



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 28 November 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Gallery of Modern Art; State Library of Queensland

Hon. PD BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.10 am): Queenslanders have another great opportunity this weekend to celebrate Brisbane's growing status as a centre for culture and learning. A gala people's day has been organised on Saturday, 2 December to mark the opening of the new Gallery of Modern Art and the redeveloped State Library of Queensland, where cabinet met yesterday. It is an ideal opportunity for Queenslanders to experience the \$291 million redevelopment of the Cultural Centre, which is home to our flagship arts and cultural institutions.

Visitors will be treated to the fifth Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art—the opening exhibit at the new Gallery of Modern Art and the refurbished Queensland Art Galley. There will also be great entertainment for the whole family, including James Morrison and his band, with fun activities happening across the entire cultural precinct.

It is a fantastic follow-up event to last weekend's official opening of Queensland's new world-class State Library, which I had the honour of performing with my ministerial colleagues Rod Welford and Robert Swarten. Also, the Deputy Premier, Anna Bligh, was there as the local member. The State Library is spread over five levels with more than 3.5 million items to explore. The new library includes an information zone for wireless internet access, multiple galleries and display spaces.

Mr Speaker, I seek leave to have the rest of my ministerial statement incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

There is also an Indigenous Knowledge Centre and wide decks with stunning views of the river and Brisbane's CBD.

The Gallery of Modern Art and the new State Library of Queensland are the largest cultural infrastructure projects in Queensland in more than 30 years.

They highlight Queensland's emergence as an international cultural destination.

The project supported more than 12,000 jobs during the three year construction phase with more than 72 per cent of contracts awarded to Queensland-based contractors.

But just as importantly, we now have a new, world-class venue for staging modern art exhibitions that will become major drawcards for national and international tourists—and another major contributor to the intellectual and cultural life of the Smart State.

Some time ago there was some debate as to whether the library and gallery should go ahead. My government had the fortitude to go ahead and invest this money—the only government that allocated money towards this project. On Friday, I will have the honour of opening the GoMA with my ministerial colleagues. I want to make the point that wherever these projects come up, they benefit the whole state. I notice that we have had some criticism along the way. The former Leader of the Opposition criticised it. He said—

The money should be spent on bringing the best of the world's art to Queensland, not on constructing monument buildings.

Of course we want to see the best of the world's art come here, and we will, so I would like to hear the member say that about the GoMA on Friday and Saturday. It is a shame the member is not in the

chamber. The reality is that my government has delivered this. The Smart State is about innovation, it is about learning and it is also about the arts. I want to put clearly on the public record my thanks to all of those who have made it possible. I want to thank the Department of Public Works. I also want to thank the arts ministers—and there have been three of them—who have been involved in all of this: Matt Foley, Anna Bligh and now Rod Welford. We had the courage to deliver this. This will provide a better quality of life. We have a smart library for the Smart State. We have a gallery that is going to be among one of the best in the world—in the top 10—and will be the largest modern art gallery in Australia. We built it. I am very proud of it and so should every other member of this parliament.