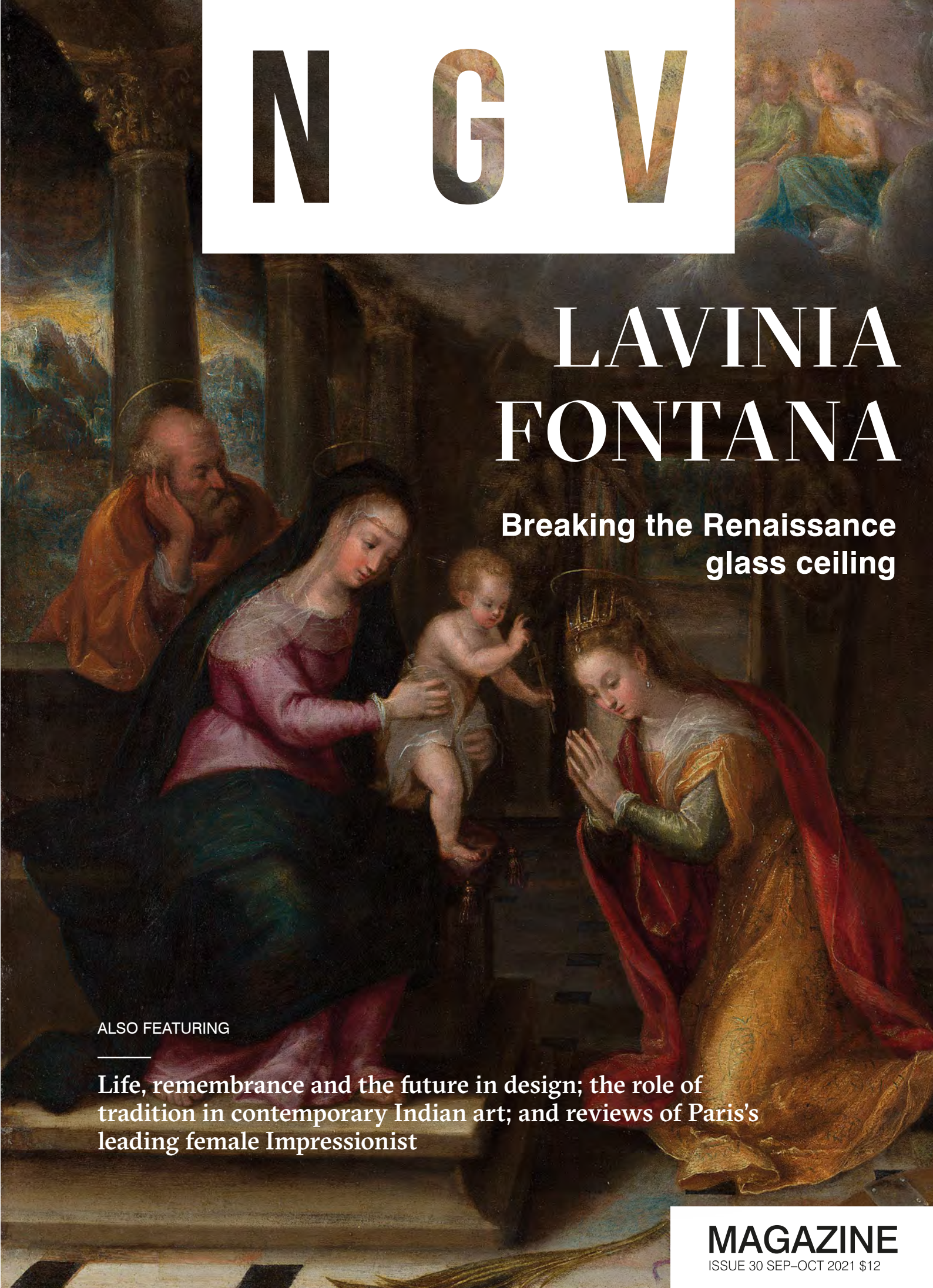


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Installation view of *Maree Clarke: Ancestral Memories* at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia © Maree Clarke. Photo: Tom Ross

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Marc Newson (designer) Noritake Co. Ltd (manufacturer) *Cutlery set for the Qantas A380 project* 2007 (designed) c. 2011 (manufactured) Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2021

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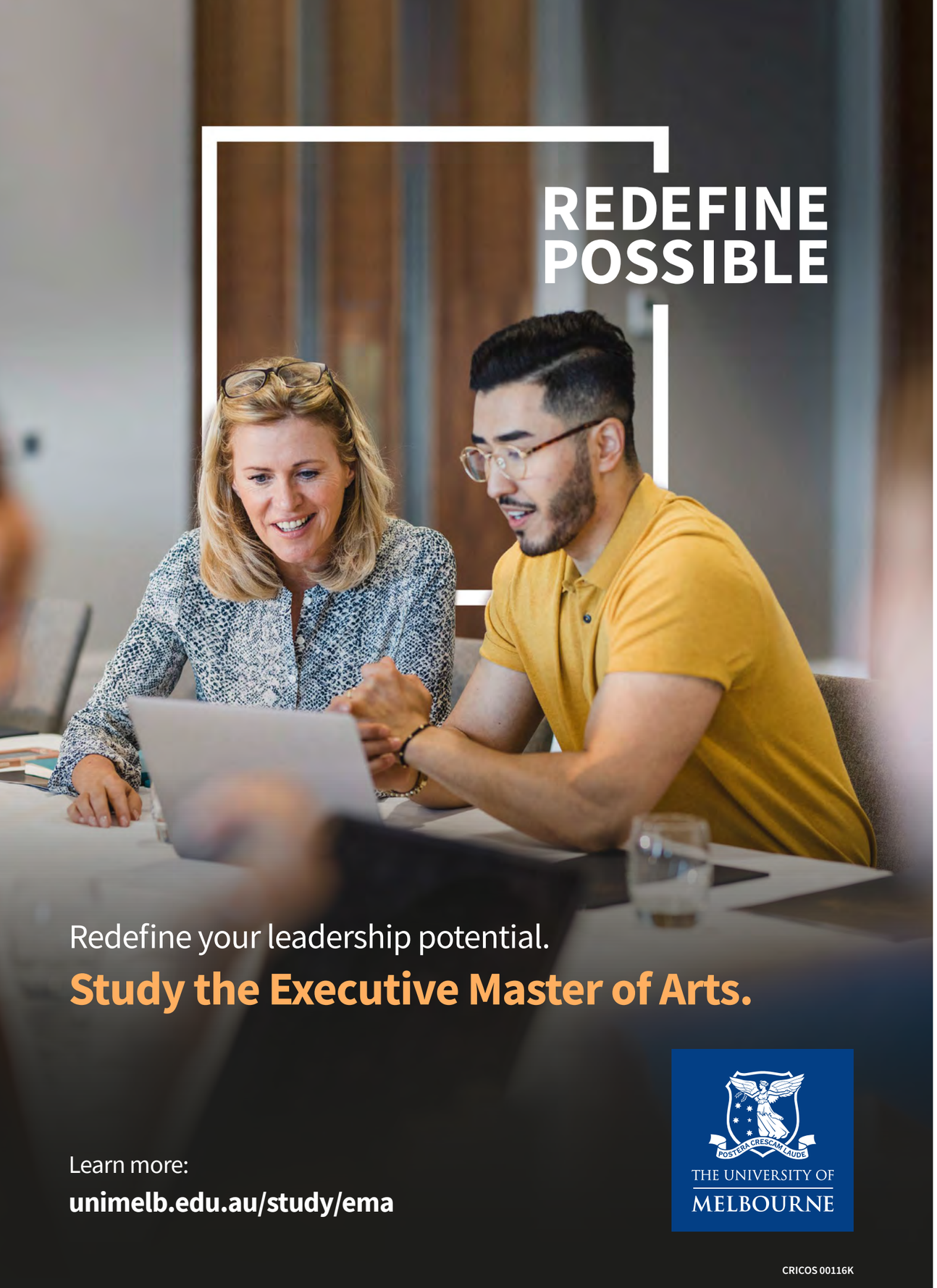
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Every effort has been made to obtain accurate information for this publication. The views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the NGV.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this publication contains names of people who have passed away. The National Gallery of Victoria acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways upon which the NGV is located.

(cover) **Lavinia Fontana** *Mystic marriage of St Catherine* c. 1575 Felton Bequest, 2021



FROM THE NGV

Inspired by the hope of spring and the natural world, in this issue of *NGV Magazine* we feature new writing that explores the themes of renewal and newness in the world of art and design.

An upcoming exhibition at NGV Australia: The Ian Potter Centre, *Sampling the Future* considers how designers and architects are bridging the worlds of design, technology, and science, experimenting with materials and processes to examine how we can make things in new ways or reimagine the value systems, rituals and beliefs that might define tomorrow. Ewan McEoin, NGV Hugh Williamson Senior Curator of Contemporary Design and Architecture, presents a selection of new projects by some of Australia's leading designers who are literally 'sampling' this imagined future, traversing large-scale installations, thought-provoking objects, associated sound and film. I thank Design Partner RMIT University and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Design and Social Context, Tim Marshall and Major Partner Telstra and CEO Andrew Penn for their support of this exhibition.

Gracing this issue's cover is the extraordinary painting *Mystic marriage of St Catherine*, c. 1575, by Italian painter Lavinia Fontana. Regarded as the first professional woman artist, and working within the same sphere as her male counterparts in Bologna and Rome during the late sixteenth century, Fontana's *Mystic marriage of St Catherine* is the first painting by this extraordinary artist to enter a public collection in Australia and is the earliest artwork by a woman artist to enter the NGV Collection. I hope you enjoy reading about Lavinia Fontana in the cover story by Laurie Benson, NGV Curator, International Art. I warmly thank the Felton Bequest for their support in bringing this significant work into the NGV Collection, which brings a new perspective to the Gallery's holdings of Italian Baroque paintings.

Another influential female artist, nineteenth century French Impressionist artist Berthe Morisot, has been warmly welcomed to the NGV Collection through this year's Annual Appeal. Dr Ted Gott, NGV Senior Curator, International Art, reveals insights into Morisot's professional and creative approach and public reception through letters, newspapers and critical commentary from the era. It is thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the community including leadership gifts from Barry Janes and Paul Cross, Paula Fox AO and Fox Family Foundation, Norman Bloom and Pauline Bloom, Myriam Boisbouvier-Wylie and John Wylie AM, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family, Ken Harrison AM and Jill Harrison OAM, John and Rose Downer Foundation, Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax and donors to the 2021 NGV Foundation Annual Dinner and 2021 NGV Annual Appeal, including readers of *NGV Magazine,* that the first work by a female French Impressionist artist has entered the NGV Collection and I gratefully thank you for supporting the NGV Collection – your community collection.

With the generosity of Melbourne philanthropist and NGV donor, Dr Pauline Gandel AC, on display soon at NGV International is the exhibition *Golden Shells and the Gentle Mastery of Japanese Lacquer*. The exhibition will showcase the only complete example of the Japanese 'shell matching' game *kai-awase* known to be in existence. Comprising two Japanese lacquerware shell boxes and 720 gold-gilded clam-shaped shells, each decorated with hand-painted Japanese and Australian flowers, this new edition of the game has been especially commissioned by Pauline Gandel. Here, we offer an insight into the story, significance and mastery behind these elegant works with an article by Professor Yamazake Tatsufumi, who oversaw the development of this extraordinary project.

Take care, and I hope that you enjoy both this edition of the magazine, and the wonderful season of spring.

Tony Ellwood AM
NGV Director

In this issue of *NGV Magazine*, we are pleased to share in-depth insights, drawing from the history of art to research into works from the NGV Collection and exhibitions, as well as groundbreaking, convention-challenging artists, and the next generation of leaders in design and architecture.

