

Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters Update of 8 December 2020

Prepared by Barbara Flynn,
Barbara Flynn Pty Ltd
Art Curator to The Paul Ramsay
Foundation

Curator's recommendation
supported by the Foundation,
8 December 2020

Copyright © Barbara Flynn and
the artists 2020

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Commissioned artist: Uncle Badger Bates	5
3	Precedents	17
4	The artworks	22
5	The image world of Uncle Badger Bates	27
6	Methodology and process to date	31
7	Working team	32
	Notes	36
	Appendix A	37
	Appendix B	40

1

Introduction

Public Art for The Paul
Ramsay Foundation Sydney
headquarters – update of
8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn
and the artists 2020

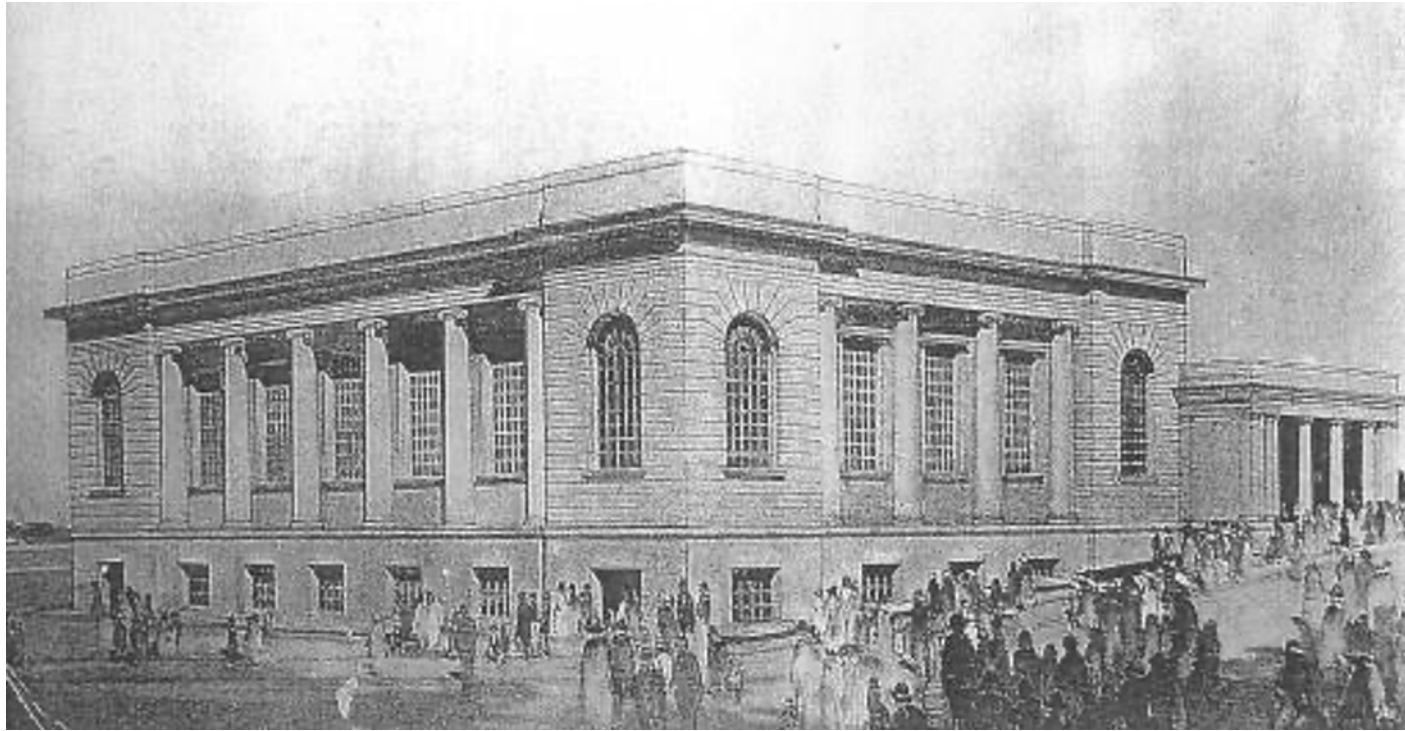
Acting on the unanimous decision of The Paul Ramsay Foundation on 29 June 2020, Barkandji artist William Brian ‘Badger’ Bates was invited to take up the public art commission to create forged steel gates for the entry portico of the new Sydney headquarters of the Foundation. In September 2020 the Foundation committed to a second work by Bates for the entry portico, a painted artwork ceiling.

The Foundation’s new headquarters building is the original former First Church of Christ Scientist building, which was constructed in the Doric style and dedicated on 11 August 1929. [Image 1] Adam Haddow of Sydney architects SJB has designed the stunning extension. [Image 2]

A further two artists and one artist collective were initially presented by Barbara Flynn, art advisor to the Foundation, on 29 June 2020, and were considered by the Foundation and the project working group.¹ The entrance portico and the entry gates were by far the most preferred locations for art, [Image 3] and Bates was the artist whose work most inspired the Foundation and the working group.

In accepting the commission, Bates said that the prospect couldn’t be more ideal for him at this stage in his life as an artist. He said that blacksmithing is an art very closely related to the work he does in linocut and carving, and that he has wanted to take it up since his grandmother, Granny Moysey, introduced him as a child to an ‘old fella’, Papa George, who was a blacksmith at Toorale Station. The young Bates seemed to know then that he wanted to work in iron, saying to Granny Moysey that he ‘wanted to put things together with fire like Papa George’.²

Bates set about completing some other prior commitments and began work on the gates in August 2020. A first Zoom meeting was held on 8 October 2020 to bring Bates together with Matt Mewburn of Eveleigh Works and Gabriele Ulacco of Shop 1, members of the working group Flynn had formed to assist the artist (detailed in Section 7, below).



1
The former First Church of Christ Scientist, 262–270 Liverpool Street, Darlinghurst

2
The new Paul Ramsay Foundation Headquarters at 262 Liverpool Street, Darlinghurst, showing the extension by SJB



3
Selected location for public art, Entrance portico gate



2

Commissioned artist: Uncle Badger Bates

Public Art for The Paul
Ramsay Foundation Sydney
headquarters – update of
8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn
and the artists 2020

William Brian ‘Badger’ Bates is a Barkandji man, born 1947 in Wilcannia, New South Wales, who lives and works in Wilcannia and Broken Hill. [Image 4] He is a distinguished senior figure and leader of his community of Wilcannia, and a widely recognised and respected activist and advocate for the health of the Darling River. The quality and originality of Bates’s art, and his integrity and dedication to community and the environment, make him a fine choice of artist for the Foundation. The work Bates has dedicated his life to aligns with the work of the Foundation to eradicate poverty and set up programs to improve the lives of Aboriginal communities and youth.

As he has said in relation to his work *One Mile Billabong, Wilcannia* (2005):

I use lino because I can make big bold images and use my Barkandji traditional designs to fill in the picture. Lino is like carving emu eggs or wood, which I was taught as a kid at Wilcannia. The wavy lines show the movement of the water when the turtle is swimming, bringing it alive, these lines are what my grandmother used to carve on boomerangs. The lines take you right back to the billabong, like in a dream. The turtle is hiding in the weeds where it is safe, we don’t see these weeds much anymore, and I tell people that the river must have all the right kinds of water weeds for the animals to eat, to hide in and to breed in. The story about the turtle is also a story about my people, the Barkandji people of the Darling River, we also depend on the river and billabongs for food, but also for our way of life, our culture.³

As he expresses it so beautifully in the quote above, Bates prints his works in linocut in black and white, which amplifies the clarity and power of the line he achieves. To make a linocut you carve the line by pushing the cutting tool away from you. It is an art that requires patience, application and great steadiness of hand; there are not many masters of the art and Bates is one. [Images 5–14] Linocut is a medium that is well suited to expressing the subject matter Bates wants to get across. It allows for a richness and multiplicity of detail that Bates

exploits to show the insides of things, like the skeletal structure of the fish and wildlife he depicts. Here he evokes his grandmother, who would admonish him to respect and understand the kangaroo he hunted or the fish he caught by understanding its organs and bone structure.⁴

Bates tells his life story in a statement submitted to the Murray Darling Basin Royal Commission on 1 August 2018.⁵ In it he recounts how he was raised by a beloved grandmother, Annie Moysey, who spoke the Barkandji language and many other languages, and moved with the young Bates so he wouldn't be removed by the authorities. His father was a white man and his mother Aboriginal, and he was exposed to the ways of whites and Aboriginal people in Wilcannia, Bourke, Louth, stations between Wilcannia and Bourke, Cobar and Murrin Bridge. Granny Moysey taught him how to carve emu eggs and is still present in his life today, with Bates speaking of recognising her presence in the murmur of a breeze and of the pride she would have in the life he has made for himself as a distinguished artist. As he worked with Mewburn and the working group at Eveleigh Works in November, he would often share that the memory of Granny Moysey had just then floated into his mind.⁶

Bates tells stories of life on the land and the creatures that inhabit it that were handed down to him as a boy (see, for example, images 10–12). These are true and genuine stories that will bring a profound new dimension to the lives of people in Darlinghurst, giving them something to think about beyond the jobs they are working at in the city. The relationships that will be formed between a senior artist like Bates, who hails from a different part of the state, with neighbourhood residents and younger Sydney artists alike will provide an inspiring model of cross-generational and cross-community understanding in Australia for people to learn from. It will be a crew of younger Sydney artists who will be contracted to work with Bates to create the portico ceiling painting.

