

It is a privilege for me to be able to recommend artist Cameron cross on behalf of myself and my city. Cameron has developed one of the most exciting and inventive tourism project ideas focused on developing tourism and economic development, not only here in Australia but in six other sites in the world.

The city of Emerald has, for the past twenty, been host to Australia's only Sunflower Festival. This has given our city a close association with the sunflower, the focus of Cameron's art piece. Our festival and indeed our tourism product, have expanded greatly since the unveiling of our Van Gogh all to the credit of Cameron Cross.

During the feasibility stage, Cameron provided our council with the engineering documentation which was transcribed into metric and given Australian engineering certification. While painting the masterpiece and preparing the canvas, Cameron used a local fiberglass contractor, volunteers from unemployed groups and art students from schools attracting a great deal of community participation.

The easel for the painting was manufactured by a local contractor, creating local employment and now with the finished product, the tourism industry in our region is expanding and providing further job opportunities.

The giant easel is more than just a tourist attraction. The visitor is left with the impression that this booming city also has a cultural side. It has helped bond Emerald's arts and cultural groups together and in it they have something in their city to speak of with pride.

The easel played a major role in Emerald's winning the Central Queensland Tidy City Award earlier this month and also linked the cities of Altona, Manitoba, Canada with Emerald. It is without hesitation that I again comment Cameron Cross, the artist, and his project to you as a winner.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Maguire  
Mayor - Emerald Shire Council