



From the Mayor

In just a few days' time, the Rockhampton Museum of Art will finally open to the public.

It's been a long journey for the museum, although I'm not quite sure when to draw the start line.

Was it in 1977 when Rex Pilbeam said it was up to future generations to maintain the collection?

Or in 2017 when Council received business case funding? Or 2019 when the first sod was turned?

No matter where you start the story of its construction, I'm glad this chapter is almost finished and we can move onto the

next phase where the Museum is open to the community.

And I genuinely think that there is something for everyone at the museum. It will be a space not just for art, but for learning, and for fun and for making new connections.

The Museum itself will do exactly that, bridging the gap between the CBD and Riverside to open up and activate that entire precinct. But it will go far wider than that.

It will bring in visitors to our region to see this nationally significant collection of contemporary Australian artists because it is the best regional gallery in Queensland.

It will be a defining part of our region

in the years to come which will add to our reputation as the Beef Capital and Home of Barra. And having more options for visitors will see more people come here, stay longer and spend more. When the Museum opens its doors this Friday, I would encourage everyone in our community to come in and see it for yourself. It is not just about art, it is about our history.

One of the first exhibitions – Welcome Home – tells the story of how our renowned collection came to be and, for the first time, we have a fitting home to welcome you into so you can see it firsthand.

I look forward to seeing you there.



New gallery a gift to CQ art lovers

"We invite Queenslanders to experience the new Rockhampton Museum of Art.

This expansive new gallery is truly a cultural gift to Queensland.

With our state ready to welcome back visitors, the new museum will be top of the list for the region's cultural tourism experiences and will help to position Queensland on the world stage in the lead up to Brisbane 2032.

The Queensland Government has invested \$15 million in the Rockhampton Museum of Art through the Building Our Regions program and Arts Queensland investment.

This government acknowledges the important role of cultural infrastructure in growing regional development and creating local jobs that last well beyond the construction phase.

Congratulations to the Rockhampton Regional Council (RRC) for leading the design and construction of the beautiful new Rockhampton Museum of Art."

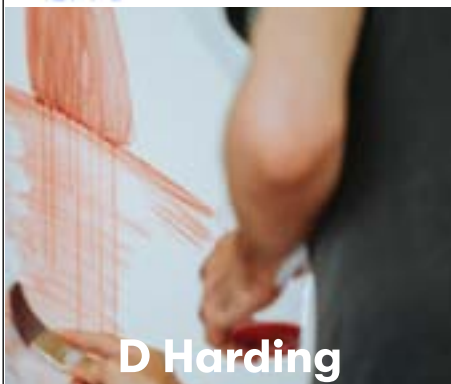
**Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk,
Deputy Premier Steven Miles,
and Minister for the Arts
Leeanne Enoch**



Photo of the Rockhampton Museum of Art supplied by Nathan White.



Come and explore our exhibitions



D Harding



Welcome Home



The Gold Award

Welcome Home image: John Rigby (1922 – 2012), Poetic night (detail) 1976, oil on canvas, 106 x 120 cm Purchased through the Art Acquisition Fund, with assistance from the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council 1976 © Courtesy of the Family of John Thomas Rigby
The Gold Award image: Wendy Sharpe (1960) The presence at her side (detail) 2020 oil on linen, 125 x 125 cm Courtesy of the artist and Philip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane



Rockhampton
Museum of Art

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ROCKHAMPTON MUSEUM OF ART



The RMOA project involved over 800 tradespeople.

RMOA from the beginning

In August 2019, work on the Rockhampton Museum of Art (RMOA) began with the demolition of the former SGIO building.

The new Gallery site located at 220 Quay Street was chosen to maximise Rockhampton Regional Council owned assets, including Customs House located next to RMOA.

The intention was to create an integrated hub of activation that would drive visitation and catalyse further change.

Leading the development of RMOA as the main contractor was the Rockhampton based company Woollam Constructions.

At the time of construction, Woollam Constructions Managing Director Craig Percival described the project as a “once-in-a-lifetime” opportunity.

“The Woollam Constructions story is unique in Rockhampton’s history, as Australia’s oldest privately-owned building company,” he said.

“The Rockhampton Museum of Art will go down as a special chapter in the 136-year-old history of Woollam.”

A key priority was to ensure that local business played their part throughout construction, with over 800 tradespeople involved on-site.

During construction, the goal for RMOA on supporting and investing in local tradespeople was set to 30 per cent.