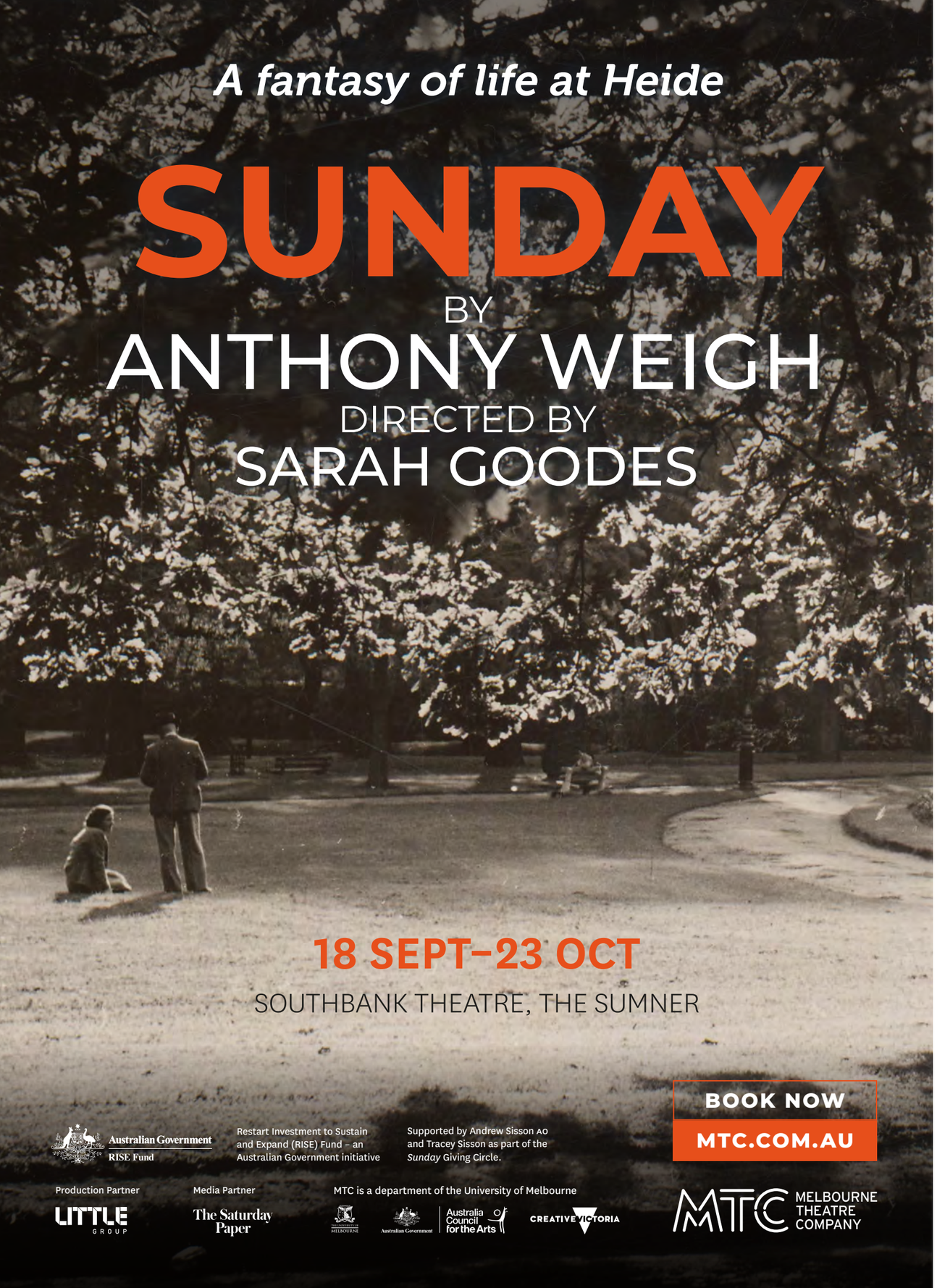
For this issue's 'Deep Read', design writer, editor and curator Penny Craswell tells the unexpected story of design's relationship with symbols and objects of mortality, remembrance and mourning throughout history. Craswell suggests that 'designers have a role in asking the big questions, including those of life and death' and looks to design pieces in the NGV Collection to tell this story.

The upcoming exhibition *Transforming Worlds: Change and Tradition in Contemporary India*, drawn from the NGV Collection, presents an exciting new direction emerging in art created across India: centuries old traditional arts being used by established and emerging artists to depict current issues. Minhazz Majumdar calls it the 'contemporary traditional arts of India' and for this issue introduces the work of three artists in the exhibition, Pushpa Kumari, Sonia Chitrakar and Soni Jogi, who merge personal, social and global concerns into their work.

Finally, we introduce new Collection displays at NGV International through a range of articles on key works and art movements. Laurie Benson, NGV Curator, International Art, writes about the NGV's collection of Baroque paintings, now in a dedicated Gallery on Level 2, highlighting the scope and impact of this truly international style. Amanda Dunsmore, NGV Senior Curator, International Decorative Arts & Antiquities, and Cathy Leahy, NGV Senior Curator, Prints & Drawings, look at works by European and North American artists that were heavily influenced by Japanese art and culture during the late nineteenth-century, and which now feature in a new display also on Level 2 amongst the Gallery's collection of Impressionist paintings.

I hope you enjoy reading the stories in this issue, and are inspired by unexpected, unprecedented and unique art and design, and the influence these works and movements have on the way we consider the world.

Donna McColm
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Philip Samartzis is a sound artist, scholar and curator with a specific interest in the social and environmental conditions informing remote wilderness regions and their communities. Samartzis is the recipient of two Australian Antarctic Division Arts Fellowships in 2009 and 2015, which he used to document the effects of extreme climate and weather events in Eastern Antarctica, Macquarie Island, and on the research vessel Aurora Australis. Samartzis is an Associate Professor within RMIT School of Art, and the artistic director of the Bogong Centre for Sound Culture.

PROFESSOR YAMAZAKI TATSUFUMI
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LAURIE BENSON
Curator, NGV

Laurie Benson is Curator of International Art at the NGV. He has worked on many exhibitions, including *Darkness & Light: Caravaggio & His World* (2004), *The Impressionists* (2004), *Cinema India: The Art of Bollywood* (2007), *Salvador Dalí: Liquid Desire* (2009) and *Italian Masterpieces from Spain's Royal Court, Museo del Prado* (2014). He curated *Medieval Moderns: The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* (2015) and was co-curator of the exhibition *The Horse* (2015). He has published widely on works in the NGV Collection.

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Anne Montgomery, *Sandringham Beach* 1950,
oil on board, 40 x 50 cm. Private collection, Melbourne

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SAMPLING THE FUTURE

From 3D-printed corals and modular underwater reef structures, to robotically printed and knitted architecture, *Sampling the Future*, an upcoming exhibition at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, reveals some of the extraordinary ways that advanced technologies and manufacturing are shaping our near and distant futures. Learn more about the technology, science and motivations behind the works with insights from the featured designers.

BY EWAN MCEOIN

Twenty-first-century designers are increasingly driven by a desire to achieve greater efficiency, sustainability and ethical impact. Bridging the worlds of design, technology and science, this exhibition presents a selection of works from the NGV Collection, alongside new projects by leading experimental and speculative designers who are 'sampling' the future. It reveals some of the many ways that digital technologies and advanced manufacturing are transforming how designers and architects operate. Each project gives us a glimpse of exciting possibilities ahead and shows how designers are reimagining how and why objects, structures and buildings are designed and made.







Divided into two groupings – the near future and the distant future – the exhibition features large-scale architectural installations, thought-provoking design objects, as well as film and sound-based works. Designers exploring the 'near future' present works that seek to combat climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, while those exploring the 'distant future' draw on history, mythology and philosophy to explore our relationship to and continued reliance on natural resources, as well as the central role that materials will continue to play in shaping the tools and artefacts of future human civilisations.

The near future: collaboration and invention

In a search for ways to combat climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, Dr Pirjo Haikola and Alex Goad work at the intersection of science, engineering and technology – joining forces with other disciplines as creative innovators in two groundbreaking underwater design projects. Their high-resolution productions successfully emulate nature in structures that can heal damaged ecosystems and accelerate biodiversity.

Combining her skills as a designer, researcher and scuba diving instructor, Dr Pirjo Haikola is developing new uses for sea urchins, a species that has overrun parts of southern Australia's waters. In the cool waters of Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia, rising ocean temperatures and excess nutrient levels coupled with reduced numbers of predators due to overfishing are causing an explosion in sea urchin populations. The soaring sea urchin populations overeat kelp forests and seaweed habitats, creating underwater wastelands called barrens and posing a major threat to the ongoing survival of many marine species and habitats.

In *Urchin corals,* 2020–21, brought into the NGV Collection through the support of Brendan and Grace O'Brien, Haikola has developed a landscape of 3D-printed corals from a new material manufactured from the shells and spikes of the purple sea urchin (*Heliocidaris erythrogramma*) and the black sea urchin (*Centrostephanus rodgersii*) mixed with organic plastics called biopolymers. The process of photogrammetry (the art and science of extracting 3D information from photographs) underlies the production of Haikola's *Urchin corals*. On a 2020 trip to the Great Barrier Reef, Haikola took photographs of living coral. Using digital software, she generated 3D files of the living coral and, combined with open-source print files, used these to 3D print the *Urchin corals*, maximising the possibility to recreate a realistic natural structure. The sea urchin material presented in Haikola's installation is part of ongoing investigation into the beneficial properties of sea urchin shells and has led to a collaboration on material development and testing for coral reef restoration purposes.

Similarly, Melbourne-based artist and designer Alex Goad's research and practice looks to help mitigate the increasing effects of human activity on marine ecosystems by creating 3D-printed Modular Artificial Reef Structures (MARS). The damage to coral reefs globally is a well-documented reality caused by a myriad of environmental pressures. These include ocean acidification, river sedimentation run-off, destructive fishing practices, invasive species and most critically of all is coral bleaching caused by warming ocean temperatures because of climate change.

MARS are designed for constructing reef habitats in tropical and temperate waters without the need for heavy-duty equipment. The structures are a three-dimensional lattice that can be deployed from small boats and implemented by divers.

The innovative reconfigurable design creates a large surface area within a small footprint, while also providing protection for smaller fish species. The detailed surface skin pattern of the modules is designed to aid the colonisation of coral and filter feeding species, such as oysters and mussels. This system could be strategically positioned to reintroduce biodiversity in ecosystems damaged by coastal development or act as natural filters for waterways experiencing increased sediment deposits. The modular design enables endless configurations to suit varying scales, situations and topographies. The MARS system in *Sampling the Future* has been especially designed for use in cool and temperate environments, such as coastal Victoria and Port Phillip Bay.

The other designers featured in 'the near future': Roland Snooks, Leanne Zilka and Jenny Underwood, examine how, in our digital age, small-scale, distributed and high-tech manufacturing within a circular economy may replace the large-scale 'linear' or factory production that defined the last century. These new systems for high-strength, lightweight construction promise a more ecologically balanced future – a future that will be defined by material efficiency, minimal waste and the capacity to manufacture and build considering the common needs of people, ecosystems and other species.

Melbourne-based architect Roland Snooks's structure *Unclear cloud*, 2021, uses an experimental technique of infusing a carbon fibre structural skeleton within robotic 3D-printed polymer skins. *Unclear cloud* illustrates how digital design processes, 3D printing and composite materials could transform the production of architecture. New methods of digital fabrication are increasingly available, allowing structural performance, ornament and architectural expression, once separate 'layers' within a building, to become one integrated whole. This holistic approach to design and fabrication is made possible using generative design algorithms and robotics. The sound work embedded within the architecture, by sound artist Philip Samartzis, reminds us that a future increasingly defined by big data and interconnected digital systems (the cloud) must also consider the accelerating data-carbon footprint of architecture and design. Read more about Samartzis's sound work on page 24.

