

ART GALLERY — REDEVELOPMENT

733. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

Before I ask my question, on behalf of the member for Wanneroo, I acknowledge in the public gallery in Parliament today the leadership team from Wanneroo Secondary College and Joseph Banks Secondary College.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to diversifying the local economy through its investment in Western Australia's arts, cultural and hospitality industries.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house how the Art Gallery of Western Australia rooftop redevelopment project has supported local jobs; and can the minister outline what it will mean for further employment opportunities in the hospitality and cultural tourism industries?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house how this project will bring more people to the Art Gallery and the broader cultural centre?

The SPEAKER: I think he might be able to!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

- (1)–(2) Spectacular. That is the word—spectacular!

Mr S.A. Millman: You are talking about the Art Gallery, right?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Absolutely. On Thursday evening, the Premier and I and a large group of people gathered on the rooftop of the Art Gallery of Western Australia for what was not only the delivery of a very important election commitment, but also the rebirth, the reimagining, of our Art Gallery. I mean this sincerely, because when the director of the Art Gallery, Mr Colin Walker, was appointed, he was charged with reimagining and reinvigorating the Art Gallery of WA to refocus the work of the gallery and indeed what the gallery delivers to audiences with a Western Australian focus. With the gallery reimagined and the rooftop activated, we will see a spectacular addition to the cultural precinct. We will see being welcomed into the gallery a huge number of people across all ages, all backgrounds and all diversities, because we want to share the stories of Western Australia. We want to make sure that the Western Australian artists are front and centre in what the gallery has to offer, and that is one of the key focuses that Colin Walker and his team at the Art Gallery of Western Australia have delivered.

The other thing is the activation of the rooftop, and it is spectacular. It includes a magnificent piece from Christopher Pease, an Indigenous artist. It covers most of the upper section of the Art Gallery rooftop. His work *Targets* is a remarkable piece of Indigenous art that reflects the history of Western Australia from an Indigenous through to a colonial perspective. It captures the imagination of people who visit the gallery and of course at night, during activation events on the rooftop, it is illuminated. This is a major change to our Art Gallery. It is now a contemporary gallery, reflecting Western Australian artistic endeavours.

The member asked about jobs. Very proudly, dozens and dozens of Western Australian workers were involved in the construction work that was required, including a number of Indigenous employees who were contracted to deliver this magnificent and spectacular rooftop re-imagination. The other thing of course is it now allows some of our art pieces that have been concealed for some time to be front and centre, including our sculptures. Madam Speaker, you would be very interested in the number of sculptures that are now positioned on the rooftop, including *The Caller*, a very famous sculpture—it is worth a lot of money, too, I might say.

I am so pleased that the member asked this question because it allows us to reflect on how important the creative industries are to Western Australia, to our economy, to our diversification and of course to tourism. We know that when it is safe to open up our cultural institutions to visitors, both international and interstate, we have a spectacular story to tell. I commend all the artists involved, with their works exhibited in the gallery at this moment. I commend Colin Walker, his team and the board, headed by Janet Holmes à Court. I also particularly acknowledge the Premier for his deep interest in the rooftop project. He is a man of culture! I must say that this is a great addition to the cultural precinct more broadly. This government opened Boola Bardip, our new museum, and of course this re-imagined gallery is part of a very important precinct for Perth and Western Australia going forward. It is something that all Western Australians should be very proud of.