Bates's work with and for his community is substantial and profound. He worked as an Aboriginal Sites Officer for NSW National Parks and Wildlife for 21 years until he retired in 2005. Since then, he has contributed his time to sitting on boards and committees, including the Joint Management Committees of Paroo-Darling National Park and Toorale National Park, and the Mutawintji National Park Board of Management. He teaches young people about Barkandji culture. And he makes his art, including exhibiting his work, taking up artist residencies and realising public artworks.

Saving the Darling River is a never-ending, abiding concern. Speaking of his beloved Barka, Bates says:

It is who we are. We take our name from it, Barkandji means people belonging to the Barka ... The Barka gives us healthy food and medicine, it gives us wood to make our artefacts, reeds to weave. It is where we go as families to swim, boat, camp, picnic, fish, go yabbying, and prepare and cook our traditional food. It is where we relax and enjoy our homeland. When we go fishing we go as a family and we sit and talk and remember and pass stories on about our ancestors and our land and water. If we catch some fish we light a little fire by the river and cook the fish and some johnny cakes and we sit and eat there on the river. We don't use plates or knives and forks, we just use our fingers and maybe a bit of bark as a plate. It is where we do our artwork, take photos, make videos, make songs and dances. It is where we teach our children and speak our language.⁷

Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020



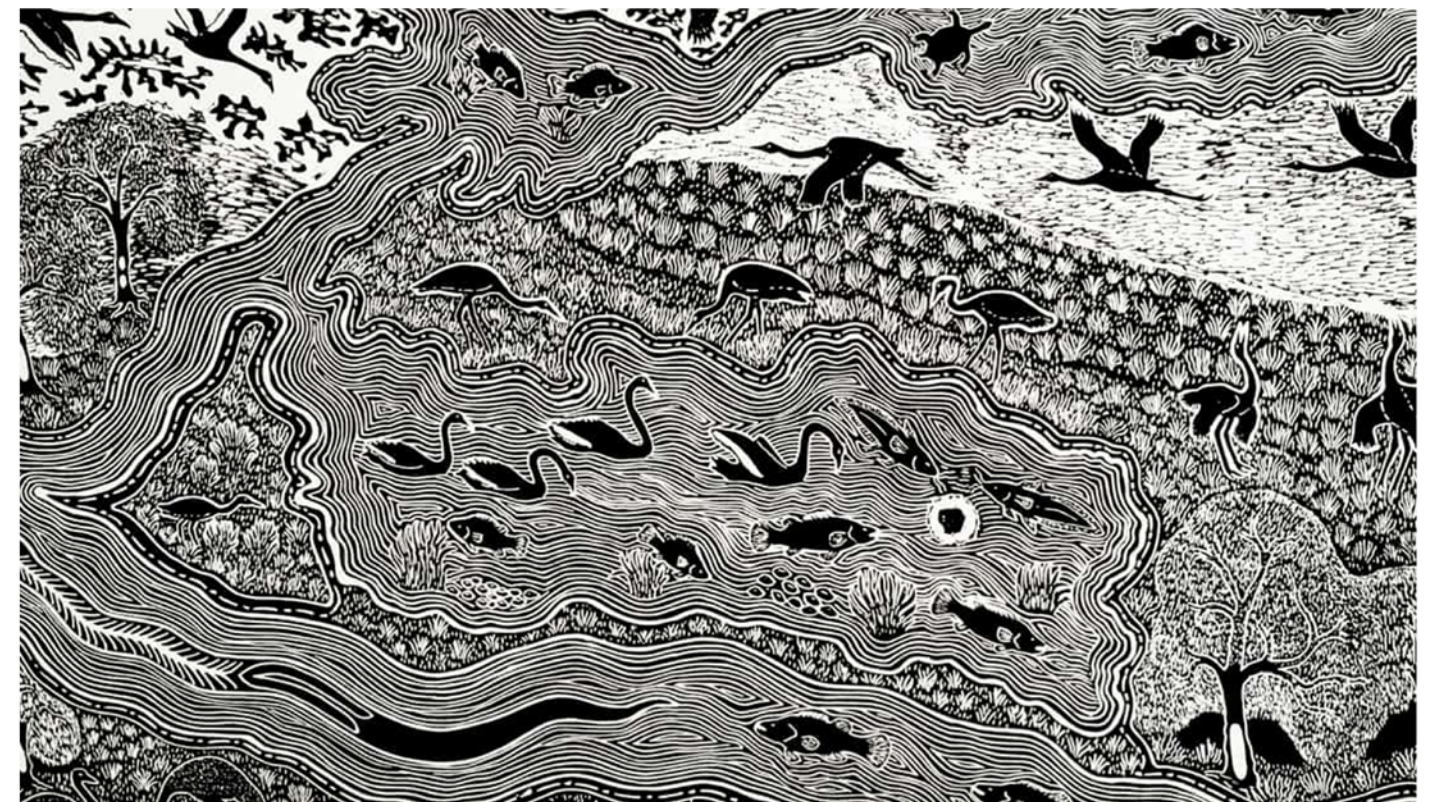
Uncle Badger Bates
Mission Mob, Bend Mob, Wilcannia 1950's, 2009
Linocut print



6

Uncle Badger Bates
*Barka The Forgotten River and the Desecration
 of the Menindee Lakes, 2018*
 Linocut print

8



7

Uncle Badger Bates
Warrego Darling Junction, Toorale, 2012
 Linocut print, black on ivory wove paper
 42.5 x 73cm (blockmark)
 Collection: Art Gallery of South Australia
 Image: courtesy Belconnen Arts Centre

9



8

Uncle Badger Bates
Iron Pole Bend, Darling River Wilcannia, 2007
 Linocut print



9

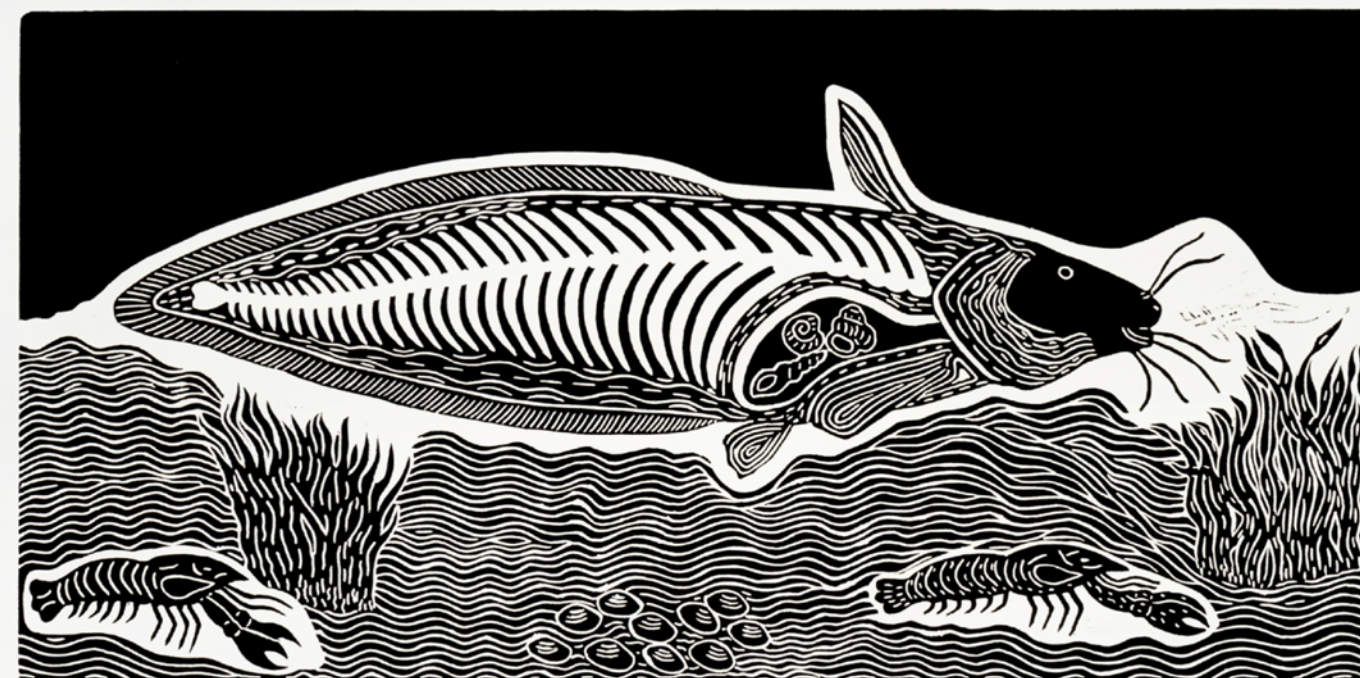
Uncle Badger Bates
Ngatyi Yarilana (Rainbow Serpents Having Young), 2007
 Linocut print



