



Media release

The Hon Ted Baillieu MP
Premier
Minister for the Arts

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NGV ranks with world's most popular galleries

The 150th birthday celebrations may be over, but the gifts keep coming for the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), with the announcement that the NGV was Australia's most visited gallery and the 25th most visited art gallery in the world in 2011.

Premier and Minister for the Arts Ted Baillieu congratulated the NGV team on the great result, as revealed by London's *The Art Newspaper* in its annual survey of art gallery attendances around the world.

"Last year was a milestone year for the NGV," Mr Baillieu said.

"It celebrated its 150th anniversary, opened new spaces for children and for contemporary art, announced new acquisitions and hosted a stunning array of exhibitions with everything from German Expressionism to Melbourne's street art.

"Overall, the attendance figure was 1,547,495, bringing our gallery in ahead of its interstate counterparts and leading international galleries such as Tate Britain in London, the Guggenheim Museum in New York, and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam," Mr Baillieu said.

The NGV operates two campuses, NGV International on St Kilda Road, which reached 815,020 visitors, and The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square, which welcomed 732,475 visitors across the year. The Australian Centre for the Moving Image also featured on the Art Museum attendance list, with 895,410 visitors, making it the 63rd most attended in the world.

"This is a fantastic achievement, especially when we consider that all the galleries ranked ahead of the NGV, and many ranked lower, are in cities with more than 10 million people," Mr Baillieu said.

"At NGV, between 70 and 75 per cent of visitors are consistently from Melbourne and regional Victoria.

"This means the NGV enjoys one of the highest community participation rates in the world, proving once again that Victorians are passionate about embracing the arts," Mr Baillieu said.

NGV Director Dr Gerard Vaughan said the NGV was delighted to rank so well in relation to worldwide gallery attendances.

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“This ranking today confirms that Victorians, and our many visitors to Melbourne, appreciate both the NGV’s highly important permanent collection, and our strong exhibition program,” Dr Vaughan said.

This announcement comes just weeks after Melbourne Museum was voted Australia’s top tourist attraction at the Australian Tourism Awards, with a higher rating than Sea World, Taronga Zoo and Kakadu National Park.

In June 2012 the NGV will open this year’s spectacular Melbourne Winter Masterpieces Exhibition, *Napoleon: Revolution to Empire*. Exclusive to Melbourne, the exhibition will bring to Australia for the first time nearly 300 works, examining French art, culture and life from the 1770s to the 1820s.

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