

MEDIA RELEASE

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First Nations artist commissioned for the Torpedo Factory Renewal Project

The Harbour Trust is pleased to announce that Dennis Golding has been commissioned to create three artworks at Sub Base Platypus in North Sydney on Cammeraygal Country. The new artworks will recognise and celebrate Country and culture as part of the Torpedo Factory Renewal project at the site.

Dennis Golding is a Kamilaroi/Gamilaraay artist from the north west of NSW and was born and raised on Gadigal land. Through his artistic and curatorial practice, Dennis aims to present powerful representations of contemporary Aboriginal cultural identity that inform narratives of history and lived experiences. Some of his recent achievements include curating the Calling Country show at the 9pm Sydney New Year's Eve Fireworks in 2022 and designing the Wallabies' First Nations jerseys.

The appointment follows a targeted EOI process led by Yerrabingin, First Nations consultant for the Sub Base Platypus renewal project, and supported by Harbour Trust board member Alison Page, where shortlisted artists were invited to develop a concept in response to the brief.

Dennis' concept is based on the connection between the waterways of the Cammeraygal Country, plants used in the Project's new parkland, and the Torpedo Factory historic roofline, which all have distinctive sharp and curved edges. The overall theme of the concept honours these edges and powerfully connects the building to its Indigenous surroundings. As part of the approach, Dennis will engage with local youth to explore themes and ideas that celebrate culture, identity and Country. He also intends to produce the murals in collaboration with his mother Vicki Golding – a local artist based on Bidjigal Country.

Dennis Golding said 'I am thrilled to have been selected for this project and I can't wait to share the finished product with the community. The new artwork will activate the space, connect the building to its natural surrounds and give new life to the retired base. I'd like to thank the selection panel for giving me this opportunity to work with my mother and local Indigenous youth to share this story through art.'

Janet Carding, Executive Director of the Harbour Trust said 'This is a pivotal moment for the Harbour Trust as it's the first time we've commissioned a First Nations artist to create a site-specific work. We look forward to working with Dennis to incorporate his artwork into this new space, and explore the diverse stories of the area.'

Commencement of the commissioned work will take place in the coming months with the opening of the Torpedo Factory to follow shortly.

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ABOUT SUB BASE PLATYPUS

Formerly a torpedo factory, submarine base and gasworks, Sub Base Platypus is a community recreation and work hub in North Sydney, homeland of the Cammeraygal People.

From 2016 to 2019, Sub Base Platypus underwent stage one of its transformation – seeing the site go from former naval base to recreational urban park and community space. Currently, Sub Base Platypus is undergoing stage two of its transformation, known as the Torpedo Factory Renewal Project. This project comprises demolition of the harbour-facing portion of the former Torpedo Factory building to create a new foreshore park and public domain spaces that explore the site's history.

When Sub Base Platypus was opened by the Harbour Trust in May 2018, it marked the first time the site – formerly a gasworks, torpedo factory and submarine base – had been accessible to the public in 150 years.

ABOUT THE HARBOUR TRUST

Located in First Nations Countries at the entrance to Sydney Harbour, the Harbour Trust's visitor destinations are places of natural beauty. They also feature heritage structures and other significant remnants from the nation's colonial, maritime, and military narratives.

The Harbour Trust's destinations include Cockatoo Island / Wareamah, North Head Sanctuary in Manly, Sub Base Platypus in North Sydney, and Headland Park in Mosman. They also protect Woolwich Dock and Parklands, Macquarie Lightstation in Vaucluse, and the Former Marine Biological Station at Camp Cove.

Through its management of these places, the Harbour Trust provides residents of – and visitors to – Australia's largest city with access to precious bushland, parks, and open spaces. Their vision is to create, amplify, and make accessible the values of their protected places and, through storytelling, foster a sense of place and belonging.

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