

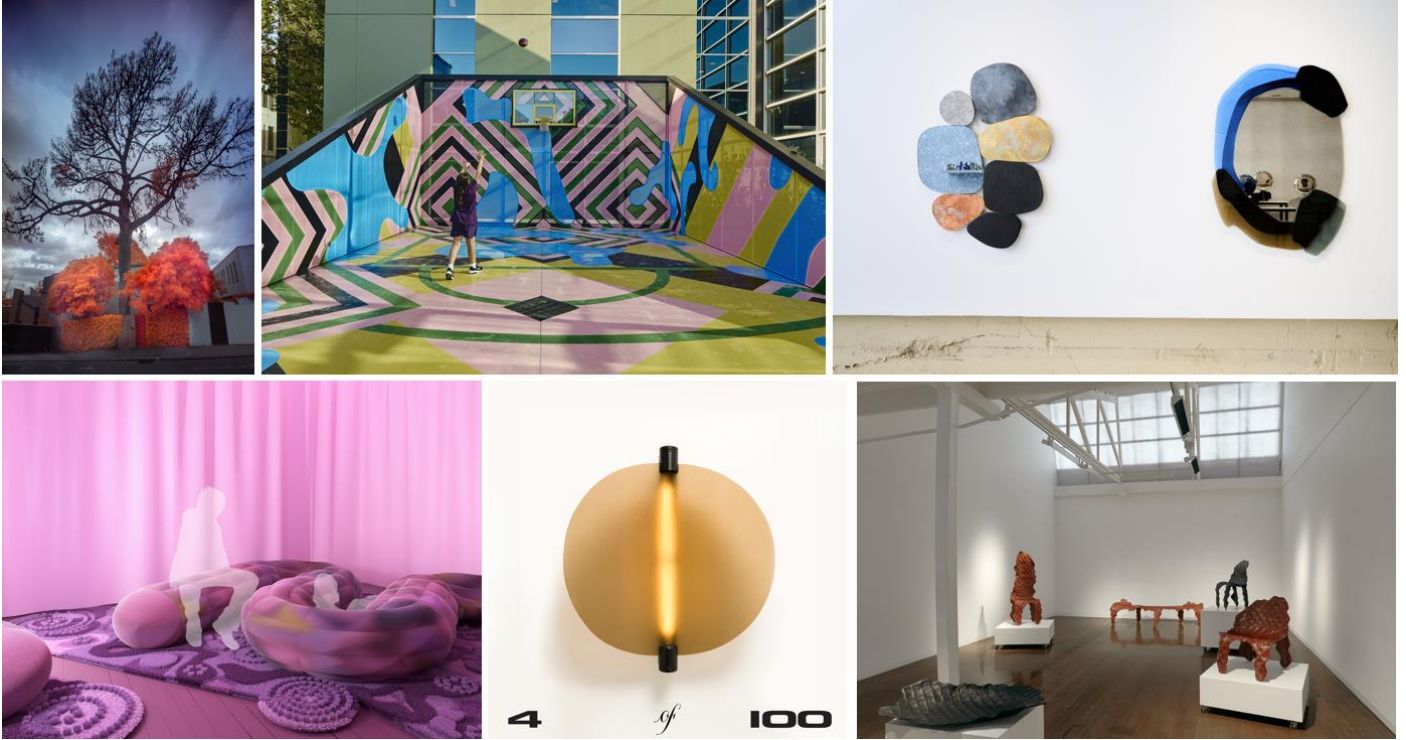


## MEDIA RELEASE

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.TAYLORGIBSON@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU  
ANNIE ROSS | 0447 679 440 | ANNIE.ROSS@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

### Melbourne Design Week 2025 – Design the world you want

NGV International and venues across Victoria | 15 – 25 May 2025



**12 March 2025:** Featuring a dazzling showcase of 100 elegant and avant-garde contemporary lights, furniture designed for neurodivergent audiences and leading designers and brands from across the country, Australia's premier design festival Melbourne Design Week returns from 15 – 25 May 2025 offering a vital platform for creatives to showcase boundary-pushing work and test new ideas.