10

Uncle Badger Bates
One Mile Billabong, Wilcannia, 2005
 Linocut print

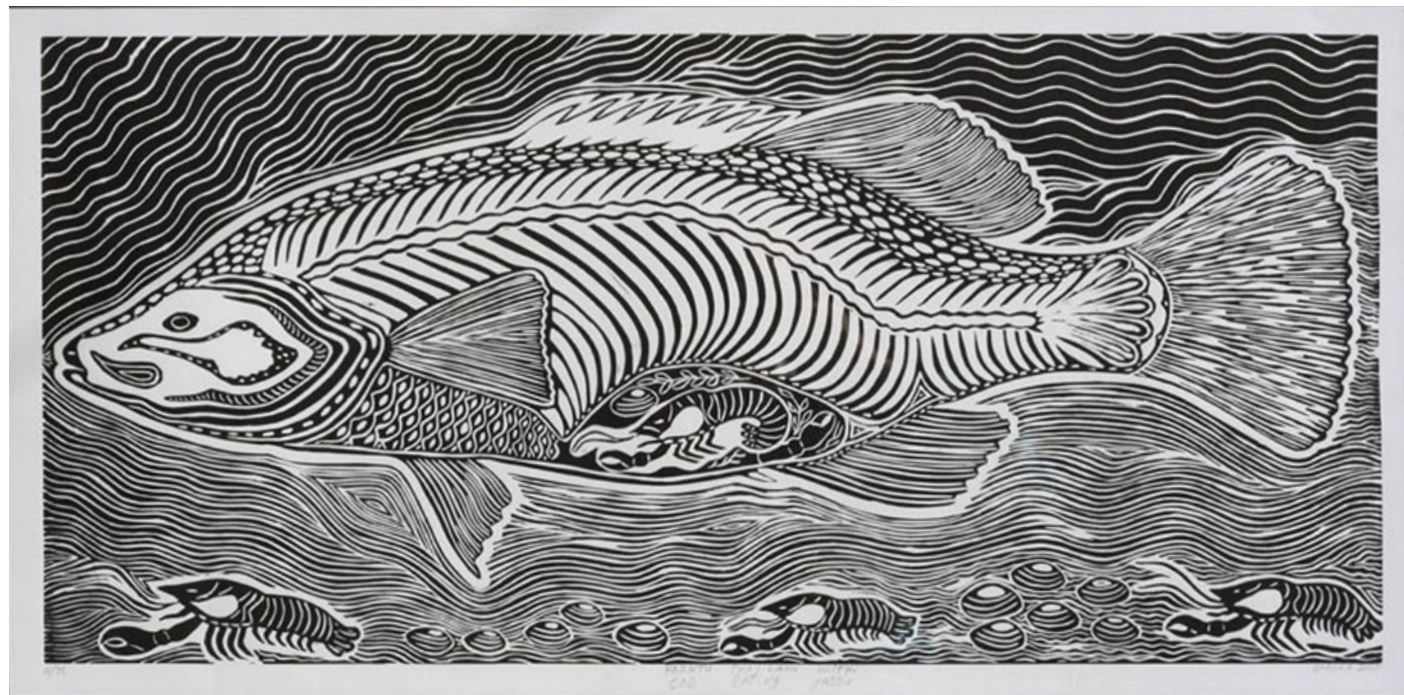
12



11

Uncle Badger Bates
No More Catfish, 2004
 Linocut print

13



12

Uncle Badger Bates
Parntu Thayilana Wiithi (Cod Eating Yabbies), 2004
 Linocut print



13

Uncle Badger Bates
Warrego Karampara (Coroberi), Toorale, 2012
 Linocut print



Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020

3 Precedents

The architectural masterwork Casa Milà by Antoni Gaudí – known as ‘La Pedrera’ (The Quarry, after a famous stone quarry in Catalan) – was the inspiration for the idea for a contemporary Australian artist to blacksmith the entrance portico gates. [Images 15–18] La Pedrera is a wonder of the art of ironwork. Each of its 32 balconies is unique. Ironsmiths the Badia brothers reputedly worked from hand-drawn sketches by Gaudí by interpreting them in hot iron almost at random to fashion the three-dimensional form of the balcony railings.

The artwork gates for the Foundation building will be blacksmithed by Bates working with Matt Mewburn of Eveleigh Works. [Images 19–20] The work *Eveleigh Treehouse* (2019) by Sydney artist Nell was made in Mewburn’s foundry and provided an early model for the strong working relationship Bates has subsequently established with Mewburn. [Image 21] To make the *Treehouse*, Nell invited the community to participate to forge the elements of the artwork. The quantity of leaf appendages required was beyond the scope of a single artist. Members of the public were invited to register online to learn blacksmithing while lending a hand on Wednesday evenings or weekend days over a two-month period in 2019. The solution devised provided tangible benefits for the community while securing the labour the artist required. [Image 22]



15-16

Antoni Gaudí
Wrought iron work at Milà, known as 'La Pedrera'
(The Quarry), Barcelona, Spain



17-18

Antoni Gaudí
Wrought iron work at Milà, known as 'La Pedrera'
(The Quarry), Barcelona, Spain



Artisan techniques to make the gates

Eveleigh Works <https://www.eveleigh.works>

Our story: The largest and most technologically advanced workshop in the southern hemisphere, Eveleigh was opened in 1887 by the NSW government for the maintenance and manufacture of steam locomotives. The two blacksmithing bays inhabited by Eveleigh Works are the only intact operating bays remaining. We use a large portion of the blacksmithing equipment at Eveleigh, which is considered ‘the largest and most integral collection of Victorian blacksmithing equipment, in terms of integrity and extent known in the western world,’ according to the Smithsonian Institute (Washington, DC, USA)



19 a–b

Eveleigh Works

20

Matt Mewburn (centre), Director, Eveleigh Works



21

Nell (seated at front) with the participants who helped her forge the elements of *Eveleigh Treehouse*, 2019



22

Nell
Eveleigh Treehouse, 2019
Forged steel
Site-specific installation at South Eveleigh, Sydney
Collaboration with Cave Urban, co-commissioned by Mirvac and Carriageworks
Curated by Daniel Mudie Cunningham

The artworks

Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020

Each of the three portico gates will be 3 metres high and fabricated in two leaves. As engineered by Mainbrace, the gates will pivot from a plate and pivot mechanism at their base and be secured with a restraint at their top edge.

The three panel-configuration lends itself perfectly to the artist’s vision to depict the stories that are critical to his life and world view, and the world view of the Barkandji people. The central panel will tell the story of the Seven Sisters who, as in the story handed down through time, will appear to be drawn up to the sky. [Image 23] As Bates recounts the story, ‘The sisters used to get around on earth and the one that was the most beautiful kept getting into mischief and the old people tried to talk to her but she wouldn’t listen, so they made a whirly-wind that took her up into the sky and they sang the other six sisters up as well to look after her. The dullest star is the sister that kept getting into trouble. They look down on us and are called *witu witulinja*. When the dew drops fall down on us in winter they are crying, the dew drops we can drink and can save us in the bush.’⁸

The *Ngatyi* (Rainbow Serpent) will be depicted on the left-hand panel of the gates against a backdrop of Barkandji country and south-western New South Wales. When Bates returns to Sydney for his second working visit in January, he will meet with his colleagues among the Sydney mob whose imagery will appear on the panel at right. The ceiling painting will depict the Emu in the Sky (see below). [Image 24] The gap between the top of the gates and the ceiling will act as a metaphor for the transition from day to night, and from earth to sky. Day and earth will be the province of the gates, and night and sky of the ceiling painting above. Quoting Bates, ‘To see something in the day is different from the night.’

