

Hamilton's Dance Heritage

Projection Proposal - James St Plaza

'Multicultural' seems a fitting term to use when acknowledging individuals and groups of diverse cultural, economic, and historical backgrounds. It is also a term that springs to mind when describing Hamilton. Dance and music are practices core to the human condition that envelop and unite cultural, and socioeconomic boundaries from both a historic and contemporary perspective. Dance has this uncanny power to bring together people from many different walks of life. Dance creates lasting connections. Not just in the mind, body, and emotional aspects of the individual, but also within the community. Hamilton has a long and diverse legacy that embraces and celebrates dance and the vibrant cultural traditions and communities that form around it. From the post war jitterbugs and the family dances of the historic 'Italian Centre', the lively drag shows of the Hamilton Gay Bar, and the many gigs in bars, pubs, and countless street buskers, to the many dance events and schools that call Hamilton home. Dance and music are the rhythmic beating heart of Hamilton.

Salsa, tap, jazz, flamenco, funk, hip hop, break dance, ballet, musical theatre, formal and informal dance, traditional and contemporary dance, for over 70 years there has been dance of some form or another enlivening and invigorating Hamilton's residents, community, and culture. This proposal for the James St Plaza projections offers a vibrant animated celebration of dance and music. It will focus on connecting many styles of dance and music whilst showcasing the power and significances dance plays in connection to community, and cultural heritage, both traditional and non-traditional, historic and contemporary. It will be an exploration and celebration of dance that incorporates all the conceptions, connections, and contributions that dance might represent to Hamilton's community.

The animation will be produced in a highly abstracted and stylised manner that emphasizes the dynamic form and flow that music and dance embody. Bold and colourful graphic animation with an accompanying musical soundtrack will take the viewer on an engaging visual journey through dance and culture that, through abstracted imagery, represents Hamilton's rich historical and cultural connection to dance and music. The animation will be designed in a non-narrative and non-linear way. The graphics will morph, merge and transform between different visual depictions of dance styles, people, events, and culturally and historically significant stylised representations. The rationale behind this non-narrative, non-linear approach is that a passer-by can engage with and enjoy the animation at any point without needing narrative or sequential context. This projection will be appropriate and appealing for all ages, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds and will bring a much needed vibrant, invigorating energy to James St Plaza. After all, dance and music are in many ways a communication beyond spoken and written words, it is a language of body and soul that all people are fluent in.



Hamilton's Microcosmic Mosaic

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A microcosm can be defined as a 'little world' and refers to something in miniature that reflects a much larger object, idea or meaning. Much like Hamilton itself being a reflection of the spirit of Newcastle, Paul Maher's beautiful mosaic artworks that ornament Beaumont St are a microcosm of Hamilton's people, place, community and culture. Mosaics are striking works of art that have held significance to many cultural groups throughout history. They generally consist of small pieces of coloured stone, glass, ceramic or other material pieced together to create patterns, motifs or iconic imagery. Contemporary mosaics take on many forms and modern materials and explore a myriad of different ideas and approaches in expressing conceptions of community and culture.

From the sandy, muddy track that was Beaumont Street in the early 1800's to the bustling 'eat street' that now describes it, Hamilton is no stranger to change and transformation. Over the years many different styles of building have been constructed, demolished, renovated and restored resulting in Hamilton being home to variety of heritage buildings and architectural styles. These historic and heritage public spaces, shops, pubs, clubs and homes are, much like the mosaics, a microcosm of Hamilton's people, their sense of place and community. They are also a reflection of Hamilton's cultural and historic heritage, and in some sense a glimpse into Hamilton's future. This proposal for the James St Plaza projection suggests an exploration of the different places, architectural styles, spaces, shapes, forms, functions and facets of the buildings that make up Hamilton.

The visual style will take an abstract approach with a vibrant and engaging treatment that is analogous to mosaic. Following this visual theme the animation will explore geometry, line, angle, colour, contrast, pattern, and form in a way that reflects both the heritage and contemporary places, spaces and buildings of Hamilton. The colour scheme will be a bright and bold contemporary palette that lends from the vibrancy of the buildings, signage and street art of Beaumont St. The animation will have an accompanying musical score that will help to engage the viewer and provide a dynamic flow to the piece. Different facets of Hamilton's rich architectural heritage will be presented in a series of abstract animated scenes that will transform and change, much like Hamilton has since the early 1800's. This will depict and reinforce the resident's connection to place and Hamilton's fascinating history and culture. This animated projection will provide an engaging and entertaining projection and lighting display for James St Plaza that is appropriate for people of all walks of life and especially relevant and significant for Hamilton residents, cementing their sense of pride in this historically and culturally rich community.



Coal Mining to Cosmopolitan Eat Street

Projection Proposal - James St Plaza

Out of the dark coal dust and heavy industrial mining machinery comes a burst of colourful culinary delights.

Coal mining in Australia first originated in the 1790s near Nobbys Head. Convicts mined coal near the mouth of the Hunter River to what went on to be Australia's first commodity export. This projection plays homage to the enormous steel works while acknowledging the changing sense of place as Newcastle transitions from an industrial town to a vibrant metropolis. This animation also celebrates the rich multicultural food scene on Beaumont Street, a destination for foodies from all over, serving up a wide range of culinary experiences.

The proposed projection celebrates Newcastle's vast industrial past, beginning with abstract imagery of coal dancing around the screen morphing into a mechanised factory assembly line. Then furnace shapes spew bright molten steel that cascades down into abstract shaped moulds. The moulds cool, casting colourful shapes that lift out of the moulds and form into images of various food ingredients. The ingredients, (example, cucumber, carrot, lettuce, orange berries & beetroot) fill the screen in an explosion of colour. The food then smashes together into an abstract explosion forming a number of multicultural dishes from curries to pizzas, kebabs and gelato.

The food then flows off screen leaving the bustling Beaumont Street, however, all of the cars and people are represented as different food in all shapes and sizes. Hamburgers zip by while strawberries dawdle, carrots float past high in the sky while pizzas roll on the street. The streets are green and clean with windmills and solar panels made from food.

A storm rolls in, bringing a thunderclap followed by a rain of sauces. The scene fills up with an abstract swirl of liquids before reseeding back to the coal in a seamless loop ready to play again.

This proposed projection celebrates the rich industrial history of Hamilton and it's thriving multicultural community. The abstract machinery and colourful food varieties stand in for people without representing any one race or gender. The animation celebrates an industrial and mining past that built a great city like Newcastle, while acknowledging the need to transition to an information based green economy. Though paying homage to Hamilton's wonderful restaurants and bars, the food in this story is a metaphor for a changing sense of place.

