

Developing the artwork • 8

the inclusion of art, artists contemplating making a bid might reasonably be expected to decide whether they are interested in that job. If they can't relate to the information provided, it may not be worth pursuing.

When Jane Kelly and David Patten received the *Invitation Document for the Appointment of a Lead Artist* from Sheffield City Polytechnic for its £80 million development plan Campus 21, they received a clear, confident and well articulated summary of the aims and objectives for the involvement of artworks and artists in the development.

See also 'Applications & proposals'

In return, Kelly and Patten responded with a 'package' of information comprising slides, studies and proposals for previous work and catalogues, all well-produced and showing the breadth of their skills and experience. They describe this package as "a generous investment" not least because it represented some £60 worth of material!

Moreover, the initial meeting for short-listed candidates took the form of a presentation by the commissioners based on their own research into art in public in Britain and the USA, presentations by other members of the development team – architects, developers, etc – and a comprehensive site visit.

Jane and David state unequivocally: "We were able to produce a good response to the brief because it was clear and comprehensive without being overly directive. They had done their research thoroughly and in asking us to take them seriously, they were indicating that they would take us seriously."

Their subsequent appointment as lead artists was to some extent the result of this initial establishment of mutual respect and recognition. But if a well-prepared brief and well-prepared response were the only factors in achieving this, the answer to the commissioner/artist relationship would be easy. Unfortunately (or fortunately?) other factors come into play, not least of which are the inexpressible issues of personal philosophy, ideology, taste or just plain inter-personal chemistry!

In this example the commissioner's brief triggered a recognition or response in the artists. Their return submission then triggered a recognition in the commissioner. There was some level of mutual understanding beyond the written words, though contained within the language and ideas both were using.

Checklist

- If you can't relate to a brief think carefully about going further – the first trigger may have failed.
- If you do/can relate to it, see your response as an investment and recognise that investments can fail as well as produce dividends.

8 • Developing the artwork

Making an application



Jane Kelly and David Patten putting up an exhibition to support their proposal. Photo: Chris Lawton

In April 1992, Jane Kelly and David Patten were appointed Lead Artists for the Campus 21 development programme at Sheffield City Polytechnic now Sheffield Hallam University.

For this multi-million scheme, they will work as part of a design team, their focus being the development of a concept and philosophy for art in public, a schematic plan and methodology, identification of sites, routes and opportunities, materials and themes and a framework for the involvement of other design teams. The overall theme will be materials, with stone, steel and water symbolising the city's industrial history.

The initial phase, to be completed by summer 1993, is to revitalise the Pond Street area by incorporating into the polytechnic site a public thoroughfare, so that it acts as a link between a proposed media centre and the city's Lyceum and Crucible Theatre, helping to create a 'cultural quarter'. By the end of 1995, two further phases will be complete. By appointing artists in the planning stages, Peter Downey (principal assistant in the polytechnic's resource planning department) says: "Art will not be an add-on extra, but an essential part of the design."

In their initial application and proposal Kelly and Patten – who have worked collaboratively in the past – describe what it would be like to walk to the Pond Street site once the development is finished. "We leave the station, and use the pedestrian crossing to cross busy Sheaf Street to reach the corner of the Student Union Building. Previously, the dark angled façades were blank, but now their ugly awkwardness