The motif of Emu in the Sky refers to an Aboriginal astronomical constellation:

To some, the stars clustered around the ‘Coalsack nebula’ in the Milky Way look a bit like a shadowy smudge. But to most Aboriginal Australians, they are better known as the Emu in the Sky. [Image 25]

Aboriginal Astronomy and its interplay with modern ways of reading the sky have shifted into focus in recent years, as research from various communities across the country is shared to gather parallels and

differences. Stories of the sky have expanded the ways we think about the land we are connected to.⁹

As Barkandji woman and curator Zena Cumpston explains, discussing the origins of the exhibition *Emu Sky* that she has curated for the University of Melbourne:

Reflecting on the mad collection of early Australian ‘Scientists’, who documented, studied, classified and experimented with our plants, I wondered why they couldn’t see that a wealth of knowledge about these plants existed already. There was 60,000+ years of careful observation that they failed to realise, record, respect or engage with in any proper way.

This ‘blind spot’ all these Science people have when it comes to our science, our knowledge embedded in Country, reminded me of the black mass which makes the ‘Emu in the Sky’. The emu is essentially a void but it is this ‘nothing’ which makes the form which tells so much.

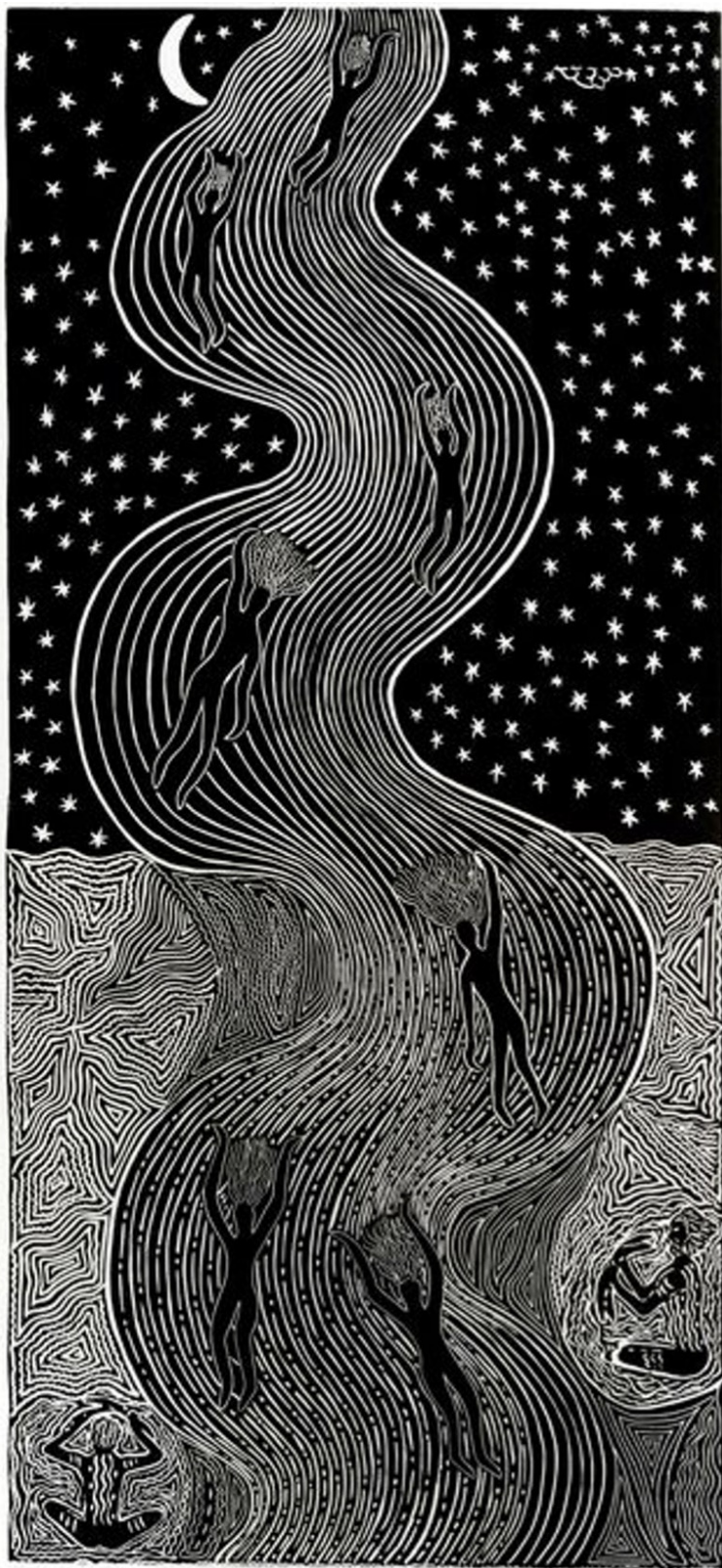
It’s the idea that what you see depends on how you look at it, your own understanding of what is there allows you to see the emu and all the wealth of information she holds, not the blank void.¹⁰

According to Matt Mewburn, the finish to forged metal and ‘how it feels’ accounts for 50 per cent of its beauty. In other words, the finish and the way the gates will feel to the touch will be essential. Bates couldn’t agree more: he saw the Gaudí works on a trip to Spain a couple of decades ago, and the attraction was such that he couldn’t keep from touching Gaudí’s gates or the metalwork he experienced in Seville. He tells a story of custodians having to shoo him away. Gates left raw will rust, and rust is not the best surface to convey the precision and clarity of line of everything Bates has ever made. The finish for the gates is being carefully considered by Mewburn and David McBeath of O.H.M. Consultants, an esteemed metals conservator who is advising on the coating for the gates. Mewburn and McBeath will conduct their experiments and have sample coatings ready for Bates to see when he returns to Sydney in January.¹¹

The ceiling painting will extend the full expanse of the ceiling and be made using durable exterior paint. It will be visible as a stunning backdrop when looking through the gates to the deep space above and behind them. The colours of the painting will be black and white, which the artist explains are his signature colours: ‘My work relates to what I see in the landscape all around me in Barkandji country. For me, Australia is a black and white country. There are light and shade and strong contrasts that I translate into black and white. Barkandji country [is] not colourful all year long. Barkandji country is not anything like Central Desert country and its art of many colours. Black and white will work well on the Foundation site where it won’t clash with other elements like the green of the garden.’¹²

Lighting is being carefully considered to illuminate the full expanse of the gates for the benefit of passers-by and people entering the Foundation headquarters for the many evening events that will be held. A second effect, creating shadowing through the gates onto the footpath, will be produced through a secondary set of lights expertly positioned. The casting of shadows onto the footpath is especially important to the artist, reminding him of the particular way gum trees he is familiar with in Mildura cast a shadow. The ceiling painting will be lit in its entirety from edge to edge.

Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020



23

Uncle Badger Bates
Witu Witolinja – Seven Sisters, 2017
 Linocut print
 40.3 x 63.8cm (image), 55.7 x 75.6cm (sheet)
 Photo: Alexandra Rosenblum/AGSA and © the artist

24



24

Uncle Badger Bates
Emu in the Sky, 2008
 Linocut print
 43.1 x 70.9cm (image), 54.4 x 87.8cm (sheet)
 Photo: © the artist

25



5

The image world of Uncle Badger Bates

Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020

These are Bates’s descriptions of the linocuts reproduced on pages 7–16, drawn from various sources, some written and some transcribed from Bates’s speech at different times, including the catalogue of his linocuts produced in 2019 by Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery.

Mission Mob, Bend Mob, Wilcannia 1950s [Image 5]

This linocut print shows how the river bend to the east of Wilcannia looked in the 1950s. The Mission Houses are neatly lined up, all the same with their toilets and showers out the back. The Mission School is beside the Mission, all the Mission kids and the River Bend kids went to school there.

