

Media Release

Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Treasurer

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Regional Development



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ONE FOR THE AGES: LOCALS CELEBRATED ON MASSIVE MURAL

The Allan Labor Government is helping celebrate the rich culture and community of Geelong, with the completion of an expansive and stunning new mural by Geelong-born and internationally acclaimed artist Rone.

Member for Geelong Christine Couzens represented Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes, alongside Rone and the mural's subjects, to officially mark the completion of the mural that stretches 88 metres across the exterior of the city's Nyaal Banyul development.

Completion of the mural is the latest milestone at the Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre, a landmark project that has already created 1,450 jobs and new opportunities for local businesses.

From youngest to oldest, the mural features 14 local faces and adds a meaningful expression of the community of Geelong to the waterfront development. Created over three months, the mural presents a connection to Wadawurrung history and the community's evolving storyline.

Seven people from across Wadawurrung family lines are featured, including three-year-old Asta Templeton. Their inclusion is an extension of the celebration of Wadawurrung Culture expressed in Nyaal Banyul's overall design.

The mural also features nine-year-old Benji Hawkes-Sutton, who is an avid Rone fan and whose work he has previously travelled to see, and 18-year-old basketballer Malik Davis, who is about to embark on an international college career he hopes will take him all over the world.

Further along the mural is Deb de Boer-Smith, born and raised in Geelong, who was drawn back to the city after the birth of her daughter, as well as 88-year-old Ken Mansfield, a familiar face who received a Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to the community.

The new mural appears on the Smythe Street side of the convention centre, which will feature a 1,000-seat plenary hall, two event spaces, meeting and conference facilities, and flexible event spaces. It will also house food and beverage offerings, a public plaza and a 200-room hotel under the internationally renowned Crowne Plaza brand.

Set to open its doors mid-next year, Nyaal Banyul will position Geelong as a premier destination for events and tourism, with four events already secured for next year, bringing an estimated \$2.4 million economic boost.

The development is being delivered as a precinct partnership by Development Victoria and the Plenary Conventions consortium, with Plenary Group as sponsor and investor as well as hotel and commercial building developer, Built as builder, Woods Bagot as architect and BGIS as facility manager.

The project is funded through the *Geelong City Deal*, a \$676 million investment from the Australian and Victorian governments, and City of Greater Geelong, to revitalise the regional economy through a range of major projects. For more information, visit: www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/cities

Quote attributable to Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Member for Corio Richard Marles

"Immortalising locals will help ensure Nyaal Banyul has a strong connection with our community. It's been wonderful hearing their stories and seeing the artwork come to life. We are securing Geelong as a premier destination for events and the arts to create local job, tourism and cultural opportunities well into the future."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories Kristy McBain

"Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre development continues its strong progress with the completion of this impressive public artwork – We are funding projects like this across our regions to drive economic growth and make Australia's towns and cities even better."

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes

"Nyaal Banyul continues to deliver for the community that surrounds it – from local job opportunities and the life-shaping experiences of apprenticeships through to the celebration of its people and cultural heritage, as seen on this amazing piece of public art."

Quote attributable to Minister for Development Victoria and Precincts Harriet Shing

"Rone's mural offers a memorable way for locals and visitors to engage with the precinct, while paying tribute to the people who shape the heart of the Geelong community."

Quote attributable to State Member for Geelong Chris Couzens

"The completion of the Nyaal Banyul Convention and Event Centre will help to ensure a strong future for Greater Geelong, one that builds upon the rich history and strong sense of community depicted in Rone's latest work of art."

Quotes attributed to Greater Geelong Mayor Stretch Kontelj OAM

"I have admired the artistic works of Rone for a long time, and this new mural is a striking addition to the Nyaal Banyul development."

"The work highlights the connection that the Convention Centre will have to the local community by featuring the faces and stories of real people, and I know it will be a major point of interest when the facility opens next year."

Quotes attributable to Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation Interim Co-CEO Sarah Eccles

"This is a significant moment in sharing Cultural connection to a site of great importance on Country. Nyaal Banyul is located in Djilang (Geelong), on land that has always been and continues to be, a place of gathering for Wadawurrung People."

"When I look up at the mural, it is with pride to see the faces of my Wadawurrung family across generations representing our continuity, resilience, and living Culture."

Quote attributable to Rone

"The people of the community inspire me most, their stories and what it means to them to be represented in their own community – It's an honour to create a piece that will be part of the future of a city that shaped me."

Quote attributable to Plenary Group Chief Executive Officer Paul Crowe

"Public art is an important way of connecting the community to an exciting new precinct. Rone's mural celebrates the character and stories of Geelong, creating a meaningful connection between the community, Nyaal Banyul, and wider region."