The textile structures *Knitted architecture*, 2021, by architect Leanne Zilka and textile designer Jenny Underwood investigate the use of digital design and 3D-knitting technologies as an architectural system. Seamless knitting technologies, which 'print' 3D forms stitch by stitch (pixel by pixel) allow the designers to produce whole pieces of extruded textile tubes.



‘Drawing on history, mythology, material and making, these set of ‘critical design’ projects reminds us of our relationship to and reliance on natural resources, while considering the central role that materials have always played in shaping the tools and artefacts of human civilisation.’

——— Ewan McEoin

Combining the scale of architecture with textile design garment technology, each piece expresses shape using different yarns and threads that have the potential to perform as structures. These works are prototypes of textile ‘skins’ that once combined with emerging digital design and advanced fibres, such as carbon fibre and Dyneema yarns, could feasibly offer ways to rapidly knit high-strength, lightweight forms for green facades and other architectural elements with material efficiency and minimal waste.

Shifting from global supply chains and ’fordian’ assembly lines, each of these projects reveal that it is increasingly software, cloud computing, algorithms, 3D printers, robots, polymers and composite materials that are the emerging tools of the twenty-first-century designer.

The distant future: future material histories

It is increasingly common for designers who practice in a field known as ‘critical design’ to use their design skills to communicate and open conversations. Striving towards systemic change, the designers presented within this theme of the exhibition each achieve their goals through a mix of design research, reflection, experimentation and making. The intention of these projects is to increase public or community awareness of important contemporary issues.

As natural processes such as ocean wave action and solar weathering degrade artificial materials polluting the oceans into finer and finer particulates, new forms of sedimentary rock will eventually emerge, perhaps dormant under oceans and rivers. Works included in the exhibition by jeweller Kyoko Hashimoto and designer and artist Guy Keulemans ask what might this material look like and how might it be used by our far future descendants? They designed their vases, *Metalloplastiglomerate vases I & II*, 2021, as a simulation of this process. Materials found in the city, including aluminium, waste plastic, copper and iron debris are rolled, pressed and hammered in mimicry of geological sedimentation, and then milled by machine. As the world contends with a climate emergency that may disrupt global supply chains, the designers speculate that it is beneficial to understand the resources available underfoot.

Another of Hashimoto and Keuleman’s works in the exhibition, a collection of rings titled *Bioregional rings 1–12*, 2021, attempts to uncover the relations of materials foraged within the one bioregion; a region defined by environmental boundaries, rather than by human-made borders. The Sydney Basin bioregion is characterised by the visible presence of sandstone, but also coal, a material geologically formed millions of years ago from decomposing wood. Sydney has many other less obvious materials for design, including coral and oyster shells that are used in the work as a substitute for limestone in the creation of artisanal concrete.

Also included in ‘the distant future’ is a collection of four mirrors by Alice Springs–based designer Elliat Rich – *Weaver patterning*, 2020, *Weaver earthly state / honeyeater*, 2020, *Weaver becoming matter*, 2020 and *Weaver ethereal*, 2020. These mirrors are offered as artefacts from a future, and/or parallel society, where Western and non-Western scientific knowledge converge and find equilibrium. This convergence is expressed in Rich’s work as a mythological story in which human beings reach a point of spiritual clarity and truly accept and understand their place within the cosmos. The mirrors and accompanying story of the Weaver offers a mythic lens to reweave ourselves, as one of the trillions of ‘patterns’ that make up the living world. Looking into the mirrors is intended as a ritual of reconnection to the ancient world. The viewer gazes beyond the here and now into eternity – a reminder of all that wraps around and within the viewer and the object.

Finally, the film work *Aurum*, 2020, by Georgia Nowak and Eugene Perepletchikov, winner of the Mercedes Benz Melbourne Design Week Award in 2020 and recently acquired with the support of the Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, traverses layers of history and mythology to examine our complex relationship with gold. Nowak and Perepletchikov are independent artists and designers whose combined practice examines material histories and contested narratives through film and installation. Their work traces the shifting relations between material, society and place, while examining the growing environmental impact of contemporary extraction and production industries. *Aurum* juxtaposes today’s extraction and production processes of gold against historical narratives and mythologies, revealing the power of gold to transform societies. Today the demand for gold continues to rise; it is essential in the manufacture of electronics and is increasingly attractive to investors as a safe haven. Old goldfields are reignited, and new open pits spread through the landscape, as we once again bank on the stability of gold to see us through the uncertain times of COVID-19 and the pending environmental threats to come.

Drawing on history, mythology, material and making, this set of ‘critical design’ projects reminds us of our relationship to and reliance on natural resources, while considering the central role that materials have always played in shaping the tools and artefacts of human civilisation.

EWAN MCEOIN IS NGV HUGH WILLIAMSON SENIOR CURATOR OF CONTEMPORARY ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE. *SAMPLING THE FUTURE* IS SOON ON DISPLAY AT THE IAN POTTER CENTRE: NGV AUSTRALIA. VISIT NGV.MELBOURNE FOR MORE DETAILS. THE NGV WARMLY THANKS DESIGN PARTNER RMIT UNIVERSITY AND MAJOR PARTNER TELSTRA FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THIS EXHIBITION.

(pp. 16–17) **Kyoko Hashimoto and Guy Keulemans** *Bioregional rings 1–12* 2021 Collection of the artists. Photo: Trianos Pakioufakis
(p. 18, above) Alex Goad Living Seawall Project. Photo: Alex Goad
(p. 18, below) Pirjo Haikola. Photo: Tim Carrafa
(above) Georgia Nowak and Eugene Perepletchikov *Aurum* 2020 (still) Purchased by NGV Foundation, 2021

From the designers





We have been working together for a number of years on the problem of scaling the fabrication of textiles to the scale of architecture in a way that can produce large-scale building elements.

There are many new fibres that have properties such as high strength, energy harvesting, air purification and climate-data gathering, that if we could scale textiles to the scale of buildings we would be able to improve our built environment and face the increasing challenges brought about by climate change. There are few architects/textile designers working together on not only the patterns of the textiles but the creation of complex form. We are used to seeing tensile fabrics contorted into all manner of shapes, or extruded tubes stretched into place, but not as whole forms, able to be translated directly from architectural models.

Our large-scaled knitted forms seen in *Sampling the Future* have successfully translated complex architectural form into large-scale knitted objects that go beyond the restricted garment templates of whole garment technologies commonly used in knitted jumpers, socks, etc. These technologies can fabricate complex form using fibres, which are not possible in the way we currently build buildings. This success allows us to think about a built environment that can be more responsive, more adaptable and able to harness the ever-growing number of new fibres that can make an impact on some difficult issues facing our buildings and cities. We now have another way to address the issue that our cities are largely built yet bear the burden of needing to adapt to climate change and mitigate the foreboding changing of our environment.

Working with whole garment technologies to produce large-scale complex shapes in lightweight materials allows us to embed the qualities of new fibres. Imagine the skin of buildings being able to accommodate microclimates that attract birds and insects, while collecting data on air quality and harvesting wind and solar energy? Together we have developed a unique language that is able to translate complex architectural form into a language understood by textile fabrication technologies using natural and synthetic fibres.

Jenny Underwood and Leanne Zilka

As critical designers, we want to understand the flow of materials across space and time.

We want to map them, as they move, form and transform around the world, but also through history and into the future. It is possible, that human civilisation alongside other species now face ecological decline due to climate change . Of course materials and substances of human habitation – our cities, farms and landscapes – will persist in some way, and this persistence is itself of speculative interest. But the intrigue we really want to investigate is what design can do *now* to prevent destruction, because such destruction is highly contingent on the design of materials. By which we mean, not just the design of materials in form, but the design of their use and role in civilisation, including their extraction, refining, manufacturing and recycling.

We believe that circular economy and degrowth strategies (the reduction of economic growth as a social objective) are required urgently to address the harms of pollution, waste and climate change brought by overproduction and hyper-consumerism. Using experimental approaches we seek to visualise these ideas through making and craft. In the short term, we see benefit in proposing new techniques and tactics for material reuse, alongside polemics for activism and change.

In the long term, change will be placed upon designers. If global supply chains fragment and break, there is benefit in knowing what resources are available underfoot. But bio-regionally constrained designing has inherent value in the present too. Digging up our own materials, from our literal or figurative backyard, and being forced to deal with the consequences of local extraction, illuminates the possible hypocrisies and injustices of placing the burdens of unsustainable production disproportionally on the Global South. Beyond radical change, degrowth or material circularity – or if all of that fails – all that is left to consider is what material conditions remain for whatever survives.

Guy Keuleman and Kyoko Hashimoto

(above) Guy Keulemans and Kyoko Hashimoto. Photo: Carine Thevenau
(left) Jenny Underwood and Leanne Zilka creating their work *Knitted architecture* 2021. Photo: Julian Kingma

MAKING WITH

Making *Unclear cloud*

Primarily recorded at the High Altitude Research Station at Jungfraujoch in the Bernese Alps in Switzerland, *Unclear cloud*, 2021, by Philip Samartzis is a sound portrait of the Great Aletsch Glacier – the longest glacier in Europe. Samartzis takes us behind-the-scenes of his work in *Sampling the Future* to share how he captured the sounds of this extreme environment – from wild winds and surfaces melting and freezing to scientific instrumentation and built structures – that tell the story of an alpine ecosystem under climate stress.

BY PHILIP SAMARTZIS

In 2019 I was awarded a Swiss National Science Foundation Fellowship to undertake a series of sound recordings at the High Altitude Research Station at Jungfraujoch (HFSJG) in the Bernese Alps to register the increasingly stark relationship between rapid industrialisation, human actions and the alpine environment. The project emerges from the work I have done mapping the effects of global warming in Antarctica through the use of innovative sound recording technologies to reveal the changes occurring in a place that is central to the health and wellbeing of our planet. While there are wideranging conversations surrounding the effects of anthropogenic climate change, science often struggles to attract attention and harness action to address the gravity of the rapid transformations occurring in places seldom seen or heard. Art is a powerful agent and advocate in how these changes are perceived and the actions required to mitigate destructive behaviours and their long-term consequences.

I travelled to the Jungfraujoch with a completely open mind. I was particularly fascinated by the technology and science that I might encounter at the research station, and how one might frame them within a sound art context. I see my arts practice as an extension of the Italian Futurists who embraced social and technological disruption in the early twentieth century and the attendant upheaval it can cause. I therefore believe the Bernese Alps are as much defined by its roads, tunnels, bridges, cable cars and trains as they are as its peaks, glaciers, rivers and valleys, which together coalesce to suggest complex ways in which the topology may be interpreted.

