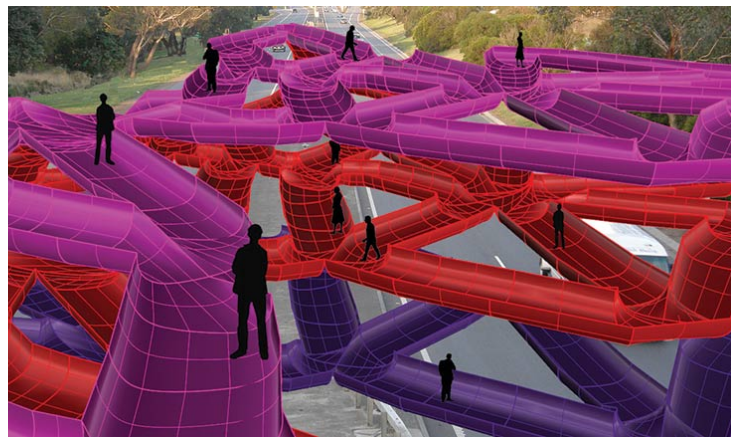


Visual art Conservation Australia

Acconci's plan to link Anzac Memorials is a bridge too far for some in art

But David Walsh supports plan to mark Gallipoli centenary as Tasmanian capital but heritage experts object

Gareth Harris. Web only
 Online: 12 January 2015



Studio's bridge would link The Cenotaph and Soldiers Memorial Avenue, which is bisected by a highway

Australian gambling magnate and museum founder David Walsh is excited that the New York-based artist and architect Vito Acconci will inject his vision into the urban landscape of Hobart, the Tasmanian capital, with a new piece of public architecture. But there has been a mixed response to the move from local architectural and heritage experts.

Studio's design is for a publicly accessible bridge linking two areas: the Levens Domain (a central, 200-hectare green space); the Soldiers Memorial Avenue and the historic riverside Cenotaph, Tasmania's main commemorative military monument. The aim is to reintegrate the war memorial into the city, which will mark the 100th anniversary in April of the British and New Zealand Corps' (Anzac) landing at Gallipoli during the First World War.

Acconci, who is best known for his controversial 1972 performance piece 'One and One Makes Three', in which he masturbated beneath a ramp built into the floor of his Sonnabend Gallery, participated in the "Future Hobart" forum in Hobart. The symposium was part of the popular annual Dark Mofo food festival organised by Walsh.

Walsh would like to pay to bring Acconci out to start a conversation with the city. "We stepped away from that point," says Delia Nicholls, a research curator at Walsh's Museum of Old and New Art, which is just outside Hobart. "We stepped away at that point, we don't want it to become 'our project'; rather, we wanted the council to work with the residents on any idea that emerged."

The bridge, comprising a multiple maze split into three levels, would cross the highway, and all three sections of the walkway would

Comments

How brilliant. Another fantastic reason to visit Hobart beyond the aggressive beauty of MONA and the delicate elegance of GASP. I do hope the City...

Share this

Like Tweet 

Also in Conservation

- [Turkey plans to make a splash with new museum](#)
- [Conservationists blast plan to turn Edinburgh's Old Royal High School into art hotel](#)
- [Kapkov's fall stokes fears for face of Moscow](#)
- [San Francisco museum finds 200-year-old DNA in African works](#)
- [Rejected, neglected, saved: architect's interiors restored by Czech Capital of Culture](#)

Also by Gareth Harris

- [Artists' studios to open in News International's former home](#)
- [Alain Seban says adieu to Beaubourg, but will his global vision be realised by his successor?](#)
- [Turkish president appeals ruling that he must pay damages to artist](#)
- [Barcelona museum director steps down over controversial sculpture](#)
- [Baku art centre launched in former Soviet naval base](#)

Most read (week) | Most read (month) | Most comments

- [Vanity, vanity... or the ultimate commission?](#)
- [Dealer Oliver Hoare is back—and this time it's personal](#)
- [New home for artist-run Turps Art School](#)
- [Anti-Putin artists' U-turn over Crimea](#)

lect. "All the surfaces of the maze are riddled with holes, from tiny more than tiny; each of the many multiple mazes surrounds an open space," says a spokesman for the studio. "You retrace your path back and forth, and find your way from one maze to another, up and down again."

