

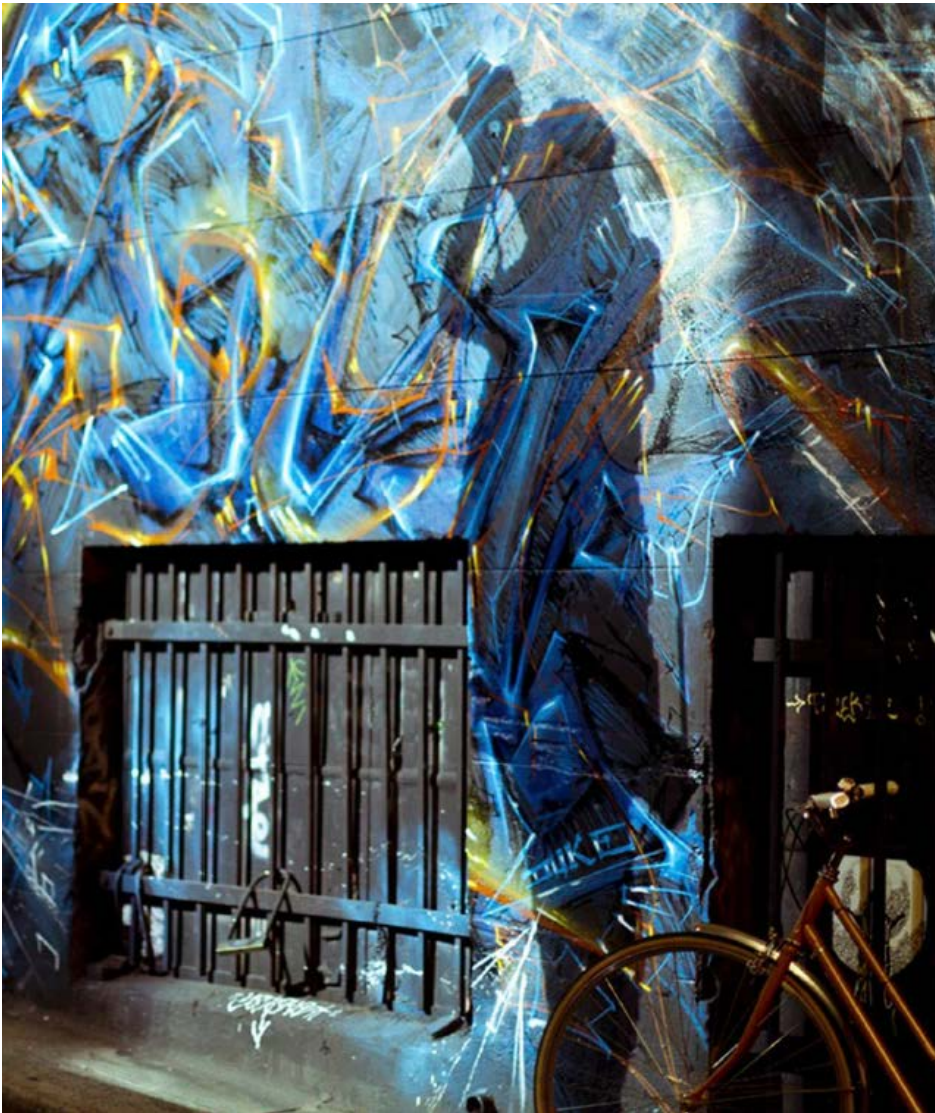


HOSIER AND RUTLEDGE LANES IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Final report

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Contents

Introduction	2
Discussion	2
Project outcomes	3
Hosier Inc reflection	6
RMIT reflection	7

Introduction

On 5 February 2013 Melbourne City Council resolved to implement a 12 month project plan in Hosier and Rutledge Lanes in order to address the anti-social behavior taking place in the lane. The plan was enacted to trial an alternative approach to the installation of CCTV. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is the approach that has been used to inform the plan.

A steering committee chaired by City of Melbourne met from March 2013 – March 2014 to oversee the project. Members included City of Melbourne branches (Arts & Culture and Community Safety and Wellbeing), Hosier Inc, Salvation Army Street Teams, Youth Projects, RMIT School of Art and Victoria Police.

