

Wollongong artists create hot pink crapper where users are rewarded in 's---coin'

Millawarramercury.com.au/story/9348437/turdis-wollongong-artists-create-composting-toilet-for-cementa26

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Lucas Ihlein (left) and Kim Williams inside their Turdis.

Ever seen an artwork and thought "that's crap"?

A pair of Wollongong artists will not be offended if anyone dumps like that on their latest work, a device that's interactive in the dirtiest way possible.

Kim Williams and Lucas Ihlein have constructed a hot pink composting crapper called [The Turdis](#) for a regional arts festival next weekend.

Patrons will be encouraged to use the composting toilet - and will receive a reward for making a deposit, a currency called "shitcoin", redeemable for discounts or fruit at the [Cementa26](#) art festival, held across the Great Dividing Range in the former industrial [town of Kandos](#).

Produce received by *The Turdis* during the festival will be turned into "humanure" and used as fertiliser on a farm near Kandos.

Williams and Ihlein spoke to the *Mercury* about their work, which is called *Glimpses of Poo-topia* as the crappy puns continue.

"We've got our own branded toilet paper, we've got jars of composted human manure, we've got *Turdis Candy*," Williams said.

"When people use *The Turdis*, they've actually provided a service to the environment - so we pay them in Shitcoin, our own bespoke currency," Ihlein said. "They're making a deposit, creating healthy soil through their contribution to the composting process."



The Turdis in all its hot pink poo-catching glory.

The project has a serious side, which is to demonstrate how easy it is to set up and use toilets that don't use up to six litres of drinkable water every flush, and the compost that's generated makes good fertiliser to continue the cycle of life.

But Ihlein said it was important not to be too earnest.

"We always try and make it fun, have a laugh, and Kim has composed a banger of a song called *Poo and Wee*. If you check out our [website](#), you can see the *Poo and Wee* karaoke video, and sing along while you follow the bouncing poo emoji."

"At an exhibition launch we had at Manly Art Gallery earlier in the year, we got the whole audience singing, including the Mayor."

The interaction does not stop once the toilet paper has been used - patrons can then go outside and have a debrief.

"We like to create a salon atmosphere around *The Turdis*," Williams said.

"We have hay bales set up, people can sit down and we can talk shit together."

At the Cementa Festival. Williams and Ihlein will be joined by artist and somatic practitioner Gideon Payton Griffiths, aka The Shit Shaman, who will be conducting "conscious shitting" workshops outside *The Turdis*.

"Gideon's workshop gets people to contemplate their own stool, helping participants to overcome the cultural stigmas attached to it. Those stigmas are really facilitated by the technology of the water flush," Ihlein said. "We press the flush button and our poo goes away so quickly that we never properly contemplate it. There is an aspect of shame around this very essential part of the functioning of our healthy biological organism."

But next weekend at the Cementa Festival, poo and its many facets will be the subject of celebration, not shame.

"There's a whole process it has to go through to be composted ... it reaches 60 degrees, and that temperature then kills off the pathogens within the human manure," Williams said.

"Then over the process of the full 12 months, that then settles down and turns into something that just looks like potting mix. We have jars of composted humanure that we bring along, to show people how the finished material is benign. When you unscrew the lid and shove it under someone's nose, they're ready for something awful, but it actually just smells like lovely fresh soil."

The Cementa 26 festival will be held in the streets, shops and buildings of Kandos from September 17-20.

<https://cementa.com.au/>