Some of the families still lived on the river bank like they always had, in tin huts and tents. I lived with my grandmother, grandfather, mother, and my older brother in the two tin huts on the right hand side of the picture near the *Ngatyi* (Rainbow Serpents or Water Snakes) head. Old Grandfather Jack Smith lived in the second hut. To the south of us is the One Mile Billabong where we used to catch yabbies, turtles, shrimp, mussels and fish. To the north of us was the tin hut of Cousin Sonny and Cousin Amy Quayle and their family. To the north of the Quayles is the White Sandhill, it was a special place that belongs to *pytyuka*, the moon. We used to meet the Mission kids there to play, but we were told not to go there after dark as it is a burial place.

On the left hand side of the picture are more tin huts on the river. You can see how the Bend mobs and the Mission Mobs used to visit each other and all go to the river fishing by the foot tracks crisscrossing all over the place. The road into the Mission ended in a circle and we met there to play rounders and have claypan dances. The Bend mob would play rounders against the Mission mob and the winners would play the Mallee Mob who lived to the north of town across the river.

On the print, the main road ends at the river. There is a bridge across the river and the town on the other side, but I did not put these in as in the 1950s I was not allowed to go over the bridge into town. My grandmother was afraid that I would be taken by the welfare if I was seen in town, because I had a white father

and my skin was fair and my hair [blond]. The main road divides the print in half, and represents the path that many kids were taken away on, and the path that some returned on years later, some are still trying to find their way home. My four younger brothers and my sister were all taken away from Auntie Maggie’s river bank camp in a big black car.

Barka The Forgotten River and the Desecration of the Menindee Lakes
[Image 6]

This linocut shows the Barka or Darling river and lakes Pamamaroo, Copi Hollow and Menindee, the wrinkly marks indicate the lakes are drying up and the fish are dying. The three cods in the river are in the weir pool but the rest of the river is drying up.

Warrego-Darling Junction, Toorale [Image 7]

This is where my grandmother, Granny Moysey, and her brothers and sisters were born in the 1870s and 1880s, and they lived there into the early 1900s as it was a safe place for them. My grandmother’s father was the station manager and his brother owned the station. In 1902 and 1903 the famous anthropologist R.H. Mathews interviewed my grandmother’s sister, stepfather, and other relations at this place and he wrote down our language and customs. This linocut print goes back to this time before the irrigation pumps and ploughed paddocks, and shows the junction of the Warrego with the Darling River, and the billabongs, fish, birds and trees. There are many middens and canoe trees along this part of the river that remind me of my ancestors.

Iron Pole Bend, Darling River Wilcannia [Image 8]

The Iron Pole Bend on the Darling River is where Granny used to sit down to fish and she saw the water dog there. We lived near this bend in a tin hut when I was a kid and I walked to the Mission School from here. The river runs diagonally across the print from bottom left to top right, and you can see the fish, yabbies and shrimps in it. The two *Ngatyi* (Rainbow Serpents) in the river are blowing a rainbow. On the middle left you can see the dead fish in the dried-up Lake Wytuycka, this hasn’t had water in it for a long time, but when I was kid it often had water in it and we used to get waterbirds’ eggs there. In the sky you can see *pytyuka*, the moon, the Seven Sisters, and the emu in the Milky Way.

Ngatyi Yarilana (Rainbow Serpents Having Young) [Image 9]

This shows the two *Ngatji* at Ularara Waterhole on the Paroo River near Wanaaring, the female has eggs ready to have young. Up in that area around Jandra on the Darling River, that’s where the two *Ngatji* started travelling and forming the country. They went down through Ularara and Nocoleche, they travelled through Paroo-Darling National Parks, down to White Cliffs. They lay around on a hill in White Cliffs, then past Mutawintji, and they created all the land way over to the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. Then they circled round and came back in at Yancannia and Birndiwarlpa waterhole where they met the young ones that had come underground all the way from the Paroo. They all went back to the Paroo.

One Mile Billabong, Wilcannia [Image 10]

This linoprint of the One Mile Billabong shows a long-necked turtle swimming out of the weeds into the clear water, it has been eating some of the weeds and small snails. I remember this billabong from when I was a kid and I still go back there. We always used to hang out there because we knew we could get a feed of crawfish, mussels, turtle or duck and swan eggs. I was reared up there, learning how to find crawfish in the dry billabong bed. When I grew up I took the young kids there and showed them. We learnt to swim there because it was not as dangerous as the river, we were allowed to go there on our own. There was a lot of mistletoe on the box trees and gum trees which had sweet fruit on it. The billabong was often full of clear water with lots of kinds of weeds that the fish and turtles and that eat. Now it is more often than not a dust bowl, I like to show people in my linoprints what the environment should be like and the relationships between the animals, plants, water and landforms.

No More Catfish [Image 11]

When I was small we used to catch a lot of catfish. Little shells were inside the catfish. You get those very seldom now because the river is polluted. We used to smash those little shells and use them for bait. Granny would tell us to lift up a log – they used to stick to the logs. We would collect them and put them on the fishhook, shell and all. The catfish loved to eat them. When we put the log back we weren’t allowed to push the log, it would break the shell. We had to do it steady, we had to keep up the bait supply. You see in this linoprint some river mussels and some yabbies and some weed. That weed is different to the other weed with the flower on it. We used to catch fish on that weed. On one part of the river you’d go and there was a lot of weed growing, so we’d get it and put it in the billy can and take it to the other bend in the river and we’d catch a lot of black bream.

The catfish is out of the water in this print because today we can’t get catfish, very seldom do you get a catfish. Well you get none really, and I called it ‘no more catfish’, and that’s why it’s out of the water. If you look at the bottom of this print that’s how the river used to be when I was a kid. The black at the top represents the end. It’s the end if we don’t look after everything. Yeah, it’s the end of the ecosystem.

Parntu Thayilana Wiithi (Cod Eating Yabbies) [Image 12]

Granny used to catch cod at the Iron Pole one mile out of Wilcannia on the eastern side of the river. We used to go and fish there, at the big bend in the river and that’s where Granny’s fishing spot was. She used to sit on a bare patch there, we call it a stony bank. It’s like limestone sort of stuff and it’s a good place to fish. Across the river is where Granny saw the Water Dog (a form of the *Ngatyi* or Rainbow Serpent). She used to go to this spot because we lived not far away. Granny used to fish there all the time.

Warrego Karampara (Coroberi), Toorale [Image 13]

The men are singing and the brolgas dancing near the swamps along the Warrego on Toorale. The brolgas are my ancestors. The Toorale hills in the background are very important as they are covered in silcrete and chert which was quarried

and made into stone tools that were traded along the Darling River and out into the back country. The Warrego cuts through the hills making deep waterholes and a ‘choke’ where the floodwaters banked up and spilled out onto the western floodplain, which is where the brolgas gather and dance even today.

Wiimpatja Paakana Nhaartalana (Me fishing in the Darling River)
[Image 14]

Wiimpatja Paakana Nhaartalana is me fishing on the Darling River and what I tried to do in this print was to go back to the time before when we had a fishing spear, fishing like the old people used to do it. When I was a kid we used to make spears out of wire, bull wire, and go and spear fish because the water was clean which it’s not anymore. We used to dive for fish and you could see them even 8 or 10 feet away from you sometimes.

Public Art for The Paul
Ramsay Foundation Sydney
headquarters – update of
8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn
and the artists 2020

6

Methodology and process to date

Public Art for The Paul
Ramsay Foundation Sydney
headquarters – update of
8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn
and the artists 2020

The chart in Appendix A sets out the stages being followed to deliver the two works by Bates.

Bates is anticipated to make a total of four visits from Wilcannia/ Broken Hill to Sydney: three to progress the artworks and a fourth to attend the dedication of his art at the time of the official opening of the Ramsay headquarters.

Following the Zoom conference of 8 October 2020, Bates made an initial site and working visit (9–13 November). In those three days he worked with Matt Mewburn at Eveleigh Works to conceive and lay out the three panels of the gates, and started to make forged elements for the central section of them. Gabriele Ulacco worked with the artist to generate the first set of concept drawings required to fabricate the artwork, which are submitted as part of this report. On 9 November Bates toured the new headquarters site with Michael Grant and Adam Haddow who explained their vision to him. Geoff Finch, Peter Davis, Grant and Haddow met with Bates and Mewburn at Eveleigh Works on 11 November to see firsthand the progress that had been made. Other meetings were held with the lighting designer proposed and the crew who will paint the ceiling. Kylie Kwong, renowned chef and Ambassador for Food, Culture and Community for South Eveleigh, dropped by.

