

## Melbourne Now for VCE Visual Communication Design

### Key curriculum links

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- Create communication solutions through the application of the design process
- Analyse, interpret and understand visual communication in its social context
- Explore the ways in which ideas and information are communicated visually
- Examine the influence of cultural and historical factors on contemporary and historical examples of visual communications
- Describe how the use of materials, methods, media, design elements and design principles communicate information and ideas
- Use visual communication terminology to describe and analyse contemporary and historical examples of visual communications
- Analyse examples of visual communication and design in terms of audience, ideas, intended purpose, application of design elements and principles
- Identify and describe the skills applied by professional designers at stages throughout the design and production process of visual communications
- Discuss decisions made by designers – ethical, financial, philosophical – to satisfy the requirements of the design brief

### Overview

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Within *Melbourne Now* are a number of smaller exhibitions in which visual communication design plays a central role. *Melbourne Design Now* showcases industrial, product, furniture and object design from Melbourne designers and design studios, with themes of the economy, social culture, sustainability, the human body and visual culture.

At The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, the Design Wall, a giant wall installation 7 metres high and 15 metres wide, displays thirty design projects that represent design in everyday life, with interactive tablet displays that document aspects of design development and production. The design projects are colour-coded according to theme and for each theme an exemplar has been selected. These include the direct-to-brain bionic eye developed by Professor Mark Armstrong and the Monash Vision Group, which allows blind users to make out objects and people with the aid of a brain implant, and world-class digital film cameras and video editing products from Blackmagic Design. A display of innovative furniture and lighting explores how local designer/makers push the boundaries of materials and form.

Another exemplar is the award-winning Bolwell Edge caravan – the latest stage in caravan evolution, incorporating cutting-edge materials and aerospace technology. Sited in the Grollo Equiset Garden at NGV International, the caravan is the working studio of a different designer-in-residence each week for the duration of the *Melbourne Now* exhibition, presenting a valuable opportunity for students and teachers to meet practising designers, ask questions about their creative and critical design thinking and observe how they communicate design ideas.

In *Designer Thinking* – another exhibition within the exhibition – the different conceptual and practical approaches of a number of emergent local fashion designers are explored in an installation of street wear and formal wear that mixes the utilitarian with the sculptural.

New approaches to the design of both jewellery and shoes are explored in an exhibition of bespoke shoemakers and in a display of the work of Melbourne's cutting-edge jewellers. Working in a variety of materials, designers playfully explore form, line, colour and the relationship between the object and the wearer.

Ideas of sustainability are evident in the work of many of the exhibiting artists and designers. The work of award-winning designer Leyla Acaroglu is presented as an exemplar for its focus on the global and social impact of design and technology, with emphasis on sustainability and product life-cycle assessment. *The Secret Life of Things* is a series of animations – commissioned in partnership with the Design and Technology Teachers Association (DATTA) specifically for design and technology students – that promotes environmentally sustainable decision-making in design and product development. Design Play Cards is a deck of fifty playing cards made to challenge, inspire and inform young designers about opportunities for sustainability in product development.

Sustainable design underpins the thinking of Urban Commons, a design studio committed to reshaping urban spaces through the integration of product, landscape and communication design. The *Urban Commons foodscape* in the Grollo Equiset Garden at NGV International invites visitors to change the way they think about landscape design and food production.

ARM Architecture occupies NGV Studio, providing an opportunity to observe their working practices, while *Sampling the City: Architecture in Melbourne* shows the current work of Melbourne's vibrant architectural community.

*On Top of the World: Flags for Melbourne* is a public art project in which artists were asked to design flags representing the cultural, social, political and historical identity of Melbourne. The resultant flags will be flown during *Melbourne Now* in the Great Hall of NGV International and across the city of Melbourne.

## Starting points for discussion

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Visit the Design Wall and the design case studies at NGV Australia.

- Choose an object of design and identify how design elements – point, line, shape, form, tone, texture, colour and letterform – and design principles – figure-ground, balance, contrast, cropping, hierarchy, scale, proportion and pattern – are used.
- How do the qualities of the materials used contribute to the function or appearance of the object?
- What do you think was included in the designer's brief?
- What can you find out about the production process for the object?
- Think about the different stages of the object's life cycle. In what ways would the object impact on the environment?
- How has technology impacted on the design and manufacture of the object?
- Choose another example of design from the exhibition. What is the purpose of the design? Who is the intended audience? What ideas are evident in the design? What historical or cultural influences can you find in the design?

Before your visit, prepare a series of interview questions for an artist or designer working within the exhibition. You might include questions about idea generation and presentation, the design process, working methods, dealing with clients, materials and production, and sustainability and life-cycle assessments.

## Suggested artists/projects

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Some artists and projects related to Visual Communication Design are listed below, but there are many more. You can use the *Melbourne Now* microsite or app to find more information about these artists as well as a map showing the location of their work. You may also like the *Design, Architecture* and *Fashion* tours on the *Melbourne Now* app.

### NGV International

Bolwell *EDGE* caravan

*Contemporary Jewellery*

MaterialByProduct (Susan Dimasi)

*On Top of the World: Flags for Melbourne*

Preston Zly Design

Cameron Robbins

*Shoemakers*

Urban Commons

*Zoom*

### The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia

ARM Architecture

*Designer Thinking*

*Melbourne Design Now* – case studies

*Melbourne Design Now* – Design Wall

*Sampling the City: Architecture in Melbourne*

Leon van Schaik