



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

MEDIA CONTACTS: MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, NGV
MARION JOSEPH | 0427 147 999 | MARION.JOSEPH@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
SIENNA TAYLOR-GIBSON | 0455 579 397 | SIENNA.TAYLOR-GIBSON@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU
ANNIE ROSS | 0447 679 440 | ANNIE.ROSS@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

Emerging creative excellence on show in Top Arts 2025

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia | 14 March – 20 July 2025 | Free entry



14 March 2025: From a large-scale copper work embossed with Braille text to a series of paintings inspired by an Arctic Monkeys album, **Top Arts 2025** returns in its 31st year to showcase the incredible creativity of Victoria's young emerging artists. Opening 14 March at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, this year's exhibition celebrates the exceptional talent and dedication of 40 students from across Victoria who have excelled in the VCE subjects of Art Making and Exhibiting and Art Creative Practice.

The selected works span across diverse mediums from moving image and digital media to drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, textiles and sculpture. The works present compelling themes of cultural identity, as students explore their personal stories through art, while also examining the beauty of everyday life and broader themes of knowledge, and nature.

Eden Thomas's installation *Copper Lining (Please Don't Touch the Artwork)* contemplates the power of knowledge and the importance of directing attention in an age of information manipulation. The nearly two-metre-wide copper panel is embossed with Braille text reading "Please don't touch the artwork", creating an ironic paradox inviting touch while restricting it. Developed in consultation with Vision Australia, Thomas considered different ways knowledge can be hidden or inaccessible.

In the photo series *My Life* Ethan Mangopoulos depicts his personal journey of growth and self-discovery as he enters adulthood. Using vibrant colours and layered textures emulating x-ray scans, the works capture the artist's experience of coming of age, navigating changing relationships, and finding one's place in the world.

Meg Kane's photographic series *Our Rooms* explores personal identity through intimate portraits of the artist's friends set in their bedrooms amongst possessions that reflect their interests and the subcultures they connect with. Each photograph is paired with a plinth displaying a selection of objects from the sitter's room. By pairing the objects with the portraits, Kane celebrates the way personal spaces shape identity and reflect the shared experience of curating and displaying interests to others.

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First Nations artist Eva Philippiadis's woven basket artwork titled *Hold Me Gently* is a reflection on culture, family and influences that make up oneself. The basket is adorned with delicate oyster shells and contains inscribed boab nuts bearing intimate phrases such as 'Please Hold Me Gently', capturing the tenderness of physical and spiritual connections between identity and family.

The Hon. Colin Brooks, Minister for Creative Industries said: "Top Arts 2025 is an inspiring showcase of the incredible talent and creativity of young Victorians, and the importance of creative education. You can't get a more high-profile opportunity than an exhibition at Australia's most visited gallery – the NGV – and I look forward to seeing where these young artists take their talents in the future."

The Hon. Ben Carroll, Minister for Education said: "For more than 30 years, Top Arts has celebrated a generation of incredible VCE art students, showcasing their wonderful works to a wide audience. Congratulations to all the students exhibiting their work, and to their teachers and schools for supporting their journey. Our creative future looks bright!"

Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV said: 'NGV's annual Top Arts exhibition continues to be a celebrated platform for emerging young artists, showcasing the next generation of creative talent across Victoria.'

Sarah Hunter, Managing Director, Officeworks said: 'At Officeworks, we're committed to helping young artists bring their ideas to life by making the tools they need accessible and affordable. We're proud to support the *Top Arts* exhibition for a third year as Principal Partner and through the Officeworks Creativity Award which recognises the most creative use of materials within an exhibiting artist's work.'

Top Arts 2025 will be on display from 14 March – 20 July 2025 at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, Fed Square, Corner of Flinders St & Russell St, Melbourne. Free entry. Further information is available via the [NGV website](#).

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IMAGES:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/myojbbkqp0lem0fiy0urz/AGL2BCXiQ2834YZIaheQAq0?rlkey=tk82n7xioug71fgtdfc835p7z&st=uu2wbt16&dl=0>

Image caption (L to R clockwise): Installation view of Top Arts 2025 on display from 14 March - 20 July 2025 at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, Melbourne. Photo: Tobias Titz; **Arthur Batura** *All bark no bite*, 2024. Photo: Tobias Titz; **Indigo Gordon**, *Membrane wulf*, 2024; **Elektra Katsalidis** *Deconstructed Cabinet of Curiosities*, 2024. Photo: Tobias Titz; **Mats Plevritis** *Architectural Forms (detail)*, 2024. Photo: Tobias Titz

Media Contacts:

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

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

Bonnie Horne, Media and Public Affairs Officer, NGV

0448 369 260 | bonnie.horne@ngv.vic.gov.au

Briana Tomasino, Media and Public Affairs Officer, NGV

0408 333 399 | briana.tomasino@ngv.vic.gov.au

Sienna Taylor-Gibson, Media and Public Affairs Assistant, NGV

0455 579 397 | sienna.taylorgibson@ngv.vic.gov.au

Annie Ross, Media and Public Affairs Assistant, NGV
0447 679 440 | annie.ross@ngv.vic.gov.au

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