Discussion

This project has tested a different way to engage the community to prevent crime. The initial premise of this project was to explore a range of alternatives to CCTV using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, an approach previously used in other parts of the City of Melbourne. The point of difference between this project and previous CPTED projects was the 12 month duration, other interventions have been short term taking place over a number of days or weeks.

Through focused intervention over the twelve month period a range of outcomes have been achieved. Hosier Inc commenced as a community organisation at the very start of the project and has developed as the project has progressed. Hosier Inc in many ways has taken stewardship of the lanes and is well placed to take many of the actions of the project forward. Their continual oversight and investment in the lanes provides a strong platform for future initiatives.

The outcomes of this project relate largely to improved perceptions of safety, through an improved sense of community cohesion, more so than situated in crime data. At the end of the twelve month project Hosier Inc. reported an overall reduction of antisocial activity in the laneway and stated they had benefited greatly from new relationships with organisations such as the Salvation Army and Victoria Police (refer Hosier Inc. Reflections on page 6). The formal steering committee has now wound up and City of Melbourne staff will attend two meetings of Hosier Inc. per year to remain informed about any issues arising in the laneways and any planned projects by Hosier Inc.



Project Plan

Shaded area denotes the original plan from Future Melbourne Committee meeting on 5 February 2013 and the non-shaded area indicates the outcomes

Natural Surveillance	Responsible
<p>City Lights Restore the 'City Lights' light boxes in Hosier Lane and host a series of curated exhibitions.</p> <p>The City Lights light boxes were installed in the mid 1990's and are now in disrepair. Andy Mac was the curator of the City Lights Gallery formerly located in Hosier Lane and provided an informal artist in residence role within the lane for many years.</p>	<p>City of Melbourne</p> <p>RMIT</p>
<p>Outcome As part of the project RMIT developed a plan and framework to curate art installations in the 'City Lights' light boxes attached to the back of the Forum theatre. The framework has been prepared and was given to City of Melbourne with the intention that a community organisation such as Hosier Inc could curate the installations in the light boxes over the coming years. In October 2013 the Forum theatre removed the light boxes and this element of the project did not proceed.</p>	
<p>Mentoring Include Rutledge Lane as a location in the existing Signal Arts Street Art Mentoring program.</p> <p>Expand the existing Signal Art Street Program in Union Lane to Rutledge Lane for youth engagement and street art workshops. Development of this program will activate this space through workshops to develop new skills and works, with the ultimate benefits of safety through natural surveillance. Program will be fortnightly until June 2013 and then monthly from June – December 2013 at which time fortnightly programming will resume.</p>	<p>City of Melbourne (Signal Arts)</p>
<p>Outcome From April through to December 2013 Signal Arts delivered 12 mentoring sessions (24 weekend workshops) in Rutledge Lane. The sessions were delivered in a 'drop in' format which meant that young people were not required to formally notify of their attendance. A total of 415 young people participated in targeted street art workshops all led by established Melbourne street artists. Eleven percent of participants were female and 89% were male with the average age between 15-16 years of age.</p> <p>Although the Signal street art mentoring workshops achieved excellent outcomes for young participants, it is recommended that programming in Rutledge Lane cease. Rutledge Lane is a high demand, high profile laneway with limited wall space leading to conflicting projects rolling out, at the same time and often competing for wall space.</p> <p>The steering committee and Signal felt that while it was useful to pilot this approach in Rutledge Lane the City of Melbourne Street Art mentoring program should be contained to the one location of Union Lane.</p>	
<p>Street Teams The Salvation Army Youth Street Teams will regularly visit the lanes on weekend nights. Regular reports will be made to Victoria Police and City of Melbourne regarding any anti-social behaviour observed.</p>	<p>Salvation Army</p>

