tasmania

Sky high plan for 117m tower in centre of Hobart’s CBD

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HOBART may soon have its own iconic building to rival famous landmarks around the world with ambitious plans revealed for a tower that would stretch high into the sky above the CBD.

At 117m tall, the proposed Detached Art Tower would be nearly 50m higher than Tasmania’s current tallest building, Wrest Point, and offer breathtaking panoramic views of the city and beyond.

DAVID WALSH: SEE IT AS OUR BIG, BOLD OPPORTUNITY

The tower is still to go through the Hobart City Council planning approvals process, but Detached project director Leigh Carmichael has told the Mercury it will be “a powerful symbol of creativity and a reflection of the people that live in this city”.

“It will provide Hobart and Tasmania with a new cultural icon and attract domestic and international visitation. There is a groundswell of cultural activity in and around Hobart, and this is part of the next wave,” he said.
The semi-transparent steel tower is the first concept to be revealed to the public as part of the Detached cultural precinct development.

The tower, scheduled to open at the old Mercury site in Macquarie St in mid-2017, would include art galleries, project spaces and areas for public programs focusing on art, science and health.

The precinct and Art Tower will be built and funded by the not-for-profit Detached Cultural Organisation, with Detached director Penny Clive “taking on the challenge and responsibility to build on Mona’s success”.

The tower is designed around a “double helix” set of 1300 internal stairs, making physical exertion an integral part of the experience.

A number of interactive elements within the tower would gather population health and bio data for the Menzies Research Institute.
A collaboration between architect Robert Morris-Nunn and structural engineer Jim Gandy, the innovative design features a hydraulic “central lifting core” that would allow construction of each level without the use of a crane.

Mexican-Canadian electronic artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer – the man behind Mona’s Pulse Room and last year’s Dark Mofo interactive public artwork Articulated Intersect – will develop three pieces for the tower under the name Biometric Abstraction.

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“Biometric Abstraction relies on public participation to create unique, personalised experiences,” Lozano-Hemmer said. “The voices, movements and vital signs of visitors will provide the content of the piece itself, creating a connective experience between people and the city.”

A temporary light installation by Lozano-Hemmer, Pulse Column, lit up last night as part of Dark Mofo, to mark the site of the proposed Art Tower. He will present the concept at a public forum at the Odeon Theatre at 11am today.