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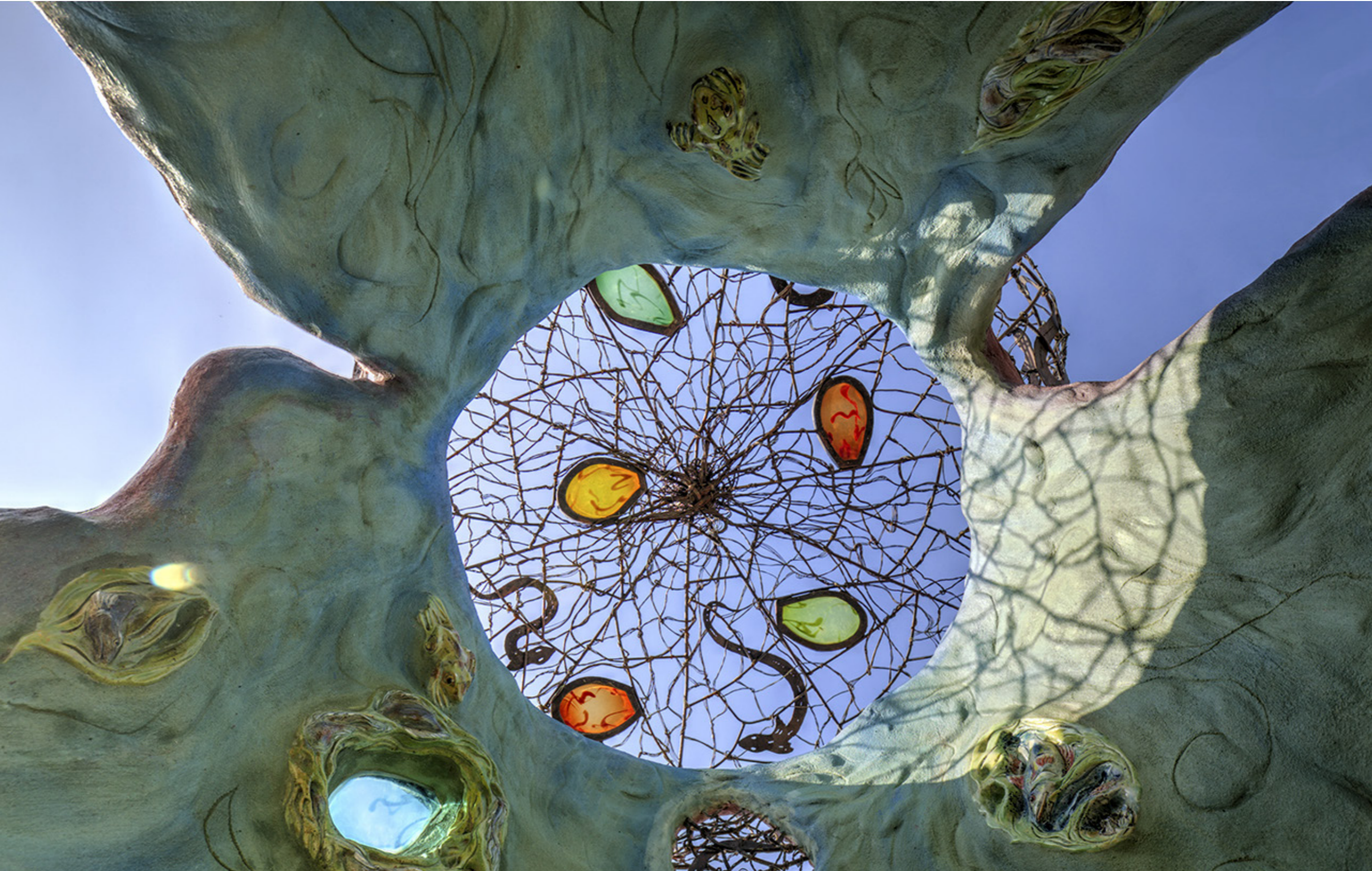
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Circa 1886 Reserve

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CIRCA 1886 RESERVE TRACT CONSULTANTS



The Circa 1886 Reserve and playground form part of a new residential estate currently under construction on the outskirts of Melbourne, Australia. The Reserve is located adjacent to the historic, hilltop Eyrecourt homestead (circa 1886) and has been designed to visually extend the heritage site into the new estate and complement its gardenesque style.

It is believed that the gardens of the original homestead were designed by William Guilfoyle who was the Director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens from 1873 to 1908 and was also responsible for a number of regional botanic and private gardens of the time.

The design for the Circa 1886 Reserve aspires to provide a contemporary interpretation of Guilfoyle's picturesque style. As part of this endeavour, a materials and planting palette have been adopted that are heavily inspired by the Victorian era homestead and its surrounding garden of mature Oaks, Elms, Araucarias and Monterey Pines.

The Circa 1886 Reserve also draws on Guilfoyle's design vocabulary through the inclusion of a series of landscape character zones orchestrated to provide both 'wide and spacious prospects' and areas of intimate scale and surprise. An Oak Lawn encloses a generous grassed kick-about space, while the Rain Gully's topography, stone edges, and planting create a series of small spaces for rest and play, while also serving a bio-infiltration role.

A feature of Guilfoyle's designs was the erection of detailed structures and follies. Such structures added a picturesque charm to the landscape, highlighting points of visual interest along a network of paths. One of the true delights of the Circa 1886 Reserve is the inspired work of artists Bentmetal Designs and Honeyweather and Speight whose structures bring richness to the park experience while also helping to define the park's character –

bridging historic and contemporary.

Artist/blacksmith Bentmetal Designs' art takes the form of ornate steel fencing, handrails, interpretive signage, seating, and the reserve's shelter, inspired by Nardoo, an indigenous water plant.

Cleverly drawing on the aesthetic of Guilfoyle's gardenesque structures and follies artists Honeyweather and Speight's Grotto Shelter uses the language of onion dome roofing, grottos and caves to create a highly crafted magical play space for children where echidnas, dunnarts, bats, spotted quolls, owls, lizards, snakes, turtles, bees, dragon flies, frogs as well as fresh water fish, mussels, yabbies and plenty of eels await discovery.

Working with these artists to realise the Circa 1886 Reserve vision was both the biggest challenge and the biggest pleasure in the bringing the project to life. While both artists were delightful to work with, incorporating their work into the Reserve brought with it a number of added challenges, including the extra effort required to gain both client confidence and local authority approval, and the added complexity involved in managing the construction contract. In the end, though, this extra effort was worth every minute of our time, as it is the Park's art is that truly brings it to life.

CIRCA 1886 RESERVE
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CIRCA 1886 RESERVE
CLYDE, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

Design Firm | Tract Consultants
Consultants | Smec (Engineers)
Artist | Bentmetal Designs
Honeyweather And Speight
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