A second working visit to blacksmith the work is scheduled for 17–23 January 2021. A third visit to complete and inspect the work prior to installation on site will take place in March 2021. Bates will visit a fourth time to approve and sign off on the installation of the artwork and attend the official dedication of the artwork and the new headquarters building.

7

Working team

Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020

Uncle Badger Bates, artist

Professor Glyn Davis AC, Chief Executive Officer, The Paul Ramsay Foundation

Cindy Penrose, Chief Operating Officer, The Paul Ramsay Foundation

Michael Grant, Director, Cornerstone Property Group, developer

Geoff Finch, Creative Resolution (Australia) Pty Ltd, project manager

Adam Haddow, Director, SJB, architect

Barbara Flynn, Barbara Flynn Pty Ltd, public art advisor

Peter Davis, Mainbrace Construction, construction director providing engineering services

Matt Mewburn, Owner, Eveleigh Works, fabricator

Gabriele Ulacco, Shop 1, architect liaising with the artist to prepare concept and construction drawings

David McBeath, O.H.M. Consultants, metals conservator advising on protective coatings for the gates

Proposed and yet to be confirmed: Tim Carr, Australasia Leader Lighting, Arup, tendering for role of art lighting designer



Photos: Mark Pokorny



Photos: Mark Pokorny



Photos: Barbara Flynn

Notes



Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020

- 1
- Flynn was appointed as public art advisor for the project on 17 June 2020. She worked quickly to come up with possible locations for art and a shortlist of artists who would work successfully in those locations, and presented her ideas to representatives of the Foundation on 29 June 2020. Other early proposals included a bas-relief work for the parapet; a mosaic for the entry portico; and a sound work for the public garden. The opportunity to commission Uncle Badger Bates to make the gates and ceiling painting for the portico entry was the recommendation of Flynn and the unanimous choice of the Foundation.
- 2
- Quoting from a telephone conversation between Bates and Flynn, 16 July 2020.
- 3
- From a text by Bates about the linocut *One Mile Billabong*, *Wilcannia* (2005). See Image 10.
- 4
- Bates speaks of his earliest efforts to carve emu eggs at the age of eight and demonstrates his technique in linocut in a video produced by Art Gallery of South Australia for *Tarnanthi: Festival of Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art*, 18 October 2019 – 27 January 2020: see AGSA, *Tarnanthi 2019 – Badger Bates*, YouTube, 7 October 2019, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0PgtDxWCo4. A 2013 video produced by the Art Gallery of New South Wales provides extensive detail on the artist's subject matter and carving technique: see AGNSW, *Artist Badger Bates*, YouTube, 5 June 2013, www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKmzfnEtSbw.
- 5
- William Brian (Badger) Bates, submission to Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission, South Australian Department of Environment and Water, 2018, p. 1, www.environment.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/public/river_murray/royal-commission/submissions/william-badger-bates-barkandji-nsw-mdb-rc-gen.pdf.
- 6
- As remarked several times in conversation with Barbara Flynn in Sydney, November 2020.
- 7
- Bates, submission to Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission, p. 1.
- 8
- Quoted in Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery, catalogue of linocut prints of Uncle Badger Bates, 2019.
- 9
- Science Gallery Melbourne, *Emu Sky Beginnings with Zena Cumpston*, introduction to exhibition curated by Zena Cumpston, 2020, <https://melbourne.sciencegallery.com/blog/emu-sky-exhibition-zena-cumpston>.
- 10
- Zena Cumpston, quoted in Science Gallery Melbourne, *Emu Sky Beginnings with Zena Cumpston*.
- 11
- From Flynn's notes of Zoom meeting, 8 October 2020.
- 12
- In conversation with Barbara Flynn at Eveleigh Works, Sydney, 11 November 2020.

Photos: Barbara Flynn

Appendix A

Public Art for The Paul Ramsay Foundation Sydney headquarters – update of 8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn and the artists 2020

Indicative stages of public art projects

The following table sets out the milestones of a public art project.

1	Initial stage
Stage	Project milestones
Site analysis, curatorial research and artist identification	Advice of art advisor
Contracting of art advisor	Execute art advisor’s contract
Template artwork contract provided for review	Form and convene sessions of working group
Art budget recommended	
Discussions of the possible artists matched to sites	
Develop shortlist of artists	
Direct commission or competition managed by art advisor	
Successful artist(s) selected	
Reporting to the relevant consent authority or authorities	

2 Commissioning of artist stage

Stage	Project milestones
Draft provisional cost plan in consultation with artist, to be amended as concept and materials are further refined	Site visits and artist briefings by architects and art advisor Start discussions with engineer and lighting consultant Ongoing briefings of artist by architects Research and confirmation of materials selection
Final artwork concept	
Finalising of artwork contract	
Reporting to the relevant consent authority or authorities	

3 Creation of artwork stage

Stage	Project milestones
Design development	
Identifying possible fabricator(s)	
Commissioning of prototypes	Prototyping
Tender	Reconfirm costings
Engagement of successful tenderer(s)	
Preparing DA documentation	
Construction documentation	
Ongoing reporting to the relevant consent authority or authorities	

4 Fabrication and preparations for installation

Stage	Project milestones
Fabrication	Fabricate artwork
Complete artwork lighting design	Commissioner undertakes artwork lighting and site preparation with input from the artist and art advisor Light fixtures ordered
Preparations for transport	
Site preparation	

5 Final delivery and installation stage

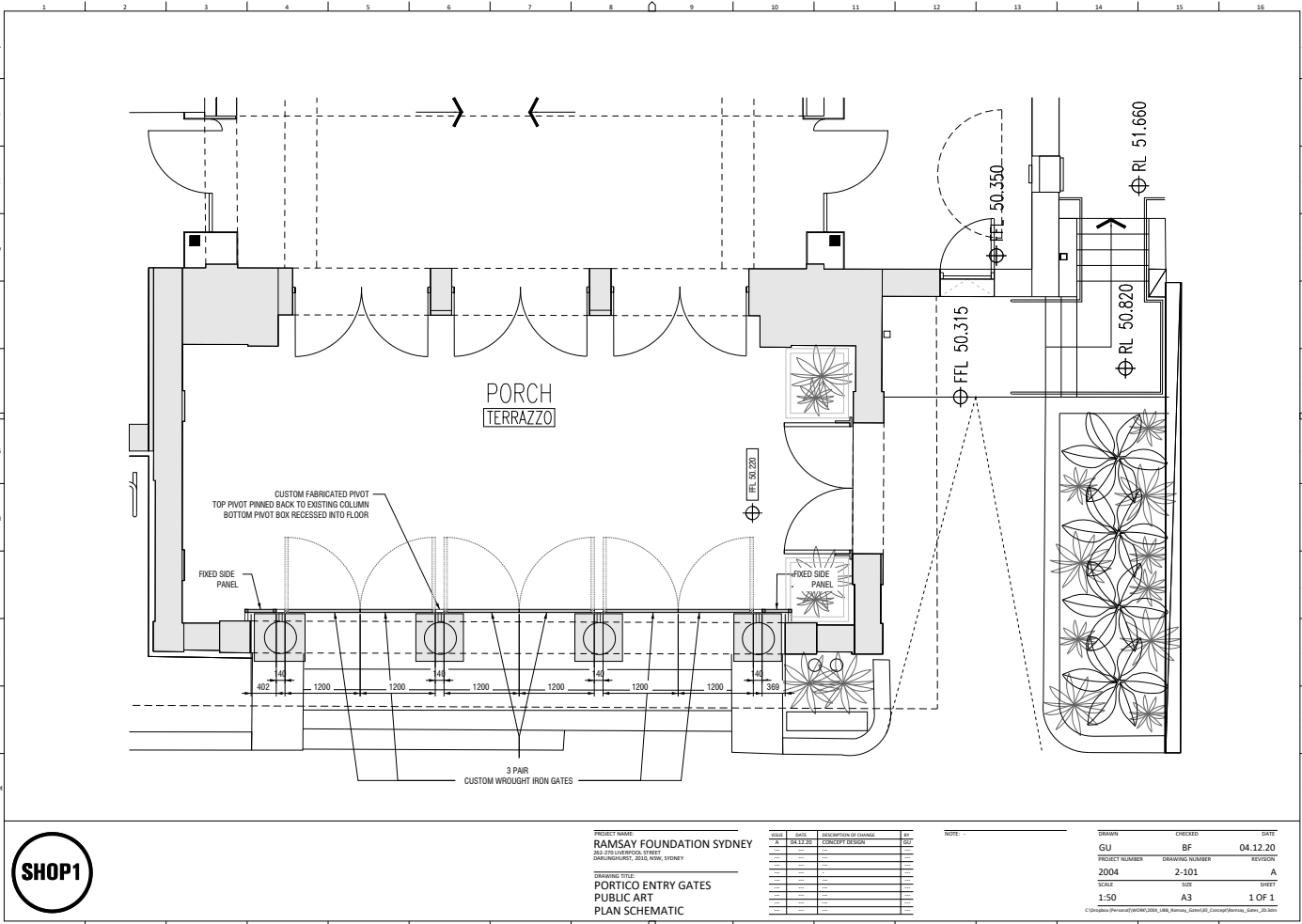
Stage	Project milestones
Transport	Deliver and install artwork
Installation	
Maintenance manual	Complete maintenance manual by artist
Inspection and acceptance	Mandatory site visit by artist for final inspection and acceptance
Defects rectification	Rectify any defects by artist
Signage, promotional material, catalogue	Confirm and complete title, signage, writing about the artwork
Artwork photography	Photograph the work

