

NOMANSLANDING



Nomanslanding is a contemplative floating artwork experience.

5 artists - Artists Robyn Backen, Andre Dekker, Graham Eatough Nigel Helyer and Jennifer Turpin were invited by three curators from Australia, Germany and Scotland to work together to create a site specific touring artwork, a world wide commemoration of WWI.

'Nomansland' is that place between two army forces in World War I that no one wanted to traverse – an impasse, the gap of fear and uncertainty between the two opposing sides. Nomanslanding is a creative poetic reimagining of this empty space. In the artwork 'Nomansland' becomes a space of memory and metaphor. It becomes a place for the audience to contemplate states of vulnerability that happen during conflict, and a lament on the sadness of loss and devastation of war.

A circle inside a square. A dome inside a box. The pure simple geometric forms of the floating structure resonate with traditional commemorative and spiritual architecture; dome as chapel, slatted walls as temple.

The Nomanslanding dome is conceived as a space where different voices, languages and sounds can reverberate, ricochet and be whispered. In the manner of much traditional sacred architecture the perfect dome is a piece of acoustic architecture, creating acoustic 'sweet spots' and resonances.

A six part performance takes place every 25 minutes presenting the audience with an abstract ; It begins with the audience being processed and prepared for the crossing in army tents on floating barges, moving to a processional experience of going out over the floating walkways. Participants are ushered into the dome by a dark figure who controls the movement of the dome /boat. He is like the mythological character 'Charon', the boatman who ferried the dead across the River Styx. Within the open dome an abstract soundscape conjures the 'going off to war'. As the dome closes the audience is engulfed by sounds of conflict and battle. The darkness of the closed dome and changing soundscape evokes the thoughts, feeling memories and realities of being inside the head of a soldier on the edge of death. A solo performer begins to sing a lament, an elegy, a reflection and contemplation – conjuring sadness and loss. As the doors open and light floods in the lament culminated in a moment symbolizing hope and redemption.

Artists

Jennifer Turpin, Robyn Backen, Andre Dekker, Graham Eatough, Nigel Helyer

Date

2015

Description

Floating artwork, internal dome 10 metres diameter, 6 metres high

Materials

steel, timber, PVC plastic, buoyancy bladders

Location

Darling Harbour, Sydney, Australia
1st April – 3rd May 2015,
Merchant City Festival, Glasgow,
Scotland 13th July – 2nd August
2015,
Ruhrtriennale, Duisberg, Germany
14th August – 13th September 2015

Client

Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority
Glasgow Life
Urbane Kunste Ruhr, Germany

Engineer

Event Engineering