Jungfraujoch is the saddle between two mountain peaks – Jungfrau and Mönch – which are located on the boundary between the cantons of Bern and Valais in Switzerland. Since 1912, Jungfraujoch has been accessible by cogwheel railway from Kleine Scheidegg, running partly underground in a tunnel between the Eiger and the Mönch mountains. The railway terminates at Jungfraujoch, which at an elevation of 3454 metres makes it the highest station in Europe. The HFSJG is located on the south slope of Jungfraujoch and is accessible from the railway terminus through a tunnel. The research station comprises several buildings including The Sphinx Observatory, which provides a viewing platform at an altitude of 3572 metres. The Research Station was inaugurated in 1931 and comprises five laboratories, a mechanical workshop, library, a dining and recreation room, kitchen and ten bedrooms. The Sphinx Observatory has an astronomical dome, laboratories, a workshop, two terraces for scientific experiments, and a weather observation station.[1]

The Great Aletsch Glacier originates at Jungfraujoch and is the longest glacier in Europe at approximately 23 kilometres long, 1.5 kilometres wide, and 900 metres at its thickest point. The Great Aletsch Glacier is one of the most extensively investigated glaciers in the world through long-term measurements of changes in length, mass balance and volume, which is being used to provide evidence of the impact of climate change. As Jungfraujoch is well above most sources of air pollution, the HFSJG is well positioned for measuring the composition of the atmosphere. Of particular interest is the concentration of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, which has been continuously measured since 1986 in efforts to determine how human-made carbon dioxide is distributed to the atmosphere, the biosphere and the ocean to gain more knowledge on air quality, sources of air pollutants and climate change. [2]

During fieldwork I used different microphones to capture a variety of acoustic, spatial, atmospheric and vibration-based phenomena. I used omnidirectional microphones to register events such as wind, snow and ice along with social, material and industrial sound emanating from the nearby train terminus, businesses and viewing platforms. While these types of events were clearly discernible, the microphones registered precise articulations of them within the pristine alpine topography. I placed hydrophones within water and ice to record geophysical sound resonating within the frozen environment of Jungfraujoch and the Great Aletsch Glacier. Water in particular is an efficient transmitter of sound, traveling four times faster than in air. The recordings capture the pervasive presence of anthropogenic sound permeating through the frozen landscape produced by tourists, transport operations and recreational sport. I attached accelerometers to various metal surfaces and structures to record solid vibration generated by high-velocity wind, and the process of melting and freezing. The recordings produced by the accelerometers clearly express the stresses and fatigue occurring within the material structure of buildings and infrastructure to demonstrate the effects of extreme climate and weather events on the built environment. I produced additional sound recordings around the base of the mountain range to capture related habitat, glacial carving and snow melt, and additional anthropogenic sound caused by tourist operations, agricultural producers and ambitious new building projects. These recordings provide a wide sample of the diversity of sound that occupies the alps to demonstrate the pervasive nature of human activity set within what is often presented as an unspoilt wilderness. The recordings also reflect the changing sound ecology of the alpine environment transformed by increasing temperatures accelerating the contraction of the Great Aletsch Glacier, as well as the instability of the mountain topology compromised by the loss of permafrost. The precariousness of the degrading high-altitude environment is underpinned by increasing rock and ice falls, while crevasses are becoming more common around the head of the glacier due to decreasing snowfall.



The main goal of my fieldwork methodology is to make all the creative choices in situ. I want to be truly responsive to the place and circumstances that I find myself in without forcing my own personal creative and aesthetic sensibility and agenda upon the situation. For instance, life on a research station is a compendium of natural and human sounds. Rather than trying to privilege one over the other I accept all sounds as being of equal interest and value, and true of the alpine experience. I am very much composing as I am recording, directing the action through microphone choice and placement, with special consideration given to subject, duration and space in order to place an event within a specific environmental context. I want the environment to reveal its own biases and dynamics with as little intervention as possible. In this way listeners are free to discover characteristics and behaviours interesting to them, presented within a framework of a naturally occurring set of interactions and exchanges. My role is to direct attention to places and actions that are often overlooked or disregarded through the aperture of sound recording and psychoacoustics. Composition for me therefore is a product of selecting and sequencing sound recordings that accurately reveal the ecology and phenomenology of place.

Unclear cloud, 2021, is designed to place audiences deep inside an extreme environment to afford embodied experiences of alpine ecologies under duress. Within the immersive sound field the Bise and Foehn winds converge to express the precarious nature of life on the exposed ridge. Within the same space audiences are also provided an encounter with the specialist scientific instrumentation used to register upper atmospheric gasses, which are central to understanding the long-term consequences of greenhouse gas emissions. By choreographing space with sound within a specially calibrated aural environment, audiences are invited to experience the complexity of the alpine soundscape through its many forces, materials and technologies. It assists audiences to empathise with these rarefied ecologies by listening through them rather than hearing them at a distance. My research builds on work currently undertaken in the fields of acoustic ecology, bioacoustics, sensory ethnography and environmental science, whereby sound recording and composition is used to transform the understanding and appreciation of endangered habitats in order to advocate for their preservation. It is within this framework that *Unclear cloud* offers a portrait of a place in which a future without ice may prove to be a fait accompli, and therefore its sounds like its glaciers are similarly at risk of becoming mere apparitions within a spectral landscape.

SCAN TO LISTEN TO AN EXTRACT OF PHILIP SAMARTZIS'S *UNCLEAR CLOUD*, 2021, USING THE PASSWORD **NGVSepOct**

PHILIP SAMARTZIS IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITHIN RMIT SCHOOL OF ART AND A SOUND ARTIST, SCHOLAR AND CURATOR WITH A SPECIFIC INTEREST IN THE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS INFORMING REMOTE WILDERNESS REGIONS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES. HE WISHES TO THANK CREATIVE VICTORIA AND THE SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THIS PROJECT. LISTEN TO HIS WORK *UNCLEAR CLOUD*, 2021, IN *SAMPLING THE FUTURE*, SOON ON DISPLAY AT THE IAN POTTER CENTRE: NGV AUSTRALIA. VISIT NGV.MELBOURNE FOR MORE DETAILS.

Philip Samartzis recording at the High-Altitude Research Station at Jungfraujoch in the Bernese Alps in Switzerland, 2019. Photo: Philip Samartzis

LAVINIA FONTANA

She is considered the first professional woman painter and her commissions were sought by the most influential and elite families throughout Bologna and Rome. We introduce the story of Lavinia Fontana and share the earliest artwork by a woman artist to enter the NGV Collection – Lavinia Fontana's *Mystic marriage of St Catherine*, c. 1575.

BY LAURIE BENSON

Italian artist Lavinia Fontana (1552–1614) is widely recognised as the first professional woman painter to forge a successful career in Europe. This gift by the Felton Bequest to the NGV of her *Mystic marriage of St Catherine*, c. 1575, brings a new perspective to the NGV's strong holdings of Italian Baroque paintings and is the earliest work by a woman artist in the Collection.

Fontana was born in Bologna, the capital of the Emilia-Romagna region in Northern Italy, which in her time was an influential artistic centre, boasting strong artistic patronage. Bologna featured a culture that fostered progressive thinking and was the home to the oldest university in Europe, founded in 1088. It played a major financial and political role in Italy with a number of Popes and influential Cardinals coming from there. Many Bolognese intellectuals and Church leaders, particularly Pope Gregory XIII, helped shape the Counter-Reformation, the sixteenth-century reaction to the threat posed to the Catholic Church by reformers, such as Martin Luther. Members of the leading Bolognese families also played a key role in Fontana's career.

Fontana's mother Antonia de Bonardis came from an artistic family, and her father was the Bolognese master Prospero Fontana. Likely demonstrating her talent at an early age, in an extraordinarily enlightened act for the time, Fontana was actively encouraged by her parents to be an artist. Her father trained her and strongly promoted her career through persuading his own clients to engage her. He saw her as the inheritor of his practice, especially as ill health greatly restricted his capacity to work in his later years. Fontana's marriage contract stipulated that she was not to leave Bologna for extended periods of time until Prospero died.

Prospero Fontana was a great artist in his own right, as evidenced by his *Holy Family with Saint Jerome, a female martyr and the infant Saint John the Baptist,* c. 1552–1555, which was also gifted to the NGV Collection by the Felton Bequest in 1961. He is also known as a very influential teacher of a whole generation of artists, not just his talented daughter. As a confidant of a number of Bolognese and Roman intellectuals he was well aware of the policies and guidelines decreed by the Church that governed what subjects artists could treat and how they were to be treated during the Counter-Reformation. His daughter would have been well versed in the ideology of the Counter-Reformation, which comes through clearly in her art.

Fontana established her reputation by producing fine portraits and small devotional works, such as the *Mystic marriage of St Catherine*. It illustrates a vision experienced by the Christian martyr, St Catherine of Alexandria (c. 287 – c. 305 CE), in which she consecrated her virginity to Christ through their mystical marriage, witnessed here by the Virgin Mary, St Joseph and a chorus of musical angels. Included are a martyr's palm, a book (probably the Bible) and a broken wheel, the symbol of her later martyrdom, upon which Fontana has placed her name. Significantly, she has signed it with her maiden name indicating that it was painted before her marriage in 1577 after which time she used her married name. Therefore, it is one of her earliest works.

Much of Lavinia Fontana's early work featured strong and independent women from ancient mythology and Christian history. Aside from often painting St



Catherine, St Elisabeth, Mary Magdalene and the Virgin Mary, she also painted the Old Testament heroine Judith in the act of beheading Holofernes, and the Goddess Venus. It seems logical that by painting such characters she is consciously highlighting the role of strong women in history and projecting values that she identifies with. It is surely no coincidence that Fontana painted at least three versions of the *Mystic marriage of St Catherine*, before she married in 1577. Although probably an apocryphal character, Catherine of Alexandria was a Christian martyr noted for her purity and devotion to Christ. She purportedly lived in Egypt when it was under Roman rule, and was the daughter of the Roman Governor King Costus, but converted to Christianity at a time of extreme persecution of Christians under the Emperor Maxentius. Catherine was a noted orator and convinced hundreds of people to convert to Christianity and was persecuted for her defence of Christians. When called to justify her actions before the Roman rulers, she refused to repent and was subsequently tortured then starved in prison to force her to deny her beliefs. In a desperate act to change her ways, Maxentius tried to make Catherine marry him, and her refusal symbolises her virtue and the sanctity of her virginity, which she consecrated to Christ in her Mystical Marriage (the term given to the symbolic wedding ceremony with Christ, a pledge of spiritual commitment), the scene portrayed in this painting.

As an unmarried pioneering woman artist practising a profession completely dominated by men, Fontana unequivocally expressed her own virtue through her art by often painting a Saint primarily recognised for her purity and devotion as a Bride of Christ. It also can surely be no coincidence that she signed her name on the broken Catherine wheel, the most identifiable symbol associated with St Catherine. When Catherine refused to marry Maxentius, he ordered her execution on dreaded spiked wheels, however they shattered on her touch. She was subsequently beheaded, but the broken wheel became the most common symbol of her spiritual strength and martyrdom. Catherine vigorously and successfully argued her case before a Roman court, and according to her legend she was also known for her sharp intellect, symbolised in this painting by the well-thumbed book at her feet.

Fontana herself received a fine education being able to read Latin, was well versed in Classical texts and, typical for women of her status, could play music, as evidenced by her self-portrait seated at a spinet (1577, Uffizi Gallery, Florence). She also grew up in the richly intellectual environment of her father's academy and her own work epitomises the philosophies of the Counter-Reformation. She took a naturalistic approach to painting the figure, and expressed clarity in the narratives and iconography of the subjects she portrayed, key features for Counter-Reformation art.

This finely painted work is all the more noteworthy as Fontana could have been no more than twenty-three years old when she made it. It is a complex composition featuring a plunging perspective while the figures form a strong diagonal that energetically leads the eye across and down the painting to the all-important Catherine wheel. It is set in an elegant hall supported by Corinthian columns through which can be glimpsed an alpine landscape. Through her father, she would have seen paintings and prints by all the leading Italian artists and the influence of Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci and Correggio is very apparent in her work, although these are not the only discernible influences. For instance, the landscape is painted in rapid and sketchy brushstrokes that recalls the loose treatment of such details by Venetian artists, such as Veronese and, especially, Tintoretto. That Fontana was receptive to such a broad range of artists is testament to her liberal approach to painting. Furthermore, it is painted on a copper support, which was almost unheard of in Italy at the time. The Flemish artist Denys Calvaert, who was working in her father's studio, no doubt introduced her to this practice, which was quite common in Northern Europe. This is further indication of her open-minded approach to painting and keen interest in new ideas and techniques.



