

Lantern to illuminate Yarrila Place atrium

By Andrea FERRARI

INSPIRED by the Gumbaynggirr name of Yarrila Place, artist Emma Coulter, who won the commission to create a public artwork for the new building's atrium, is now working with multidisciplinary teams, including structural modelling, to begin to bring the piece to life.

Yarrila means to illuminate, brighten, light up or illustrate.

"After so much planning and resolving many complex technical issues, it was fantastic to see the sculpture's geometry and physical form in real life scale at the recent mid-point inspection," Coulter said.

"It was especially exciting to see the colour samples which are glossy, highly chromatic and very reflective."

Coulter describes how the inspiration for the Coffs Harbour artwork comes from

the idea of light refracting on the surface of the water and dispersing into colour:

"My work is site-specific, so for me it is always very important to consider the context of the site, the place, and the history," Coulter told News Of The Area.

"I start with a place of immersion, of familiarising myself with all of these things, and doing my own research in a fairly intuitive way, searching for the idea that feels right to draw from."

❑ Coffs Harbour's subtropical, surf coast location and historical lighthouse are each interpretive elements in Emma Coulter's 'let them feel the light' public artwork.



❑ Emma Coulter's planned work will form a lantern at the heart of Yarrila Place, creating coloured patterns and shadows.

❑ 'let them feel the light' is a multi-coloured site-specific sculpture of coloured glass and aluminium that will extend across the large, three-story wall in the centre of Yarrila Place's atrium, to be installed before construction is completed for Yarrila Place in mid-2023.



Along with the Gumbaynggirr name, Coulter also drew from the historical significance of the South Solitary lighthouse built on the Coffs Coast in 1878.

Having grown up in South East Queensland, as a young girl Coulter experienced wonderful, fun, road trips that she made with friends to the Coffs Coast and its beautiful beaches.

"I wanted to capture some of these feelings of joyousness in the artwork," she said

"Coffs Harbour being a town very much centred on its location of the coast and the water, I wanted this idea, of the significance of land and sea, to be central to my work.

"I drew on this idea of light refracting on the surface of the water, and dispersing into colour, as being central to my concept development.

"Surrounded also by beautiful regional parks, I wanted to also capture that idea through colour."

In the development of her idea, she also drew upon a series of coloured

Perspex sculptures that she had made previously, which explored ideas of coloured light in space, and how they might intersect with their surrounding environment.

"I came up with the conceptual idea of 'let them feel the light', which also became the title for the work."

The artwork will extend across a large three-storey curved brick wall within the atrium space, in what

the architects are calling the 'internal street', which connects from Gordon Street through to Riding Lane.

'let them feel the light' will traverse the wall, reaching up from ground level to the upper level.

It will be a brightly coloured geometric sculpture, with a highly chromatic, glossy two pac aluminium surface, dispersed with illuminated coloured glass.

The work extends across a height of ten metres and the geometric modules are about twenty metres in length in total.

It will be visible from many different viewpoints within the space, so the work can be experienced in many ways.

"In this way it responds to the architecture of the building and Yarrila Place," said Coulter.

'let them feel the light' is being fabricated in Brisbane by Stainless Aesthetics.

❑ Talking technicalities: Emma Coulter and Mike Mooney at Stainless Aesthetics' fabrication studio in Brisbane bringing 'let them feel the light' to life.

