

PROJECT 9

Christo and Jeanne-Claude

1990

Wrapped Vestibule

12 September - 25 November 1990
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Christo exhibition

2 March - 14 April 1991
Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

BIOGRAPHY

Husband-and-wife team Christo and Jeanne-Claude are widely known for their public art projects. From 1961, they proposed ambitious alterations of public places. The duo created temporary large-scale environmental works (in both urban and rural settings), often wrapping buildings and landscapes in fabric. In doing so, the artists faced resistance from governments and the public alike. However their ability to build a constituency of supporters allowed them to maintain artistic freedom. Following the death of Jeanne-Claude in 2009, Christo has continued to make work under the name of both artists.

FACTS

- 21 years after Christo and Jeanne-Claude realised *Wrapped Coast* they returned for a survey exhibition, *Christo*, at the Art Gallery of NSW and Art Gallery of WA.
- It was the largest exhibition to date of works by Christo and Jeanne-Claude and the first time an Australian museum had curated a survey of a contemporary international artist.
- 150 works were displayed, many from Christo and Jeanne-Claude's private archive.
- Unrealised and works in process were also exhibited, such as *The Gates*, New York, *The Mastaba* of Abu Dhabi, Project for the United Arab Emirates and the *Arc de Triomphe*, Paris.
- *Wrapped Vestibule* was a newly made work for the exhibition in Sydney.
- When critic John McDonald commented on *Wrapped Vestibule* he stated:

At first it looks as though a team of workers had placed a huge drop cloth over everything in preparation for painting the ceiling. Yet none of Christo's sites are arbitrarily chosen... it draws attention to a space that thousands of people pass through every week without really seeing it.

PROJECT 9

Christo and Jeanne-Claude

1990

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Twenty-one years after Christo and Jeanne-Claude created *Wrapped Coast – One Million Square Feet*, Little Bay, Sydney, Australia, 1968–69, the first Kaldor Public Art Project, a survey exhibition, *Christo*, was staged at Sydney’s Art Gallery of New South Wales and Perth’s Art Gallery of Western Australia as Project 9. The exhibition traced Christo’s first sculptural works through to the wrapped buildings and vast environmental projects he created with Jeanne-Claude, where they famously wrapped, surrounded and veiled sites around the world. Over 150 works were displayed, many from Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s private collection. A new work, *Wrapped Vestibule*, was also made for the exhibition in Sydney. *Wrapped Vestibule* cloaked the transitional room between the street and the exhibition spaces, shrouding the sculptures, mosaics and marble of the gallery’s entrance vestibule in white cloth, gathered and bound with rope.

It was the largest exhibition of Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s works to date and the first time an Australian museum had curated a survey of a contemporary international artist. Documentation, drawings and plans were displayed for ten of the projects that had been realised, including the first work created in a public space, *Iron Curtain – Wall of Oil Barrels*, Rue Visconti, Paris, 1961–62, a 5.5-metre-high stack of oil drums obstructing Paris traffic, and the first wrapped public building, *Wrapped Kunsthalle*, Bern, 1967–68, encased in polyethylene and rope. To commemorate the creation of Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s first major environmental work, *Wrapped Coast*, a mural-sized photograph of the 2.4-kilometre shrouded Sydney coastline was displayed, together with models, drawings and collages for the project. *Wool Works*, the wrapped wool bales created for Melbourne’s National Gallery of Victoria during their 1969 visit, was also represented, as well as *Wrapped Trees*, two wrapped eucalypts made during their stay.

Kaldor Public
Art Project 9:
Christo and Jeanne-
Claude,
Wrapped Vestibule,
Art Gallery of New
South Wales,
12 September –
25 November 1990
© Christo

Photo: Wolfgang
Volz



Kaldor Public
Art Project 9:
Christo and Jeanne-
Claude
Exhibition view:
Christo, shown at
the Art Gallery of
New South Wales,
1990
© Christo

Photo: Tim Marshall

