

NSW

Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore set to fork out thousands for cryptic artworks

WE could end up with a giant inflatable poo on a lawn. Sydney's Lord Mayor is inviting weird and not-so-wonderful artists to be paid to "decorate" the city.

ROSE BRENNAN, The Daily Telegraph

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London residents inspect the giant sculpture of a table and chair called The Writer by artist Giancarlo Neri on Hampstead Heath. Picture: Getty

CASHED-UP Clover Moore is rolling out the welcome mat to the world's most bizarre artists with an offer of up to \$85,000 each to build wacky installations in Sydney.

But councillors are concerned that strange art installations — such as the giant chair erected in the UK or an inflatable poo littering the lawn in Hong Kong — could hijack the project.

The Lord Mayor, who has previously spruiked outlandish public artworks such as a [\\$2.5 million giant milk crate](#) and [the \\$11 million Cloud Arch](#), wants local and international artists of “all genres” to submit ideas for Art & About, to go on show from January 2019 to July 2020.



An inflatable sculpture called Complex Pile makes a not-so-charming contribution to an exhibition in Hong Kong. Picture: Getty

“We are particularly interested in artworks that can temporarily transform spaces across our city,” a spokeswoman for Ms Moore said.

“The Lord Mayor encourages all artists with an interesting idea for our city to apply.”

Artists can apply for \$10,000 to \$85,000 to build the projects. But they can also be paid \$1000 if the project is merely short-listed.

“The artist can be offered a \$1000 fee to assist with costs that can be incurred from a Stage 2 submission,” a City of Sydney spokeswoman said.



📷 Forever Bicycles by Ai Wei Wei is another artwork to raise eyebrows on the global exhibition circuit.



📷 Sydney Lord Mayor Clover Moore visits the QVB to celebrate the building's 120th birthday on Wednesday. Picture: Justin Lloyd



📷 When it comes to odd art experiences, this submerged exhibition on an artificial reef 30m deep off a Florida coast takes beating.

The council has set aside \$712,000 for Art & About projects in 2018-2019.

Earlier this year a “mental health vending machine” selling bars of “purpose” or “belonging” was part of Art & About, while last year residents in a Waterloo unit block lit up their windows to make the tower “a beacon to the community”.

City of Sydney councillor Craig Chung is concerned Art & About will be flooded with bizarre ideas — such as the Italian artist Giancarlo Neri’s giant desk and chair called The Writer, or US artist Paul McCarthy’s 15m inflatable poo.

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That work was recently seen in Hong Kong but “terrorised” a Swiss town in 2008 when it became airborne.

“I think we all appreciate good art around the city but some things really just defy logic like the giant poo ... if that’s installed, people will be scratching their heads,” Mr Chung said.

“I’m not going to be very surprised at all if we see money being spent on some really far-out and inappropriate things.”

His council colleague Christine Forster said Art & About should be limited to Australian artists to build something permanent.

“At some point you’ve got to stop and say where is the cost-benefit ratio? She’s big on that point to the state government but never applies the same rule to herself,” she said.