

Over 8,000 tennis balls line the walls of David Shrigley's interactive *Melbourne Tennis Ball Exchange* at Triennial EXTRA

NGV International | 19 – 28 January 2024, open until 11.00pm | FREE

22 November 2023: In January 2024, leading British artist **David Shrigley** invites visitors to the National Gallery of Victoria to trade their own tennis balls for one of over 8,000 new balls lining the walls of his participatory artwork *Melbourne Tennis Ball Exchange*.

This large-scale and evolving installation at the NGV is making its Australian premiere and is presented as part of the free, late-night NGV Triennial EXTRA program, 19-28 January 2024.



Visitors to *Melbourne Tennis Ball Exchange* have the opportunity to contribute to this ever-changing artwork by exchanging a pre-loved tennis ball for a new one. Shrigley hopes that visitors can consider the joy that can be experienced through trading everyday goods, even when the goods are of equal value.

A previous presentation of this work *Mayfair Tennis Ball Exchange* premiered in London in 2021 at Stephen Friedman Gallery and saw thousands of people engage with the work over three months.

Of the inspiration behind the work, David Shrigley said: 'The *Tennis Ball Exchange* was initially inspired by my dog. She loves tennis balls. Dogs and human beings have different relationships to objects. My dog will fight over a tennis ball at one moment and then be completely uninterested in it the next.

'When I first made the *Tennis Ball Exchange* in London I thought that people would bring in soiled tennis balls that their dogs had chewed and replace them with nice new ones. What most people actually did was create an artwork on a tennis ball which they then came and exchanged. So it became a sort of free-for-all open exhibition.'

Melbourne Tennis Ball Exchange will be a centrepiece of the NGV's late night Triennial EXTRA festival in January, which unfolds over 10 nights featuring live performance, DJ sets, artist pop-up talks, conversations and other creative activations in response to the works in the exhibition.

Open late to 11.00pm every night 19 – 28 January, the free program presents unique and thought-provoking experiences that explore, reflect and resonate the ideas of international contemporary art and design practitioners in the NGV Triennial exhibition, and the world at large.

In the NGV Triennial exhibition opening 3 December, Shrigley will also present *Really Good*, 2016 a monumental seven metre high 'thumbs-up' sculpture at the entrance to the NGV. Originally conceived for the Fourth Plinth Commission in London's Trafalgar Square, the sculpture is characteristic of the self-conscious irony often found in Shrigley's work and is intended as both a satirical and sincere gesture.

Shrigley is known for his darkly humorous artworks which reflect on the banality and absurdity of everyday life. He was the subject of the solo exhibition *David Shrigley: Life and Life Drawing* at the NGV in 2014 and more than 200 original drawings by Shrigley were set within the heart of London's famed Sketch Restaurant in dialogue with interior design by Paris-based India Madhavi from 2014.

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Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV, said: ‘Over the ten nights of NGV’s Triennial EXTRA program we invite visitors to contribute to the Australian premiere of this remarkable interactive work by preeminent British contemporary artist David Shrigley. *Melbourne Tennis Ball Exchange* expands upon the artist’s conceptual practice while playing with concepts of community and the simple joy of trading everyday items.’

The NGV Triennial is a powerful and moving snapshot of the world today as captured through the work of over 120 artists, designers, and collectives at the forefront of global contemporary practice. Uniquely bringing art, design, and architecture into dialogue with one another and traversing all four levels of NGV International, the NGV Triennial features nearly 100 projects including over 25 world-premiere projects commissioned by the NGV.

Triennial EXTRA takes place from 19 – 28 January 2024, every evening until 11.00pm. Further information is available via the NGV website: [Triennial EXTRA | NGV | Triennial](#)

The NGV Triennial is on display from 3 December 2023 – 7 April 2024 at NGV International, St Kilda Road, Melbourne. Entry is FREE. Further information is available via the NGV website: [NGV.MELBOURNE](#)

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TRIENNIAL EXTRA IMAGES:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/hhe640w0l927bqgfkf5qm/h?rlkey=d8h75m8wrfymf45de21sypzzm&dl=0>

TRIENNIAL IMAGES & MEDIA KIT:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/x9jq04o9kyqlyrqmbkfb/h?rlkey=psroiedu21wjkw6c1motfrjrm&dl=0>

Image caption: David Shrigley, *Mayfair Tennis Ball Exchange*, 2021. Courtesy David Shrigley and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London and New York. Photo by Max Newson.

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