

ROOM SERVICE

In-house curator appointed to the Cullen hotel

THE Cullen, the first of six Art Series hotels planned for Melbourne, has opened in Prahran. The 115-room hotel on Commercial Road features works by Adam Cullen, including seven large acrylic canvases in the foyer and 33 digital prints. There are two sculptures to come.

Jane O'Neill is the in-house curator for the hotel and possibly the first person in Australia to hold such a title.

O'Neill, who has an extensive background in the art world, worked with Cullen between 1996 and 2000 and curated his work in three independent contemporary art exhibitions. She is finding working within a hotel invigorating.

"A hotel is a wonderful environment for art. It means you get to live around the art," she says. "Cullen, with his absurdist sense of humour and his shrewd observational take on Australian culture, is the perfect choice for such a project."

O'Neill's role, now the hotel is open, is to introduce guests to Cullen's work and to the wider art scene.

"If someone says to me I want to learn all I can and get to know the young up-and-coming stars of the art scene then that's what I will do," she says. In keeping with the art theme, the hotel has bikes and Smart cars decorated with Cullen's work for guests to hire.

The hotel also has in-house personal fitness advisers: former Hawthorn footballers Shane Crawford and Ben Dixon.

Rooms from \$172. See artserieshotels.com.au.



Family break on a budget

It's not often you get a deal like this during school holidays. Even better, Club Med properties in the Asia Pacific region are inviting children to stay for free.

The offer applies to children under 12 and is available for minimum eight-night stays at Club Med Nusa Dua Bali; Phuket; Bintan Island; Cherating Beach, Malaysia; and Mauritius for travel until April next year. It's on sale until November 30.



On show ... (top) artist Adam Cullen with one of his works; Club Med Phuket.

FREQUENT FLYER
NIKKI TYLER

The country is best seen from the saddle, says this bike enthusiast.

Q What was your first international trip?

A Fiji. We ate fresh seafood cooked on the sand at night and then washed it down with some kava.

Q How important is travel to you?

A Having a trip to look forward to makes me happy. Working at Bicycle Victoria I get to travel around Australia and plan the best places to hold a bike ride, whether it be along the Great Ocean Road for the Great Victorian Bike Ride or in Western Australia for the Great West Australian Bike Ride. I get to see a lot of our great country.

Q This year's Great Victorian Bike Ride has 5000 participants. Will you be on your bike?

A I would love to be but because I need to be at the new campsite every day at least five hours before the riders, I won't get a chance. But seeing the people at the end of the ride so elated by their achievement – that's even better than getting to ride yourself.

Q What's your favourite cycling destination?

A That unexpected, quiet back road is the greatest find.

Q Do you tire of travel?

A Travelling for work can take its toll but then I end up in Margaret River in WA and think it beats being in the office.

Q Can you distinguish these days between leisure travel and business travel?

A Yes. Business travel is still fun but it is about doing as much work as you can. It can sometimes be driving for hours planning a bike route and hopping from meeting to meeting. There isn't a lot of time to sit back.

Q Favourite destination?

A Turkey. I started in Istanbul and travelled to the bottom to Olympos and then spent four days on a yacht in the Mediterranean. I loved that it