Fontana had a long and distinguished career painting mythological works and religious paintings, winning many commissions for altarpieces. She is, however, perhaps best known as a highly skilled and inventive portraitist. She was engaged by a broad range of patrons, particularly from the elite of Bologna, its surrounds and Rome. Her most prestigious commission was for a painting of the Holy Family for King Phillip II of Spain in 1589.

Although Fontana was one of the more prominent artists in Bologna, at the age of fifty-four she moved to Rome, perhaps at the behest of Pope Paul V (Camillo Borghese). His nephew, the powerful Cardinal Scipione Borghese lived for some time in Bologna and was a patron and supporter of Fontana's and may have influenced her move to Rome where she became an official portrait painter to the Vatican. Most significantly, she was the first woman to be admitted to the prestigious guild for painters in Rome, the Accademia di San Luca, which had to change its rules to admit her.

It seems that most of the works Fontana made in Rome were portraits; the extremely competitive nature of the art world in Rome saw her complete one altarpiece only. Her narrative paintings were savaged by contemporary critics such as the Roman-born writer and artist Giovanni Baglione, who no doubt felt threatened on many levels by the intrusion of the very first successful woman artist. She also happened to be Bolognese at a time when there was an influx of significant Bolognese artists in Rome, such as the Carracci, Francesco Albani, Guido Reni, and Domenichino who were gaining lucrative commissions. She seems to have signed few works from her time in Rome and it is apparent that the patriarchal nature of art history, and the subsequent prejudices against the reputation of women painters, has meant that much of her work has been misattributed to her male counterparts. However, as further research into her life and work goes on, a clearer picture of her late oeuvre will no doubt emerge.

The *Mystic marriage of St Catherine* is the first painting by this important artist to enter a public collection in Australia. It has been presented to the NGV by the Felton Bequest, continuing its long history of supporting the NGV through gifts of significant works of art.

LAURIE BENSON IS NGV CURATOR, INTERNATIONAL ART. THE NGV WARMLY THANKS THE FELTON BEQUEST FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THIS WORK.

(p. 26) **Lavinia Fontana** *Mystic marriage of St Catherine* c. 1575 Felton Bequest, 2021
(left) **Prospero Fontana** *Holy Family with Saint Jerome, a female martyr and the infant Saint John the Baptist* c. 1552–1555 Felton Bequest, 1961
(above) **Lavinia Fontana** *Self-portrait* 1577 National Academy of San Luca, Rome, Italy

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A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Reviving the lost art of *kai-awase* and *kai-oke* production

Golden Shells and the Gentle Mastery of Japanese Lacquer celebrates a traditional Japanese competition of comparison, a shell-matching game known as *kai-awase* that is thought to have been invented and played from the ninth century. A contemporary, complete set of the *kai-awase* game, created in Japan between 2013 and 2015, is the only full set of the game in known existence, even in Japan, and was commissioned by Dr Pauline Gandel AC. Professor Yamazake Tatsufumi, who oversaw the development of this project, shares the remarkable story behind these elegant works.

BY PROFESSOR YAMAZAKI TATSUFMI

Until the completion of the *kai-awase* (shell-matching) game and *kai-oke* (large lacquer boxes used to store the shells) on display at NGV International soon in *Golden Shells and the Gentle Mastery of Japanese Lacquer*, a historically accurate version of this ancient Japanese game had not been produced since the latter half of the nineteenth century, when Japan ended its policy of seclusion and became a modern nation. This is the first overseas exhibition to display a complete set of *kai-awase* and *kai-oke*, which are rarely seen even in Japan.



Commissioned by Dr Pauline Gandel AC, the set was created between 2013 and 2015 by the master lacquer artist Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo and forty-six artisans who worked on the production of both the shells and the boxes in the town of Wajima, on the Noto Peninsula. It comprises 720 clam shells (360 pairs) decorated with gold leaf and painted with floral motifs, and two *kai-oke* shell boxes decorated in black and gold *maki-e* lacquerwork depicting chrysanthemums in full bloom. *Maki-e* is a highly decorative style of lacquerware produced by sprinkling gold and other decorative powders and flakes on a lacquer base. The term means 'sprinkled picture'. The underside of the *kai-oke* lids and the upper surface of their stands feature scattered *kai-awase* shell designs in relief using the *taka-maki-e* (relief lacquer) technique.

This elaborate work was created by artisans who take immense pride in their skills, which are keeping alive traditional Japanese crafts once thought obsolete. Their extraordinary workmanship can be seen in every aspect of the *kai-awase* and *kai-oke*, including the attached metal fittings and decorative silk cords that secure the lids. The finished work is nostalgic and graceful, and embodies the elegant sense of aesthetics cultivated by Japanese culture for over 1000 years.

Kai-oke and *Kai-awase*

There are few people, even in Japan, who know what *kai-oke* are. Although on occasion there may be opportunities to view them in museums as works of classical lacquer art, unlike stationery or cosmetic sets they are far removed from our contemporary lifestyle and therefore do not feel familiar. But while unsure of the exact use and history of *kai-oke*, most people would get the impression from the Japanese written characters that they are a container for storing shells (kai 貝 = shell; oke 桶 = tub). As the world of elegant noble pastimes flourished, *kai-oke* inevitably evolved into gorgeous lacquer furnishings. In marriage ceremonies between samurai and noble families, *kai-oke* containing decorated clam shells came to be treated as a symbol of familial alliance through marriage. Of the vast number of wedding furnishings, they were the most important and were carried on palanquins at the head of the extensive wedding procession to the house of the bride. This wedding custom reached its peak as the *daimyo* (feudal lords) were competing for financial power during the seventeenth century, after which it was adopted by the private sector and became a custom among upper-class townspeople, albeit on a smaller scale. As samurai society approached its end around 1868, the custom died out. Thus, this is the first time in well over a century that a complete *kai-oke* set with shells has been produced.





Kai-awase is both the name for the shell-matching game and for the painted clam shells used in the game. It was first played from around the ninth century, but it was from the sixteenth century that the historical significance of *kai-awase* sets and an awareness of them as a symbol of samurai families' status was recognised. The defining feature of the game was the pairing of bivalve shells: a pair of shells would only match if they were each other's original partner, a concept thought to symbolise monogamous relationships. To explain the elegant game briefly, it involves pairing matching clam-shell halves from a large array placed in front of players, the winner being the person who has the most pairs. Initially the game was played by pairing the two halves of undecorated shells; later, many other elements came to be included, such as the players singing songs to each other, which led to lyrics being painted on the shells. This version of the game was favoured by court nobles and flourished for a considerably long time. Players relied on the markings on the outside surface of the clam shells to find matching pairs. To increase the difficulty of the game, white shells with as few markings as possible were often used. Over the years, to make clear that each pair of shells was a set, paired pictures were painted on the insides, making the shells even more attractive and endearing. It is believed that this form of the game was established around the sixteenth century and became fashionable during the seventeenth century. Clams were used for *kai-awase* because they were white, large and robust, and because of their fulsome, appealing shape and pleasant feel. It seems that by the seventeenth century, however, the popularity of the *kai-awase* game led to large clams of the native species becoming extinct. Beautiful *kai-awase* sets attracted interest from Europe as well, and from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, royal and aristocratic families competed to add pieces to their collections.

Kai-awase production

The clam shells were prepared by having their inside and outside surfaces thoroughly washed and polished, a difficult process that required five people to complete. Once each shell was polished, gold leaf with a purity of 95.79 per cent was adhered to its inside surface. Some examples from the past are layered with fine paper into which gold leaf has been pressed, or are painted with gold paint. In this case, lacquer was thinly applied to the inner surface of the shells prior to adhesion of the gold leaf in order to bring out the gloss and lustre of the gilt. This process was undertaken by two young female lacquer artisans who imparted an excellent finish to the gold leafing of the 720 shells they completed.

Many historical *kai-awase* shells feature idealised scenes from aristocratic life and historical literature, while others feature scenery, birds, luxurious lifestyle items and so on. For this set, it was decided to use flower motifs, in part influenced by the superb floral *kai-awase* shells that remain in the Reizei family of Kyoto, a house with a traditional poetry lineage dating back more than 700 years. It was also thought that by featuring well-known flora, the significance and value of reviving *kai-awase* would be more impactful.

At the planning stages, the shell painters had yet to be found, but production on the *kai-oke* commenced regardless. There is no point making a *kai-oke* without the painted shells that accompany them, so thankfully we were able to find three emerging *Nihonga* artists from Kyoto who understood and supported the project's purpose. Literally meaning 'Japanese picture', *Nihonga* refers to the traditional style of Japanese painting with black ink and ground pigment bound with gum arabic or animal glue. Their abilities were much anticipated, but it was not as simple as conventional *Nihonga* painting. There were many technical challenges; in particular, the painters had great difficulty controlling their brushes on the uneven concave surface of the shell and on the layer of gold leaf.

Once painting commenced it became clear the volume of work required to design the flower motifs could not be handled by three artists, so twenty-five other production members, mainly lacquer artists, were hastily brought on board. This made a total of twenty-eight people working on the flower designs using actual specimens, botanical illustrations or photographs as references.

Making the *Kai-oke* shell boxes

Production of the two *kai-oke* was informed by another pair of *kai-oke* in the Pauline Gandel collection of Japanese lacquer that are thought to date from the eighteenth century. Formerly owned by the Mori family, a great *daimyo* family in western Japan, they are in good condition and have a dignified appearance. In June 2013, with Pauline's cooperation, this historical *kai-oke* set was transported from Melbourne to Wajima, where those producing the new *kai-oke* could view them, perform detailed investigations and make notes before starting the project. It was envisioned that the *maki-e* design decorating the new *kai-oke* should have magnificent chrysanthemums depicted in *taka-maki-e* rising up from the base and blooming in clusters throughout the central panels of the *kai-oke* and on top of the lids. Chrysanthemums have long been a traditional motif in Japanese lacquer-work, and the aim was to use precise *taka-maki-e* to revitalise the Japanese sensibility with which they have come to be associated over the years.

Even for the veteran woodcarver in charge of the process, the construction of the *kai-oke* presented many challenges. The sensitive touch required to create such carefully crafted details on the lid, as with every aspect of the project, shows the precision and skill with which craftspeople in times past were equipped.

Work on the *kai-oke*, from creating the bare wooden structure up to the final *maki-e* decoration, was a sober process. The reason excellent lacquer products produced from a wooden base have been passed down over centuries with little sign of deterioration is due to such precise techniques applied across the production process. Producing this contemporary *kai-oke* strongly influenced the nine people working on this component of the project and increased their technical knowledge, particularly those responsible for crafting the wooden structures of the *kai-oke*.

Australia and Japan

Japanese crafts were first introduced to Australia more than 140 years ago in 1875 at the Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition in Melbourne, and it is fortuitous that this magnificent lacquer-work – an entirely new *kai-oke* and *kai-awase* set – is being unveiled in the same city. It is impossible not to feel a deep connection to the fact it was completed with support from Australia. This unprecedented work, of which there is no example even in Japan, was created by a group that included many young creators. It is not easy for them to earn a living from their skills, and yet, lacquer's mysterious beauty continues to draw aspiring young people. The tradition and workmanship required to create *maki-e*, for which the world once pursued Japan in olden times, is not lost. This *kai-awase* game is proof that we must continue to strive to bring Japanese crafts to life.

