

## 8.12. The North Sydney Art Prize 2022

**AUTHOR:** Jess Gledhill, Team Leader Arts & Culture

**ENDORSED BY:** Rebecca Aukim, Director Community and Library Services

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. North Sydney Art Prize 2022 - photographs of award winners and exhibition [8.12.1 - 6 pages]
2. North Sydney Art Prize 2022 - social media buzz document for report (002) [8.12.2 - 5 pages]

### **PURPOSE:**

To provide a report on the North Sydney Art Prize held at the Coal Loader from 14 - 29 May 2022 which attracted approximately 10,000-15,000 visitors over the 16-day exhibition period.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Art Prize is a major biennial event on Council's calendar and the largest arts event of its kind on the north side of Sydney, attracting thousands of visitors from across the region to the Coal Loader.

For the 2022 Art Prize, 110 artworks were exhibited from over 360 entries. Drawings, works on/with paper, sculpture, installations, and new media were exhibited across the Coal Loader's cottage, artist studio, tunnels, chambers, and parklands. A curatorial brief provided a contemporary framework encouraging artists to consider the overarching principles of the Centre for Sustainability and the Coal Loader's layered history.

The Art Prize received positive feedback from the sponsors, artists, and visitors, acknowledging the role that North Sydney Council plays in developing, supporting, and promoting the creative arts in the region through the delivery of a meaningful, accessible, quality, and relevant contemporary arts experience.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Funding for this project was included in the adopted 2021/22 budget. The program budget is \$76,000 inclusive of \$22,000 in Council funded prize monies for the Major Open and Emerging Artists' awards.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** the report be received.

## **LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

### **4. Our Social Vitality**

4.1 North Sydney is connected, inclusive, healthy and safe

4.2 A centre for creativity and learning

## **BACKGROUND**

In March 2013 a revitalised North Sydney Art Prize was held at the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability exhibiting new media, sculpture and installation-based works alongside two-dimensional artworks. A Curatorial Brief provided a contemporary framework while maintaining a local and inclusive attitude. Importantly, the revised format has significantly raised the profile of the Art Prize which is now a major biennial event on Council's calendar and the largest arts event of its kind on the Northside of Sydney, attracting thousands of visitors from across the region.

## **CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

Community engagement is not required.

## **DETAIL**

### **Organisation and Participation**

In 2022, the North Sydney Art Prize received over 360 entries by emerging to established artists with 110 selected by a panel of arts professionals in consultation with the Curator (Council's Team Leader Arts & Culture).

In 2022, there was a significant shift in visitor demographics; the exhibition attracting a younger and more culturally and linguistically diverse audience. For example, young people aged 25 – 35 years and of East Asian descent represented approximately fifty percent of visitors.

This shift was likely the result of the exhibition creating a "buzz" across social media, particularly platforms popular with younger people such as Xiaohongshu (Little Red book) and Instagram due to the "Instagrammable" quality of the immersive art installations, many of which harnessed light and new media, to transform the subterranean tunnels and chambers in ways not previously explored.

## **Sponsorship**

There were 6 prize categories and 4 sponsors with a total cash value of \$41,000 as follows:

- \$20,000 Major Open Award, \$12,000 Award for Sculpture and \$2,000 Emerging Artist Award sponsored by North Sydney Council
- \$5,000 Site Specific Award sponsored by Australian Catholic University
- \$1,000 Work on/with Paper Award sponsored by Primrose Park Arts & Craft Centre Inc.
- \$1,000 Award for Drawing sponsored by the Royal Art Society of NSW

With the unexpected and late withdrawal of a major sponsor, Council increased its support for the Art Prize sponsoring the Major Open Award, Award for Sculpture and Emerging Artist Award. The required sponsorship monies were pooled from the Arts and Recreation budget.

All sponsors were gratefully acknowledged in the promotional material, advertising, and exhibition catalogues. They were also formally thanked at the opening event and in the form of a letter and exhibition material after the exhibition.