Over 11 days and 350+ events, exhibitions, talks, and installations, Melbourne Design Week will celebrate the depth and richness of design talent in the region from a new crop of emerging talent to the industry's most well-respected and established professionals. Highlights include **A New Normal** an exhibition of designs to make Melbourne a self-sufficient city by 2030; a retrospective exhibition of lighting designer **Volker Haug** marking 20 years of designing and making in Australia; plus presentations by the country's leading showrooms, studios and makers including **Trent Jansen, Coco Flip, Jessie French, Fiona Lynch, Tait, Cult** and more.

Melbourne Design Week is an initiative of the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria and is curated and delivered by the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV). Melbourne Design Week continues to thrive year on year welcoming over 100,000 visitors to the 2024 festival, making it Australia's largest design event.

An exhibition of **100 Lights** will illuminate North Melbourne's sweeping Meat Market Stables in a visually spectacular display of lighting designs by 100 artists, designers, and makers staged by **Friends & Associates**. Visitors will be immersed in a glowing environment replete with lamps, pendants and sconces made by emerging to late career practitioners including Adam Goodrum, Ross Gardam, Tantri Mustika, Marlo Lyda, Jay Jermyn and many more.

Two icons of the Australian industry, decorative lighting designer Volker Haug and furniture designer Trent Jansen, will mark 20 years of designing and making in Australia and innovative practice with retrospective exhibitions reflecting on their design legacies. Hailing from Stuttgart, Germany, Haug moved to Melbourne in the early 2000s and founded his eponymous label which has established a reputation for blending functionality with artistic expression. To mark this career milestone the studio will present **20 Years of Volker Haug Studios**, a display of the brand's most significant designs tracing the evolution of Haug's design philosophy from early works to his most iconic pieces.

Recognised as one of Australia's most accomplished designers, Trent Jansen's career will be surveyed in an exhibition titled **Trent Jansen: Two Decades of Design Anthropology**. The exhibition will traverse his early works repurposing road signs into stools to his groundbreaking collaborations with First Nations makers such as designers Johnny Nargoodah, Errol Evans and Tanya Singer, and artist Maree Clark.

Further highlights include **Sibling Architecture's** *Deep Calm*, an exhibition that is the culmination of a year-long research project into how architecture can cater for neurodivergent audiences. Weighted sofas and tactile rugs designed by Sibling will create the calming effect of deep pressure widely used by occupational therapists working with children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) to reduce symptoms of stress and anxiety.

**A New Normal** will present designs and policy recommendations by 12 Melbourne architects in an exhibition at the Boyd Baker Compound in Bacchus Marsh. Concepts proposed to transform Melbourne include a water treatment plant by **MUIR** in the form of public sculpture installed in local communities, **Baracco + Wright's** proposal to transform abandoned buildings across the city into mixed-use spaces with residential housing, and **NH's** waste-to-energy facility attached to local sports facilities. *A New Normal* won the Melbourne Design Week Award when it was presented on the rooftop of a high rise building in 2021. Architects Kennedy Nolan and NMBW have both completed projects utilising concepts from the 2021 exhibition and the project has gone on to be developed for Sydney, Perth and Guadalajara, Mexico.

**The Hon. Colin Brooks, Minister for Creative Industries, said:** "The Allan Labor Government is proud to support Melbourne Design Week 2025, delivered by the NGV, which will explore the vital role design plays in all of our lives now and into the future. We encourage the design community and everyone interested in the power of good design to get involved."

**Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV, said:** "Now in its ninth year Melbourne Design Week is a vital platform for designers from across the country and the Asia-Pacific region to share ambitious ideas and new works that will shape the future for the better."

