

Artist Statement – David Wood – Bent Metal

Our vision for the St Kilda Botanical Gardens

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Garden, we have designed four gates to be constructed in steel, using traditional blacksmithing techniques similar to those used in the period in which the gardens were established.

Our designs are inspired by Victorian era garden aesthetics, particularly arabesque influences, grottos and arbours. They also draw from the Edwardian, Deco and modern streetscape of the local area, providing a cross over point.

Exploring the scientific, conservation, educational and recreational functions of a botanic garden, one of our aims is to educate the public on the garden's history and its physical layout. Through notation we recognize the garden's past contributors, its flora and built structures.

The three gates located along Dickens Street are designed to restore symmetry, add gravitas to and complement the wealth of original features found at the southern end of the central heritage core. The history expressed in the main gate will tell the story of the garden to future generations and be a direct link to what is found within.

The Tennyson Street gate departs from the formality of the other gates, a map that schematically defines the main features of the garden, emphasizing its recreational aspects.

The St Kilda botanical gardens are held dearly in the hearts and minds of the local community. As a local artist, we reflect on and respect the significance of this space. This is as an exciting opportunity to further contribute to the community of which we have been part of for the past 17 years.

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