

Hon Steven Marshall MP Premier

Thursday 26 March 2018

International arts leader appointed as Art Gallery of SA Director

Premier Steven Marshall today announced Ms Rhana Devenport as the new Director of the Art Gallery of South Australia, and recognised the fact she is the first female to hold this important role.

Ms Devenport has more than 25 years' experience in collection development and exhibition presentation across several national and international platforms and, in doing so, has forged significant connections with artists, donors, benefactors and sponsors.

Premier Steven Marshall congratulated Ms Devenport on her appointment, which comes at an exciting time for the gallery, with more than 800,000 visitors per year, a record-breaking exhibition program and an internationally-regarded collection.

"I'm delighted with Ms Devenport's appointment and I look forward to seeing the Gallery continue to flourish under her directorship," Premier Marshall said.

"Ms Devenport brings to Adelaide a wealth of experience, leadership acumen and, significantly, a genuine commitment to and understanding of the important role art can play in people's lives.

"South Australia has a proud history of championing the role and contribution of women across all sectors of our community – from politics and Indigenous Affairs, to science and the arts – and this appointment continues that legacy.

Ms Devenport will replace Nick Mitzevich after an eight-year reign at the Art Gallery of South Australia.

The selection process was led by the Chair of the Art Gallery of South Australia Board Tracey Whiting who described Rhana Devenport as an international arts leader with the ability to realise the ambitions of the Gallery.

"These ambitions include a new building with a global impact, working closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and communities, and developing and presenting with innovation and verve, a billion-dollar art collection," Ms Whiting said.

In New Zealand, Rhana Devenport was the Director of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth, leading the development of the Len Lye Centre.



In 2013, she became Director of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki and, in 2017, curated the work of Lisa Reihana as the New Zealand Pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale.

This year, Ms Devenport was appointed an Officer of The New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to the arts. She returns to Australia with a commitment to art's civic importance.

"I am deeply honoured by this appointment, the Art Gallery of South Australia has forged an excellent reputation for its ambition, its outstanding collection, and a dynamic exhibitions program," said Ms Devenport.

"I am thrilled to be leading this strong and innovative cultural organisation into the future.

"Great art museums are the heart of great cities and reflect how a city considers itself in the world and how it contributes to self-discovery, empathy and shared knowledge."

Ms Devenport will relocate to Adelaide with her husband, multimedia artist Tim Gruchy, and will commence at the Gallery in October this year.