The 11<sup>th</sup> iteration of the **Melbourne Art Book Fair** brings together the best publishers and designers from the Asia-Pacific region from 15 – 17 May at NGV International. The fair plays host to over 100 publishers in the Great Hall where visitors can browse booths limited edition books, prints, magazines and more. In 2025 the Fair features a strong presence from South East Asian publishers including Cahyati Press (Indonesia), Spacebar Zine (Thailand), and Suburbia Projects (Malaysia), along with leading and emerging publishers from New Zealand.

During the stallholder fair, local children's book authors will lead **Kids storytime sessions** reading newly released books gathered under Yayoi Kusama's towering *Dancing Pumpkin* sculpture in Federation Court.

As part of the Melbourne Art Book Fair satellite program an exhibition of acclaimed New Zealand artist, designer and typographer **Catherine Griffiths'** 40-year practice will explore the intersection of typography and language in public space. The presentation at the Design Gallery, Melbourne School of Design marks the largest exhibition of Griffiths' work ever presented in Australia. **Comme des Garçons** will present a pop-up Book Stand featuring talks and publications from a selection of local publishers and communication designers in their Melbourne flagship store. A complimentary bookmark designed by Comme des Garçons will be available exclusively during Melbourne Design Week.

**Designer talks by the *Dancing Pumpkin*** will engage Sarah Lynn Rees, Danielle Brustman, Fiona Lynch and Jessie French in pop-up talks with NGV Curator Timothy Moore at NGV International to discuss themes of memory and materials.

Returning to the theme of design and death for a second year, **Open House Melbourne** will present **Beyond the Grave** a two-day symposium focused on the architecture, places, issues and practices associated with the end of life. The symposium will commence at the Shrine of Remembrance, reflecting on the role of memorials in urban planning and the future of cemetery design. This will be followed by workshops guiding participants to plan a memorial and a floral design workshop focused on how to honour a loved one.

The reoccurring theme of 'Design the world you want' invites designers showing in the festival to consider how their creative output shapes the future.

**Further highlights in the program include:**

- Leading design studios, brands and showrooms will exhibit during the festival including lighting brand **Objects For Thought** presenting their first collaboration with Melbourne-based designer **Jordan Fleming**, **Jardan** will lead factory tours and repurposing workshops, plus presentations from **KFive**, **Tait**, **Muji**, **Zuster**, and **Dowel Jones** with **Curio Practice**.

- Galleries across the city will activate with exhibitions including **Sophie Gannon Gallery** presenting the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Designwork exhibition this year showcasing pieces by established female designers Elliat Rich and Ashley Eriksmoen, **Craft** will stage a solo exhibition by Locki Humphrey using Prickly Pear leather to create objects and furniture, and **Cordon Salon** will have a solo presentation at **Oigall Projects** while upstairs **Oigall: Design House 2** will be a group show of female designers taking over the domestic space above the Gallery.
- Highlighting the design ingenuity and legacy of First Nations designers, **Artbank** and **Agency Projects** will present **Catch: Tales of First Nations fishing through the Artbank Collection** an exhibition of fish traps by practitioners including Aunty Kim Wandin.
- **Beci Orpin** will collaborate with custom furniture maker Softer Studios for her first foray into furniture design bringing her signature pop of colour and shapes to the collection launching during Melbourne Design Week.
- The sustainable reuse of timber from urban trees will be the focus of programs exploring how to give new life to discarded trees and contribute this material to the circular economy. Exhibitions including the Robin Boyd Foundation's **Knot Pine** exhibition of designs by Alexandra Pontonio, Melbourne School of Design's **Tout le cochon**, and **Goodbye London Plane** presented by Ma House Supply Store will all present new furniture designs using reclaimed urban timber.
- In a first for Melbourne Design Week, a series of events will focus on developing industry connections through organised sport as designers seek to engage with their industry colleagues in new ways. A **run club** will take participants on a running route past iconic Melbourne sites of design, architecture and sculpture produced by women, all offer attendees a chance to network while being active.
- Bringing together the community in a one-day networking event designers and design enthusiasts will participate in a **2-on-2 basketball tournament** at a Cremorne basketball court recently painted in a bespoke Reko Rennie design.
- The festival will culminate with a 12-hour exhibition titled **Reimagining the clubhouse**, by Found Golf, Katie Kelso and Good Sport Magazine featuring works by eight designers that challenge the traditional concept of a sporting club house. The event will include a trophy making competition and a Design Week closing party at Runner Up bar in Collingwood Yards.
- The **Melbourne Design Week Film Festival** offers an opportunity to be immersed in design through a series of films curated by Spiros Economopoulos and screened at Lido and Classic Cinemas. Highlights include documentaries on leading female architect of the Modernist Movement Eileen Gray, and Arthur Erickson, a leading architect whose iconic and queer legacy is little known in this country.

