Ash Keating: Activate 2750

10 February – 7 March 2009
Penrith City Council, Penrith

First bulk bin drop, Penrith City Civic Precinct, 4:00am Thursday 26th February 2009, 2009, C type photograph, Commissioned by C3West for SITA Environmental Solutions, Photograph: Alex Kershaw, © The artist

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Ash Keating, Artist

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Activate 2750 aimed to be a disruptive presence that encouraged the public to consider existing systems of production, consumption and disposal. (it) brought attention to the unsustainable practices of contemporary society by redirecting and reusing materials destined for landfill, into the public realm.

Activate 2750 was a public art project by Melbourne artist Ash Keating which took place over four weeks between 10 February and 7 March 2009 in Penrith. The project set out to raise awareness about our relationship to the production and consumption of waste by creating an artwork that reused material collected by the artist from the acres of dumped waste at SITA's Davis Road Transfer Station, a facility in Wetherill Park that disposes waste to landfill.

Activate 2750 (2750 is Penrith's postcode) comprised an impressive sculptural mountain constructed from 10 tonne, or three truckloads, of clean and potentially reusable materials derived from commercial and industrial waste. It was deposited outside the Penrith Council Chambers, in the Penrith City Cultural Precinct.

The installation was the focus of live performances, processions and actions throughout Penrith by a group of young artists and performers from Western Sydney. These waste creatures, dressed ominously in extraordinary costumes fashioned from discarded industrial fabric off-cuts, roamed the city centre in processions pushing abandoned supermarket trolleys, a symbol of suburban consumerism, laden with materials destined for landfill. Accompanied by amplified sound produced from recordings of the rhythmical mechanical thumping of the waste compressors at the Davis Road Transfer Station, the performers infiltrated Penrith delivering a disquieting, end-of-the-world form of spontaneous theatre.

Activate 2750 brought to light the enormous quantities of commercial and industrial waste sent to landfill. The 10 tonnes of material used by Ash Keating is a fraction of the waste delivered to the Davis Road Transfer Station every day. According to statistics provided by SITA, the artists waste pile represents 0.0005% of Sydney's annual waste to landfill: a shocking statistic.

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Artist: Ash Keating
Photography: Alex Kershaw
Business partner: SITA Environmental Solutions
Project Partner: Penrith City Council

Ash Keating, Activate 2750, 2009,... — **More info**

Betwixt art + rubbish

— Curator Glenn Barkley on Activate 2750

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