## **Selection Panel**

- Hayley French, Acting Director, Parramatta Artists' Studios
- Bronwyn Tuohy, Public Art and Placemaking Leader, Inner West Council
- Susan Milne, Artist, Curator and Co-Founder, Eramboo Artist Environment

The selection process was outlined on the Art Prize webpage and in the 'Entry Form' and 'Conditions of Entry' in accordance with Arts Law NSW. All entries were submitted online expediting the entry and data management process.

The process for selection was also revised which enabled the written material to be viewed on line rather than amassing printing material for a one off use only. Images were copied onto a USB which also kept the amount of printed material to a minimum. Judging took place over one day and selected artists were notified on the website.

## **Selected Works**

The panel selected 110 works for exhibition. Winners were selected on site by the selection panel following installation. Most selected artists resided in Sydney Metro and Regional NSW areas, however artists from the QLD, VIC and WA were also represented the program's national significance.

## **Award Recipients**

- **Major Open Award**, Alyson Bell, The Twilight Hour
- **Award for Sculpture**, Stevie Fieldsend, Still (once trees)
- **Site Specific Award**, Saskia Everingham, Phoenix Trees
- **Work on/with Paper Award**, Ariella Friend, Where the great brown rocks are grand
- **Emerging Artist Award**, Ryan Andrew Lee, Wonnarua
- **Award for Drawing**, Sylvia Griffin, Material Palimpsest

## **Administration**

The Art Prize is a logistical, physical, and administratively intense project involving primarily staff from the Arts & Culture Team in Community Development. Some basic support is provided by the Coal Loader staff and the Communications & Event staff where appropriate, however the organisation, management and delivery of the Art Prize rests with the Team Leader Arts & Culture who works with the Arts Team (two part-time staff) from Community Development to deliver this large-scale event over a ten-month period.

A Risk Management Plan and Work Method Statement was developed to cater for the installation of sculptural and site-specific works at the Coal Loader as well as accommodating recent changes in WH&S. The document also covered opening event activities, exhibition period and the public program.

The installation required a detailed schedule and plan to ensure works were suitability and safely placed. Professional installation technicians assisted the Team Leader Arts and Culture with the installation over a two-week period, as did the Arts Team staff. This aspect has also grown in line with the scale of the event requiring additional work for the Arts Team and additional installation and technical support.

A Public Program of artist talks was developed and delivered.

## **Marketing**

Advertisements were placed in a broad range of arts journals both in hard copy and online. An active social media campaign was undertaken to connect to both existing and new audiences. There were 6,500 visits to the North Sydney Art Prize webpage on Council's website and 600 views of the promotional video. Exhibition posters were designed and distributed to art galleries, artist studios, art schools and centres, community organisations, libraries and community notice boards and large-scale exhibition banners were produced and displayed across the Coal Loader site and in Waverton.

The Art Prize was advertised extensively with advertisements or listings in the following:

- Art Almanac
- Arts Hub

- Mosman Daily
- North Shore Living
- North Sydney News
- Various social media platforms including Instagram, Red Book and Facebook

## **Feedback**

Council received a number of emails of support from artists and visitors with a particular focus on the quality of the art prize as a leading contemporary arts event. Overall, responses were very positive highlighting quality of works, curatorial praises and the calibre of the exhibition as well as the need for more high-quality arts and cultural events and exhibitions of this nature.

## **Summary**

The Art Prize received positive feedback from the sponsors, artists, and visitors, acknowledging the role that North Sydney Council plays in developing, supporting, and promoting the creative arts in the region through the delivery of a meaningful, accessible, quality, and relevant contemporary arts experience.

Since its first iteration at the Coal Loader in 2013, the Art Prize has grown significantly to become the largest arts event on the Northside of Sydney. As such, there is a need to review the Art Prize format, to ensure the program is in line with available resources.