PROFESSOR YAMAZAKI TATSUFUMI IS AN ACADEMIC SPECIALIST AND AUTHORITY ON JAPANESE LACQUER. HE IS CURRENTLY A PART-TIME LECTURER AND EMERITUS PROFESSOR AT KANAZAWA GAKUIN UNIVERSITY IN KANAZAWA, ISHIKAWA, JAPAN.

THIS IS AN EXTRACT FROM THE ESSAY 'A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY: REVIVING THE LOST ART OF *KAI-AWASE* AND *KAI-OKE* PRODUCTION' FEATURED IN *GOLDEN SHELLS AND THE ELEGANT GAMES OF JAPAN*, PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA IN 2021 AND AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE AT NGV DESIGN STORE ONLINE AT NGV.MELBOURNE/STORE. THE NGV WARMLY THANKS EXHIBITION PATRON DR PAULINE GANDEL AC. *GOLDEN SHELLS AND THE GENTLE MASTERY OF JAPANESE LACQUER* IS ON DISPLAY SOON IN THE PAULINE GANDEL GALLERY OF JAPANESE ART AT NGV INTERNATIONAL. VISIT NGV.MELBOURNE FOR DETAILS.

(pp. 34–5) **Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo** *Kai-awase shells (Kai-awase no kai)* 2015 (detail) Pauline Gandel Collection of Japanese Lacquer
(p. 36) **Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo** *Chrysanthemum kai-oke shell boxes (Kiku maki-e kai-oke)* 2015 Pauline Gandel Collection of Japanese Lacquer
(p. 37) **Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo** *Kai-awase shells (detail) (Kai-awase no kai) Hibiscus mutabilis (rose of Sharon or cotton rose)* 2015 Pauline Gandel Collection of Japanese Lacquer
(right) NGV Photographer Nicholas Umek preparing the 720 *kai-awase* shells from the Pauline Gandel Collection of Japanese Lacquer for photographic documentation at NGV International.



SHARING AND SUPPORTING TRADITIONAL JAPANESE ART
By Dr Pauline Gandel AC

My 'quiet' determination with the *kai-awase* project presented in this exhibition was to enable the re-creation of my own set of *kai-oke* in the imperial style of the best of Edo-period *maki-e*, Japan's most revered and sumptuous lacquer decoration technique. Accompanying it would be 360 pairs of individually handpainted shells featuring Australian and Japanese flowers, blending the beauty of both nations. I undertook this effort with my husband and confidant John Gandel AC and continue to be blessed with his unwavering support. After seven trips to encourage and oversee the project during its production we have reached a stage where we are finally able to share it.

All of this was made possible with the assistance of project director, Kaneko Noriaki, and his protege, the master lacquer artist Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo, assisted by academic specialist Professor Yamazaki Tatsufumi. The project is the culmination of over two years of dedicated work by a large group of young professionals: metalwork artists, *maki-e* artists, *chinkin* lacquer artists, gold-leaf artists, painters, woodwork artists and project managers – all of whom contributed diligently to my vision, guided by the discerning eyes of all contributors. Without doubt, this project would not have been possible without the extraordinary workmanship and sophistication demonstrated by all participants, including an aspiring young Australian artist who was supported with a grant to study the art of lacquer in Japan.

I hope this exhibition will earn its place as a canonical moment in the Australia–Japan alliance and be of contextual significance in supporting traditional Japanese practices.

BEHIND THE SCENES: CAPTURING THE GANDEL COLLECTION
By Nicholas Umek, NGV Photographer

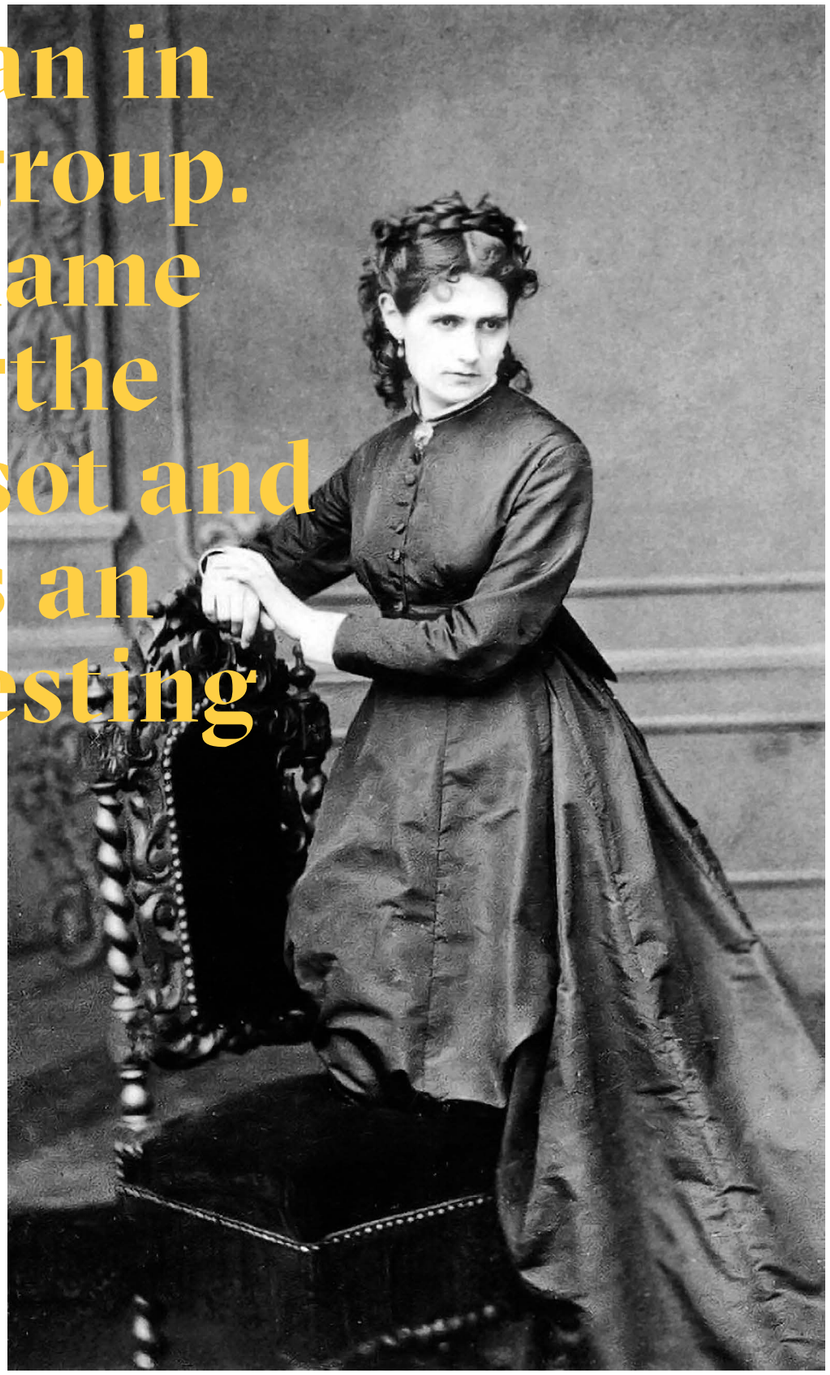
The golden shells and other historical Japanese works, which the Gandel family have kindly loaned to the NGV for this exhibition, contain some exquisite examples of Japanese design, craftsmanship and detailing. The contemporary 'shell matching' game that forms the centre of the exhibition is a new, 720-piece set of shells that was commisioned by Pauline Gandel AC. Included with this new work was a range of material that show the research, development and thinking behind the creation of the game – including tests, samples, sketches and documentation of the various design elements of the shells and their boxes.

Together with Predrag Cancar, NGV Senior Photographer, I constructed a complex studio set-up for the photographic documentation of each of the 720 shells. Our goal was to capture in macro detail the front and back of each pair of shells with our 400-megapixel camera. However, before we even took the first photograph, we spent many days making fine calibrations to ensure the maximum detail possible was retained in the final image and the colour extremely accurate to the original works. Careful use of archival materials ensured the safety of the artworks and many useful tools of photography – templates, guides, place markers, scrims (light modifiers), reflectors, bounce boards and diffusion materials – completed the final photographic setup.

I'm in awe of the innovative directions that leading Japanese craftspeople take their materials and forms with using design and techniques. It was a true honour – indeed a great meditation of sorts – as I also endeavoured to best represent the capabilities and tools of my own trade in the comprehensive photographic documentation of each of the works in the exhibition.

LIFE & TIMES

‘There is a woman in this group. Her name is Berthe Morisot and she is an interesting case.’



With the extraordinary generosity of the community through the 2021 Annual Appeal, the first work by a female French Impressionist artist will join the NGV Collection: *La Broderie*, 1889, by Berthe Morisot. We warmly thank supporters who made leadership gifts to make this possible, including Barry Janes and Paul Cross, Paula Fox AO and Fox Family Foundation, Norman Bloom and Pauline Bloom, Myriam Boisbouvier-Wylie and John Wylie AM, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family, Ken Harrison AM and Jill Harrison OAM, John and Rose Downer Foundation, Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax and donors to the 2021 NGV Foundation Annual Dinner and 2021 NGV Annual Appeal. In celebration of this important painting, we take a closer look at Berthe Morisot, the artist who is now heralded as defining the Impressionist style with her unique and innovative approach, but whose work elicited mixed reviews from contemporary critics of her time.

BY DR TED GOTT

The art critic for the French daily newspaper *Le Figaro*, in 1876 published Albert Wolff, published an angry attack on the second group Impressionist exhibition, held in the Durand-Ruel Gallery in the rue Le Peletier, where the Paris Opera House had formerly stood prior to its destruction by fire in October 1873. Wolff wrote:

> The rue Le Peletier is an unlucky place. After the Opera House fire, now there is a new disaster in the same neighbourhood. Durand-Ruel has just opened an exhibition of what is said to be painting. The innocent passer-by, attracted by the flags outside, enters, and his fearful eyes are met with a cruel spectacle. Five or six lunatics, including a woman, a group of unfortunate people suffering from the madness of ambition, are showing their paintings here. There are people who giggle at these things. As for me, my heart is tight. These so-called artists call themselves uncompromising, they call themselves the Impressionists. They simply take up canvases, paints and brushes, throw a few bits of colour around randomly, and then sign their works as though they are finished! ... There is also a woman in this group, as in all infamous gangs, by the way. Her name is Berthe Morisot, and she is an interesting case. In her work, feminine grace is maintained in the midst of the overflows of a delirious mind.[1]

Wolff’s reference here to just ‘five or six lunatics’ out of the nineteen artists who showed their work in 1876, in what was called simply an ‘Exhibition of Painting’, is a reminder that initially many more artists were associated with the Impressionist group than we think of today. Their inclusion helped defray the costs of staging the early group Impressionist exhibitions, but the more conservative nature of their art is indicated by Wolff’s signalling Camille Pissarro, Edgar Degas, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Berthe Morisot as that year’s artists whose work seemed to indicate diminished mental capacity.