<p>Outcome The Salvation Army Youth Street Teams regularly visited the lanes on weekend nights. The teams reported minimal activity or anti-social behaviour other than intoxicated individuals, in the laneways since the visits commenced in December 2012. Street Teams have agreed to continue walking through the area as part of their regular patrols.</p>	
<p>Natural Access Control</p>	<p>Responsible</p>
<p>Improve lighting and amenity Upgrade the existing unmetered public lighting in both lanes and incorporate lighting to showcase the street artworks. Also explore options for greening the space.</p> <p>Review existing lighting in both lanes and design lighting treatment options March – June 2013. Lighting treatment will be used to showcase street art and enhance safety within this space at night. Possible locations for green infrastructure (e.g. vertical gardens) to enhance the amenity of the precinct will also be explored through the street scapes program.</p>	<p>City of Melbourne</p>
<p>Outcome Design work was completed for the lighting treatment to the laneways and extensive community engagement had been undertaken. Due to the planning application to the State Government for the redevelopment of the Forum Theatre the installation of catenary lighting has been postponed. Once the outcome of the planning application is known the lighting project will be revisited. This will in the 2015 – 16 financial year at the earliest.</p> <p>Green infrastructure (e.g.: vertical gardens) to improve amenity was not explored during the project to do other project elements taking priority.</p>	
<p>Gallery Space Explore options for a gallery space in the immediate precinct as a base for local street artists. This space would be used to store artist's supplies, hold events and workshops. The need for a sustainable gallery space and centre for street art has been highlighted through consultations. The space could be part of the City of Melbourne Creative Spaces program.</p>	<p>City of Melbourne</p>
<p>Outcome The project investigated the feasibility of a gallery space in the laneway potentially located as part of the former Russell Street Theatre. This option was not pursued once the plans for the redevelopment of the Forum Theatre and the former Russell Street Theatre were known.</p> <p>Youth Projects facility in Hosier Lane has also been part of the discussions regarding a gallery space. This may be revisited in the longer term.</p>	
<p>Territorial Reinforcement</p>	<p>Responsible</p>
<p>Events and Action Research Host a series of Street Art events in Hosier Lane to reinvigorate the standard of the street art.</p> <p>As part of the RMIT Urban Laboratory action research project artists and participants will form partnerships to create new works and socially engaged artistic projects. These street art events are intended to commence in February 2013, activating the space over 12 months in three 10-week blocks with a series of interventions and responses by the artistic teams and community members with a particular interest in forging relationships and increasing a sense of safety.</p>	<p>City of Melbourne</p> <p>RMIT</p>

<p>RMIT have committed \$27,000 to this project for 12 months from February 2013 to February 2014. The project activities between February and June 2013 will contribute to the development of an Australian Research Council application for further funding in July 2013. If successful there will be project interventions over a three year period.</p>	
<p>Outcome RMIT delivered a series of programs to activate the lanes as part of their Urban Laboratory project (refer RMIT reflections on page 7). RMIT University Art in Public Space researchers were invited to developed an engagement strategy (May 2013 to January 2014) for Hosier and Rutledge Lanes involving teams of artists creating various forms of artistic intervention. The project hypothesis was to investigate if socially engaged artistic practice can strengthen relationships between and within user groups, impact the site and potentially shift people’s perceptions of the space and sense of safety. RMIT’s involvement was rescoped due to the high level of activity taking place in the laneways at the time such as the National Gallery of Victoria ‘All Your Walls’ project.</p>	
<p>Rutledge Lane Explore options to declare Rutledge Lane as a ‘legal’ street art lane.</p> <p>Currently Rutledge Lane is not a permitted street art location as no formal agreement has been formulated between street artists and building owners. Consultation is underway with building owners to legally permit street art in this location.</p>	<p>City of Melbourne</p>
<p>Outcome Street Art permits for the Rutledge Lane were obtained by Signal to deliver the Street Art Mentoring program. The new Graffiti Management plan endorsed at the Future Melbourne Committee on 13 May 2014 states the following:</p> <p><i>The City of Melbourne will establish the following process for managing street art within the municipality:</i></p> <p><i>44.1. Subject to agreement with other stakeholders such as the police, residents and street artists [and with consideration of any potential health issues relating to the use of spray cans and paint], general owner/managing agent permission will be negotiated for the use of Union Lane, Rutledge Lane and parts of Hosier Lane.</i></p> <p><i>44.2. The existing street art permits will be allowed to expire except for specific sites as indicated above. With the owner having the right under Victorian Law to choose if graffiti should remain on their building facades, this does not materially change the current arrangement.</i></p> <p>The Community Safety and Wellbeing branch will work with Engineering Services and Victoria Police on implementing the above process.</p>	

Hosier Inc. Reflection

Hosier Inc. provided the following reflections on the twelve months of the project.