**North Sydney Art Prize**

Award Recipients

**Major Open Award, Alyson Bell, *The Twilight Hour***



**Emerging Artist Award, Ryan Andrew Lee, *Wonnarua***



Site Specific Award, Saskia Everingham, *Phoenix Trees*



Work on/with Paper Award, Ariella Friend, *Where the great brown rocks are grand*



**Award for Drawing, Sylvia Griffin, *Material Palimpsest***



**Award for Sculpture, Stevie Fieldsend, *Still (once trees)***





Exhibition photos





# the north sydney 14-29 MAY 2022 ART PRIZE



Morgan Veness, *Retrieve, Retreat* 2018

## call for entries

**CALLING FOR ARTISTS** to exhibit interior and exterior works across the renowned Coal Loader site at 2 Balls Head Drive, Waverton

### AWARDS

**Major Open Award**

sponsored by North Sydney Council \_\_\_\_\_ \$20,000

**Award for Sculpture**

sponsored by North Sydney Council \_\_\_\_\_ \$12,000

**Site Specific Award**

sponsored by Australian Catholic University \_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000

**Emerging Artist Award**

sponsored by North Sydney Council \_\_\_\_\_ \$2,000

**Work on/with Paper Award**

sponsored by Primrose Park Arts & Craft Centre Inc \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000

**Award for Drawing**

sponsored by Royal Art Society of NSW \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000

**ENTRIES CLOSE 30 NOVEMBER 2021**  
**APPLY ONLINE** at [northsydney.nsw.gov.au/artprize](http://northsydney.nsw.gov.au/artprize)

[artsandculturenorthsydney](https://www.facebook.com/artsandculturenorthsydney)