Morisot, indeed, could be said to have been let off lightly, in this vicious review where Wolff proclaimed that trying to persuade Pissarro that trees were not violet-coloured nor the sky a buttery yellow was as hopeless as attempting to convince a deluded man who thought he was the Pope that he lived in Paris and not the Vatican. Or attempting ‘to explain to Mr. Renoir that a woman’s torso is not a mass of decomposing flesh with purplish green spots which denote the state of complete putrefaction in a corpse!’[2]

Wolff was not the only critic to express disparaging views about Berthe Morisot’s work in this year. Declaring the 1876 exhibition to be full of ‘unhealthy ravings’, *Le Soleil*’s critic Émile Porcheron wrote dismissively: ‘Mlle Morisot has had the audacity to send drawings that do not exist, they are so impossible. Let’s move on’. While in *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité*, writer Alfred de Lostalot delivered a backhanded compliment, expressing a critical trope about Morisot’s supposed inability or unwillingness to finish her paintings that was to persist in reviews of her work for years to come: ‘it is most regrettable when one considers the delicacy of her colouring and the happy boldness with which her brush plays with light, to see that this artist is so quickly satisfied with her work that she abandons it while it is still barely a sketch’.[3]

Remarkably, Berthe Morisot’s reaction to this sort of negative criticism is known, from a letter penned to one of her aunts in 1876:

> If you read any Paris newspapers, among others the *Figaro*, which is so popular with the respectable public, you must know that I am one of a group of artists who are holding a show of their own, and you must also have seen how little favour this exhibition enjoys in the eyes of the gentlemen of this press. On the other hand, we have been praised in the radical papers, but these you do not read. Anyway, we are being discussed, and we are so proud of it that we are all very happy. [4]



Morisot's works stood out in 1876 as the only contributions by a woman artist amid the work of eighteen male colleagues. Her position was even more striking in the new Impressionist movement's first group exhibition, held in 1874, when she was the sole woman exhibiting alongside twenty-nine men. It was not until the fourth group Impressionist exhibition in 1879 that the two other women associated with the movement, Mary Cassatt and Marie Braquemond, showed their work with the group for the first time. This was the only one of the eight group Impressionist shows held in Paris between 1874 and 1886 in which Morisot herself did not participate, due to the recent birth of her daughter Julie – the subject, aged eleven, of the painting *La Broderie*, 1889.

Berthe Morisot was born in Paris in 1841, into a wealthy upper middle-class household. Her father, Tiburce, was a high-ranking bureaucrat, and so Berthe's life was from the outset to be one of wealth and privilege – but also, due to her class and gender, one bounded by strict social constraints. From their early childhoods, both Berthe and her sister Edma aspired to become artists, and their parents were supportive of this – indeed, in their eyes, an artistic education for their daughters would increase their prospects of marriage in later years. The Morisot family lived in Passy, a rich enclave in the 16th arrondissement of Paris, a district where Berthe was to live for her whole life, even after her marriage. Berthe grew up here in a household tended to by domestic servants and hired kitchen staff. Her primary education, supervised by her mother Cornélie, consisted of preparation to run the business and social aspects of a bourgeois household when she became a mistress of one in her own right after marriage.

In the late 1850s, however, Berthe and her sister Edma began receiving private art classes from a respected if conservative painter, Joseph Guichard, who lived in the same street as the Morisot family. This close connection may have influenced the decision, from 1858, to allow Guichard to take the Morisot sisters to the Louvre Museum, where his own painting and drawing classes were supplemented by studying and eventually copying directly after the great works of the Old Masters – an exceptional freedom, really, for girls of their class and age at this time.

In 1860 Berthe told her mother that she wanted to also learn how to paint out of doors before nature, and Guichard recommended a new teacher for this – the respected landscape painter Camille Corot. With Corot as both teacher and chaperone, Berthe and Edma were now able to travel outside Paris, to master the art of painting *en plein air et sur le motif* (out of doors and directly in front of the subject). Together they travelled to Pontoise, a rural town thirty kilometres north-west of Paris, to paint on the banks of the Oise river. Corot, himself, became a regular attendee at the Tuesday evening soirées that Mme Morisot held, to which she invited writers, musicians, artists and other cultured acquaintances.

Corot was an artist whose early experiments with painting out of doors were revered by the young men who would soon form into the Impressionist group. Studying with him gave Berthe considerable credibility when she began to meet these

‘If you read any Paris newspapers ... you must know that I am one of a group of artists who are holding a show of their own, and you must also have seen how little favour this exhibition enjoys in the eyes of the gentlemen of this press ... Anyway, we are being discussed, and we are so proud of it that we are all very happy.’

——— BERTHE MORISOT, 1876

artists. This began in 1859 when, while copying art at the Louvre, Berthe was introduced to the printmaker Félix Bracquemond, who in turn introduced her to the flower painter Henri Fantin-Latour. Fantin-Latour himself was close friends with a progressive painter who was soon to become a household name in Paris – Édouard Manet. And one of Manet’s friends was Edgar Degas.

The exact circumstances in which Berthe met her future Impressionist colleagues Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro and Paul Cézanne are not known. It seems most likely, though, that it was Edgar Degas who first introduced her to them. After 1872, her work exuded a new confidence, and she began to paint in a much more experimental and open manner. Like Berthe herself, her new Impressionist friends had all had works submitted to the Salon rejected by that exhibition’s conservative jury. And this lay behind the decision taken in 1874 by the group to exhibit their work independently of the Salon. In April 1874 they did just that, opening their own exhibition titled ‘First Exhibition of the Private Company of Artists’. At 35 boulevard des Capucines in Paris, in premises loaned to them by the photographer Nadar, they now displayed works that revealed an innovative approach to painting that privileged ‘impressions’ over ‘finished’ artworks that were more commonly accepted and produced in traditional studio settings. Berthe Morisot contributed her remarkable painting *The Cradle,* 1872, (Musée d’Orsay, Paris), to this groundbreaking exhibition.

The exhibition was a moderate success, but divided the art critics who wrote for the dozens of daily newspapers that were published in Paris at this time. One hostile critic, Émile Cardon, felt that the works displayed by Berthe and her colleagues were ‘quite simply the negation of the most elemental rules of drawing and painting. The scribblings of a child have a naiveté and sincerity that make you smile; the debaucheries of this school are nauseating and revolting’.[5]

Even more severe criticism came from a source closer to home, however. Outraged to see his former pupil exhibiting with these radical young artists, Morisot’s former tutor Joseph Guichard penned an extraordinary letter to her mother at this time that, in retrospect, prophesied eerily the insults that were to be publicly hurled by Albert Wolff two years later:

> I have seen the rooms at Nadar, and wish to tell you my frank opinion at once. When I entered, dear Madam, and saw your daughter’s works in this pernicious milieu, my heart sank. I said to myself: ‘One does not associate with madmen except at some peril’ ... To be sure, contemplating and conscientiously analysing these paintings, one finds here and there some excellent things, but all of these people are more or less touched in the head. If Mlle Berthe must do something violent, she should, rather than burn everything she has done so far, pour some petrol on these new tendencies ... she must absolutely break with this new school, this so-called school of the future. [6]

1874 was a watershed year for the thirty-three-year-old Berthe Morisot in another manner as well – for she had finally fallen in love, with Édouard Manet’s younger brother Eugène, who was a minor artist and novelist in his own right, but who was wealthy enough never to have to really work for a living. In addition to his wealth, Eugène Manet was a man who understood Berthe’s artistic aspirations and, most importantly considering the gender and social structures of the era, was not threatened by them. Unlike her male colleagues Monet, Pissarro and Renoir, Morisot’s livelihood did not depend on the sale of her paintings – and as a result, she was able to produce highly experimental works. As her biographer Anne Higonnet has put it: ‘While Morisot did not need to earn money, she needed to know her pictures were worth money’.[7] With Eugène’s support, Berthe continued to contribute works to subsequent group Impressionist exhibitions, and she was increasingly recognised as one of the movement’s most innovative practitioners.

While she did receive positive reviews of her work (in 1877, for example, the critic Émile Bergerat wrote that ‘the best painter of all, in the sense of having an innate gift of colour, is a woman, Mlle Berthe Morisot’),[8] when scanning the totality of contemporary reviews of the Impressionist exhibitions that are known today, it must be said that negative criticism of Morisot’s work far outnumbered any words of praise she received in the 1870s and 1880s.[9] While her reaction to this is largely unrecorded, letters survive that bring to life the mixed criticism she received on the occasion of the seventh group Impressionist exhibition in 1882.

In the winter of 1881–82, Berthe and her husband Eugène visited Italy for an extended trip that was cut short, however, when their toddler daughter Julie became seriously ill with bronchitis. They retreated to Nice, where Berthe remained while her husband organised the framing and display of the works she exhibited in the 1882 exhibition (called ‘The Exhibition of Independent Artists’), which opened on 1 March 1882 in rented premises in the rue Saint-Honoré. The early reviews of the show gave Morisot scant attention, a problem compounded by the fact that due to various delays when the exhibition opened only one of her works was on display, placed on an easel in the foyer. This was unfortunate, as she missed out on a favourable review from one of the critics most sympathetic to the Impressionist’s aims and principles, Ernest Chesneau, who lamented in the revue *Paris-Journal* that ‘I’m disappointed that Mme Berthe Morisot has limited her contribution to a single, very elegant and very delicate figure of a dreamy woman’.[10] Eugène initially wrote from Paris to tell his wife ‘don’t be upset because the newspapers do not mention you’[11], although eventually more of her works were framed and placed within the exhibition. In Nice, she was resigned, writing to Eugène: ‘Am I not a failure at the exhibition? I have a feeling that I am, but I have become very philosophical. That sort of thing no longer depresses me as it had formerly’.[12]

Eventually around a dozen of Morisot’s works were shown in 1882, arousing a by now long familiar hostility with certain art critics. Paul du Charry thundered that: ‘We will not speak of Mrs. Berthe Morisot, who seems to have made it her mission to lose everything she once possessed. We recall both exquisite profiles and charming silhouettes by her, which today have completely disappeared’. After noting that certain works within the exhibition had ‘caused a horrified gentleman to write on the banister [of the stairwell leading to the show], in an angry and furious hand, only these words: I protest!’, he closed his review with this snide serve: ‘While not quite frothing at the mouth like that poor guy, we say frankly to Mme. Morisot that, when one has her common sense and her talent, it’s really not done to make fun of the public in this way’.[13]

Acknowledging that ‘Mlle Berthe Morisot always has an exquisitely finessed palette’, Armand Silvestre complained in the progressive journal *La Vie moderne* that ‘this charming artist’s drawing has become far too imaginary. Her canvases are nothing more than delicious stews of colour’.[14] Two other critics attacked Morisot’s painting *A la campagne* (In the countryside), 1881 (private collection), a portrait of a model named Marie seated on a porch before a background of brightly coloured leaves and flowers. Jean de Nivelle declared that ‘she doubtless repented for having painted a recognisable woman, by framing her against some indescribable greenish colour where a few splashes pretend to represent flowers’[15]; and Armand Sallanches called it an image of a ‘ young girl who is terribly bored by the beauty of nature!’[16] Surprisingly, Morisot was quite sanguine about this, telling Eugène that: ‘I received the newspapers last night and read them with great interest ... I can see from here that my poor big *Marie* is a caricature. I don’t think she has been badly reviewed at all’. Eugène replied with a more positive newspaper clipping, which must have been a pleasant surprise: ‘I am sending you an article by [Philippe] Burty who has not yet seen all of your exhibits’.[17] In his article in *La République française*, the prominent critic Philippe Burty had praised her ability to paint swiftly in the new Impressionist manner: ‘I believe that Mme Berthe Morisot could paint an entire exhibition worth of works even if she decided to do so only the night before its opening. Her paintings and her pastels have lost nothing of their feminine charms. She is, in the delicate sense of the word, the Impressionist par excellence’.[18]

While Morisot’s reaction to this praise from Burty is not known, another letter from Nice to her husband Eugène does give an amusing insight into her disdain for the aggressive negativity of *Le Figaro*’s art critic Albert Wolff. In what she called ‘Wolff’s stupid article’, published on 2 March 1882 a day after the opening of the seventh group Impressionist exhibition (and therefore not mentioning her own work, which was mostly yet to be installed), Wolff castigated the ‘many ridiculous paintings’ on display, thundering that: ‘When you have seen one Impressionist painting, you’ve seen them all. These works are signed with different names, but they seem to come from the same factory ... They are the same failed works which make the public laugh and which sadden art critics’.[19] Morisot’s response to this was quite hilarious, actually. As she told Eugène:

> I usually pass on the *Figaro* to Mlle Fulmann and to Mme Labarre. I was going to give them this issue as I had given them the others, and I was amused in advance by imagining the questions they would ask me about the Independents, but [the nurse] Pasie spilled a whole inkpot over it and I had to throw it into the fire. Wolff’s prose thus got only what it deserved. Is it possible to have less artistic sense than this creature, and to be more unbearably arrogant?[20]

Berthe Morisot thus stands out as a woman who was as resilient in the face of opposition from the myriad conservative critics of her day, as she was adventurous and radically experimental as an artist.

