

Friday 10 July 2020

## NEW ARTWORKS BRIGHTEN UP A REOPENED RYDE AQUATIC LEISURE CENTRE

Customers visiting the recently reopened Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre can enjoy bright new artworks created by staff.

To ensure the health and safety of our community and limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), Council closed the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre (RALC) for three months. While staff were unable to service customers directly during this time, some used the opportunity to undertake maintenance to the centre, while others were deployed to assist different teams of Council. Meanwhile, Children's Party Host Erin Hackelton-Smith and Lifeguard Patrick Perlstone saw the shutdown as an ideal time to brighten up the centre with new artworks.

First swimming lessons can be daunting for some children and Erin wanted to produce something happy and bright to put kids at ease and create something they will remember. The mural features a mermaid and her sea-creature friends. Erin's mother, Marina, is a swimming teacher at the centre and incorporates the imagery into her lessons where possible.

Patrick's background as a scenic artist for films, gilding, and concept design made him perfectly placed to create an eye-catching design that reflects elements and colours found at the RALC. The artwork, which is positioned at the far end of the pool near the entrance to the indoor stadium, spells out S-T-A-D-I-U-M using a range of imagery, from soccer balls to basketball nets, badminton shuttlecocks and more.

Short messages related to the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic have been included, such as 'Wash hands' and 'Social distancing'. To add another dimension, he has also incorporated real silver leaf into the work, which catches the sunlight and brings an extra sparkle.

City of Ryde Councillor Christopher Gordon, Chair of the Arts Advisory Committee, visited the RALC to check out the new works.

"City of Ryde is committed to supporting the arts and local talent," Clr Gordon said.

"These works are an incredible example of Council staff using their initiative and skills during a difficult time to create something unique and memorable for the community to enjoy."

The unveiling of the new artworks coincides with the resumption of swimming lessons at the RALC from next Monday 20 July.

Term three of swimming lessons will take place over 10 weeks between Monday 20 July and Sunday 27 September. Places can be booked by calling the RALC on 8878 5111 or emailing [swimschool@ryde.nsw.gov.au](mailto:swimschool@ryde.nsw.gov.au).