However, by the building’s completion,

the amount of local contribution was sitting at over 57 per cent, almost double the intended goal.

To assist with the construction of the three-storey building, RMOA secured funding from all levels of government totalling \$36.475 million with an additional \$2 million provided by the Queensland Government during the initial business case and design development stage of the project.

HANSON CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS IS PROUD TO HAVE PARTNERED WITH WOOLLAM CONSTRUCTIONS

to deliver this wonderful new gallery for the people of the Rockhampton region.

Congratulations to the Rockhampton Regional Council for the foresight to give the people of the region a building that will have a lasting impression on locals and visitors alike for many years to come.

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The Rockhampton Museum of Art building is the largest gallery in regional Queensland.

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ROCKHAMPTON MUSEUM OF ART



Demolition work began in August 2019.



Minister Leanne Enoch, Deputy Premier Steven Miles, Mayor Tony Williams, MP Barry O'Rourke, MP Brittany Lauga, and Cr Drew Wickerson.

Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry said that "she was proud that the Federal Government could contribute \$10 million towards the project.

"The Building Better Regions Fund helped support local businesses who provided goods and services throughout the construction."

"The project constructed a three-storey Art Gallery within the recently developed Riverside precinct in Rockhampton's CBD, allowing the Art Gallery to better showcase and preserve its nationally significant collection, featuring artists Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, Russell Drysdale, John Coburn and Charles Blackman.

"It will also feature contemporary artists including the likes of Michael Zavros, Del Kathryn Barton, Richard Bell, Sally Gabori and Ben Quilty as just some of the many names whose works have been acquired."

The Rockhampton Museum of Art building is the largest gallery in regional Queensland.

It features two large flexible gallery spaces, three multi-purpose education spaces, increased collection storage areas, a restaurant, retail space, as well as a function space on the top floor overlooking the Fitzroy River.

The Museum of Art is over 4700 square metres under the roof, is designed by Clare Design, well known for their work on Brisbane's Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) and architects Conrad Gargett and Brian Hooper.

"The design process was really enjoyable," Managing Director of Conrad Gargett Lawrence Toaldo said.

"We worked collaboratively with a very



Cr Drew Wickerson, MP Barry O'Rourke, MP Michelle Landry, and Deputy Mayor Neil Fisher.

supportive client, our design team (Clare Design and Brian Hooper Architect) and our engineering team were terrific.

"However, seeing D Harding's incredible process of engaging directly with our building to create a really special piece of art is very rewarding.

"Galleries are challenging to build because we have to deliver it to an international standard and meet numerous technical requirements.

"But to see it all come together is satisfying, particularly the way it now feels part of the city.

"We are so proud of our contribution."

RMOA hit the 50 per cent completion rate by June 2020, with the second level of the building underway.

Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk was impressed with the progress of RMOA, saying, "the Palaszczuk Government's commitment

of \$15 million for RMOA was an investment in the local economy and community."

"This project is not only keeping locals in jobs during the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic but when finished would drive tourism to the region for years to come," she said.

"Construction is at the halfway mark, and it's fantastic to see this incredible project coming to life which will bolster the city's reputation as the vibrant home to one of the nation's leading regional galleries."

By September 2020, the roof was added to the building, with the outside facade works commenced later that year.

In January 2021, another milestone was completed as RMOA reached the lockup stage.

In September 2021, RMOA officially reached the end of its construction period totalling 109 weeks.

The Museum of Art is almost six times the size of the previous Rockhampton Art Gallery, allowing more opportunities for Rockhampton's cultural scene.

Rockhampton Region Mayor Tony Williams said it is fantastic to reach completion and to be able to deliver the new Rockhampton Museum of Art.

"Our community has had a front-row seat as this building has been constructed right in the heart of the CBD," he said.

"It's been a huge project but walking through the building, it's clear that it has absolutely been worth it.

"There is so much potential here for our community, and at this moment, this building offers an incredible blank canvas.

"This project is a credit to what we can deliver for our community when all three levels of government work together."

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RMOA exhibitions open

The first exhibitions at the Rockhampton Museum of Art (RMOA) have been revealed as 'Welcome Home', 'Here We Meet', and 'Gold Award'.

Mayor Tony Williams said he is excited to see the exquisite artwork on display in the museum.

"The exhibition is drawn from Rockhampton Museum of Art's diverse and nationally significant collection of artworks," Mayor Williams said.

