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**Re Bay Trail Public Art Commission  
Cyril Curtain Reserve, Williamstown**

## Expression of Interest

This proposed project offers

**Maintenance free, element proof materials**  
**Reliable artist with proven experience**  
**Viewer engaging design**  
**History aware content**

○ **Intended Approach**

**Title** THREE SPECIMEN SLIDES OF HISTORY  
Viewer engaging, site specific, sculptural installation

### **Description**

Three thick, parallel glass panels, spaced narrowly, depicting three historic scenes from Williamstown history rise directly out of the grass land. They will be clearly visible both from the land and from the sea /coast. The scenes are printed on the glass while maintaining translucency. This specific set-up together with the translucency of the printed glass will allow for several ways of viewing.

**Size** Each panel 7600mm x 2600mm; the dimensions are a multiple of the standardized size of specimen slides. Space between the panel approx 70cm;

### **Viewer Engagement**

There are three modes of viewing. Firstly, from far distance, a layered, abstract object with minimalist shape contrasts in a highly balanced way with the natural environment. Secondly, depending on their direction of approach (either from the sea/coast or from the land) viewers will perceive a different image on the top layer. Thirdly, approaching from the sides, viewers will investigate the sandwiched middle layer. This is nevertheless present in all aspects of the work due to the transparency of prints on glass.

### **Material**

High performance glass as it is now widely used in contemporary architecture (e.g. products by Viridian), element proof, UV protected print on glass (e.g. products by G.James). Contemporary glass is a highly durable (vandalism, harsh weather conditions), maintenance free material that does not harm the natural environment. Without frames the art work will be anchored in the ground by a metal construction.

### **Content**

In biology a specimen slide carries an extremely thin slice of a much bigger body in order to be observed under a microscope. Ultimately the observations of the microscopic views are added up to help form an understanding of the entire body.

The Three Specimen Slides of History will depict three scenes on three glass panels: A scene of the prosperous harbor at Williamstown, a scene of the convicts' labour and a scene of the Yalukit-willam observing. The prosperous harbor will be seen from the sea / from the coast, the scene of the convicts' labour will be seen when approaching from the land, and the scene of the Yalukit-willam observing will be placed between the two other panels.

Thus, each panel represents a slice - a specimen - of history. Their unique installation - three parallel panels with inter space not allowing an adult to walk through, their transparency, and their size (a multiple of the standardized specimen slide) - refer to how we observe history and how we then understand it. We can only single out particular topics from the past to scrutinize them in greater depth. These topics will always reflect our individual interests and backgrounds. Nevertheless we eventually have to acknowledge that the whole that we call history can only be the sum of all possible investigations. The whole is always more than its parts. But when it comes to history we will never see the whole but are obliged to find other views time and again: The immigrants arrived with prosperity in mind (panel facing the sea / the coast), the settlers met hardship and lawlessness (panel facing the land) and the Yalukit-willam watched both happen and got nearly crushed in between (panel between). Even this small selection of views (in the literal and metaphorical meaning of the word), have to be re-investigated over and over again in order to do justice to the past.