



Photo: Lindy Allen

NEWS

The first ever Art & Industry festival finished on Sunday 27 November after delivering 20 events over 10 days. It included the two major events opening and closing the

festival, exhibitions, performances, street art, installations, two open days at mega factories Qenos and Toyota, an industry networking breakfast, walking tours and Westside Cool which shone a spotlight on the businesses of west side makers and creators.

Art & Industry Festival Artistic Director Donna Jackson said, "The Industrial Fashion event on Friday 18 November was a fantastic way to introduce people to the idea of the festival and SPARK Family Night was a great way of introducing families and kids to the festival. I'm really happy about those two events in terms of different methods for getting people to think about art and industry."

The last major event for the first Art & Industry Festival, SPARK Family Night, took place at Seaworks in Williamstown on Friday 27 November. An estimated 2,000 people, predominantly local families with children, enjoyed a wide variety of entertainment and participatory events, including fireworks, car crushing, sideshows and music.

SPARK Family Night aimed to provide an old-style family night of fun that could both entertain diverse audiences as well as provide an avenue for them celebrate the unique industrially-focused culture of their local area. The elements of SPARK were carefully chosen to move people away from being passive recipients of mass culture to absorbing, in an interesting way, true stories and experiences of the history of heritage of Hobsons Bay.

Organisers are very pleased with attendance figures with over 4,000 people attending the various programmed events and a further 20,000 attending the Toyota Open Day which included an Art & Industry installation in the Press Shop. Several projects offered opportunities for direct community engagement with over 200 participants aged 7 to 70, including students from two local schools, working alongside artists in costume design, shadow puppetry, photography, film and storytelling projects.

Mayor of Hobsons Bay, Cr Sandra Wilson said, "Hobsons Bay is absolutely proud to be the festival partner in this inaugural Art & Industry festival. It's been mind-blowingly good. We feel extremely lucky that Newport local Donna Jackson, with her rich experience as a producer, sought out the opportunity to work close to home with us to deliver these amazing immersive experiences in art, community connection and creativity, drawing it all together under a rich industrial theme. We are really keen to explore the future of this festival."

The Art & Industry Festival sincerely thanks all the artists, participants, sponsors, delivery partners, business owners and residents of Hobsons Bay for making this new festival feel like a welcome addition to the cultural life of the inspiring and industrially-enthused western suburbs.



ZOYA MARTIN
ALTONA RESIDENT AND ARTIST

TALKING HANDS

During the festival there was a strong response to the large format photography exhibition of black and white images by Altona resident Zoya Martin. Talking Hands explored the diverse experiences of Hobsons Bay workers, their skills, struggles and passions as told by their hands. The exhibition was at Woods Street Arts Space, Laverton. The photos were also presented as part of SPARK Family Night at Seaworks..

Through Talking Hands, Zoya aimed to create beautiful, authentic, arresting images that would resonate with project participants and the broader community and highlight the diversity of the community. Zoya also wanted to increase local access and participation with the Wood Street Arts Space and extend her skills as an artist, developing an idea from 'a seed' and delivering an exhibition.

Zoya worked as a graphic designer and illustrator for over a decade, and is currently undertaking a Masters in Arts Therapy. She also has an Honours Degree in Graphic Design. Following her participation in Donna Jackson's 'Lion Taming your Arts Project' workshops, held over 3 months from February to April 2016, Zoya went into the homes of more than a dozen workers from a wide variety of industries to talk about their work lives and capture something of that history via images of their hands. The focus on hands was deliberately chosen because it encouraged people to open up more easily than if she was asking them to participate in a portrait session. By asking them to think about what their hands were doing throughout their working life, her subjects were comfortable sharing personal details and stories.

She began the project at home with her father, Rob Martin, a former aircraft builder who also built their family home in Altona in 1980. One of his thumbnails

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Photo: Jenny Dumm



has been black as long as Zoya can remember and this was the first time she had spoken to him about the process of building their home and what it meant to him.

Subjects of the Talking Hands project included a boat-builder, a nurse from the Altona hospital, a football maker from the famous Sherrin family and a youth worker. Through exploring stories of working lives in the western suburbs in this way, Zoya has been able to tease out impacts of what we all might think of as workplace improvements, mechanisation which makes life easier for workers but has the unfortunate side effect of distancing workers physically from the product they were creating. This physical connection to hand made objects is something many people now crave.

In launching the exhibition, Donna acknowledged that Zoya had developed a concept that perfectly fit with the aims of the festival in honouring the past in ways that can contribute to designing the future. "Zoya has been able to capture something about each and every person in these beautiful photographs. It's really added depth to the festival. It recognises the hard work done by people in this area in a way that really honours their working lives."

The Lion Taming process was great. It was wonderful to have Donna Jackson as a mentor, to help me bring all this to fruition. Before being involved in this festival, I don't think I would have considered myself an artist. Donna demystified the whole process. One day she said, 'Being an artist is having a list of things, you have an idea, you know what you want to accomplish, you make your list and you just work through it.' It sounds very unromantic, but this approach makes it feel achievable.

- Zoya Martin

Music for the opening was provided by the band MindJam. The artist also noted the generous support she received from her father who provided technical support and assistance in hanging the show and Hobsons Bay City Council staff, particularly Tania Blackwell.

A SAMPLE OF WHAT PEOPLE SAID ABOUT THE FIRST ART & INDUSTRY FESTIVAL

IF: INDUSTRIAL FASHION

"I thought it was outstanding. I felt proud, being a local. It is showcasing the region and showcasing it well with style and great humour."

- Steve Bracks, former Premier of Victoria.

TOYOTA PLANT OPEN DAY

"I loved the oral histories that were part of the Art & Industry installation at Toyota. The open day was a chance to pay tribute to the amazing workers and their skills."

- Anne Duggan, local resident and coordinator CFMEU Training Unit.

WESTSIDE COOL LAUNCH

"We loved being involved in Westside Cool. We've had a definite increase in traffic."

- Lou Bernath business owner of One in a Mill.

SPARK: AN OLD STYLE FAMILY NIGHT OF FUN

"It was absolutely brilliant and what a backdrop - we've got the city and the boats and everything right on our doorstep. I hope it makes the whole of Hobsons Bay proud of our industrial heritage and that it brings us together in a sense of pride for what we can do."

- Vicki Passmore, local resident.

ART & INDUSTRY FESTIVAL

"People have been so impressed that this is an event for their area, it's very specific and people have taken an ownership of it very quickly, they've connected."

- Tony Mead, artist for the street art project Industria to Suburbia.

WHERE TO FROM HERE

Following the presentation of the first Art & Industry Festival, the Artistic Director and the cultural team from Hobsons Bay City Council will undertake a process of review and evaluation to help inform future plans. The intention is to present the festival biennially to allow two years of authentic engagement by the community, industry and artists in the development of high-quality arts projects.

STOP PRESS : HOW TO STAY IN TOUCH

The Art & Industry Festival is online. If you haven't done so yet, sign up for our newsletter. Once organisers have established future plans for the festival, opportunities for creative arts development and local business partnerships will be available so make sure you are first to hear about these. You will also be able to view images from the 2016 festival as they are collated and published. www.artandindustry.com.au