

Marco Chiandetti's installation of myna birds wins approval

EMILY RITCHIE | THE AUSTRALIAN | MAY 6, 2016 12:00AM



British artist Marco Chiandetti at Mortuary Station. Picture: Adam Yip

British artist Marco Chiandetti's installation of myna birds, which was denied permission to be displayed at this year's Sydney Biennale, finally has received approval from the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

Chiandetti had planned to display the birds in cages but was told in February that this required permission from the animal welfare unit.

According to Biennale chief executive Ben Strout, acquiring the licence involved ensuring that the installation met general standards: verification of cage size (enough room for five unhurried wing flaps from one side to another), the types and size of perches, and ensuring that the birds were sufficiently conditioned to having people around them.

"It was a lot of things that you would apply to standard animal zoological care," Strout says. The process was drawn out because no one had asked to exhibit this particular species before, so "there was no research data ... they had no comparable standards".

Strout adds: "We had to learn the rules together and try to apply them to an artistic installation." Chiandetti's living artwork is open daily at Mortuary Station.