



New murals set to brighten up Armidale's CBD

Local artist James O'Hanlon has started painting one of a series of murals set to add a splash of colour to the Armidale Mall and its laneways as part of a NSW Government funded project by Armidale Regional Council and Renew Armidale.

Mr O'Hanlon was selected to spruce up the Perrot Arcade, and began work on painting the interior wall and front entrance on Moore Street last week.

Armidale Regional Council Mayor Ian Tiley said the project is a great way to add some vibrancy to the CBD.

"Public art is a fantastic way to breathe life into a space and make our CBD more inviting," said Cr. Tiley.

"Council and Renew Armidale chose James for his creative and colourful designs that will liven up the arcade and hopefully have positive impacts on the businesses operating within the arcade."

The designs created by Mr O'Hanlon celebrate the diverse birdlife that calls the Armidale region home.

Some of the featured feathered friends include the regent honeyeater, the king parrot, and the superb fairy wren.

In his submission, Mr O'Hanlon said the design builds upon the avian theme already present in the area through existing murals, and complements the nearby buildings.

"The clothing on the birds reflects the art deco stylings of nearby architecture including the Tattersall's Hotel opposite the arcade," said Mr O'Hanlon.

He also said the artworks will encourage interaction and excitement among people walking past.

"People can pose for photos with their feathered friends, share them online, and enhance the reach of Armidale's new avian citizens far beyond just the mural wall," he said.

The paintings will be scattered through the arcade, with designs positioned opposite Laneway Café, opposite Bennie Bottles, and at the front exterior wall on Moore Street.

Mr O'Hanlon won't be the only artist brightening up the area, with another mural set to be created on the wall of the BooBooks laneway next to the Tattersall's hotel. Charlie Nivison, otherwise known as Sillypear, will join Christian Peterson, also known as CRISP, to collaborate on the project.

The murals project falls under the Armidale Mall and Laneways Beautification Project, which has been funded by a \$60,000 Streets as Shared Spaces grant from the NSW Government.

The winners of the pop-up installation competition were also announced, with four successful applicants set to install temporary art installations in the Mall in the first two weeks of April.

The pop-up competition is also part of the Mall and Laneways Beautification Project, and is a way to add excitement to the Mall.

For more information about the winners and their installations, see below:

Charlie Winter - Charlie's project is called the 'Threlfall Hydro Serpent', and explores the connections between sustainable energy and the landscape.

Jules Harris - Jules came up with the idea of the 'Young Amazon', which highlights Minnie Webb and Australia's first all-female fire-fighting team from the early 1900s.

Trish Donald - Trish's project is called 'Beetles Galore', and will be an installation of paper-mache Christmas beetles, inviting viewers to contribute memories of summers and beetles.

Judy Grieve and the Armidale and District Historical Society - 'Beardy Street Then and Now' will be a photographic display showcasing the changes in Beardy Street in the past 170 years.