Street Teams

'The presence of this team in the laneway over the past year has been instrumental in providing a link between the community and holding ground against aggression and fall out from aggression previously experienced on a continual basis. We would welcome the opportunity to have this service continue, and to work with the Salvation Army to determine the best timing for their patrols to attend'.

Victoria Police

'Working with the steering committee has been a way of understanding the police input into the laneway and understanding their ability for response. It has also made the officers involved with this project more aware of the situations that are especially relevant to this laneway area'.

CCTV

'The original concept of CCTV was estimated to cost \$60,000. Hosier Inc is of the opinion that such an investment would be better spent on activation programs. It makes sense to learn and grow the current good work rather than let it go. In the past 12 months, many of the problems that we had initially appear to have moderated, although there is still activation in the early hours of the morning, which is proving difficult at times. For example, we have noticed that the zone has become a favourite hangout for groups of kids who visit at 2am - 4am with stereos cranked up and drinking. We understand there will always be issues of concern and we will need to be constantly working together to ensure the safety and amenity of the area for all. From a community perspective, this process has been a good first stage. We have formalized our group, which is now an incorporated association with diverse membership and are working together on several projects that will continue the good work'.

Hosier Inc.

RMIT Reflection

After spending 12 months working in Hosier and Rutledge Lanes the RMIT researchers offered the following commentary and observations.

Hosier and Rutledge Lane are key destinations for tourists, local and international, they contribute to the vibrant nature of the international perception of the City of Melbourne. The diversity of user groups contributes to differing aspirations and intentions for the space. A range of curatorial approaches should be considered in the laneway to maintain its vibrant nature, particularly the spontaneous and ephemeral nature of the works.

In anticipation of any future building works taking place in the lane ways negotiations should occur with the developer to look at creative solutions to issues that may impact the space based on the history of previous building projects. The introduction of a percent for art scheme to developments could provide a great opportunity to engage artists in the space to minimize the effects of the building site, for example light based works may be commissioned where gantries deplete natural light in the laneway providing diverse forms of interest. Building infrastructure could support innovative public artworks.

Our observations reveal the impact of weather in the city notably affects the use of space in Hosier and Rutledge lanes. When the weather changes from cooler months to warmer, a suite of socially engaged projects could be considered as a tool to reduce destructive behaviour and activate the space. During cooler months the laneways tend to be less inviting and therefore appear less safe, a partnership with the Light in Winter program in Federation Square could link the two spaces and encourage more consistent foot traffic making the space feel safer. Additionally the re-commissioning of the light boxes would draw a crowd to laneway openings across the winter months.