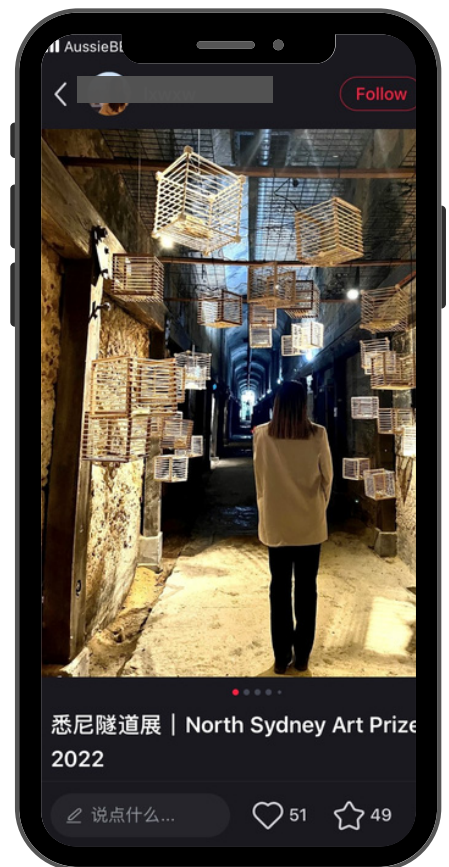
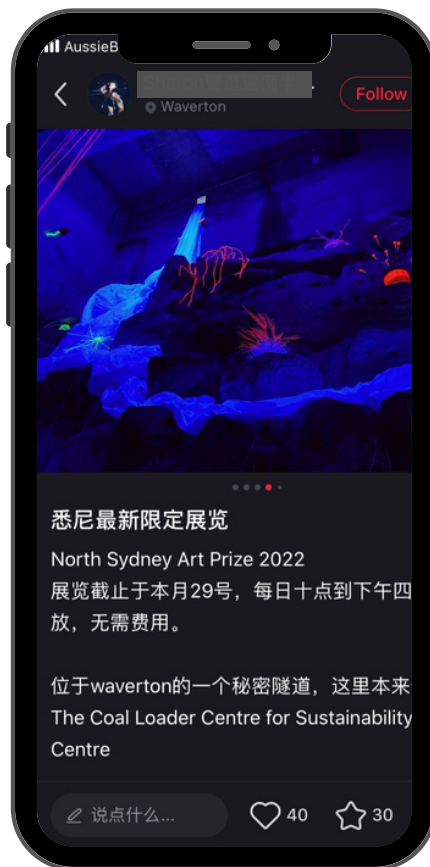
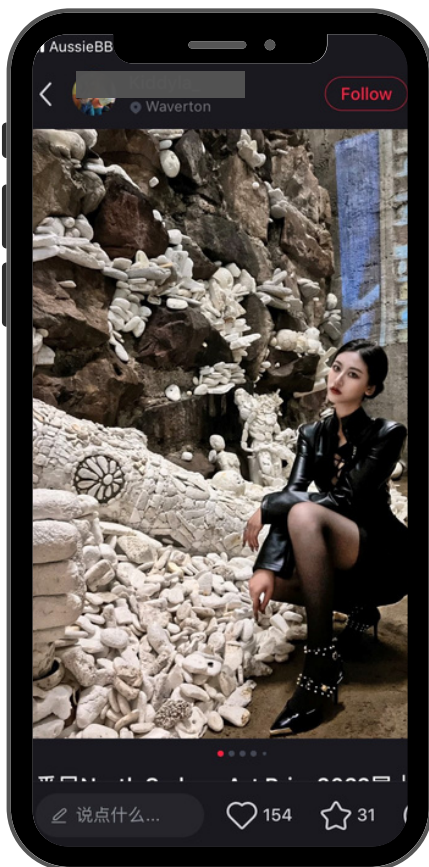
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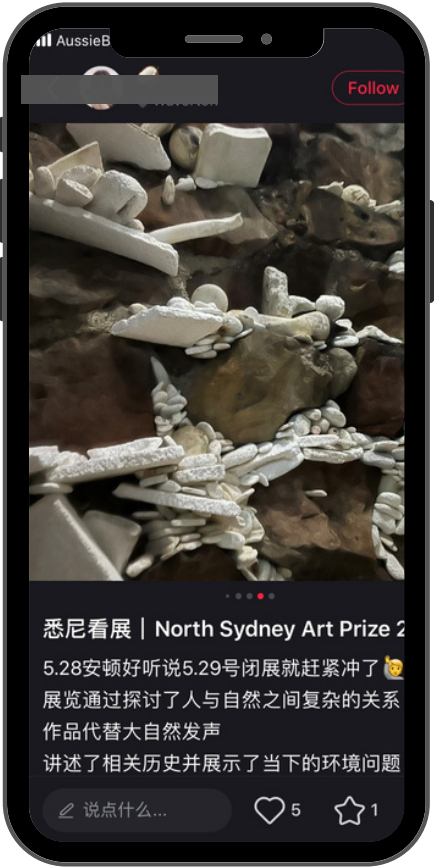
