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LOOKING TO THE FUTURE - A NEW HOME FOR VISUAL ART

After welcoming more than 1,240,352 visitors and 700 exhibitions over the past 33 years, the original Gallery at HOTA closed to the public for the final time on Sunday 28 April at 5pm.

Heralding the beginning of an exciting new chapter for the Coast's Home of the Arts, HOTA will turn its focus and energy to opening the brand new HOTA Gallery in early 2021.

Once open, the \$60.5 million, six level, purpose-built space will be the largest gallery outside of a major city in Australia.

Gallery Director, Tracy Cooper-Lavery, said HOTA will continue to support local artists and be a place of visual arts during the construction period.

"HOTA Gallery will remain active in the arts community by continuing to offer commissions and programs focused on local, national and international artists. The recently introduced Artists Pass will encourage homegrown artists to visit HOTA and engage with art and other creatives."

There is plenty for HOTA patrons to see and do too while the new Gallery is under construction.

"For visitors of all ages there are a range of programs to engage in, including ArtLab and Life Drawing, plus our foyer display presenting key works from the Gold Coast City Collection," said Ms Cooper-Lavery.

"We'll also move towards presenting more art in the outdoors and further developing our outdoor curatorial program, where you can expect to see art pop up in unexpected places around the precinct."

Until June 30 you can enjoy the exhibition, *Dean Cogle: Beyond Nostalgia*, a retrospective by local artist Dean Cogle that captures the Gold Coast's retro iconic architecture.

Gold Coast City Art Gallery first opened its doors in 1986, as part of the larger Gold Coast Arts Centre development and was the first time the City collection could be displayed in a proper gallery setting for the public to view.

The City Collection has grown from a modest 270 works to more than 5,000 works of art worth more than \$30 million. It also includes one of the largest collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art in regional Australia.

The new HOTA Gallery signifies the city's commitment to the Arts – a striking beacon of design that will form the centrepiece of the 17-hectare HOTA precinct.

"The Gold Coast community has craved an international standard art museum for many decades and now we finally have the opportunity to make that happen," said Ms Cooper-Lavery.

"We'll be able to attract ambitious international exhibitions, while also having enough exhibition space to present highlights from the City Collection and showcase local artists like never before. This will put us on the map."

The Gallery team have an enormous task ahead as they plan the move into the new space and for the next 20 months will be working on preparing the 5,000 strong collection for the move, while developing signature international and national exhibitions.

HOTA CEO, Criena Gehrke, said the HOTA team had been travelling Australia and the world talking to galleries and private collectors as well as engaging with local artists.

"I'm looking forward to having the kind of Gallery that the Gold Coast deserves. The plans we have are going to blow you away. This is going to be a gallery that's right at home here," she said.

For more information on HOTA, visit their website: www.hota.com.au

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FOR ALL MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

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Key facts and figures:

Over the last 33 years, the Gallery at HOTA has welcomed:

- 1,240,352 visitors
- 700 exhibitions
- 16,000 exhibited artists
- 2,000 workshops and events

While also supporting artists and contributing to the visual arts scene through:

- 100 art awards with over \$724,000 in prizes and acquisitions
- 17 years of Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Award - awarding 948 finalists, 19 winners and the involvement of 17 judges
- 48 Gold Coast Art Prizes, resulting in more than 250 acquisitions for the collection
- 30 Gold Coast International Ceramic Art Awards, with more than 1,500 ceramic works displayed