

John Kelly project to cement Sunshine's status as heart of west

MEDIA RELEASE

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Brimbank City Council Chair of Administrators, John Watson, is delighted to announce that John Kelly's *Man lifting cow* sculpture is well underway at Fundère Studios in Sunshine and is set to be unveiled in early September.

Backed by substantial financial and in-kind support from both philanthropic and corporate organisations, the significant 5-metre-high art installation forms part of Kelly's famous international series of cow sculptures and is soon to be situated in the heart of Sunshine, where Kelly grew up.

Once completed, *Man lifting cow* will sit adjacent to the new Brimbank Civic and Community Centre on Hampshire Road. Usually the preserve of major city centres such as London, Paris and Monte Carlo, this sculpture will act as a beacon signifying Sunshine's re-emergence as one of Australia's great centres.

By promoting active community connections, it is hoped the project will assist in rebuilding social capital and attracting visitors to the Sunshine Town Centre. For the City of Brimbank, *Man lifting cow* presents an opportunity to foster cultural understanding and civic pride in a region with historic disadvantage.

Mr Watson has praised Kelly for his generous contribution to the community as well as the open-handedness of philanthropic and corporate organisations working together to bring the project to life.

"This project demonstrates how a collaborative approach between artists, corporates, councils and philanthropic organisation can deliver significant and lasting social and economic benefits to people through the arts," said Mr Watson.

"It is destined to become a regional icon, drawing national and international attention to Brimbank. It is also symbol of the gutsy, strong, and hard-working character that makes Melbourne's west great," he said.

The sculptor marks Kelly most personal piece of work - a monument for his father who still lives in Sunshine and who is battling cancer. He has expressed hope that the project will inspire everyone in Sunshine who dreams 'big' and his joy at being involved in collaborative community project.

"I've been truly overwhelmed by the amount of enthusiasm surrounding this project. I feel a strong connection to Sunshine and am thrilled that this sculpture, with so much personal meaning, will mark the spot where our family arrived and prospered in Australia," said John Kelly.

"My biggest hope is that the community is inspired by the sculpture and that Sunshine continues to foster artists of the future," he said.

Council's three principal partners are Sotheby's Australia, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation and Sunshine Marketplace. The Sun Foundation is a major supporter and the project supporters are Sunshine Business Association, the Victorian Government, Kane Construction, Bonacci, Lyons Architects and Big West Festival.

About the re-emergence of Sunshine

The significance of Sunshine is being rediscovered by the Victorian Government in their Plan Melbourne, a metropolitan planning strategy which identifies Sunshine as a location that will experience substantial growth and development.

Man lifting cow is one of many projects transforming Sunshine and building its reputation as the heart of Melbourne's west. To celebrate its imminent unveiling, Brimbank City Council and partners have invited the community to get involved in a series of arts initiatives: the 1000 Cows Project, the VCE Art Prize and the John Kelly Exhibition and Education Program.

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