"The Welcome Home exhibition will open in conjunction with the official opening of the RMOA, will be free to view and will be on display in gallery one from the 25th of February to 30th of October 2022."

RMOA's director, Jonathan McBurnie, has said that "Welcome Home is an exhibition divided into different thematic responses to the collection and the CQ region."

"The exhibition is an expansive look at Australian Art and art of our region, with several influential Central Queensland-based artists, former Gold Award and Bayton winners.

"The different sections of the exhibition focus on different aspects of the collection as an evolving, living thing, a reflection of our region and our people.

"These focuses include the landscape and the way it feeds and reflects our collective selves, the retelling and recommitment to Indigenous and multicultural stories of Australia, and importance of alternative perspectives."

Here We Meet at the Rockhampton Museum of Art, built upon Tunuba (Fitzroy River), a river that traverses the Central Queensland region, flowing through the towns and cities bringing with it life and activity.

The river connects communities, cultures, industries and experiences, it's where the coast meets the country and where our earliest histories meet present day.

Here We Meet illustrates and celebrates the region's connectedness and long history of cooperation and collaboration, bringing together works by Karen Stephens, Belynda Waugh and Veronika Zeil.

Each artist lives and works in regional Queensland with their work exploring concepts of place, the environment and celebrating what Central Queensland as a community represents.

This project was made possible by the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund, provided through Regional Arts Aus-



RMOA is a place to come home to overlooking Tunuba (Fitzroy River) and in the distance Nurim (Mount Archer).



The exhibition will bring together key works from the Rockhampton Museum of Art collection.



John Rigby (1922 – 2012) Poetic night 1976 (detail), oil on canvas, 106 x 120 cm, Purchased through the Art Acquisition Fund, with assistance from the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council 1976, © Courtesy of the Family of John Thomas Rigby.

tralia, administered in Queensland by Flying Arts Alliance.

Communities and Heritage Councillor Drew Wickerson said for ten years, the Gold Award has been growing in importance as a nationally significant event.

"First established in 2012, the Gold Award was made possible through a bequest from the estate of Rockhampton philanthropist Moya Gold," Councillor Wickerson said.

"The Gold Award is a celebration, bringing together a broad range of artists, whose varied approaches to the painted medium conveys the breadth and diversity of painting in Australia today."

Artists invited to participate in the Gold Award 2022 include:

- Robert Andrew
- Gordon Hookey
- Euan Macleod
- Nonggirnga Marawili
- Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran
- Wendy Sharpe
- Ian Smith
- Guan Wei

"The paintings will be on public display from 25 February 2022 to 15 May 2022," Councillor Wickerson said

"Along with the acquisition of the winning artwork/s through the \$50,000 prize

money, additional artworks are set to be acquired via the Rockhampton Museum of Art Philanthropy Board's Gold Patron program."

In 2019, the Rockhampton Museum of Art Philanthropy Board launched the Gold Patron Program to raise funds to enable additional works from the upcoming 2022 Gold Award to be added to the museum's permanent collection.

Collectively, the Gold Patrons, all members of the Central Queensland community, have generously donated \$150,000 for art purchases from the selection of artworks entered into the Gold Award 2022.

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are proud to be associated with **Woollam Constructions** and would like to congratulate them on the completion of the Museum of Art.





Michael Zavros art

A very special painting is set to be unveiled later this week to celebrate the opening of the Rockhampton Museum of Art – a portrait of former Mayor Margaret Strelow. 'Margaret Strelow in the new Museum of Art' was painted by leading Australian artist Michael Zavros whose paintings have been exhibited in museums through Australia, New Zealand, Asia and Europe. Commissioned through representative gallerist Philip Bacon Galleries, Michael Zavros has painted portraits of prominent Australians including Dame Quentin Bryce and actor Alex Dimitriades both in the National Portrait Gallery. Describing Ms Strelow as the driving force behind the creation of the Rockhampton Museum of Art, Mayor Tony Williams said he was thrilled to see her legacy honoured.

"I have no doubt that in the years to come people will talk about Margaret's contribution to our arts and cultural history in the same way that we do about Rex Pilbeam, who originally built this wonderful collection," Mayor Williams said.

"As the former Mayor, Margaret was a passionate, unflinching supporter of the Rockhampton Museum of Art and it is absolutely a pleasure for Council to honour her legacy with this incredible portrait."

