

SCAPE Public Art – Lifting the Spirit of the City

Millions of people will see the art work placed around Christchurch by the SCAPE Public Art Trust, but only a few will ever be aware that without time donated by a few dedicated, passionate lawyers none of those works would be standing.

Since 1998 SCAPE Public Art has installed 10 permanent and 160 temporary works of public art in central Christchurch. These have ranged from the largest outdoor sculpture in New Zealand, Neil Dawson's *Fanfare* marking the northern entrance to the city, to the works of world-renowned sculptor Antony Gormley.

Two of Gormley's identical cast-iron figures titled *STAY* have been acquired for Christchurch as a permanent, legacy piece. One has been recently installed mid current in the Avon River and the other will be installed in the Arts Centre's north quadrangle in early 2016.

STAY will stand for hundreds of years, millions of people will get to see the work. Yet without significant hours of free work by a handful of lawyers none of this art would be able to stand in such prominent and significant public locations.

Anderson-Lloyd partner Mark Christensen said he regarded free of charge work for SCAPE Public Art, which has clocked in at hundreds of hours over 17 years as something that helps lift the spirit of the city and its residents.



Mark Christensen, Anderson Lloyd, in front of Antony Gormley's *STAY* sculpture, during installation on site in the Otakaro - Avon River, 2015. Commissioned by Christchurch City Council for SCAPE 8 *New Intimacies*.

“Things like gaining resource consent for large-scale public art works can be a real task, and of course if there’s no resource consent then the work can’t be displayed,” he said.

29 October 2015

This publication is intended only to provide a summary of the subject covered. It does not purport to be comprehensive or to provide legal advice. No person should act in reliance on any statement contained in this document without first obtaining specific professional advice. If you require any advice or further information on the subject matter of this article, please contact the partner/solicitor in the firm who normally advises you.

Page 1 of 2

“We have to liaise with everyone from local iwi to engineers and ecologists to manage the legal side of things to make sure everything happens to plan. Once that’s achieved we can have art being displayed in public for anyone to see, which really helps enrich the city, that’s when it becomes a really interesting and satisfying process.”

Good art, by its nature is challenging, and working with a group such as SCAPE Public Art, who push the envelope in terms of how and where public art is displayed is not a passive exercise, Christensen said.

“SCAPE definitely push the edges of displaying permanent art in public places, but I believe that helps to push our understanding of art as viewers. As their lawyers, that means we have to stay ahead of the game and guide them through all the different processes required to achieve their wishes while staying within all legal requirements. Good art naturally pushes boundaries and that means we can’t sit back and be reactive. We have to actively guide SCAPE through many processes, which gives our work some edge.”

SCAPE director Deborah McCormick said the situation was quite simple – without the pro bono work by people like Christensen, there would be no public art, that Christchurch has gained a national and international reputation for.

“Mark and Ben Johnston are our legal representatives on the SCAPE Public Art trust board, and handle everything from risk mitigation to our legal and community framework to the original writing of our founding deed – we couldn’t do it without them,” she said.

“That leaves us free to deliver art to public places within the city, that millions of people will see and serves a valuable purpose.”