The bridge is planned to lead into and through myriad rows of lights, or "luminous trenches", to be installed along the Soldiers Memorial Avenue. It would link the 536 cedar trees that commemorate Tasmanian soldiers killed in global conflicts.

Johnston says: Daniel Thomas, writing in Art Monthly Australia, said that last year's public forum recorded little interest in using the planned lighting to give the avenue greater use of the avenue at night. But he says that the bridge would "completely transcend its role as linkage; it would become a landmark in its own right".

Friends of the Soldiers Memorial is a key community organisation backing the overhaul. "It is a starting point for more detailed design work and funding proposals," says Ian Howard, the president of Friends of the Soldiers Memorial, a voluntary organisation that is responsible for the upkeep of the avenue. The idea of the luminous trenches is an unexpected bonus, but this aspect may not proceed, because it could disturb rare remnant grassland.

In opposition to the initiative, citing concerns about the long-term impact on remnant bushland across the Queens Domain. Ian Johnson, the principal of Hobart-based companies, the architecture firm Jaid and the Historic Landmarks Advisory Team, says: "The plan is appealing in its own right. I also support the vision, which seeks to broaden and intermingle art with our urban environment. At the same time, this possible development can be seen as a test of the calm and poise, the responsibility and respect for liberty, which the place retains."

The City Council has provided \$30,000 for the concept development of the bridge. "Studio Acconci's proposal will be included in future thinking about the Queens Domain," says Jane Castle, the council's cultural heritage co-ordinator.

Join The Art Newspaper

Free e-newsletter and alerts: Daily news, analysis and breaking news delivered to your email inbox.
Free digital edition: the complete latest issue, exactly as it was printed.

The Art Newspaper TV: Watch the latest reports, interviews and features.

Comments

DAVID WALSH, HOBART

I submitted this some time ago but it has appeared: Although, as stated, I contributed the cost of Vito's trip to Tasmania, I am implacably opposed to his proposal. It reminds me of a Charlie Brown book report- the best that a fading talent could do the night before a deadline. I had hoped for far better, and probably owe a few apologies to those whose time and money I wasted. I am, however, somewhat salvaged by the knowledge that there is no realistic chance of a Vito 'inspired' project proceeding.

STEVE, GLASGOW

It looks like just another display of the rampant and unchecked ego that is the only requirement to be a successful modern conceptual artist (or Zaha Hadid-style architect). Is trampling all over the memory of the dead a price worth paying just to see a giant hamster maze?

DR DAVID STEPHENS, CANBERRA

Surely we are past building bricks and mortar memorials to failed military exploits of a century ago. Build it if it works aesthetically but call it something else.

ANNA WALDMANN, SYDNEY

How brilliant. Another fantastic reason to visit Hobart beyond the aggressive beauty of MONA and the delicate elegance of GASP. I do hope the City finds the money or can convince the State and Federal Governments to contribute. There is such a paucity of visionary, stunning structures and buildings in Australia .

Write a comment

Comments are moderated. If you would like your comment to be published, please use your real name, not a pseudonym. We ask for your address in case we wish to contact you - it will not be made public. Do not use it for any other purpose.

Email*

Name*

City*

Comment*
1000 characters remaining

Want to write a longer comment to this article? Email theartnewspaper.com

- Jobs
- What's On
- Sister Editions
- Retailers
- About
- Testimonials
- Allemandi Publishing
- Contact
- Privacy Statement
- Site Map

[Subscribe to The Art Newspaper...](#)

[Advertise in The Art Newspaper Network...](#)

[Sign up to receive the weekly email newsletter...](#)

[Search through The Art Newspaper Archive...](#)

[Contact the team at The Art Newspaper...](#)