

MEDIA ALERT

19 January 2017

New CEO Role for Gold Coast Cultural Precinct



Image: Criena Gehrke, newly appointed CEO/Director of The Arts Centre Gold Coast

As part of the next phase of development for the Gold Coast Cultural Precinct, the Board of The Arts Centre Gold Coast (which in due course will become the Board of the Gold Coast Cultural Precinct) has announced the creation of a new role, CEO/Director, and the appointment of Ms. Criena Gehrke to that role.

A nationwide search attracted many highly qualified applicants, all of whom recognised the current energy around arts and culture on the Gold Coast and the opportunities that the role offered.

Currently Executive Coordinator Arts and Culture, City of Gold Coast, Criena is the author of the widely admired **Gold Coast Culture Strategy 2023** and has been a key facilitator of the cultural renaissance the region is currently experiencing. Over the last 4 years, she has built a dynamic and highly effective team for the Council's Arts and Culture unit and created an extensive suite of programs and initiatives for artists living and working in the region.

Chair Robyn Archer AO said:

“The appointment panel was delighted with the enthusiasm so many respected cultural leaders demonstrated for the cultural precinct project and this role; even more delighted that a rigourously competitive selection process has resulted in the appointment of someone with lively and current local knowledge and experience.”

Mayor Tom Tate added:

“Criena has been a breath of fresh air for the arts and culture community across our city. Her passion and drive is obvious from the time you meet her and she has a real belief in the direction of the arts and culture movement for the Gold Coast. I look forward to seeing her shine in this new role.”

The new role of CEO/Director encompasses the provision of leadership not only for the continuing successful life of the Arts Centre, but also its gradual transformation into the cultural precinct. The precinct promises a much broader visitor experience with the spectacular new outdoor space (currently under construction), landscaped gardens, and a new Gallery (currently in concept design phase), adding to existing theatre, cinema and function activities.

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Ms. Gehrke has welcomed the new challenges of the role, saying:

“The Gold Coast really is the land of opportunity – our local artists are becoming nationally recognised, residents and visitors are experiencing more great arts and culture than ever before, and there is substantial investment being made by local government in artists and infrastructure.

“The Arts Centre Gold Coast has been a cornerstone of the arts on the Gold Coast, supporting local talent and bringing some of the best national and international arts experiences to the city. The opportunity to be involved in growing this already great organisation into the cultural heartland of the Coast is a rare privilege.”

Criena will start in the role on 20 February 2017.

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