

# BREATHTAKING WESTMEAD ART BRANCHES OUT TO HONOUR NATURE'S ROLE

SHARE     



Search News



RENOWNED Colombian-born Australian artist Maria Fernanda Cardoso says her artwork commissioned for the Central Acute Service Building (CASB) continues her love and respect for nature and all life in it.

Her 16-metre tall piece, *A Tree Full of Life* - near the front entrance of Westmead's CASB and adjacent to the Innovation Centre - celebrates the environment and how it interacts with its vast communities.

"With the growing awareness of bushfires, our need for trees and the life they host is very important right now," Maria Fernanda said.

"I've been inspired my entire career by nature and the lives within it, such as butterflies, bugs, caterpillars and insects. And these living things can all be found in *A Tree Full of Life*.

MENU

“This artwork represents what I’ve been working on for decades, which is appreciation for the complexity and beauty of all life forms – big and small.”



Dragonflies were central to her work. An important insect and symbol for Aboriginal communities, it holds a rich place in local history and a connection to the land and natural environments.

Reflected deeply in this breath-taking creation, the dragonfly also represents transformation, movement and good health - all highly relevant to the Westmead Health Precinct.

Maria Fernanda took a digital approach to her work, using an iPad to ensure no detail was lost.

“Drawing digitally allowed me to create more expression in my work,” she said.

“There’s a lot of variation techniques you can get through digital, and a lot of detail you just can’t get through a pen.”

The digital file enabled Maria Fernanda to enlarge her work several times over, ensuring detail wasn’t lost before being sent to the fabricators.

Collaboration was key to the project. The team at Sydney-based Special Build helped make her ideas possible as they created techniques and effects not done before, especially on such a large scale.

“First we created the digital file, and then the cutting was done on clear perspex before we created the final layer in a beautiful anodised

MENU



aluminium,” Maria Fernanda said. “The end result is a very clear, beautiful image.”

The artist was also inspired by those who would benefit from her work.

“I wanted to get involved because I love the fact the building includes a children’s hospital,” she said. “The opportunity to provide art for children and get involved on a large-scale project was so exciting.

“Sometimes I feel like a child myself and I still have that sense of amazement that children have through my own art and discoveries.

“The world is new to children. Discovering bugs and plants and insects is something amazing, so I’m excited for them to be part of my audience.”

Carla Edwards, director for Redevelopment Redesign and Transformation said *A Tree Full of Life* was an integral connection between the new hospital and Innovation Centre.

“Having Maria Fernanda’s work brilliantly displayed at this location highlights the CASB and its spaces are places for the community and staff to gather and share knowledge and ideas,” Carla said.

“There is so much ingenuity in the concept. This is what the CASB, Innovation Centre and its spaces are all about.”

MENU

The project is part of the Westmead Redevelopment Arts and Culture Strategy, aimed to help improve the health, wellbeing and experience of visitors to the Westmead Health Precinct.

The strategy brings together partners from Westmead Hospital, The Children's Hospital at Westmead and the University of Sydney.

The CASB and Innovation Centre open early 2021.



### **Pictured (from top):**

Love and respect ... Artist Maria Fernanda Cardoso proudly reflects on her piece *A Tree Full of Life* for the first time since its unveiling.

Sneak peek ... Health and Arts Research Centre director Marily Cintra and Health Infrastructure program director for Arts in Health Brigette Uren join artist Maria Fernanda Cardoso to inspect the piece during its installation.

Reach for the sky ... The 16-metre tall artwork offers quality and quantity for patients, carers and staff.

Pride of place ... *A Tree Full of Life* welcomes visitors into the new area connecting Westmead's Central Acute Services Building and Innovation Centre.

[MENU](#)