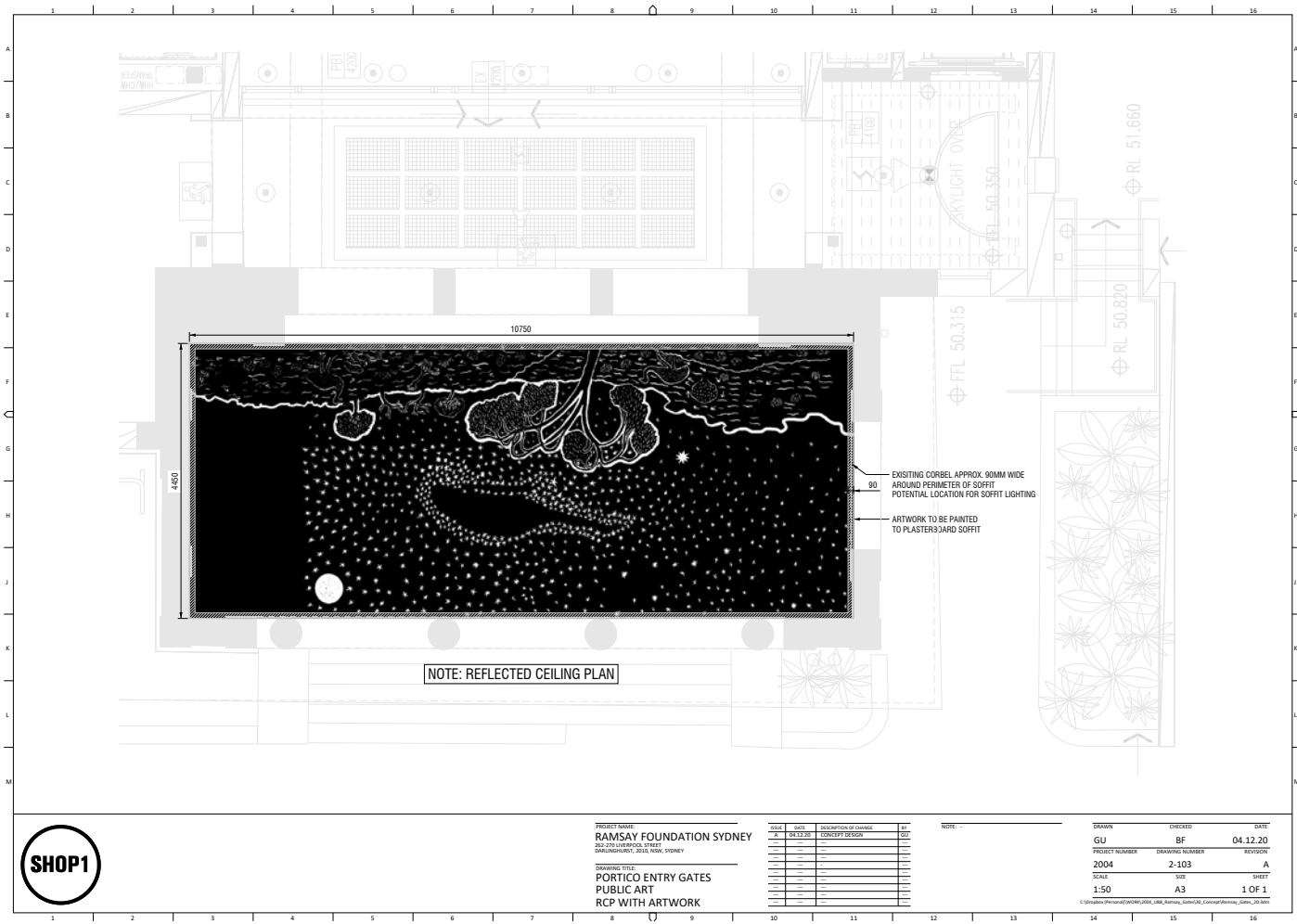
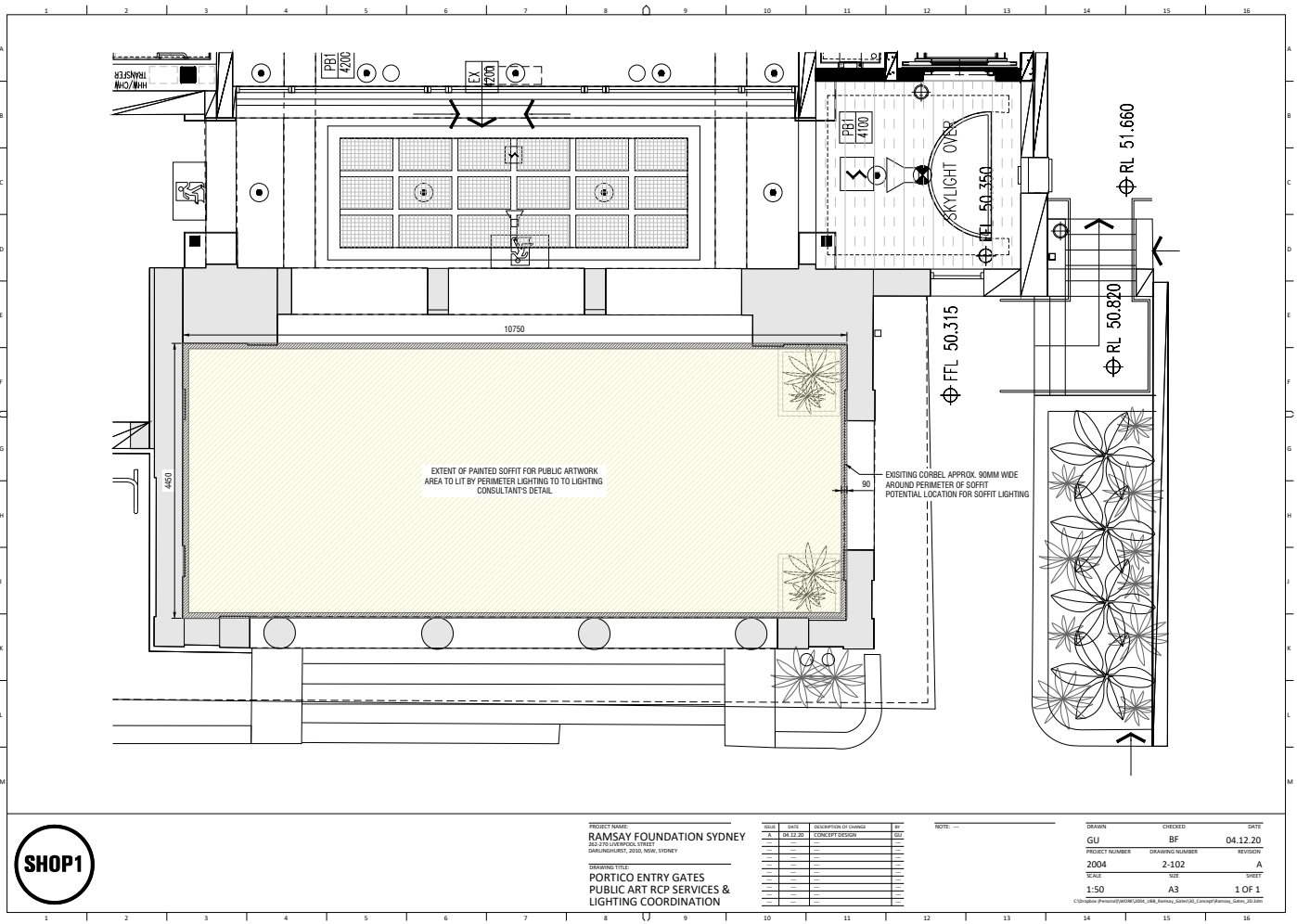
6 Launch