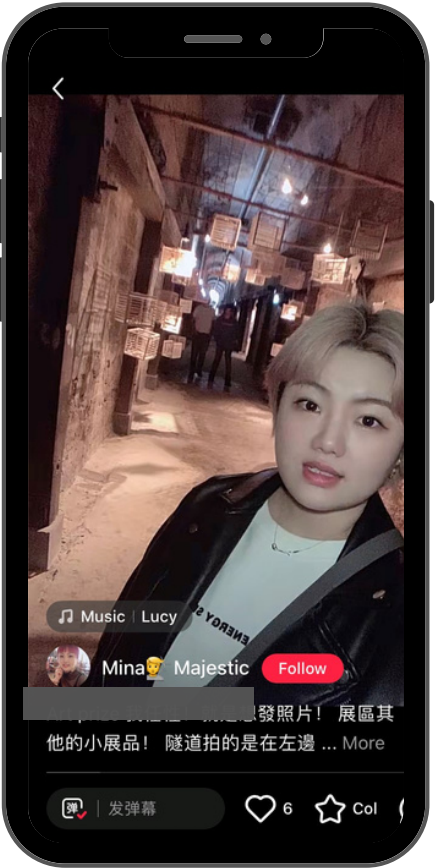
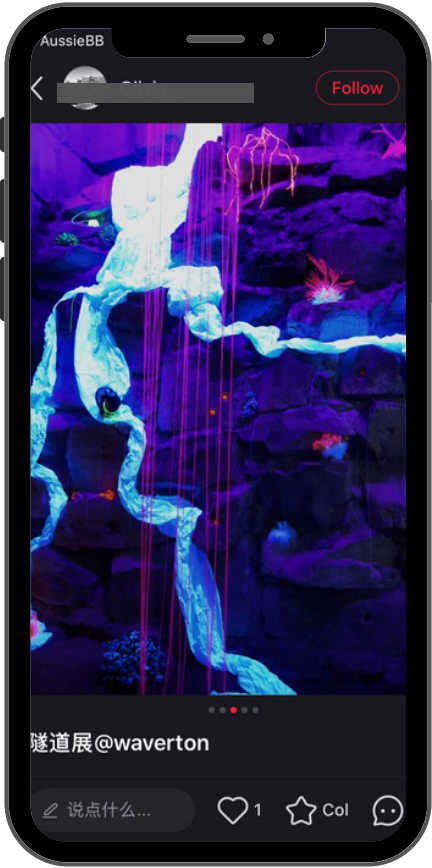
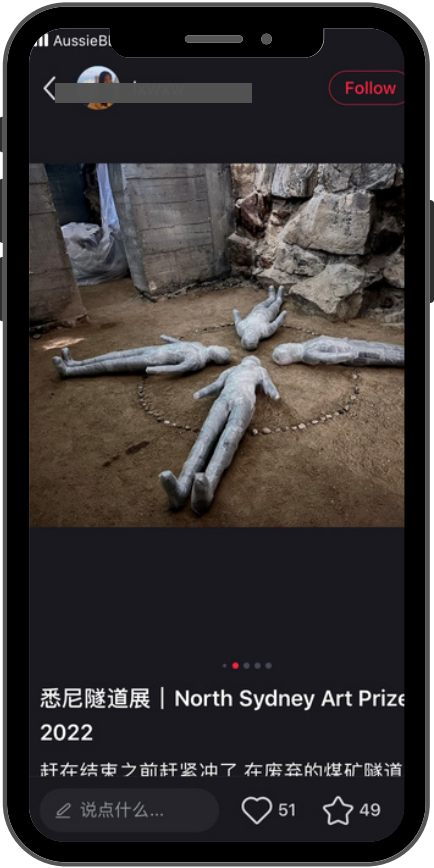
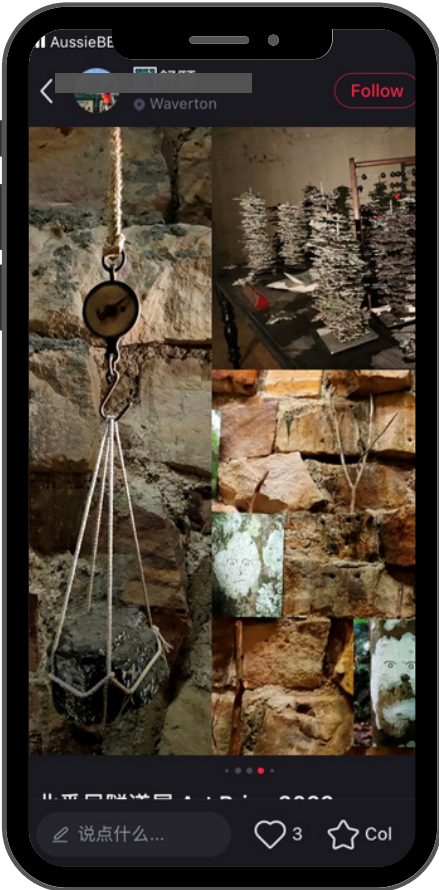


