

Audio tour tells a sculptured story

An Australian writer is helping to promote a popular tourist attraction at Dandry Gorge, deep in the heart of the Pilliga Forest.

by LIZ CUTTS

Illawarra based author, Simon Luckhurst, has been commissioned to create a podcast of the Sculptures in the Scrub located near Baradine.

When people visit Dandry Gorge in the Pilliga Forest and view the sculptures, they will also be able to see and hear from the creators of the works by listening to content uploaded to their mobile phones or iPods.

Podcasting has become an important marketing tool for tourist destinations. Simon takes visitors on a guided tour of the stunning sculpture sites.

Interviews with the five sculptors explore the creative relationship the five artists have developed with the landscape.

"The brief was to develop podcasts so that visitors to the sculptures could download the information onto their phones or media players," explained Mr. Luckhurst.

"We wanted to give them a sense of what the artists were thinking when they designed them; the process of making the sculpture and a bit about the artists themselves.

"The project has been brilliant for me because I got to go and spend a day with these amazing people doing such amazing things. Then working on information about the latest sculpture and coming up and seeing artist Pamela Denise, talking to her mosaic team and being able to watch them do such beautiful things."

Mr. Luckhurst said that one of the things that impressed him most about the Dandry Gorge Aboriginal site is the fact that visitors can interact with the art.

"This is an amazing area by itself before you put art works like this in it," continued Mr. Luckhurst. "I love the concept of public art and the fact that people can come and access it so easily; these sculptures just enhance the natural

beauty.

"I love the fact that you have to drive through the Pilliga and absorb it to get to the sculptures

"Then when you see these pieces and how much they complement what is here, it is staggering. The sculptures not only complement the natural area, they complement and relate to each other.

Many stories

"I like the way they tell so many stories. I like the way Pamela's new sculpture seems to evolve out of the ground, almost as if it has grown here. None of the sculptures intrude on the landscape, it as if they have been here for eons."

As well as being the author of 'Eddie's Country', Simon Luckhurst has written and directed several short films, as well as the plays 'Discovering Juliet', 'Curtains for Biggles', 'The Unsheltered', 'Nude All-Stars on the Mango Planet of Love', 'Concerto for Humans and Semtex' and 'Lines in the Sand'.

"My background for this project is primarily as a writer," added Mr. Luckhurst. "I recently returned from Thursday Island where I produced a sort of soap opera with an embedded health message called 'Kasa Por Yarn'. This has been a great project to work on in terms of working with people and bringing things back to community.

"But this is a very powerful project and all the stories are locally derived. It is a joy to get a job like this and talk to all the people involved. These are people who are not content to sit back, but get out there and make things happen.

"The expertise and the passion are bringing people here and enriching everyone."

When it comes online, the podcast should be accessible through the Office of Environment and Heritage website. A booklet about the sculpture project will also be available.




Writer Simon Luckhurst will take visitors on an audio tour of the Sculptures in the Scrub.

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