

MEDIA RELEASE

3 May 2010

Investa unveils major works of public art at Ark, 40 Mount Street, North Sydney

Today, on the site of the old North Sydney Telephone Exchange, the installation of two highly significant works of public art will be completed, as part of the impending opening of Investa's highly anticipated 21-level commercial office development, Ark.

Investa, developer of Ark, took the unique decision to make a serious commitment to art at the outset of their development process by commissioning two significant works of public art. The integration of these works into the fabric of the building is unique to any commercial office development in Australia, and represents a significant departure from 'art as an afterthought'.

Ark itself will officially open on Thursday 13 May and in preparation, Freddie Timms and Hany Armanious have been overseeing the final installation of their works of art in the building's public foyer.

Public art is rarely considered at the development phase, and Investa's decision to put such an emphasis on the integration of the artworks into the very fabric of the building is both commendable and highly unusual.

"So many buildings in this city have no relationship to the public whatsoever. When considering the selection of artists and the placement of their works in the space, we realised there were many different people who regularly passed the site. From the Sisters at Mary MacKillop, to the students at SHORE and the Catholic University, to residents living in the maze of residential streets just to the west of the building, we wanted to create something that spoke to as many people as possible, of all ages and backgrounds," said Andrew Coomer, architect with Rice Daubney at the inception of the Ark project.

The artists, Hany Armanious and Mary Teague, and Freddie Timms, started developing their works for the building in 2006, and today's installation is a significant moment for all three creators.

Hany Armanious and Mary Teague have collaborated previously on projects in Los Angeles and Sydney, and Armanious has been selected to represent Australia at the 54th Biennale di Venezia opening in June next year. Freddie Timms is a renowned artist and senior elder and co-founder and chairman of Jirrawun Arts, the corporation established in 1998 in the eastern Kimberley region of Western Australia to support Gija culture.

Hany's and Mary's sculpture, a playful oversized child's toy telephone, entitled *Lines of Communication*, reuses cable and desks from the North Sydney Telephone Exchange of 1936 which stood on the site. The building was deemed of no historical significance and was allowed to be demolished with the proviso that an artist reference it in some way in his or her finished work. No one on the creative team could have wished for anything more exciting or transformative than the Armanious and Teague work, which is also the first public commission by the two on such a large scale. The work is witty and immediately engaging, providing a warm welcome to all the visitors and users of the Ark public space.

"The brief was exciting to us because it was such a public and prominent position. We have created a piece that is tangled, lively and beautiful to the eye using wires salvaged from the exchange prior to the demolition of the building. We want the public to enjoy it and relate to it," said Hany, "and we want it to have staying power."

Freddie's work *Lissadell* will have a commanding presence in the building's entrance. The ceiling painting has been created by an expert crew with the artist's involvement and approval on a scale of 1:5, and at 12 x 16m, is one of the largest Aboriginal paintings ever completed. The painting is installed 10 metres above the ground, and will function as a beacon, drawing people to the building.

Lissadell is a representation of part of Lissadell station where Freddie spent much of his early life growing up and working as a stockman.

Freddie Timms has said: 'White people should know what they did to black people. Some people might understand what happened. I think that knowing the story will help Aboriginal people and white people to understand each other so that we will all come to be friends and look after things together. I hope that people will learn to respect our culture, not just walk past.'

Barbara Flynn, art advisor to Investa, identified the artists and developed the art project from its inception. Flynn says today represents an important moment in Sydney's public art landscape.

"Mary is one of the most inventive, and Hany and Freddie, two of the most respected and celebrated artists working in Australia today. Having their art as part of the fabric of the local community is a great achievement and demonstrates the critical role art can play in defining and humanising a landmark building like Ark. Investa has provided valuable industry leadership and demonstrated imagination and spirit in supporting the creation of two such singular works of art in Australia."

Investa, Ark's developer, took a unique and highly ambitious approach to the implementation of art in a commercial space. Starting the process of working with the artists early made it possible to integrate the art as an integral part of the fabric of the building. The works are very different in nature and approach but nevertheless co-exist harmoniously together. Each is visible from a distance and will act as an attractor to the building, making it a destination, important to the identity of North Sydney.

"Yes, it was an unusual approach, but the result represents a unique and seamless integration of art, the precinct and architecture. We wanted to create a space which would be inspiring and reflect the innovative and unique nature of the building itself," said Tina Tang, General Manager, Developments at Investa, who oversaw the Ark project.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Ark

Ark is a striking new landmark A-grade office building in the heart of North Sydney comprising 28,500m² over 21 levels. Embracing tomorrow's environmental sustainability, design and technology as the core to an inspirational workplace, Ark truly is a new generation office tower for a new generation of business and is the new home of Coca-Cola Amatil and Vodafone Hutchison Australia.

Ark will include two highly significant works of public art – a painting on the foyer ceiling by Aboriginal artist Freddie Timms and a sculpture sited directly on street level by Hany Armanious and Mary Teague. All artists are internationally renowned, evidenced by Armanious being chosen to represent Australia at the 54th Biennale di Venezia opening in June 2011.

Ark has been awarded a 6 Star Green Star – Office Design v2 Certified Rating, which represents “World Leadership” in environmentally sustainable design and has been designed to achieve a 5 Star NABERS Energy rating.

Genia McCaffery, Mayor of North Sydney Council has said ‘Ark will be a great asset to North Sydney. The building sets a new benchmark in sustainable development that helps confirm North Sydney as the green CBD. Council has worked closely with Investa on this development and we are confident that Ark will be a landmark building that will anchor the CBD and attract quality tenants.’

Ark's green features include:

- Tri-generation power supply
- Grey-water recycling system,
- Efficient lighting and controls,
- Natural light from three sides (side services core)
- Parking and charging bays for electric and hybrid pool cars,
- Cycling facilities (including bike racks, lockers and showers),
- A 3D Building Information Model (BIM) which combines all of the design as-built information about the architecture, services and fit outs in the building. This allows for both efficient construction and operation, and is leading technology in the industry.
- Part of Investa's EcoSpace initiative that brings together a range of inclusions that lift a tenancy's environmental and commercial performance

investa.com.au/ark

About Investa Property Group

- One of Australia's largest owners of real estate, controlling assets worth approximately AU\$7.5 billion* across commercial, industrial and residential sectors
- A fully diversified and integrated real estate group providing a full service offering across funds management, facilities management, asset management, project management, development management and property management
- A world leader in environmental sustainability
- Funds under management of approx AU\$1.9 billion on behalf of over 4,000 clients, across institutions, superannuation funds, industry funds and retail investors
- A development pipeline exceeding AU\$3 billion across commercial, industrial and residential sectors, including over 10,900 residential lots, over 790 hectares of industrial land and over 18,000m² of commercial space
- Headquartered at Investa's flagship 126 Phillip Street development in Sydney, with offices in Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth

* As at 31 October 2009

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