

MEDIA RELEASE

6 JULY 2006

Strong Future for Arts, Culture & Events on Hobart Waterfront

One of Australia's leading artistic directors believes there is a strong future for arts, culture and events on the Hobart waterfront.

Sue Nattrass AO, former head of arts festivals in Melbourne and Adelaide, says Sullivans Cove is a special place offering diverse and authentic experiences.

Ms Nattrass has recently completed a seven-month review of arts, culture and events on the Hobart waterfront for the Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority with the aim of retaining existing activities and attracting new ones.

Her report, '**A Blueprint for a Creative Future**', was co-written by Tasmanian consultants Anne Kerr and Greg Hudson. It is on public exhibition at the Authority's office at 5 Franklin Wharf, Hobart, and is available via the Internet.

Community feedback on the report is being invited until 25 August 2006.

In the report, Ms Nattrass says Sullivans Cove offers diverse work, cultural and recreation opportunities for locals and provides a wide range of authentic experiences for visitors to share, thus differentiating the Cove from the 'plastic', specially developed spaces created in other waterfront cities.

"Hobart currently has within its grasp an exciting opportunity to bring together the competitive strengths of the city to create an arts and events sector hot spot throughout Sullivans Cove," Ms Nattrass said.

"Rarely does a modern city get such an opportunity to further develop and reinterpret a pivotal precinct like Sullivans Cove in the context of its past, current and future strengths."

Ms Nattrass recommends two broad investment programs for Sullivans Cove:

- 'hard infrastructure' investment to improve buildings, spaces and services; and
- 'soft infrastructure' strategies to maintain the area's status as Tasmania's most vibrant cultural precinct.

Ms Nattrass says it is important to recognise that what happens in spaces between buildings is just as important as what happens inside the buildings.

"It is easy to focus on bricks and mortar but to achieve something special that offers the best for the community and the economy, there must be equal focus on developing the capacity of the people who have defined the Cove and its ethos to date," Ms Natrass said.

"People do not necessarily need buildings in order to be creative. However, they do need the funding support that facilitates innovation, cross-art form and cross-sector activities and the spaces to do them in. These are our future 'must-haves' for the Cove in order to deliver authentic, diverse cultural activities that honour the past and herald the future."

Among improvements suggested by Ms Natrass are:

- More cooperation and communication between individuals and organisations involved in arts, culture and events;
- The need to share resources as much as possible, including technical staff and ticketing;
- Installing flexible infrastructure such as power and sewerage to allow more outdoor events; and
- Scheduling more cultural and community events to coincide with large sporting events.

On a cautious note, Ms Natrass warns against spoiling the authenticity of Sullivans Cove.

"The greatest risk is that inappropriate development will result in the urbanisation of the Cove at the expense of cultural diversity. The Cove must contain a mix of living, working and creative spaces – and not be dominated by or serve just one demographic," Ms Natrass said.

"This is one of the most comprehensive reports into the cultural fabric of Sullivans Cove based on interviews, workshops and focus groups with hundreds of stakeholders," said Jeff Gilmore, Chief Executive, Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority.

"This work will be extremely important as we seek to build on the already rich concentration of artistic and cultural activities in Sullivans Cove and its growing use as a setting for events.

"Importantly, the report recognises the importance of informal activities as well as more organised events, including our embrace of activities on the lawns of Parliament House, Friday night drinks in Salamanca Place, and the affinity we feel for our scientific and Antarctic community.

"I encourage all people with an interest in arts, culture and events in Sullivans Cove to read the report and let us know whether you agree with the consultants."

Note to Editors: Sue Natrass AO will visit Hobart on Thursday, 6 July 2006. Media interviews will be available on this day from Noon. Please contact the Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority if you would like further information. A copy of the report is downloadable from www.waterfront.tas.gov.au.

About Sue Natrass

Sue Natrass AO was named as one of 250 women on the Centenary of Federation 'Women Shaping the Nation' Honour Roll in 2001. She was Artistic Director of the Melbourne Festival in 1998 and 1999, Artistic Director of the Adelaide Festival in 2002 and Chairwoman of Festival Melbourne 2006.

She is immediate Past President of the Victorian College of the Arts, Chair of the Confederation of Australian International Arts Festivals, a member of the Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust, a Director of Federation Square and the Melbourne Football Club and of a number of other boards and Foundations.

Ms Natrass was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2002 and was awarded the Centenary Medal in 2003.

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About the Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority

The Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority is the planning authority responsible for protecting, enhancing and developing Sullivans Cove and surrounding areas. The Authority aims to preserve the unique qualities of the Hobart Waterfront, which defines the identity, vitality and image of the Tasmanian people.

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