

PROJECT 24

Michael Landy

2011

Acts of Kindness

23 September – 23 October 2011

Installation in lower Martin Place and 200 sites across the CBD, Sydney

BIOGRAPHY

Michael Landy is one of Britain's best-known artists and is recognised as having created some of the most significant public art projects of the past decade. Landy's practice ranges from the monumental and epic to the intricate and meticulous. Over the course of his career Landy has offered critiques of society, consumerism and the alienation of self. One of the Young British Artists of the 1990s, Landy became famous for his monumental project *Break Down* in 2001, in which he systematically destroyed all of his personal belongings, from his birth certificate to his car, in a former department store in London's Oxford Street.

FACTS

- *Acts of Kindness* focused on the simple everyday gestures of compassion and generosity that occur throughout the city streets.
- Kaldor Public Art Projects reached out across Sydney for stories of kindness between July and August 2011.
- 200 of the best stories were selected from the submissions. Spaces were allocated across the city depending on their content and the location the stories occurred. Wherever possible, stories were placed at the actual site where they happened.
- The sites encompassed the main area of the Sydney CBD, from Market Street to Circular Quay bordered by Macquarie and George streets.
- To bring this city-wide installation together, Landy created a 13-metre installation in lower Martin Place. A monumental map of the Sydney CBD illustrated where the 200 stories of kindness could be found.
- Landy's idiosyncratic hand-drawn map adapted the visual language of directions, store logos and signage that characterise Sydney city streets. It could also be walked on.
- The collected stories suggested an alternate vision of the city, one which focused on its social interaction and humanity.
- One example of a submission:
Two of my good friends, who are also my neighbours, thought it was a shame that the commuters on the bus we ride every day to the CBD never communicate. Thinking this a lost opportunity, one of these very friendly neighbours stood at the front of the bus one morning and asked the assembled passengers if they would ALL like to come to tea at his apartment the following Saturday. The following Saturday, 16 of them turned up for tea and they all got to know each other!

PROJECT 24

Michael Landy

2011

PROJECT OVERVIEW

For the 24th Kaldor Public Art Project in partnership with Art & About, celebrated UK artist Michael Landy created a major new work, *Acts of Kindness*, for Sydney. *Acts of Kindness* explored the meaning of kindness in today's fast-paced world, focusing on the simple everyday gestures of compassion and generosity that occur throughout the city streets and often go unnoticed. Stories of kindness were collected from people across Sydney to form the basis for Landy's ambitious new artwork. Landy created a 13-metre installation in lower Martin Place, mapping the Sydney CBD and indicating where the 200 stories of kindness were placed throughout the city streets.

Michael Landy is one of Britain's best-known artists and is recognised as having created some of the most significant public art projects of the past decade. One of the Young British Artists of the 1990s, Landy became famous for his monumental project *Break Down* in 2001, in which he systematically destroyed all of his personal belongings, from his birth certificate to his car, in a former department store in London's Oxford Street. Landy's other major projects include *Semi-Detached* (2004) for which he reproduced his parents' house to scale inside the galleries of Tate Britain, and *Art Bin* (2010) where he invited artists and members of the public to dispose of works of art, receiving contributions from fellow artists Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and Gillian Wearing.

Landy's works explore the experience of life in a consumer world, reflecting on contemporary values, from economic worth to the importance of human relationships. For *Acts of Kindness*, Landy adapted the visual language of mapped directions, store logos and urban street signage that characterise the commerce and business of the Sydney city streets, to present his own interpretation of the city, focusing on the social interactions of its inhabitants and their stories.

Kaldor Public Art Project 24: Michael Landy, *Acts of Kindness*, Installation in lower Martin Place and 200 sites across the CBD, Sydney, 23 September – 23 October 2011

Photo: Paul Green



Kaldor Public Art Project 24: Michael Landy, *Acts of Kindness*, Installation in lower Martin Place and 200 sites across the CBD, Sydney, 23 September – 23 October 2011

Photo: Paul Green