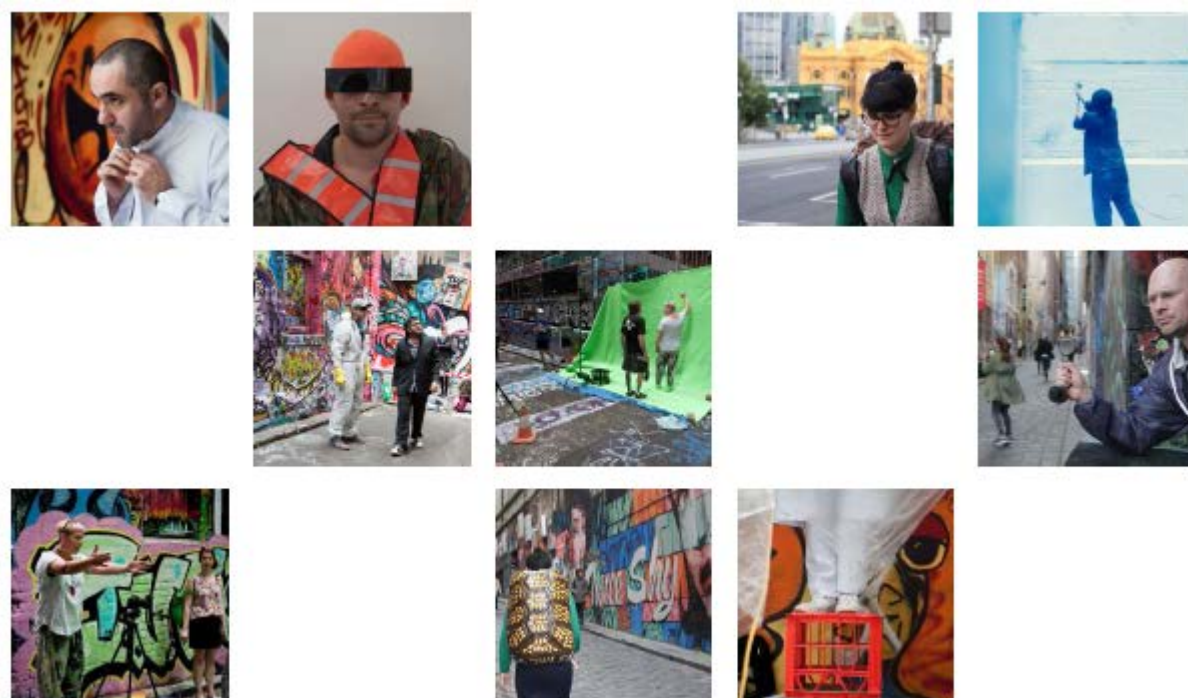
The promotion of safer practices among street artists is a critical public health issue that impacts artists and laneway user groups. Exposure to chemicals in Hosier and Rutledge Lanes, e.g. paint fumes & spills needs management specifically when council sanctioned works are taking place. We recommend an educational engagement approach should be taken instead of a purely regulatory approach. Through this Artists will be encouraged to use appropriate personal protective equipment when working in the laneway (mentorships by senior artists, as delivered by Signal, are an example of this approach). Signage should be installed at the entrance of the laneways articulating the use of aerosol in the space. Community Education should occur to raise awareness about use of aerosols.

The relationship between educational institutions such as RMIT University and diverse communities such as those represented in Hosier and Rutledge Lanes can strengthen community networks, foster dialogue, share knowledge and create opportunities. Continue to engage with educational institutions providing of opportunity for rigorous research, educational opportunities and increased connectedness between diverse groups not always associated with conventional educational structures.

Our research demonstrated that young people respond favourably to spontaneous performance work that gives them an opportunity to participate in the work on their own terms. We would recommend regular commissioning of socially engaged art practices that include performative works to provide constructive participation models for the potential engagement of young people.

The application of the relevant findings from Hosier and Rutledge Lanes to other parts of the city will create new ideas to expand beyond a limited social geographic area. Build on opportunities, such as the recent 'Melbourne Now: All Your Walls', where cultural institutions play a greater role in recognizing and embracing Hosier and Rutledge Lanes as part of a changing perception of community cultures.

RMIT Art Cities and Transformations Group 2014



Ben Cittadini surveyed passers-by and from his findings created a performative work that saw him invite people to assist him in painting an alcove white and explored notions of safety through representation.

Adrian Doyle pushed Ben's conversation further by painting the whole of Rutledge Lane, the development of *Empty Nursery Blue* explored the inaccessibility to most of the great Australian dream. The act itself injected a fine art act into a street art context.

Clare McCracken explored Hosier and Rutledge Lane s as an endangered Australian tortoise. She drew on Baudelaire's exploration of Parisian streets with Dandy's walking their turtles to be seen and to see.

Ceri Hann created a series of characters in response to the issues raised by the previous three works; the street as a gallery; the value of street art vs fine art; the sense of safety in public space; the notion of icons in the cultural landscape.

Yandell Walton's work was the final work in the suite of works, Yandell created a pop up photographic studio in the laneway and documented every day users of the lane, projecting their silhouettes back into the laneway during January.

Additionally opportunities to engage with external bodies were sort, delivering project findings at different points to different audiences; for example, a floor-talk at the NGV during the Robyn Rhodes exhibition and numerous presentations to different University programs.