025	
Test period		Feb – Mar 2025	
Post-implementation review (incl lessons learned)		Apr 2025	

## 9. Concept Design Submission

Five artists will be invited to submit and present Concept Designs. Requirements and assessment criteria will be provided in the Artist Brief.

## 10. Contact

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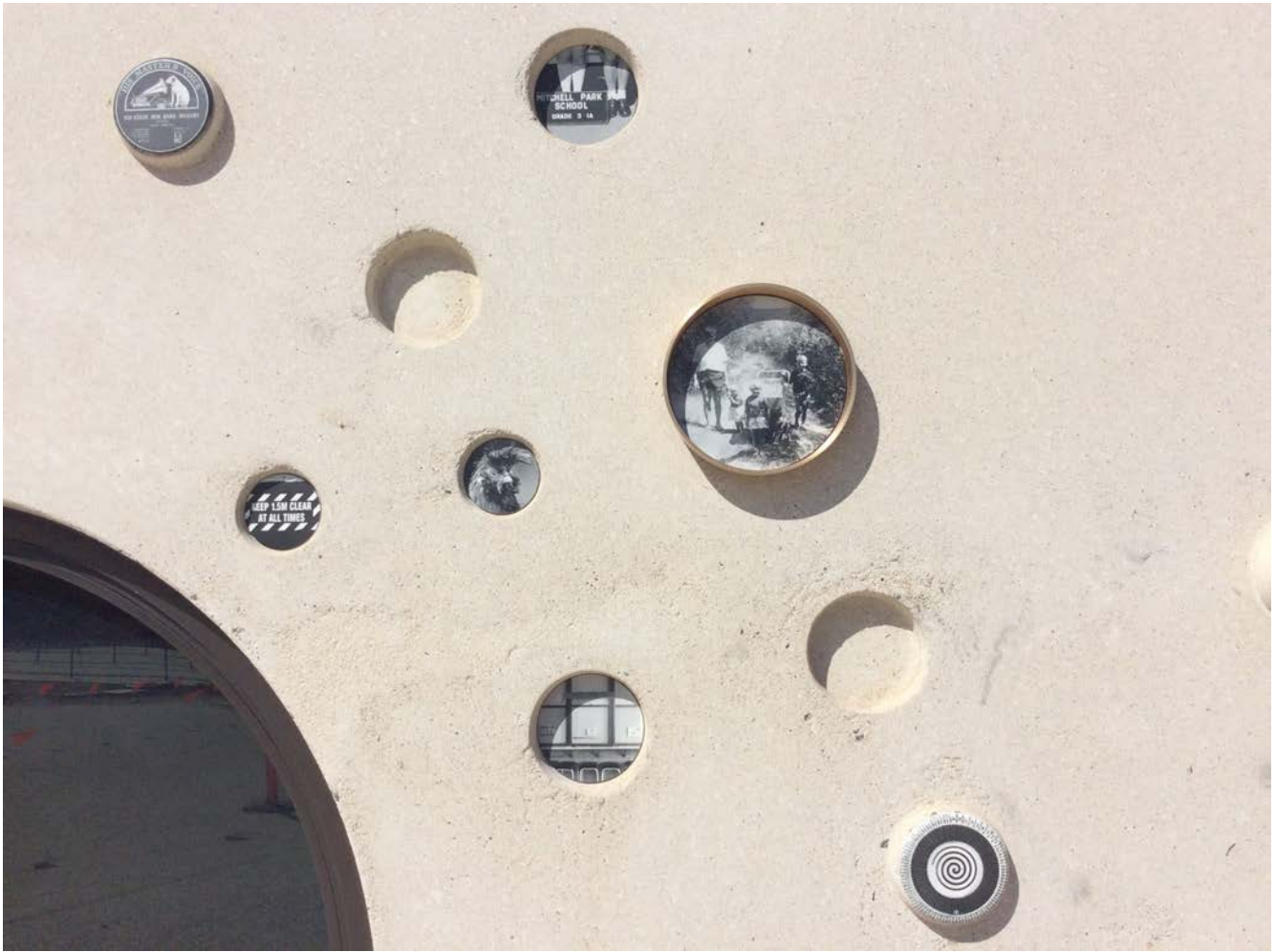
Schedule 1 Examples of interpretive public art projects



Above: *Clock Wall* by Rose Nolan, Sydney Central Train Station concourse



Above: Perforated steel gallery wall by Woods Bagot showcasing historical objects found during excavation, Sydney Central Train Station



Above: *Congregate: ins and outs* by project2project 2022. Mitchell Park Sports and Community Centre, City of Marion



Above: *From Idea to Practice* by In Plain Sight Art Studio, Southeastern Louisiana University, Computer Science and Technology Building