



## MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

MEDIA CONTACTS: MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, NGV

MARION JOSEPH | 03 8620 2346 | 0427 147 999 | MARION.JOSEPH@NGVVIC.GOV.AU

BONNIE HORNE | 03 8620 2237 | 0448 369 260 | BONNIE.HORNE@NGVVIC.GOV.AU

BRIANA TOMASINO | 03 8620 2166 | 0408 333 399 | BRIANA.TOMASINO@NGVVIC.GOV.AU

# Melbourne Design Week 2021: Design the World You Want

NGV International, The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia and other venues | 26 March – 5 April 2021



**5 March 2021:** Melbourne Design Week, Australia's leading annual international design event, has revealed the full program for its 2021 festival – the largest iteration to date. Presented by Creative Victoria in partnership with the National Gallery of Victoria, and now in its fifth consecutive year, the festival features 11 days of more than 300 exhibitions, talks, films, tours and workshops across Victoria and online exploring the theme 'design the world you want'.

Encompassing the full breadth of the design sector - from the industry's most respected designers, emerging practitioners, through to small independent studios - Melbourne Design Week celebrates the diversity of Australian design and architecture and offers both industry professionals and design enthusiasts alike the opportunity to engage with local, national and international practices at the vanguard of design world-wide. These include leading architecture firm **Kerstin Thompson Architects**; designer, researcher and SCUBA diving instructor **Pirjo Haikola**; eco-innovator **Joost Bakker**; globally renowned architectural innovator **Alisa Andrasek** and more.

The 2021 festival has been curated using the three thematic pillars: Care, Community and Climate. Events under the Care thematic reflect the desire for design processes that consider the emotional needs of others, including other species; Community celebrates collaboration across disciplines, disseminating knowledge and embracing new cultures; and Climate examines the ways in which designers can mediate the effects of climate change and accelerate the necessary shift to a zero-carbon future.

For the first time, Melbourne Design Week expands into East Gippsland, with a collection of events in Lakes Entrance and Lake Tyers presented by the Centre for Architecture Victoria | Open House Melbourne with the School for unTourists. Exploring the future for this post-fishing community, audiences will be introduced to sites around the lakes district through a series of walks, tours, talks, kayak and boat trips; hear about the issues affecting the waterways of the Gippsland Lakes from Traditional Owners, local community members, designers, artists and marine experts; and enjoy a sustainably sourced seaweed dinner with chef Nick Mahlook and curator Lichen Kelp at local landmark – the floating Sodafish Restaurant.

Traversing both the physical and virtual worlds, the program also comprises an extensive digital offering that will be accessible via a new, specially-designed digital platform, hosted on the Melbourne Design Week website and developed in collaboration with Melbourne studio Mecca Medialight with new brand design by 3-Deep. Audiences from anywhere in the world can access the never-before-seen digital program, including talks, virtual galleries for key satellite exhibitions, photo archives, interviews, podcasts and more.

Danny Pearson MP, Minister for Creative Industries, Victorian Government, said: 'Melbourne Design Week puts a spotlight on design – and the powerful role it plays in our lives. This program showcases the many seen and unseen impacts of design, and how it can shape a stronger, more sustainable world. I applaud the ingenuity of our local design community and encourage you to explore this diverse program of events.'

Tony Ellwood AM, Director of the National Gallery of Victoria, said: 'Good design has the potential to change the world – and this important provocation sits at the heart of this year's Melbourne Design Week program. Melbourne Design Week is a festival of ideas, offering industry and audiences alike the opportunity to reflect on the roles and responsibilities of design in 2021. The NGV is proud to be presenting this important festival on behalf of the Victorian Government and hope that audiences and designers alike take the opportunity to engage with this year's rich and diverse program.'

Florian Seidler, Managing Director Mercedes-Benz Cars & CEO Mercedes-Benz Australia/Pacific said 'Mercedes-Benz is proud to be a major partner of Melbourne Design Week in 2021. This year's diverse and comprehensive program of events presents a wonderful opportunity to explore important design conversations and celebrate local design talent. We're pleased to reward this talent with the return of the Melbourne Design Week Award presented by Mercedes-Benz, a cash prize which will be awarded for outstanding contribution to the program.'

#### **Highlights from the 2021 Melbourne Design Week program include:**

- The Waterfront program, presented by Centre for Architecture Victoria | Open House Melbourne, offers nearly 20 talks, workshops and exhibitions concerning Melbourne's water sources and how to engage with them through design. In addition to the extensive program exploring the Gippsland Lakes, highlights include a boat tour along the Birrarung (Yarra River); a snorkelling tour and sea urchin cooking workshop with Pirjo Haikola and Long Prawn that highlights destructive impact of this echinoderm on marine health; and a timely workshop facilitated by the Birrarung Council that invites Traditional Owners, public, students, academics and designers to join a discussion around the development of the north bank of Birrarung in Richmond.
- *A New Normal* is a series of programs, installations and talks by some of Australia's leading architectural practices, and led by Finding Infinity, that challenges Melbourne to become an entirely self-sufficient city. In *The Valley of Sun* HA Architects construct a solar powered greenhouse that proposes the La Trobe Valley as Australia's leading renewable energy and agricultural hub; *Electric Dreams*, presented by Foolscape, comprises installations that presents the possibilities for high-speed and electric interstate train systems; and exhibition *Wasted Waste*, presented by WOWOWA and 6 Degrees, examines the opportunity to convert organic waste into gas and fertiliser through anaerobic digestion.
- Leading Australian architect Robin Boyd will be celebrated in a series of events, including *Fresh Eyes: Reimagining Robin Boyd's Walsh Street*, a photographic exhibition by leading and emerging Melbourne based photographers that re-interprets Boyd's iconic Melbourne home; a 1960s inspired 'slide night' presenting a series of films produced by the Robin Boyd Foundation and hosted by Phillip Goad, Peter Maddison and Denise Whitehouse; *The Empathetic Mr. Robin Boyd: Mid-Century Design and Practices of Care*, a talk presented by Peter Raisbeck (MSD), Christine Phillips (RMIT) and Karen Burns (MSD) with the Robin Boyd Foundation, examining Boyd's role as a tastemaker whose design work ranged from houses to

