

Street artist secures W'bool mural project



One of the highly detailed and realist works by Melbourne artist Matt “Adnate” Last, whose work will soon feature in Warrnambool’s CBD as a large-scale mural. Image: Adnate.

OPINION – Carol Altmann

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] L
[/dropcap]eading Melbourne graffiti artist **Matt “Adnate” Last** has been chosen to create a \$13,000 interactive mural in the heart of Warrnambool.

The Ngatanwarr (“Welcome”) Mural will transform a prominent – but as yet unnamed – site with a 20sq/m mural with an indigenous theme that will be developed in consultation between the artist, who is not indigenous, and the local Aboriginal community.

The interactive mural is central to a wider project being

developed by a steering committee that includes representatives from the Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative, the Warrnambool City Council/Warrnambool Art Gallery, Leadership Great South Coast and the F Project, for which a total of \$22,000 has been raised from various government and philanthropic sources.

Adnate is the second, high-profile spray paint artist to secure a large-scale mural commission in Warrnambool, following that of **Scottie "Bonsai" Neoh**, who was awarded the \$15,000 commission for the Mortlake Rd pedestrian underpass.

Unlike the Bonsai commission, however, the Ngatanwarr Mural went to expressions of interest, albeit in a tight turnaround time.

The call went out in mid September, with artists given around three weeks to submit an EOI.

Chairman of the selection committee, **Paul Lougheed**, from Leadership Great South Coast, told us that four local artists were among those to submit an EOI, with Adnate selected "by a panel including representatives from the aboriginal community, arts community and other interested community members".



Matt "Adnate" Last at work with his tools of trade: a smartphone and a spray can. Image: www.invurt.com

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A02F2F;"] T
[/dropcap]here is no doubt that securing the services of Adnate is a coup for Warrnambool: his striking work can be found in major cities around the world and, earlier this year, [he was chosen to paint a rare, blank 23m-high wall in Melbourne's famous Hosier Lane.](#)

And there is no doubt that his work will be a drawcard, particularly as it will include interactive QR codes to tell the stories behind the images.

But the perennial question again comes to mind: how can local artists get ahead if they keep being overlooked for significant local commissions?

We raised this same question [earlier this year](#) with the Bonsai commission, which followed the awarding of a \$20,000 commission to Melbourne artist **Ewan Coates** in 2010 for his bronze sculpture *The Three Pillars of Gratification*, and another \$20,000 commission in 2011 that was won by Ballan

artist **Velislav Georgiev** for his work *Chance Encounter*, that sits on the corner of Lava and Liebig streets.

It is a vexed issue.

On one hand, Warrnambool can't simply close itself off to artists from elsewhere, but on the other, a \$13,000 commission (which includes materials and equipment) is the sort of work that can start to make an art career viable to a local artist.

Unlike in metropolitan areas, major commissions are rare in the south-west and many of the murals you now see around Warrnambool were done for very little money, but significant goodwill.

We look forward to seeing what Adnate produces, but at the same time will continue to argue that at least *some* of these large commissions should stay "at home".

[box]The Ngatanwarr Mural will be launched on Friday March 20, 2015, to coincide with 'Close the Gap' day. You can find more of Adnate's work on his [website here](#).[/box]

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There is not just one vet running for South-West Coast at the next state election. Independent Michael McCluskey plans to bring his science and economic skills to the political arena. Image: Supplied.

[box]In the lead-up to the Nov 29 state election, *Bluestone Magazine* invited candidates from the three major parties – [Liberal](#), [ALP](#) and [Greens](#) – to tell us why they were running for the seat of South-West Coast. Michael McCluskey is an Independent candidate who contacted us with his response to this same question. He has chosen a question and answer style.[/box]

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hy have you decided to run?

I have held a long term frustration with the way our political system operates, particularly in regard to the lack of science-based, 'bigger picture' thinking amongst our politicians. The quote 'A statesperson thinks about the next generation whilst a politician thinks about the next election' rings very true to me.

What skills do you believe you can offer the community and the electorate?

I believe my diverse background, in particular my strong grounding in science, would be an invaluable asset to our current political system. Initially I worked as a dairy farm hand for 3 years before joining the Federal public service as an Employment Officer.

After leaving this role I then went to spend the next 24 years as a veterinarian, serving the agricultural industry and then later the equine (horse) industry. I have also completed extra university study with units in Psychology and Economics, and obtained entry into the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists.

What are the main issues affecting our community?

I believe the main issue affecting us is the level of violence within the community. Until we more effectively deal with this issue our four main well beings – economic, social, environmental and animal well being – will never realise their full potential.



Violence in our community, including family violence, must be tackled if we are to progress across a range of areas. Image: www.stylemagazine.com.

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[/dropcap]hat other issues are important to you?

Health care– Currently our pets and racehorses receive access to a better healthcare system than what most humans do, particularly in relation to surgery waiting lists. A well funded and wisely operated health system, with timely access to needed care will bring greater economic and social well being both in the short and long term.

Education– If we look at any community throughout the world there is little doubt access to education is a key determinant of how well a society functions, both economically and socially. Whether one takes a trade, university or other creative pathway, we need to do all we can to maximise access to these pathways, including restoring the TAFE system.

Public transport– an efficient, well funded public transport system, along with the provision of quality roads will produce

a significant boost to the economic, social and environmental well being of all our communities.

Fracking for natural gas mining— the known short term and unknown long term risks associated with injecting many millions of litres of chemically laden fluids into the ground/aquifers outweighs the potential benefits. It took politicians nearly 80 years to acknowledge lead in petrol was harmful to our children. For the sake of our grandchildren we can't afford to wait another 80 years on this issue.

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[/dropcap]**hy didn't you run through a political party?**

My concern is once in the party system, the ability to speak one's mind and act with one's head and heart can be stifled, which for me defeats the purpose of being in politics in the first place. If we can't vote with our conscious on every issue, are we really being true to ourselves and to our electorate?

How can we fund these important issues you have raised?

Reducing wastage within our system is one key component. \$100 wisely spent is better than \$1000 poorly spent. Tapping into some of the billions of dollars entering our superannuation system presents an opportunity as well. It would help fund vital projects in healthcare, education and public transport, as well giving super funds a safe, alternative asset class in which to invest in. In the 'chase for yield' there is already concerns about asset prices being pushed beyond fair value due to pent up investment demand.

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