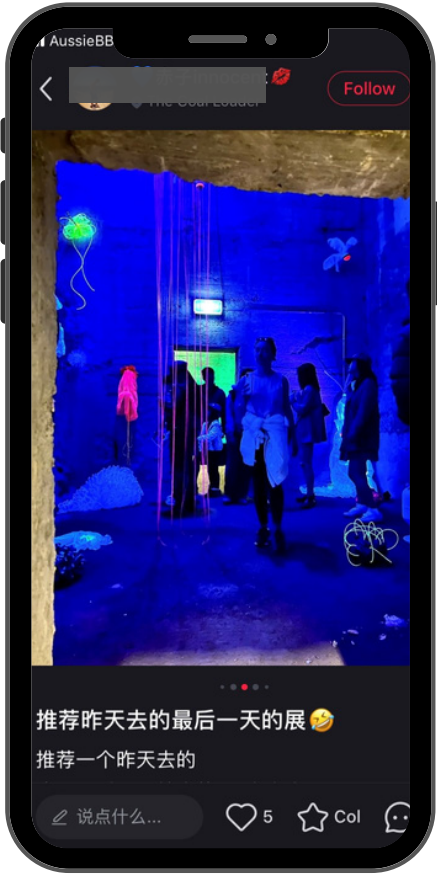
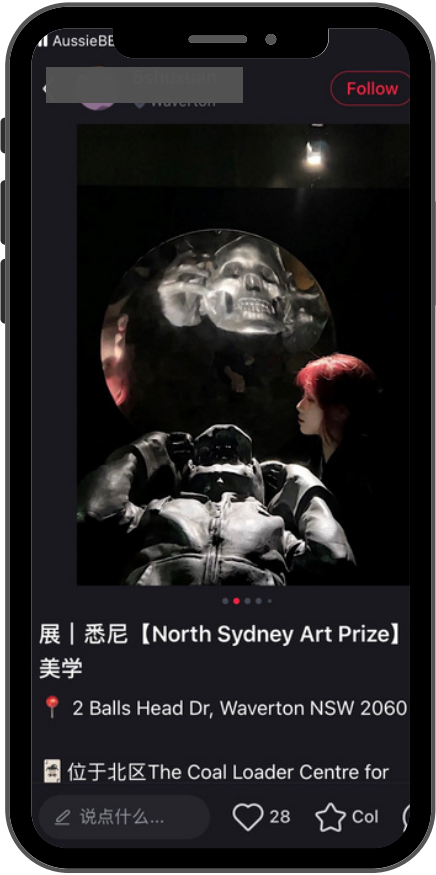
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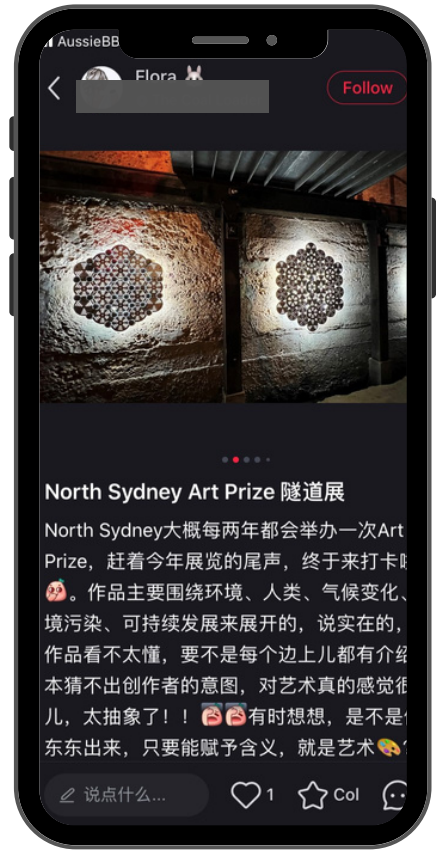
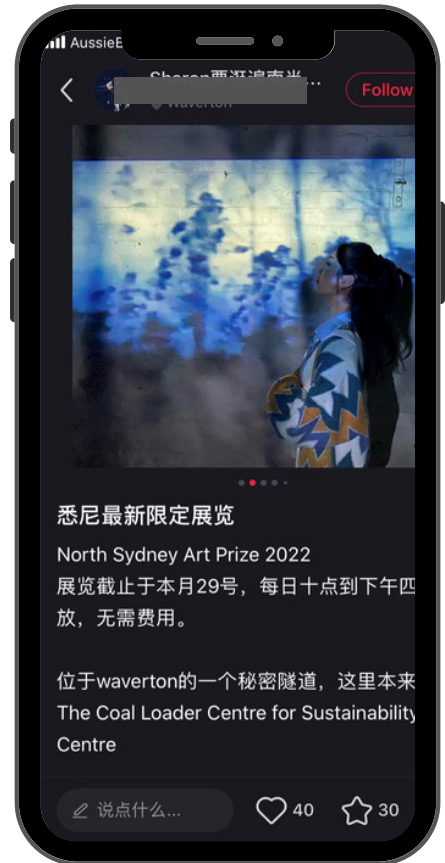
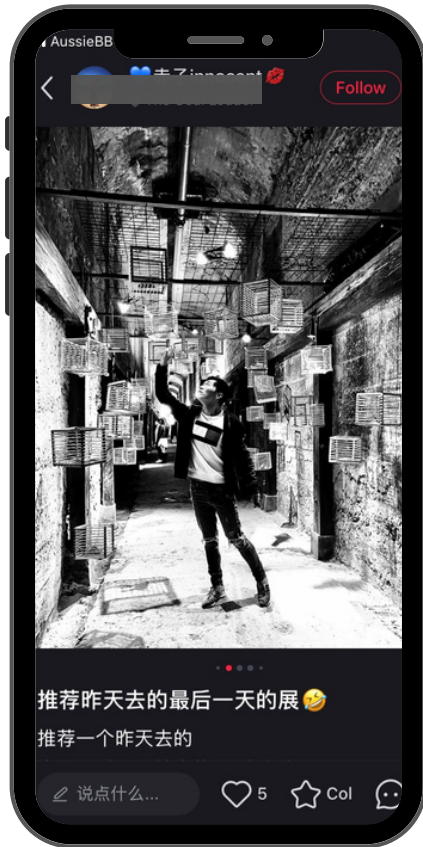
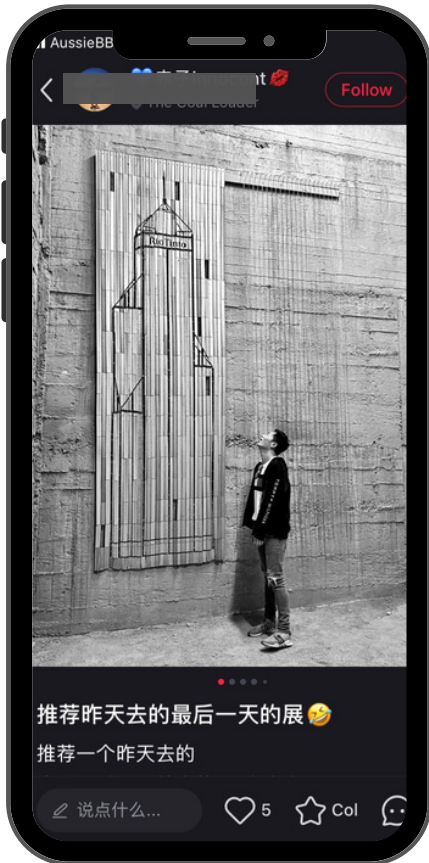
## BUZZ ON XIAOHONGSHU SOCIAL MEDIA

photographs, videos and wayfinding maps were posted hundreds of times by East Asian Millennials & Gen Z's during the exhibit. Here's a snapshot of just some of the user created content that helped us reach a brand new audience!









Content was also created and shared by some heavyweights from Australia's creative industries, some with with tens of thousands of followers on social media.