exhibitions and urbanism; and a new, richly-illustrated publication, *After Australian Ugliness*, published by the NGV in collaboration with Monash University and the University of Technology Sydney with the support of the Robin Boyd Foundation, offers a contemporary response to Boyd's seminal 1960 text *The Australian Ugliness*.

- *Business and Design Forum: MedTech Futures*, hosted by NGV and presented by Creative Victoria, is an opportunity to hear from leaders in the Victorian medical technology sector on how they are using design to achieve competitive advantage and position their businesses, products and services at the fore of national and global markets. Providing an expansive view of the MedTech sector in Melbourne, which is home to more than 250 medical technology companies, the forum will explore how government, institutions, businesses, researchers, and designers are together creating opportunities in response to the emerging health landscape. Moderated by journalist and broadcaster Ali Moore, speakers include Amanda Caples, Lead Scientist, Victorian State Government and Andrew Nash, Chief Scientific Officer, CSL Behring.
- The Telstra Creativity and Innovation Series at NGV International returns with Ellen Broad from the School of Cybernetics, ANU, asking 'What if the future for AI reversed hemispheres?' Presented via a specially commissioned and immersive audio-visual content piece followed by a live panel discussion, the event aims to uproot the prevailing philosophies that have shaped the development of AI and ask where we're going next.
- Featuring the work of more than 30 designs from Australia, Asia, and Europe, *COMMUNITY*, presented by alt.material, features never-before-seen work by designers exhibited within empty shopfronts across the City of Yarra that respond to the theme of "community". *COMMUNITY* is an opportunity for audiences to see new creations by leading furniture and object designers, including Ron Arad, Amanda Levete, Sam Jacob, Iris van Herpen and Ross Lovegrove – some of whom have never-before exhibited work in Australia.
- The Melbourne Art Book Fair, an annual event offering a unique platform that brings together a diverse range of art publishers, artists and designers worldwide, returns in 2021 with an expansive format featuring a broad range of events not only at the NGV, but also at offsite venues such as bookstores, galleries, art spaces and rooftops. The Centre for Contemporary Photography will host a variety of photography book launches; Collingwood Yards will be the Fair's home for architecture and design; Perimeter Books will present events that spotlight independent publishers from Australia and internationally; and Le Space Gallery will host a mini 'fair' - Le Art Book Fair – with a variety of rare and first-edition publications on offer. The Fair's newly conceived online platform also features over 80 local and international publishers, which this year will host an online platform for book sales and live streamed events.
- *Design Broadcasters* is a program that aims to develop design writing and criticism in Melbourne and Australia by commissioning writers to visit and write about design, in partnership with Assemble Papers. With applications open to leading and emerging design writers and critics residing in Victoria, Design Broadcaster will help writers develop a critical voice, writing skills and industry connections in the design disciplines. Selected participants will be commissioned to write the equivalent of one feature article for Melbourne Design Week's website with possible syndication in the design media.

An initiative of the Victorian Government and delivered by the National Gallery of Victoria, the inaugural Melbourne Design Week was launched in 2017. Melbourne Design Week runs from 26 March to 5 April 2021. Explore the full program online at [designweek.melbourne](https://www.designweek.melbourne).

The NGV Department of Contemporary Design and Architecture is generously supported by The Hugh D. T. Williamson Foundation.

[designweek.melbourne](https://www.designweek.melbourne)  
[@ngvmelbourne](https://www.instagram.com/ngvmelbourne) #melbournedesignweek

**IMAGES:** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/79j7as49oouzix4/AADCSDt0noRci4QnP136qf7ga?dl=0>

**Image caption:** Joost Bakker's future food system at Federation Square. Photo: Earl Carter

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Satellite Program Media Enquiries via Neil Hugh Office:

Caitlin Quinlan – [caitlin@neilhugh.com](mailto:caitlin@neilhugh.com) or +61 455 163 779

Cardia Speziale – [cardia@neilhugh.com](mailto:cardia@neilhugh.com) or +61 411 040 337

**NGV Media Contacts:**

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

0427 147 999 | [marion.joseph@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:marion.joseph@ngv.vic.gov.au)

**Briana Tomasino, Media and Public Affairs Officer, NGV**

0408 333 399 | [briana.tomasino@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:briana.tomasino@ngv.vic.gov.au)

**Bonnie Horne, Media and Public Affairs Officer, NGV**

0448 369 260 | [bonnie.horne@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:bonnie.horne@ngv.vic.gov.au)