



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

MEDIA CONTACTS: MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, NGV

MARION JOSEPH | 0427 147 999 | MARION.JOSEPH@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

PENNY FRANCE | 0439 543 833 | PENNY.FRANCE@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

BONNIE HORNE | 0448 369 260 | BONNIE.HORNE@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

BRIANA TOMASINO | 0408 333 399 | BRIANA.TOMASINO@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

ALICE RAYMOND | 0499 690 472 | ALICE.RAYMOND@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

SIENNA TAYLOR-GIBSON | 0455 579 397 | SIENNA.TAYLORGIBSON@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

Melbourne gets the ‘thumbs up’: Felton Bequest acquires David Shrigley’s larger-than-life bronze *Really Good*, 2016 for NGV



18 March 2024 - David Shrigley’s iconic bronze sculpture, *Really Good*, 2016, which takes the form of a seven-metre-high ‘thumbs up’, has been generously acquired for the NGV Collection by the **Felton Bequest**.

The work was originally conceived for and displayed on the Fourth Plinth 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.

The work is currently a major highlight of the NGV Triennial, a gallery-wide exhibition of contemporary art, design and architecture. Displayed prominently on the NGV International

forecourt, the work irreverently greets visitors as they enter the building.

Now joining the permanent collection of the NGV, *Really Good* will continue to be enjoyed by audiences of all ages for generations to come.

The British-born David Shrigley is celebrated around the world for his darkly humorous artworks which reflect on the banality and absurdity of everyday life. While best known for his distinctive drawing style, Shrigley’s practice spans a range of media including sculpture, installation, animation, painting, photography and music.

Shrigley was a Turner Prize nominee in 2013 and in 2014 the NGV presented the artist’s first major Australian survey exhibition, *David Shrigley: Life and Life Drawing*. In 2020, David Shrigley was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in HM Queen Elizabeth II’s New Years Honours list.

David Shrigley said: ‘I am delighted that *Really Good* has found a permanent home in Australia. I have great affection for both the NGV and the city of Melbourne and my time visiting and exhibiting there has been very rewarding. Artworks change depending on the context in which they are shown and new meaning is created as the artwork travels. It has been exciting to see how people have responded to the work at the NGV Triennial.’

Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV, said: ‘David Shrigley captures our life, times and culture with an irreverent and universal visual language that resonates around the world. His monumental bronze sculpture *Really Good* exemplifies his creative worldview – and will no doubt become one of the icons of the NGV Collection. We are grateful to the Felton Bequest for generously acquiring this important work for Melbourne and Victoria.’

Rupert Myer AO, Chair, Felton Bequests’ Committee, said: ‘The NGV is a major destination for contemporary art and design – thanks in part to powerful and moving exhibitions like the NGV Triennial. We are proud to have acquired this work by David Shrigley, one of the UK’s most celebrated artists, and to further Alfred Felton’s vision for a dynamic and diverse collection for the people of Victoria.’

NGV Triennial is on display until 7 April 2024 at NGV International, St Kilda Road, Melbourne. Free entry. Further information is available via the NGV website: [NGV.MELBOURNE](https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/NGV.MELBOURNE)

ABOUT THE NGV TRIENNIAL 2023

NGV Triennial 2023 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 contemporary art, design and architecture into dialogue with one another and traversing all four levels of NGV International, the NGV Triennial features nearly 100 creative projects by artists including **Yoko Ono** (Japan), **Sheila Hicks** (USA), **Tracey Emin** (UK), **Betty Muffler** (Australia), **David Shrigley** (UK), **Maison Schiaparelli** (France), **Maurizio Cattelan** (Italy), **Iris van Herpen** (Netherlands), **Jean Jullien** (France), **Fernando Laposse** (Mexico), **Azuma Makoto** (Japan), **Flora Yukhnovich** (UK), **Yee I-Lann** (Malaysia), **Farrokh Mahdavi** (Iran), **Hugh Hayden** (USA) and many more.

With more than 25 world-premiere projects commissioned by the NGV especially for this presentation, the NGV Triennial reveals the extraordinary ways in which leading and emerging artists and designers have responded to the most relevant and critical global issues of our time.

ABOUT THE FELTON BEQUEST

The Felton Bequest was established in 1904 in accordance with the will of Alfred Felton. It was the greatest charitable gift in Australia at the time. Managed by Equity Trustees, it remains the most valuable bequest ever made to the Arts in Australia. Its income is divided into two Bequests, one funding acquisitions of works of art for gifting to the NGV, and the other making distributions to charitable organisations in Victoria, particularly those that benefit women and children.

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IMAGES: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/y346rhtg13lika985zsyd/h?rlkey=lp9a8wltfey3hsoxipegghofzr&dl=0>

Image caption: Portrait of David Shrigley in front of his work *Really Good* at NGV International, Melbourne purchased with funds from the Felton Bequest. Photo: Tim Carrafa

Media Contacts:

Marion Joseph, Associate Director, Media and Public Affairs, NGV

0427 147 999 | marion.joseph@ngv.vic.gov.au

Penny France, Media Manager, NGV

0439 543 833 | penny.france@ngv.vic.gov.au