

Description and Location Statement

I first went to Sydney in 2003 when I was exhibiting at the gallery of New South Wales. Ever since then I have had a massive affection for the city. I have been back six or seven times since and one of my favourite things to do in Sydney is walk. I have my favourite places where I like to stand and view to the next point.

Sydney is full of hills and winding roads and a vast amount of diverse architecture. Varying from romantic wooden shutter houses to the forward thinking designs of Harry Seidler. I have made friends in Sydney and a miniature myopic lifestyle based on good food, health, relaxation and exercise. The longest amount of time I have ever spent there is two and a half months. Most days I would wake up there feeling very happy and free but occasionally I would find myself feeling low and disorientated and realised that I was suffering from an overwhelming feeling of homesickness. Sydney has everything the 21st century needs everything has a familiarity of the 1st world until you realise that home can be so far away and everything that seems so familiar can suddenly become so alien. On a few occasions such as these I've gone to King's Cross and had my photo taken next to the sign which tells me how many miles I am away from London. There is always a grouping of young backpackers, people half my age who have had the initiative to travel and explore the world. They too are standing there waiting to have their photo taken with the arrow pointing to New York, London, Paris, Rome and the various other destinations. I'm sure they are going to send these photos back to the people they are missing.

In today's age of technology it is easy to send an image of where you are and what you are doing but it's very hard to send a message of how you are actually feeling. For my proposal I would like to make a counter site in Sydney for the young, the old, the backpackers, the tourists and the businessmen; somewhere else that they can have their image taken to send back to the loved ones that they miss which conveys the feelings of distance and homesickness.

Sometimes I send out thoughts through the ether to people I love across the world and I wonder if they catch them in their dreams

With your thoughts in my mind, the distance of your heart

I would have these words inscribed on a large bronze plinth but instead of having something monumental and overpowering sculpturally on top of the plinth I would just have a lone small bird, not flying not taking off but thoughtful. This I would see as the other place to be photographed to let the people you know that you are missing them.

I have chosen Macquarie Place because this is the site of the obelisk designed by Francis Greenway to record the distance to various locations in New South Wales along the earliest roads developed in the colony. This for me is the perfect site to measure the distance of my heart.

Continuing from this central place would emerge small bronze birds placed all along the interconnecting corridor. In Sydney there are birds everywhere parakeets, magpies, tropical birds, really loud screaming birds, birds that wake you up before the day is even broke, tiny pretty little delicate birds, the kind that you would never see in Europe, birds that migrate and fly to coincide with the climate change of the year. Birds can fly, birds can go anywhere they just pick themselves up and they go. No matter how much I am missing my mum or my cat when I'm in Australia I can't just pick my wings up and fly. I would site small birds in different places some thoughtful, some about to take off, some pensive. People would be able to spot the birds as they walk through the city. I know if I were walking alone the act of doing this would keep me company and make me feel like I was not alone.

Tracey Emin, 2014