Ms Strelow said it was an honour to have her portrait displayed in the Rockhampton

Museum of Art as the doors are opened for the first time.

"When Mayor Williams first met with me to ask if I would agree to the portrait I must admit to a weepy moment," Ms Strelow said.

"This is an amazing honour. And to hang beside Rex Pilbeam is intimidating at best!"

The portrait's artist, Michael Zavros, spoke of his hopes for the portrait as it joins Rockhampton's collection.

"I hope this portrait does justice to the person who was so instrumental in the building of the new Museum of Art, and it seemed absolutely right to place her in the beautifully glazed foyer, facing the river, her back to Customs House, the contemporary space beside the traditional, the future framing the past," Mr Zavros said. Mr Zavros' representing gallerist, philanthropist and long-time supporter of the former Rockhampton Art Gallery, Philip Bacon AO said the portrait was a key contribution to both the collection and beyond.

"The collection held in the Rockhampton Museum of Art is one of extraordinary depth and quality, featuring works by some of Australia's greatest artists, so it's fitting that one of Australia's most sought after contemporary artists has been commissioned to create a portrait of the much loved former mayor, Margaret Strelow," he said.

D Harding pride of place

Immersive reflections on place and people have inspired Bidjara, Ghungalu and Garingbal artist D Harding's recently completed launch commission at Rockhampton Museum of Art.

Titled 'Wall Composition on Darumbal', the work was made possible by a fundraising campaign led by the Rockhampton Museum of Art Philanthropy Board, in which 20 donors contributed. Harding's commissioned wall painting draws on the Museum's location and proximity to significant geographic markers, seeking to continue conversations about Indigenous Australian culture and heritage across the local Rockhampton community and beyond.

"The 'Tunuba' is the foundation of the work, both visually and thematically," D said. "It has been central to my conversations with the local elderhood in Central Queensland and also the team here at Rockhampton Museum of Art when discussing what themes might be relevant to explore in this work."

"A range of different figures have been built upon the river base, including figures of tree forms, local botanical figures and other references to Rockhampton on Darumbal land. These elements express shared histories from Rockhampton families and the wider community."

With a strong family presence in Rockhampton and a personal connection to the region spanning decades, D Harding's invitation to undertake the commission reflects a deep connection to Darumbal Country.



D Harding's commission Wall Composition on Darumbal can be viewed inside the new Rockhampton Museum of Art on 25 February.

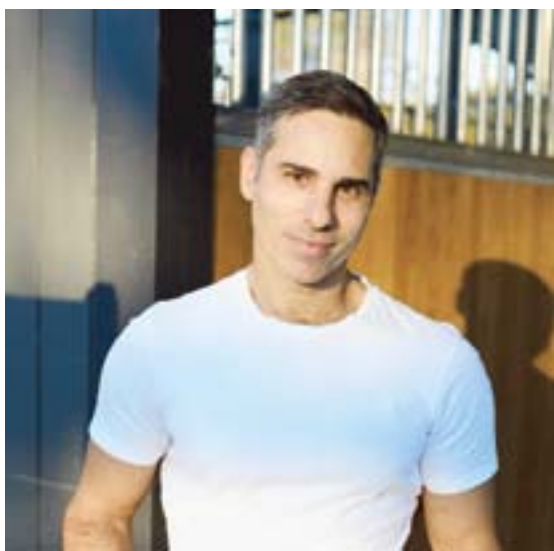
Consulting extensively with both RMOA directors, local Indigenous leaders, and stakeholders throughout the planning process, the semi-permanent work is a social and cultural resource that seeks to inspire, educate, and unite the Rockhampton community and museum visitors.

"I'm honouring the idea that the work is 'collected'; ...in future, the work can be re-staged, re-painted and re-made, continuing its life in different forms," says the artist.

Chair of Rockhampton Museum of Art Philanthropy Board, Dr Leonie Gray, thanked donors for their support and contribution to make this project possible.

"This commission will grow the Rockhampton Museum of Art's collection of contemporary Australian art and continues the over 50 years of philanthropy from which the former Rockhampton Art Gallery was founded," she said.

D Harding's work can be viewed inside the new Rockhampton Museum of Art on 25 February.



Michael Zavros. Picture: PHILIP BACON GALLERIES

Busby Demolition and Asbestos Pty Ltd are proud to be associated with, and collaborated with local businesses & RRC for the stunning new Art Gallery on Quay St, Rockhampton.



