

MEDIA RELEASE

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Country Arts SA announces South Australian Artist as Palace of Production Resident

South Australian artist Cynthia Schwertsik has been selected from more than 72 applicants from around Australia for the four-week residency of this new partnership between Country Arts SA and Catherine Murphy.

“Cynthia Schwertsik is a contemporary visual and performance artist who presents art that focuses on the environment. She creates contemporary landscapes through her playful interactions with everyday objects in public spaces and places. Cynthia will spend her time exploring the displacement of furniture in the landscape, testing her footprint on the ground and talking about the impact of the human footprint on Kangaroo Island while in residence at the Palace of Production,” said Country Arts SA’s Chief Executive Officer, Steve Saffell.

The residency honours the creative spirit of Cath Cantlon, who produced contemporary art and sculpture in her Palace of Production (P.O.P) studio, built behind the home she shared with her partner Catherine Murphy in Emu Bay, Kangaroo Island.

“The POP studio residency is a unique and a heartfelt legacy of artist, Cath Cantlon,” said panel member and artist Catherine Truman. *“In Cath’s honour, in her true lingering spirit we have chosen Cynthia Schwertsik as the first recipient. Cath would have respected Cynthia’s vibrant and bold approach to generating and making art that stimulates her audience to think beyond the four walls of a gallery.”*

Schwertsik, of Crafers, started her career in Austria as a dancer, performer and set designer. Since moving to Australia in 2012 she has gradually transformed her practice into the visual arts. Her work has been commissioned and presented throughout Europe, Australia, South Africa and the USA. The 2018 SALA prize winning video Peri-Urban was shown at Adelaide Festival Centre, her most recent public artwork *Ways of Walking* was commissioned by the City of Unley for the series Arts in Your Space. Currently she is responding to the Flinders University Art Museum’s collection of Post Object Art through performance and digital work, gaining insight into Australian artistic concepts of the 1960s and 70s.

“This residency comes in the perfect moment, as I am full of ideas that are fed through the research at Flinders University Art Museum through February and March,” said Schwertsik. *“In April I am bursting to develop new work that will be presented mid-year. I see days rolling out in front of me to simply work without interruption - I am very lucky to have this opportunity and curious to immerse myself in this environment.”*

Schwertsik has developed a proposal that reflects the creative spirit of Cath Cantlon. Cath’s working life was dedicated to extensive collaborations in theatre, film, community and public art, and interior and exterior designs for new architectural builds across regional and urban South Australia.

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“Public art is at the heart of my work, drawing installation and performative interventions are my tools. My experience as a parent, particularly the notion that motherhood is a public role, has shaped my practice. As a mother, the everyday experience and the choices I make, extend beyond my personal interest. I claim social and public spaces; I participate in the conflicts between private and public interests, both at home as well as in a political context. These negotiations have led me to develop public interventions and performances, with much of my current work set in urban, suburban environments. I am particularly interested in the slippage between the space we claim and inhabit for human consumption and the space we declare to be nature,” said Schwersik in her application.



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