

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: Thursday 16 August 2018

Tracy Puklowski to take up QVMAG post

The City of Launceston is pleased to announce Tracy Puklowski as the new head of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

Ms Puklowski has most recently served as the Director of the National Army Museum of New Zealand, and will take up the new role as the City of Launceston's Director of Creative Arts and Cultural Services from October 1.

City of Launceston General Manager Michael Stretton said Ms Puklowski had extensive experience in the cultural heritage sector and was responsible for some of New Zealand's most significant cultural programmes and projects.

"Tracy comes to the City of Launceston having demonstrated success in a region that has been at the forefront of innovation and contemporary cultural practices," Mr Stretton said.

"She possesses a Bachelor Arts History-English, a Master of Art History (Hons), a Post-Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies and is a graduate of the Getty Museum Leadership programme.

"Prior to her role at the National Army Museum, Tracy was the Associate Director of Living Cultures at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Associate Chief Librarian, Research Collections at the National Library of New Zealand.

"I believe her appointment is very exciting for Launceston and for the QVMAG, and I'm looking forward to her starting work later this year."

Launceston Mayor Albert van Zetten congratulated Ms Puklowski on her appointment.

"The QVMAG is one of the city's most important institutions, and I have no doubt Tracy will bring new energy and a new perspective to her role at the City of Launceston," Mayor van Zetten said.

"There are many exciting opportunities ahead for the City of Launceston and its cultural institutions, and we're thrilled to have Tracy aboard."

Ms Puklowski said she believed Launceston was at a pivotal point in its development, which is why she applied for the position.

"I was born in the UK, but my family and I lived in Melbourne when I was young," she said.

"My earliest memories are actually of Australia, and for that reason, it feels a bit like coming home.

"I have had a long-standing interest in QVMAG. It's a well-respected organisation with a great history, and I love the sheer span of the collections — it creates so much opportunity.

"I was fortunate to visit Launceston recently and I was really struck by the built heritage — it's a great town to walk around.

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"I firmly believe that arts, culture and heritage has the power to transform communities, and deliver powerful social, economic, and cultural outcomes. This role is right in the middle of that conversation, and that's incredibly exciting for me, both professionally and personally."

Ms Puklowski said she was excited about the move from New Zealand to Tasmania.

"There are certainly going to be many differences – we have completely different histories," she said.

"However, I think there are also many similarities. Places that are more geographically isolated tend to be very outwardly focused, innovative, and resilient — and I think that applies equally to New Zealand and Tasmania. There's been quite a lot of cross-pollination between New Zealand and Australian cultural institutions in the last decade or so and that's a great thing for both parties.

"New Zealand museums are recognised internationally for their approach to community and indigenous engagement, and that's very much at the core of my values.

"My husband and I are really looking forward to this new phase of our lives.

"We both love the outdoors, getting out and about — and we are both foodies. I can't wait to explore the Harvest Market and the Tamar Valley. I've been living far inland for the last three years and getting seafood back on my menu is a priority."