The **Melbourne Design Week Award**, presented by Mercedes-Benz Australia for the sixth year running, will be awarded to a designer or project for their outstanding contribution to Australia's largest international design event. The winner will be announced upon the opening of Melbourne Design Week. In 2024 award went to A&A who produced their most ambitious work *The Kissing Cabinet*.

Melbourne Design Week is an initiative of the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria and delivered by the NGV.

Melbourne Design Week takes place 15 – 25 May 2025 at NGV International, St Kilda Road, Melbourne and at various locations throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria.

*The full program and bookings will be available online from mid- April 2025. The majority of Melbourne Design Week is free to attend with some events requiring bookings due to venue capacities.* [designweek.melbourne](https://www.designweek.melbourne)

**IMAGES:** <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/tuj5gm5zgxsg8vepfpygx/ANil90RT4Ss-dJZndREpQMU?rlkey=71fkkbj9fzz6qs4borxqtx8x&st=dnk6ccgl&dl=0>

**For more information, please contact:**

Sasha Haughan, [sasha@articulatepr.com.au](mailto:sasha@articulatepr.com.au) | 0405 006 035

Clare Callaghan, [clare@articulatepr.com.au](mailto:clare@articulatepr.com.au) | 0450 223 485

Caroline Hendry, [caroline@articulatepr.com.au](mailto:caroline@articulatepr.com.au) | 0406 154 577

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Melbourne Design Week**  
15 – 25 May 2025

[www.designweek.melbourne](http://www.designweek.melbourne)

Instagram: @ngvmelbourne #melbournedesignweek

**About Melbourne Design Week**

An initiative of the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, and delivered by the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne Design Week celebrates design in an annual 11-day program of talks, tours, exhibitions, launches, installations, and workshops across Australia’s design capital. The curation of the program is led by the NGV Department of Contemporary Design and Architecture team. Melbourne Design Week has evolved since its inception from 100 exhibitions and events in 2017 to more than 350 in 2025. In 2024, Melbourne Design Week was enjoyed by over 100,000 people which cemented it as Australia’s leading design event.

**About the National Gallery of Victoria**

Founded in 1861, the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) is the most visited and oldest public art institution in Australia. The organisation currently spans across two venues NGV International on St Kilda Road and The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Fed Square. Once completed, The Fox: NGV Contemporary, will form the third site for the organisation, enabling the NGV to present significant works of contemporary art and design.

**Image caption:** (L-R Clockwise) *Monterey Pine*, John Gollings; March Studio X Reko Rennie. Photo: Peter Bennetts; Elliot Rich, *Mythica Ignota* at Canberra Glassworks, 2024. Photo: Pew Pew Studio; Installation view of *Partu (Skin)* by Johnny Nargoodah and Trent Jansen at Arc One 2020. Photo Tom Ross; 100 Lights. Photo: Pew Pew; Render of *Deep Calm* by Sibling Architecture.

**For their support of Melbourne Design Week we acknowledge:**

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MELBOURNE DESIGN WEEK IS AN INITIATIVE OF THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH CREATIVE VICTORIA.

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