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Noosa Council  
Media Release

## **Exhibition reveals the ‘casual misogyny’ and threatening language in urban landscapes**

Contemporary artist Michelle Hamer’s new exhibition *Are You Having a Good Night?* has opened at Noosa Regional Gallery, sparking quite a bit of chatter.

A large LED sign at the Gallery entrance – the same reserved for directing traffic around construction zones – surprised numerous Gallery visitors, with its uncomfortable messages.

“And that is precisely the point,” says Noosa Regional Gallery Director, Michael Brennan.

“The exhibition explores the prevalence of threatening language in urban landscapes – in particular that which is directed towards women, with Hamer’s hand-stitched works documenting the language commonly encountered in public spaces and in everyday interactions.”

*THERE IS NO THREAT. I’M JUST BEING FRIENDLY. YOU CHICKS ARE ALL THE SAME* – These are among the phrases stitched into Hamer’s delicate depictions of the urban environment. It was these propositions that confronted guests on the sign outside the Gallery on opening night.

“The utter everydayness of threats, embedded power and the irony and complexity of language is so embedded (in our culture), there is no escape,” says the artist.

Hamer has documented the language of urban environments for some time, with her works having become a social archive of our daily interactions.

Poignant, insightful, witty and cutting - the artist’s primary interest is in how language in the urban environment impacts us in ways not necessarily intended.

“I began photographing the glitched signage from freeways because the glowing messages felt like they were just for me. The more I translated them into stitched works, the more I noticed the language around me,” says Hamer.

Particularly disheartened by the “casual misogyny” experienced by many women in social settings, Hamer, with her new works, highlights the prevalence of behaviour often justified as harmless fun, but is “so engrained in the way we navigate spaces”.

“The language we use matters,” she says.

*Michelle Hamer: Are You Having A Good Night?* Is on show at Noosa Regional Gallery until March 21, 2021.

**ENDS.**

**Media enquiries: Nathan Evans. Phone (07) 5329 6168.**