

*PEGGY GUGGENHEIM: A COLLECTION IN VENICE*

**593. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Culture and the Arts:**

This government continues to break new ground. In particular I mention the Peggy Guggenheim —

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Sounds like a preamble!

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Members opposite are obsessed.

Several members interjected.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Okay! While members opposite focus on the provision of toilets in East Perth, we are raising the bar. We have had the highly —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Murray–Wellington!

**Mr M.J. Cowper:** Yes!

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Collie–Preston, sorry; I do apologise. I have a problem with that line today!

Members, I am the only member of this place who cannot get onto the floor and speak. Some days I would love to be able to do that, but I have given the call to the member for Scarborough and nobody else. Member for Scarborough, all I want to hear is the question—and I do not want to hear anything from anybody else during this question.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Following on from the highly successful *A Day in Pompeii* exhibition, would the minister please inform the house of the groundbreaking —

Several members interjected.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The member for Albany can focus on toilets in East Perth; we are going to talk about the Peggy Guggenheim exhibition.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Albany, I formally call you to order because you did not ask my permission to bring that particular object in, which you may be going to use in your next question; I am not quite sure. But you need permission to do that. I formally call you to order. Member for Scarborough: gee, I would love to hear the question!

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Would the minister please inform the house of the journey the Department of Culture and the Arts has been on in bringing the *Peggy Guggenheim: A Collection in Venice* exhibition to Western Australia?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY replied:**

I would be delighted to inform the house a little about the Peggy Guggenheim exhibition and the broad range of interests that the member for Scarborough is developing!

**Mr J.R. Quigley:** What was the question again?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** The member should listen to the answer and he will probably be able to deduce the question, hopefully.

I was very pleased to officiate, together with the Minister for Tourism, at the opening of the *Peggy Guggenheim: A Collection in Venice* exhibition at the Art Gallery of Western Australia last Friday evening. The opening was a very significant event in itself, with in excess of 750 people in attendance, including the member for Perth and one or two other members of the Labor Party, although I am not sure whether they were from the state opposition in particular. All members will have an opportunity to attend, and will receive a letter signed by me and the Minister for Tourism fairly soon. They will see that there is a very significant collection of works presented, including works by some of the world's foremost and influential artists, particularly from the first half of the twentieth century, including Picasso, Kandinsky, Pollock, Ernst and Rothko. It is the first time that a collection such as this has been seen in the southern hemisphere, and it marks a very significant step towards Perth becoming known as a destination that offers major cultural events, both for local residents and to attract national and international visitors to our state. It is on that basis that the partnership between the Department of Culture and the Arts and Eventscorp has been developed. It helped to present the *A Day in Pompeii* exhibition at the WA Museum, which was very successful, with about 113 000 people attending. The partnership is now presenting this exhibition in association with the Art Gallery of Western Australia as part of a new five-year partnership that will result in a significant collection of international artworks being brought to Perth over the next five years.

This exhibition is a credit to all at the art gallery who have been involved, but it is in particular to the very great credit of the director of the art gallery, Dr Stefano Carboni, who has had the vision and planning to establish a series of exhibitions like this one, and he has been able to use his international reputation, contacts and experience to bring this exhibition to Perth from Venice. Venice is, in fact, his home town, and his mother still lives there, so he has strong connections with that city, and it is wonderful that, as a result of his appointment and his activities, together with the involvement of the other staff at the art gallery, this exhibition has been brought to Perth. It is a collection of some very significant and quite thought-provoking works from the first half of the twentieth century, and, in addition, it is very much a story about Peggy Guggenheim and her involvement in the development of this collection and her support for artists, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century. I encourage all members to attend when they get the opportunity.