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**MEDIA**

**Greg Barnes and Peter Wilkinson**

Two architects imbued with a passion for flair are helping Niecon turn visionary projects The Oracle and Nirvana by the Sea into havens for those who want the best in life.

They both have extensive resumes of projects but could well be called the long-time local and the newcomer.

The 'local' is Greg Barnes who has lived on the Gold Coast for 48 of his 50 years.

The newcomer is Peter Wilkinson, who works with Greg at Greg Barnes Design Group, and is a South African who moved to the Gold Coast in late 2005.

The group has a consultancy role with Niecon that involves managing the overall architectural aspects of Niecon projects as they progress through the design and construction phase.

"You could say we keep our finger on the pulse to make sure that at the end of the day Niecon, and its apartment buyers, get the best possible outcome in terms of design integrity, fittings and finishes," says Greg.

His focus is on Nirvana at Kirra, a building which he says will be a 'very exclusive' residential address. He certainly has plenty of motivation to help make Nirvana an ultra-desirable 'home' – he has bought an apartment in the 15-level tower.

Greg, the son of long-time Gold Coast architect Barry Barnes, says he finds working with Niecon 'inspirational'.

He has a 20-year association with Niecon that includes the Aqua tower at Labrador and the twin Reflection on the Sea towers at Coolangatta.

Greg, whose second project as a registered architect was the landmark 45-level Peninsula tower in Surfers Paradise in the early 1980s, says he admires the pride that Niecon CEO Con Nikiforides takes in the family company's products.

"He is scrupulous in terms of attention to detail, and fittings and finishes are a changing feast.

"He's determined that when apartments are handed to their owners, they will have the very latest of everything, not something that was ordered a year or two earlier.

"I enjoy working with people like that.

"For me it brings some truth to the old adage that if you can enjoy your work and make it fun, you can enjoy your life."

For Peter Wilkinson, The Oracle is the most significant of a raft of Greg Barnes Design projects in which he has an involvement.

That said, The Oracle is a bit special for Peter.

Prior to taking a consultancy role with Greg, he led the team within the internationally renowned DBI Design group that took The Oracle project from merely a concept through to the documentation stage.

"The Oracle experience has been a unique one for me and I'm passionate about the development," he says.

"I want to be there as The Oracle evolves and as the vision is fulfilled."

Peter spent 22 years as an architect in South Africa, including 10 in a Durban-based partnership.

He moved to Hong Kong in 2000 and over the next five years worked on projects that ranged from hotels to the Hong Kong airport megastructure.

The highlight of his Asian stint was leading a team which won an international competition to design a new cultural centre for the heart of Hong Kong.

Peter says that when he moved to Australia he could have opted for 'more lucrative' architectural roles in Brisbane.

"I opted for the lifestyle on the Gold Coast which, as things have turned out, was very apt because The Oracle is very much a lifestyle development.

"You can't help but get enthusiastic about it."

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