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History of gallery

Rockhampton has a long appreciation for art, with the earliest recorded donation made by Edward Cureton Tomkins in 1931.

It was not until 1965 that former Rockhampton Mayor Rex Pilbeam announced the Council's intention to establish an Art Gallery in Rockhampton.

In 1967, the Council opened an Art Gallery in the auditorium at Rockhampton City Hall.

Later in 1978, the Pilbeam Theatre, named after Rex Pilbeam, opened, allowing for a purpose-built home for a new Gallery.

The story of Rex Pilbeam going on an acquisition bender for the Gallery has become the stuff of legend.

Together with Bishop John Bayton, architect Neil McKendry, and Gallery director Don Taylor, Pilbeam sought the advice of state gallery directors before flying to Melbourne and Sydney to scoop the pick of contemporary paintings from commercial galleries.

Through the financial backing of local philanthropists and an unsuspecting Australia Council, Pilbeam and his cohort assembled some 400 paintings, sculptures, ceramics and works on paper.

Artist Clifton Pugh was recorded saying that "I and the fellow artists I have spoken to are thrilled that Rockhampton is building such a gallery and collection."



William Dargie, 1912 - 2003, Portrait of Rex Pilbeam (Mayor of Rockhampton 1952-1982), 1977, oil on canvas, Purchased through the Art Acquisition Fund, with assistance from the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council, 1977, 1977_167.

"There is no doubt in a year or two (if not already) you are going to have the best contemporary collection outside the major cities."

An exhibition of all the acquisitions was held in conjunction with the opening of

the new gallery.

In its catalogue, Rex Pilbeam challenged the next generations:

"I solemnly charge the future citizens of Rockhampton to maintain and advance this Gallery in years to come."

"This is the least that we can expect of the citizens of tomorrow in return for the splendid contribution made by the citizens of today."

As part of the Rockhampton Regional Council's CBD Redevelopment Framework, one of the six catalyst projects included the development of the Rockhampton Museum of Art (RMOA) on Quay Street.

In the past 90 years, Council's significant collection has grown to hold one of the finest art collections in regional Australia, to the point where it has outgrown its current location.

The collection includes nationally significant modern Australian paintings, along with rich holdings of Japanese art, 20th century British prints, and Central Queensland's visual history.

In 2019 the Australian and Queensland governments partnered with Rockhampton Regional Council to build and deliver a new state of the art cultural facility, RMOA, which opens on Friday, 25 February 2022.



The inside of RMOA will be alive in colour during the opening weekend.

Picture: NATHAN WHITE

Artists in residence

Three regional Queensland artists have successfully gained an artist in residence opportunity, allowing unprecedented access to Rockhampton's nationally significant art collection at Rockhampton Museum of Art.

Communities and Heritage Councillor Drew Wickerson announced that Sharon Kirk, Julia Higgs, and Ben Scott were offered residencies that will run for four weeks.

"The residencies will enable the selected artists to develop their own art practice whilst studying Rockhampton's nationally significant collection of artwork in Rockhampton Museum of Art's purpose-built Collection Study Room," he said.

This opportunity has been made possible through a grant from the Regional Arts Fund, managed by Regional Arts Australia on behalf of the Australian Government.

Federal Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry said the Regional Arts Fund provides approximately \$3.6 million per year to support artists and communities in regional and remote areas.

"The Regional Arts Fund increases employment, professional development opportunities and profile of regional and remote artists," Ms Landry said.

"Importantly, the Fund also encourages and supports sustainable economic, social and cultural development in regional communities."

From RMOA's director

The opening of the Rockhampton Museum of Art's doors is special for several reasons, but for one reason in particular.

Yes, it is a triumph of cross-aisle collaboration between State, Federal and Local Governments. Yes, it is a facility on par with larger cities like Brisbane and Sydney.

Yes, it is a conversation starter for Rockhampton, Central Queensland and beyond; the words 'Rockhampton', 'Museum' and 'Arts' are on the lips of many who didn't believe such a thing is possible.

But the reason that this is truly special is that it is happening, despite the pandemic and despite those inevitable, unforeseeable challenges, is its positive message.

It says that Rockhampton is moving ahead, it is a cultural destination worthy of your consideration, and we're just getting started.

It is a testament to the willingness of the community to push for change, for progress, and claim its place as a key Queensland player.

