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CULTURE

Installing a sense of place to life on run

PUTTING yourself in Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba's shoes may not be a pleasant experience.

The artist has run about 3000 kilometres in cities including Geneva, Ho Chi Minh City, Tokyo, Chicago and Canberra as part of his *Breathing Is Free: 12,756.3km* – an installation of videos, photography and topographical maps tracking the artist's movements.

The artist said the work aimed to investigate the experiences of refugees forced to flee their homes.

"At the same time, I wanted to create a memorial to the plight of refugee people," he said.

"12,756.3 kilometres – the diameter of the earth – is the shortest distance for any human to get to the opposite side of their situation, and the world, cutting right through the earth's core. It's metaphorical, yet innately physical."

The artist ran around Canberra last October on a course designed to replicate the geography of Christmas Island.

"By superimposing the perimeter of Christmas Island onto Canberra, I wanted to collapse the

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We have run to hunt, to fight, to compete, to conquer, to condition, to escape, to survive, to move, to migrate.

Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, artist

space between these geographically distinct yet politically related places," he said.

Running has always been a part of many aspects of human existence, the artist said. "We have run to hunt, to fight, to compete, to conquer, to condition, to survive, to move, to migrate."

And by challenging his own mind and physique, Nguyen-Hatsushiba said he was forced to consider why refugees were forced to leave their



On the move ... Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba with his installation at the Campbelltown Arts Centre. Photo: Janie Barrett

homes and whether they would be happier in a new country.

"The latter question is something I have been asking myself for a long, long time," he said. "It may be naive, but that's the basic question leading my search for discovering what affect I can have as an artist."

Breathing is Free: 12,756.3km will be displayed at Campbelltown Art Centre and 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art in Ultimo as part of "Edge of Elsewhere", a three-year

artistic project looking at the demographic, social and cultural shifts happening Australia.

Other works in the show include a house in Minto transformed into a space shared by people and livestock, and Brook Andrew's large-scale animation stills about the adventures of an Aboriginal boy.

"In thinking about our communities, artists have an important role to play," said 4A's director Aaron Seeto. "They bring a different

thought process to some of the big issues which society faces, and in doing so ask us to think differently about how we are connected to one another, about our histories, and our global networks."

Nguyen-Hatsushiba is known for creating physically demanding works; in the past he has filmed underwater, filming people racing rickshaws underwater.

"He sees each of these actions as memorials of some kind," Seeto said.