

# NGV NEWS

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150  
YEARS

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY NGV!

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150th birthday!



In 2011, the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) is celebrating its 150th birthday. This is a major milestone in the history of Australia's first public art gallery, an exciting moment to celebrate the NGV's outstanding collection and the achievement of artists, and to look forward as much as back.

Founded in 1861, the National Gallery of Victoria has a rich history filled with fascinating tales, resulting in the treasures to be found on the walls of both buildings – NGV International on St Kilda Road and The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square.

Dr Gerard Vaughan, Director, NGV said: "The 150th anniversary is an opportunity to invite everyone to come and enjoy the great treasures of our NGV Collection. Many of our major spaces have been reorganised and rehung to celebrate the anniversary, and this process will continue through 2011. Some truly astonishing gifts have been made in celebration of our 150<sup>th</sup> birthday. 2011 will also be filled with magnificent exhibitions and a wide range of special programs and new installations for everyone to enjoy."

The philanthropic history of the NGV will also be celebrated in this special year, highlighting in particular the outstanding achievements of the Felton Bequest, established in 1904 after Melbourne businessman Alfred Felton died, leaving a substantial fortune for the benefit of the NGV.

**Image details:** Visitors looking at **Andy Warhol's *Self-portrait no. 9* 1986** which was completed a year before Warhol's death. Through this work, Warhol references the 'world' of Andy Warhol and his now infamous activities of the 1960s – the environment he created at his New York studio 'The Factory', his work in experimental film and music, and his acknowledged role as Pop Art innovator. This important work forms a part of the NGV Collection.

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The Felton Bequest transformed the NGV, enabling it to purchase superb masterpieces including Rembrandt's *Two Old Men Disputing* c.1628, Tiepolo's *Banquet of Cleopatra* 1743-44, Claude Monet's *Vétheuil* 1879, Frederick McCubbin's *The Pioneer* 1904 and Tom Roberts' iconic Australian work *Shearing the rams* 1888-90. Over 15,000 works have been acquired through the Felton Bequest, and the current value of the gifts from the Felton Bequest exceeds \$2 billion, of the overall collection value of \$3.5 billion.

In May 2004, respected Melbourne art dealer, artist and collector, Dr Joseph Brown, donated over 150 paintings, sculptures and works on paper, representing at the time the most generous gift of artworks ever made to a public gallery in Australia.

The majority of the NGV's marvellous collection of over 70,000 works, representing the world's most important art movements across many centuries and cultures, has been gifted by members of the community for everyone to enjoy.

The National Gallery of Victoria has grown from a small exhibition space at the Victorian State Library in 1861 to two architecturally renowned galleries in Melbourne's famous arts precinct.

The Gallery on St Kilda Road was designed by Sir Roy Grounds in 1968. It was redeveloped and designed by Mario Bellini between 1999 and 2003 as in response to new needs and the growing collection, reopening as NGV International, housing the Gallery's collection of international art. In 2002, the NGV opened The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square to hold what is arguably Australia's most exceptional collections of Australian art. Together these two magnificent buildings form the NGV.

In 2004, the new Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series began with *The Impressionists: Masterpieces from the Musée d'Orsay*. Since then the NGV has brought to Melbourne superb work of the 17th century Dutch Golden Age, explored the relationship of Picasso and his muse Dora Maar, excited audiences with contemporary works from the Guggenheim Museum, taken a step back in time to the Art Deco period, dazzled Melbourne with the genius of Salvador Dali and introduced radical 19th and 20th century works from the famed Städel Museum in Frankfurt. This annual event is now one of Melbourne's biggest tourism drawcards and a cultural landmark in Victoria's events calendar.

This year, the NGV will bring to Melbourne *Vienna: Art & Design*, showcasing the spectacular paintings of Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele, a fascinating collection of decorative arts including fabulous jewellery and other objects by Josef Hoffmann, the magnificent designs of the Wiener Werkstätte (Vienna Workshop) as well as radical works by Adolf Loos, Richard Gerstl, Koloman Moser and Oskar Kokoschka, among many others.

In 2009, the NGV was ranked the 20th most visited gallery in the world by London's Art Newspaper, with 1.6 million visitors – a great achievement. Almost three quarters of visitors to the NGV are local, with a great number being children and their families, giving the NGV one of the highest community participation rates of any of the world's great museums.

The NGV's 150th birthday is the perfect opportunity to come in and experience Victoria's truly astonishing art collection, which belongs to each and every member of our community.

Entry to the NGV Collection is free for all to enjoy!

**TO CELEBRATE THIS MAJOR MILESTONE, NGV 150 PARTY WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY 28 AND SUNDAY 29 MAY 2011.**

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## Media enquiries:

Alison Murray, Media & Public Affairs Coordinator 03 8620 2347 / 0439 348 357 / [alison.murray@ngv.vic.gov.au](mailto:alison.murray@ngv.vic.gov.au)

