



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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Chef Annie Smithers collaborates with NGV Garden Restaurant in celebration of *Pierre Bonnard* blockbuster

NGV International | 9 June - 8 October, open daily 11:30 am - 4:00 pm, Friday 6.00 pm – late | Bookings essential



10 May 2022: Annie Smithers, one of Australia's most highly regarded chefs, will collaborate with the NGV Garden Restaurant on a French farmhouse menu this winter. Inspired by Smithers' award-winning restaurant du Fermier and coinciding with the NGV's Melbourne Winter Masterpieces® exhibition *Pierre Bonnard: Designed by India Mahdavi*, the exclusive menu is available for a strictly limited time from 9 June.

Open for lunch daily and dinner on Friday, the new NGV Garden Restaurant collaboration will offer diners a bespoke menu that celebrates Victorian produce and regional French flavours. Bringing a taste of du Fermier to the NGV, the menu features French classics including potato and gruyère terrine; beef bourguignon; confit duck leg, pommes frites; and Calvados crème caramel, among other traditional French entrées and larger dishes. The drinks menu features a wine list with an emphasis on Victorian and French wine.

Tony Ellwood AM, Director of the NGV, said: 'Annie Smithers' food is reminiscent of the traditional French bistros Pierre Bonnard would have frequented in Paris in the 1900s, and we're incredibly excited for visitors to immerse themselves in this new offering at the NGV Garden Restaurant this winter.'

Annie Smithers, chef and owner of du Fermier, said: 'It is an absolute honour to be asked to collaborate with the NGV's Garden Restaurant for their Pierre Bonnard exhibition. He is one of my favourite French painters, bringing to life the idyllic rural settings and the importance of 'the table' with such vivid colour and style.'

Richard Hobdell, Restaurant Associates Executive Chef, said: 'What a thrill to be collaborating with Annie Smithers and to be able to showcase our passion for fine French food in the NGV Garden Restaurant. With each dish presented in Annie's distinctive farmhouse style, we are going back to the fundamentals of cooking which is about reconnecting each diner with local, seasonal produce and the comfort of good food.'

Du Fermier opened in Trentham in 2013 with a menu 'du jour' translating literally to 'of the day', allowing Smithers to serve fresh produce harvested from her farm in Lyonville. As an intimate, 24-seat restaurant, du Fermier books out months in advance and offers Smithers' signature farm-to-table dining experience.

The world-premiere Melbourne Winter Masterpieces® exhibition, *Pierre Bonnard: Designed by India Mahdavi*, features more than 100 works by Pierre Bonnard – a leading 20th century French painter celebrated for his iridescent palette – presented within a contemporary scenography by award-winning architect and designer, India Mahdavi.

Curated by Paris's Musée d'Orsay in partnership with the NGV, the exhibition brings late 19th and early 20th century France to life through paintings, drawings, prints, photographs and decorative objects by Pierre Bonnard. The paintings of Bonnard depict intimate domestic interiors, natural landscapes and urban scenes with subtlety, wit and a sensuous approach to colour and light.

Annie Smithers at the NGV Garden Restaurant at NGV International, 9 June – 8 October, open daily 11.30am-4.00pm and Friday 6.00pm to late coinciding with NGV Friday Nights. For bookings, menu and more information, please visit the NGV website: ngv.melbourne/anniesmithers

Pierre Bonnard: Designed by India Mahdavi will be on display from 9 June – 8 October at NGV International, St Kilda Road, Melbourne. For tickets and information, please visit the NGV website: NGV.MELBOURNE

Exhibition organised by the National Gallery of Victoria in partnership with the Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

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About Annie Smithers

Annie Smithers is one of Australia's most highly regarded chefs and one of the first chefs to truly epitomise the paddock to plate ethos. With a career spanning well over 30 years, Annie has spent the last quarter of a century in the wonderful Macedon Ranges and Hepburn Spa region of Victoria. Smithers' restaurant du Fermier in the small village of Trentham, is a tiny establishment. Annie does all the cooking, starting with baking her own baguettes each morning and offers a menu du jour that features vegetables picked that day from her kitchen garden and meats and poultry from the surrounding area. She carefully sources all products to ensure their environmental and animal husbandry credentials.

IMAGES: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/axuzf8kp0e7qn2939rv48/h?dl=0&rlkey=2b6tmbw3hb14zphcif8ozt5iv>

Image credits:

(left) Annie Smithers at her Lyonville farm. Photo: Simon James

(middle) Annie Smithers at the NGV Garden Restaurant. Photo: Eugene Hyland

(right) Annie Smithers at her Lyonville farm. Photo: Simon James

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