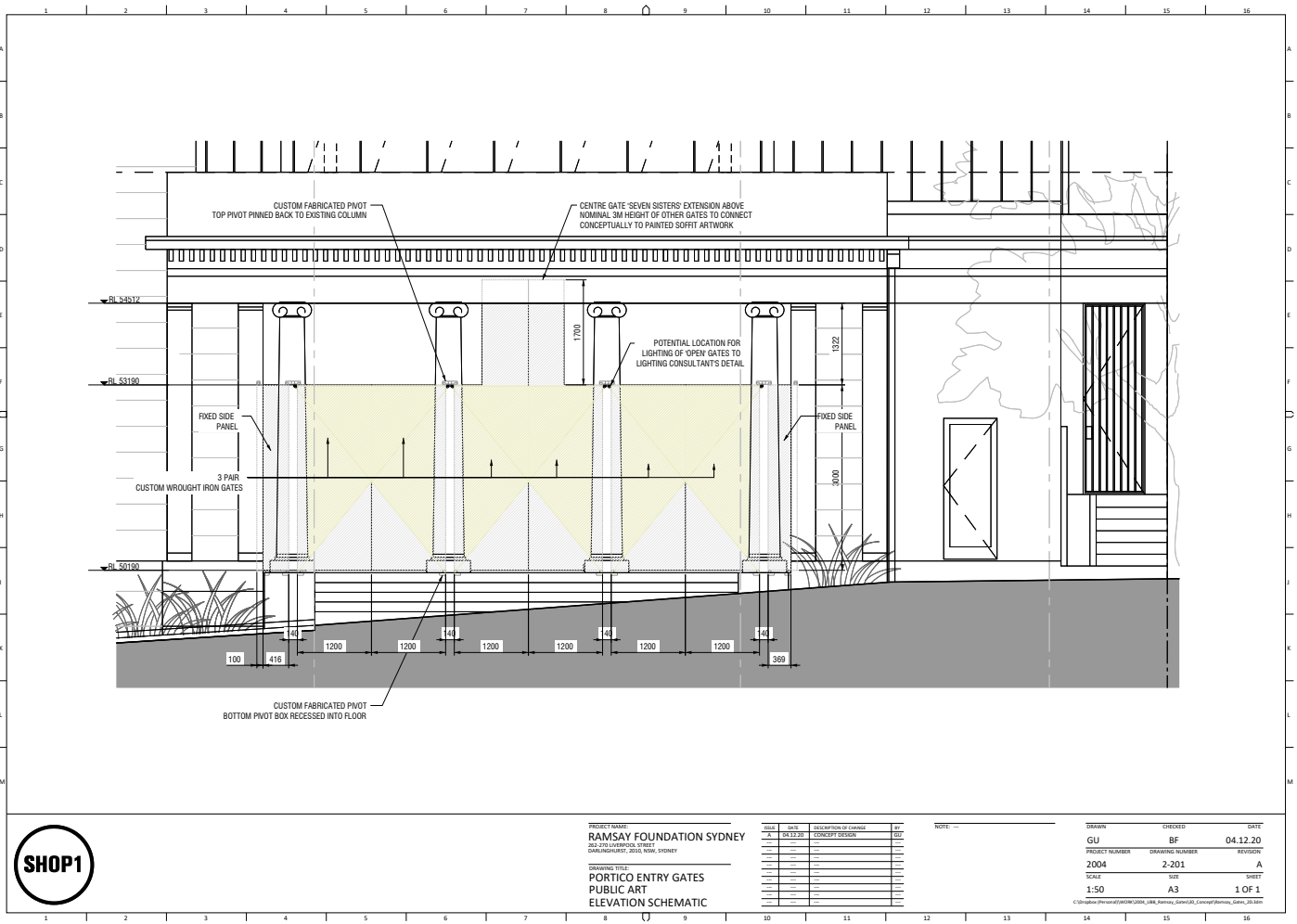
Stage	Project milestones
Launch	Launch with artist in attendance

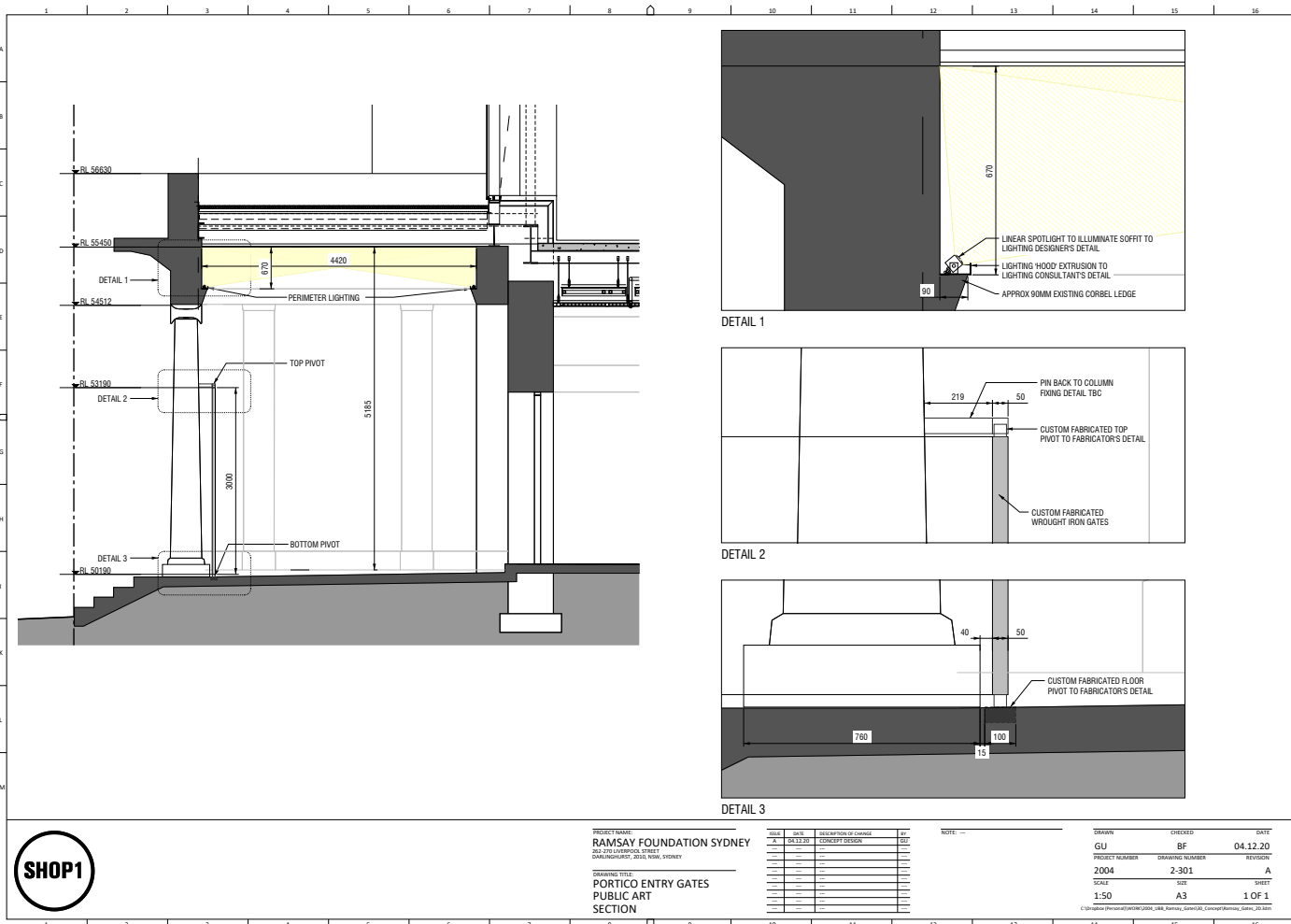
Appendix B

Public Art for The Paul
Ramsay Foundation Sydney
headquarters – update of
8 December 2020
Copyright © Barbara Flynn
and the artists 2020











F L Y N N

Barbara Flynn Pty Ltd
51/117 Macleay Street
Potts Point, NSW 2011
Mail to: PO Box 1671
Potts Point, NSW 1335 Australia
barbara@barbaraflynn.com
AU +61 (0) 411 877 379