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University of the Sunshine Coast and Blue Sky View Honoured at Queensland Gallery and Museum Awards

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) proudly announced the Winners of the **2015 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards** (GAMAA) at a gala event hosted by The University of Queensland Art Museum on Thursday 19 November 2015. This year's award Winners were presented with an exquisite trophy specially created for the event by Queensland artist Madeleine Brown.

The University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) and **Blue Sky View**, were announced the **Winners** for their outstanding achievement in the category of 'Projects: Organisations with Paid Staff' for the project **East Coast Encounter**. In awarding USC and Blue Sky View the Winners of this category, the judges recognised the significance of this exhibition and the passion of the co-curators in bringing this unique project to life.

East Coast Encounter incorporates a three-year touring exhibition, publication and a DVD. This project re-imagines James Cook's 1770 Australian journey and its impact, shifting the focus from primarily a Eurocentric perspective to present a shared story, told in engaging ways by Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists from multiple perspectives and in various media.

East Coast Encounter was developed through a partnership between Dr Lisa Chandler from the University of the Sunshine Coast, and John Waldron, independent curator and gallery and museum consultant from Blue Sky View, based on an idea by local Sunshine Coast artist Peter Hudson. The exhibition features fourteen artists, three performers/writers, a DVD by Australian journalist Jeff McMullen, and a bark canoe constructed by local Gubbi Gubbi men. The entire *East Coast Encounter* exhibition has been subsequently acquired by the Australian National Maritime Museum for its national collection and the Cook 2020 program marking the 250-year anniversary of Cook's voyage.

Co-curator of East Coast Encounter, John Waldron said: "it is great to receive such a prestigious Award. It provides important recognition for an exhibition that has been developed through strong local links, including University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) co-curator Dr Lisa Chandler, photographer Michael Cook, multi-media artist Bianca Beetson and painter Peter Hudson, who initiated the exhibition idea from his childhood reminiscences of stories of the Glasshouse Mountains."

Dr Lisa Chandler said: "We're all so passionate about this project because we're reimagining a significant historical encounter through creative practice to promote cultural dialogue and reconciliatory understanding."

Presented by Museums & Galleries Queensland, the **GAMAA celebrate the outstanding achievements, professional excellence, and innovation of Queensland's museum and gallery sector**. It also recognises the valuable contribution that our State's museums and galleries make to enriching their local and wider communities, and honours the extraordinary commitment and talents of paid professionals and volunteers working in the industry.

M&G QLD Executive Director, Rebekah Butler, said, "It is with great pleasure that M&G QLD congratulates the winners and finalists of the 2015 GAMAA. We commend all those who nominated for their remarkable achievements and contribution to the sector. This year's awards recognise a range of inspirational people and projects."

For a full list of GAMAA recipients go to the M&G QLD website at www.magsq.com.au.

The 2015 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards were presented by M&G QLD and generously supported by The University of Queensland Art Museum. The GAMAA are proudly sponsored by Brian Tucker Accounting. We also acknowledge the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland and Museums Australia Queensland.

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