I grew up in regional Queensland, and I

can tell you from experience that it isn't always easy. There are, as in many sectors, often more opportunities in the bigger cities for the arts.

This has certainly always been the pre-conception in Australia, but it mustn't be taken as gospel. There are plenty of examples here and abroad of the arts making serious contributions to smaller communities.

I'm talking about the Cementa festival in Kandos, I'm talking about MONA in Hobart, I'm talking about Renew Newcastle, I'm talking about Townsville's Strand Ephemera getting 200,000 (measurable) visitations- during Covid.

The evidence is there wherever you look.

Communities with a healthy arts infrastructure retain their youth and young adult workforce more readily, experience a greater level of liveability in their citizens, and support other sectors, particularly retail and hospitality.

The opening of the Rockhampton Museum of Art brings our community some real balance; we can now boast of active visual



arts, performing arts, agrarian, culinary and sporting culture in Rockhampton.

Something for everyone.

To those that question whether there is 'room' for both arts and sports or arts and agriculture in the same town, these things are not mutually exclusive.

The more we can offer our community and visitors, the more attractive Rockhampton will be for people to live.

Most people I have met here in Rocky appreciate our diverse community and want to celebrate all things Rockhampton.

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AE Smith (part of the Downer Group) are proud to have collaborated with the Rockhampton Regional Council on the Museum of Art project.

We would like to congratulate the Rockhampton Regional Council on creating such a magnificent, educational space for the community to enjoy and cherish for years to come.

AE Smith
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For Service 1300 313 313 or (07) 4952 5442



Opening weekend guide

The Rockhampton Museum of Art invites you for a community celebration that flows onto the street and surrounds of its new building.

Explore the new space, create with artists and make memories over the opening weekend. Roaming artists and performers will fill the museum over the opening weekend from Friday, 25 February to Sunday, 27 February.

A highlight of the event is the announcement of the 2022 Gold Award winner on Saturday evening.

Councillor Wickerson said over the last ten years the Gold Award has become one of Australia's major art prizes.

"It is fitting that people can now see the artworks in our new Rockhampton Museum of Art," Councillor Wickerson said.

"The Gold Award has also kept the work by long-serving Mayor Rex Pilbeam alive, who, back in the 1970s, headed the push for Rockhampton to acquire artworks by living Australian artists for its permanent collection.

"The acquisition of the winning works along with the works acquired by the generosity of our Gold Patrons will continue to enhance the collection."

The 2022 Gold Award will be judged by Mr Chris Saines CNZM, Director of the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art.

Watch artists create or join in and make your own sculpture at one of the workshops.

Performances range from portrait artists, pop-up musicians, and live performances.



Brad Butcher will be performing on opening night.



The Rockhampton Museum of Art is located at 220 Quay Street.

Learn about the new Rockhampton Museum of Art building by booking an exhibition tour, program room demonstration or talking with our first Artist in Residence.

Opening weekend schedule

Friday 25 February

- 1pm: Rockhampton Museum of Art open
- 4pm: Indoor programs and activation will begin
- 5.30pm: Outdoor entertainment commences with live performances from Brad Butcher, The Huxleys, with a headline performance by Miiesha.

- 9pm: Close

Saturday 26 February

- 9am: Rockhampton Museum of Art open
- 9am to 4pm: Exhibitions including Welcome Home, Here We Meet and The Gold Award 2022 and a variety of programs throughout including Messy Mornings, Yoga, Children's Tours, Collection Study Room Conversation, In Conversation with The Huxleys, tours, pop-up music and more.
- 4pm: Rockhampton Museum of Art close
- 6.30pm to 9.30pm: The Gold Award 2022

(this event is ticketed)

Sunday 27 February

- 9am: Rockhampton Museum of Art open
- 9am to 4pm: Exhibitions including Welcome Home, Here We Meet and The Gold Award 2022 and a variety of programs throughout the day including Messy Mornings, Museum Tour with a Difference with Veronika Zeil, Yoga, Roaming Artists, Children's Tours and more.

To make a booking for events hosted by the Rockhampton Museum of Art visit <https://www.rmoa.com.au/Events>



See The Huxley's perform on Friday night and have a conversation with them on Saturday.



Miiesha will be the headline performer on Friday night.



Queensland
Government



Rockhampton Museum of Art is funded by the Australian Government through the Building Better Regions Fund; the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland and the Building our Regions program; and Rockhampton Regional Council.

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