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KLIMT AND NAPOLEON HEADING TO MELBOURNE

Famous Viennese and French artworks rarely seen outside Europe are coming to Melbourne in 2011 and 2012.

Minister for the Arts Peter Batchelor today announced the next two instalments of the highly successful Melbourne Winter Masterpieces Series – *Vienna: Art & Design, Klimt, Schiele, Hoffmann* in 2011, and in 2012, *Napoleon: Revolution to Empire*.

“Victorians can expect exquisite international masterpieces at the National Gallery of Victoria over the next two winters with the exhibitions centred around two very different seats of power,” Mr Batchelor said.

“*Vienna: Art & Design*, which will be part of the NGV’s 150th anniversary celebrations in 2011, will showcase an outstanding collection of some 240 works by the greatest Viennese artists, designers and architects of the 19th and 20th Century.

“*Napoleon: Revolution to Empire* will bring more than 200 works from late 18th and early 19th Century France, including paintings, watercolours and drawings, engravings, sculpture, furniture, textiles, porcelain, glass, gold and silver, fashion, jewellery and armour.

“Like all Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibitions, both *Vienna: Art & Design* and *Napoleon* will be exclusive to Melbourne, and I am confident that like their predecessors, they will prove to be significant tourism and economic drawcards.

“With each exhibition, our international reputation grows and we strengthen our capacity to attract and present works from more of the world’s great institutions.”

Mr Batchelor said that in six short years, Victoria had developed an enviable track record of delivering highly popular major international exhibitions.

“These next two follow on from the enormous success of our previous Melbourne Winter Masterpieces blockbusters, including *The Impressionists, Art Deco, Dalí* and the current *European Masters* exhibition,” he said.

“To date, the series has been enjoyed by more than 2.4 million people and injected more than \$138 million into the Victorian economy over the traditionally quieter winter months.

“These annual exhibitions are now embedded in our city’s cultural identity and our tourism offerings – when you think of Melbourne in winter, you now think of footy *and* great art.”

Mr Batchelor, who travelled to the event by foot and public transport as part of Car Free Day, said one of the great things about Melbourne was the fact that there were so many fantastic art facilities in close proximity to each other.

“I have a number of arts events today and will be making my way by foot, train and tram. This has once again highlighted for me how accessible our arts precinct is both for those that live here and visitors,” he said.

Mr Batchelor said *Vienna* was a landmark collection of masterworks that would give audiences a glimpse into the explosion of creativity in Viennese art, architecture and design at the turn of the 20th Century, a time when Vienna was undergoing an artistic revolution and was arguably the most exciting city in the world.

"It will include furniture, paintings, jewellery, decorative arts and textiles, including masterworks by Gustav Klimt, Josef Hoffmann, Egon Schiele, Koloman Moser, Otto Wagner, Oskar Kokoschka and many others," he said.

"These pieces will be drawn from two important Viennese museums – the Belvedere Museum and the Wien Museum, as well as private lenders and institutions from around the world.

"*Napoleon* will provide an insight into French art and culture from one of the richest and most tumultuous periods in French history: the era of Napoléon Bonaparte and his wife Josephine, two of the world's most dynamic and influential historical figures – a true power couple."

NGV Director Gerard Vaughan said that *Vienna: Art & Design* would present masterworks from an extremely exciting time in the history of Vienna.

"At the dawn of the 20th century, life attained a new pinnacle of intelligence, elegance and power in Vienna. Visitors will be taken on a fascinating journey exploring the architecture and design of a modern city, which influenced the world," he said.

"Museums and galleries internationally and especially in Vienna have responded with exceptional generosity, recognising both the existing strength of the NGV's modern Viennese design collection, and also the special moment of our 150th anniversary."

Vienna: Art & Design, Klimt, Schiele, Hoffmann will be on display at NGV International from 18 June to 9 October 2011. *Napoleon: Revolution to Empire* will follow in winter 2012.