

David Handley

Producer & social entrepreneur, founder of Sculpture by the Sea

David Handley established Sculpture by the Sea in 1996, the fulfilment of a dream he had held since childhood.

To achieve that dream, David left his career as a lawyer and took the plunge. With a marketing budget of \$400 in the first year, he managed to attract an incredible 25,000 people to the inaugural event which spanned the coastline from Bondi Beach to Tamarama. Today the Sydney event is the largest and most popular annual sculpture exhibition in the world. Sculpture by the Sea, Sydney, attracts over 450,000 visitors over three weeks and the most significant sculpture sales of any group sculpture in the world.



David Handley's story of establishing and growing the event, achieving sponsorship, managing complex logistics and developing Sculpture by the Sea to include a schools program and programs for disadvantaged children, is both fascinating and highly informative. With a genuine interest in his audiences, David relates his story back to theirs, often reflecting on the world today, the role of the individual, corporate social responsibility and overcoming adversity to achieve - all interspersed with amusing or heart warming anecdotes.

More about David Handley:

David Handley is recognised across Australia and around the world as a producer and social entrepreneur. As a result of initiating and founding the world's most successful major free public exhibition in Sydney, he was commissioned by Their Royal Highnesses the Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Denmark to establish Sculpture by the Sea in Aarhus, Denmark.

In 1998, he was commissioned to produce a national series of Sculpture by the Sea exhibitions in Darwin (NT), Albany (WA), Noosa (Qld), Tasman Peninsula (Tasmania) and Bondi (NSW). The exhibitions, which were staged for up to two weeks in September to November, comprised the largest visual arts event held in Australia and featured over 260 sculptures at the five exhibition sites visited by over 250,000 people nationally.

In 2004, he initiated and founded The Fiji Swims, an annual sport and community event, held in association with Tourism Fiji, Air Pacific and leading Fijian resorts, in the Mamanuca Islands of Fiji that features:

- The 2.7km Fiji Swim – Beachcomber Island
- The 19km Fiji Swim – Sofitel Fiji Resort & Spa to Beachcomber Island Relay; and
- The 1km Fiji Swim – Treasure Island to Beachcomber Island

The Fiji Swims raises funds for the Shane Gould Swimming Project – Fiji and have featured swimmers who have won a combined total of 17 Olympic Gold medals: Natalie Coughlin (USA); Shane Gould (Aust); John Konrads (Aust); Danyon Loader (NZ); Debbie Meyer (USA); Murray Rose (Aust) and Dana Vollmer (USA).

Working closely with Olympic Swimming Champion Shane Gould and her husband and coaching partner Milt Nelms, David Handley has also established The Shane Gould Swimming Project Fiji, a project that aims to reduce the high rate of death from accidental drowning in Fiji.

David has held board positions for the International Sculpture Centre, USA; Shane Gould Swimming Project; and Sculpture by the Sea Incorporated. He is a trustee for The Australian Museum Trust, Sydney, 2002 – 2010.

David Handley's work has been recognised with the following awards:

- Ernst & Young, Social Entrepreneur of the Year (Eastern Division, Australia), 2010
- Listed as one of the '100 Most Influential People in Sydney', The Sydney Magazine, 2010
- Australian Art's Top 50 Influentials, artmarketmonitor.com, 2010
- Listed as one of the 'Leading 5 Innovators in the Australian Tourism Industry' by Travel + Leisure Magazine, 2009
- Listed as one of the 'Leading 100 Creative Catalysts in Sydney', Creative Sydney, 2009.

Sculpture by the Sea has received several awards that include:

- Joint Runner-Up, City of Sydney Award, Australian Business Arts Foundation Awards, 2007, for the Vertel & Sculpture by the Sea Partnership
- Joint Runner-Up, Bytecraft Commitment Award, Australian Business Arts Foundation Awards, 2006, for the Sydney Water & Sculpture by the Sea Partnership
- Voted third 'Most Popular Cultural Event in Sydney', in 2004 by the readers of the Sydney Morning Herald
- 'Best Art Exhibition in Sydney', as voted in 2003 by the readers of the Sydney Morning Herald
- Runner Up, Australian Financial Review, Business Arts Sponsorship Award, 2003, for the Sydney Water & Sculpture by the Sea Partnership
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David Handley has spoken extensively for organisations that include the Committee for the Economic Development of Australia, Perth; The Queens Club, Sydney; Meeting of European Union Diplomatic Corps, Consulate of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Sydney and the Australian Business Arts Foundation, Sydney.

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