DR TED GOTT IS NGV SENIOR CURATOR, INTERNATIONAL ART. WE WARMLY THANK ALL SUPPORTERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TOWARDS THIS ACQUISITION INCLUDING BARRY JANES AND PAUL CROSS, PAULA FOX AO AND FOX FAMILY FOUNDATION, NORMAN BLOOM AND PAULINE BLOOM, MYRIAM BOISBOUVIER-WYLIE AND JOHN WYLIE AM KRYSTYNA CAMPBELL-PRETTY AM AND FAMILY, KEN HARRISON AM AND JILL HARRISON OAM, JOHN AND ROSE DOWNER FOUNDATION, TIM FAIRFAX AC AND GINA FAIRFAX, AS WELL AS DONORS TO THE 2021 NGV FOUNDATION ANNUAL DINNER, AND DONORS TO THE 2021 NGV ANNUAL APPEAL.

(p. 40) Berthe Morisot. Photo: IanDagnall Computing / Alamy Stock Photo

(pp. 42–3) **Berthe Morisot** La Broderie 1889 Proposed acquisition with funds donated by Barry Janes and Paul Cross, Paula Fox AO and Fox Family Foundation, Norman Bloom and Pauline Bloom, Myriam Boisbouvier-Wylie and John Wylie AM, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family, Ken Harrison AM and Jill Harrison OAM, John and Rose Downer Foundation, Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax and donors to the 2021 NGV Foundation Annual Dinner and 2021 NGV Annual Appeal, 2021

DEEP READ

DESIGNING THE UNKNOWN

Symbols and objects of death, remembrance and mourning in design and making

We might not think of designers as being concerned with existential subjects such as mortality, but if we take a closer look at symbols and objects of death, remembrance and mourning throughout history, a different story emerges. Looking at design works in the NGV Collection as well as common symbols, from the Jolly Roger to the 'spiky blob' of COVID-19, Penny Craswell explores how designers confront the big questions of life and death, and how they can influence our perceptions and attitudes towards the unknown.

BY PENNY CRASWELL

'Death is not the opposite of life, but a part of it.'

—— HARUKI MURAKAMI

I was about ten years old when I saw my first death mask. Ned Kelly's face seemed almost serene – eyes closed, head smooth, propped up in a glass display case at the Old Melbourne Gaol. The memory of that moment has stayed with me all these years – standing there I had a powerful sense of fascination mixed with fear. This was not some horror movie or bogeyman – this was a real man, a real corpse. And his life was really taken, here, at these gallows.

Death has long held fascination for us – our own deaths may present something to fear, something to ponder, something to prepare for. Other people's deaths also can be profoundly affecting – mourning is a vital part of the human experience and we memorialise loved ones in various ways. Death masks are interesting because they make something ephemeral – a living face – concrete and eternal, relatively speaking. Dating back to ancient Egypt, the death mask has been used to record the faces of rulers and famous figures in history, from Tutankhamun to Dante, Beethoven to Napoleon. They are not made for just anybody: someone has to be famous – or infamous – to have a death mask.

Death masks are one of a number of different artefacts and objects that are associated with mortality. The skull is another common symbol. Plenty of other objects are also traditionally associated with death, including coffins, shrouds, gravestones and plaques, urns, mourning jewellery and clothes. In recent decades, many of these objects have been reworked by contemporary designers, while other designers confront the subject through works that express grief or symbolise remembrance.

One of the most interesting contemporary design explorations is *Vespers*, 2016, a series of death masks designed and created by Israeli-American designer Neri Oxman and her team the Mediated Matter Group at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The masks, which were displayed in the inaugural NGV Triennial exhibition of contemporary art and design in 2017-18, are a contemporary reinterpretation of the ancient death mask, made by 3D-printing using spatial mapping algorithms. There are three series, *Vespers I*, *II* and *III*, 2016, each with five masks. The first series, *Vespers I*, is inspired by ancient death masks that

often were made with precious stones and minerals. Five colours were selected, each corresponding to a colour found in an ancient death mask, then an algorithm was used to select colours and shapes to additively build the masks. *Vespers II* is a development of the first series, a stepping stone from the ancient past to the future of technology.

Vespers III takes the idea of the death mask one step further – these have been brought to life through the addition of living microorganisms which can be seen coursing through the nearly colourless shell. Oxman and her team synthetically engineered a variety of different microorganisms, which were placed inside the mask in order to produce specific pigments and/or chemical substances, such as vitamins, antibodies or antimicrobial drugs. 'Devoid of cultural expressions and initially nearly colourless, these masks are paradoxically the most "alive" of the three series', said the MIT team. 'They literally "re-engineer" life by guiding living microorganisms through minuscule spatial features within the artefacts of the dead.'[1] In a contemporary world where making death masks is a much less common practice, it is interesting to see how Oxman and her team have redesigned these objects, creating a set of tools and technologies to build programmable matter, and, at the same time, given the concept of the death mask a new life.

A trip to Melbourne,

March 2018. We'd stopped for an eclair at an Italian pasticceria on the way to the National Gallery of Victoria, and arrived in the late morning to see the inaugural NGV Triennial. I had already seen many of the works on Instagram and *Mass*, 2016–17, by Ron Mueck, an installation of 100 oversized human skulls piled high in the gallery, was one of the things I was most eager to see in real life. I remember the excitement of glimpsing the skulls through the doorway from the gallery adjacent and then the unreality of them as I stood close – so white, so big, so perfect. I wanted to reach out and touch them but didn't. A child was playing near one of the skulls and I worried that she would touch them: she didn't. I tried to photograph them but someone was in the way, ruining my composition. Each visitor politely jostled for the best spot to take a photograph.

Looking back I realise that the sense of disconnectedness, that Mueck's skulls didn't feel real, was almost like experiencing the sublime. In my honours thesis I had written about the sublime as theorised by philosophers Edmund Burke, Immanuel Kant and Jean-François Lyotard, but had rarely experienced it firsthand. I didn't feel terror or delight – two emotions described by Burke as part of the sublime experience. Instead I had the sense that these jawless monstrosities were so large, so numerous and so pristine that they were beyond my comprehension. It felt unreal, like they couldn't really exist in this space, as the fully three-dimensional objects that I knew them to be. Maybe there is just something about a skull. Mueck said of the work:

> The sight of a skull grabs us at an unconscious level. Even as children we know what it is, what it means. It attracts and repels simultaneously. In archaeology, forensics or investigative journalism, the image of a group of skulls begins to suggest a story. Often an unsettling one.[2]

The skull has featured throughout art history, most often as a sign of death or danger. Skulls and skeletons were commonly used in Japanese art, as well as being made as *netsuke* (decorative clothes toggles) or *okimono* (ornaments) from the seventeenth century. The skull and bones were often included in images of Christ on the cross from the Middle Ages through to the Renaissance, supposedly because Adam's bones were laid to rest below the cross. Later, the skull became a common *memento mori* (meaning 'remember you will die'), featuring in portraits and still-life paintings alongside hourglasses, clocks and guttering candles that signify that our time is numbered. In Albrecht Dürer's exquisitely detailed engraving in the NGV Collection *St Jerome in his Study*, 1514, the skull and the hourglass symbolise the scholar's mortality, and are depicted among various objects, including cushions, slippers and books, while a lion and a dog slumber peacefully at his feet.

While death is a common subject for artists, designers are not traditionally associated with such existentially profound subjects. Design's history has generally been much more pragmatic. In the post–Second World War era, design was associated with the 'machine age' – a sign of modernism and progress as well as a signifier of a certain social status. Towards the end of the twentieth century, as prices went up for 'designer' goods, it became more often associated with luxury – design was for the elite as well as the upwardly-mobile middle classes. Throughout, design was seen as a commodity, something to be acquired. Of course, all of this is a fiction – design is and always has been much more than that. Design serves many functions and one of these is communication. And in the world of communication design, the skull has a very clear meaning – death.

The image of the skull and crossbones is commonly used on poison bottles to warn us of danger. This dates back to the 1800s, when it became law to label household products that were poisonous.[3] And, of course, the skull's use as a symbol dates back much further. In her book *Hello World*, Alice Rawsthorn points out that the Jolly Roger, the skull-and-crossbones flag used by pirates to instil fear, is 'a textbook example of modern communications design ... a precursor of today's corporate logos'.[4] Even though no one knows exactly why it's called the Jolly Roger, the first recorded sighting of the pirate flag was in 1700 by John Cranby of the British Navy ship HMS *Poole*. After that, its use spread rapidly, with the skull and crossbones sometimes accompanied by an hourglass or daggers.

The 'spiky blob' of COVID-19 is another powerful communication tool brought to us by design. Its purpose is to communicate the dangerous and viral nature of this disease. The image was designed by Alissa Eckert and Dan Higgins, and is part of a sub-genre of design called medical illustration that is used in teaching, research and scientific communications. Medical illustrators





(p. 49) **Neri Oxman (designer) Mediated Matter Group, Cambridge, Massachusetts (designer) Stratasys LTD, Eden Prairie, Minnesota (manufacturer)** *Mask 2, Series 3* 2016 *Vespers, Series 3* from *The New Ancient* collection. Purchased with funds donated by an anonymous donor, 2018

(above) **Susan Cohn** *Last the blast* 2006 (detail) Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2007

(right) **Ron Mueck** *Mass* 2016–17 Felton Bequest, 2018

need to not only be designers, often specialising in graphics and/or 3D visualisation, but also to have a science education. Eckert was a painter and scientist, while Higgins had a background in graphic design, before they became medical illustrators at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

The pair designed the 'spiky blob' of COVID-19 together in January 2020, before the public had any knowledge of it. The image is based on how the virus actually looks – the shape of the proteins for example – but other aesthetic decisions, such as the colours, were made by the designers. Eckert said: 'We really focused on the big red S proteins, the ones that make the coronavirus so contagious by attaching it to human cells'. The designers also had to communicate the public health emergency that was unfolding – it had to be serious but bold, something really eye-catching. Eckert is clear that the purpose of the illustration was not to create fear, but to help the public to visualise the disease and act accordingly. Eckert says 'It gave a face to the unknown. That's how I think of it, because it gave people something substantial that they could hold on to and comprehend.'[5]

It is not unusual for the images associated with a disease as dangerous as COVID-19 to become infused with some of the fear of death associated with the illness. Just look at the plague beak – a piece of medical equipment for those doctors treating the plague from the late Middle Ages to the seventeenth century. Plague doctors wore full-length gowns with hoods, gloves and boots, finished off with a face mask in the shape of a long bird's beak that was filled with a 'posie' – herbs traditionally used to ward off bad miasmas in the air, believed at the time to carry the disease. In the 2020s, the plague beak has been replaced with personal protective equipment (PPE) – the full-length suit, hood and mask worn by doctors and nurses treating COVID-19 patients. While it's not as macabre as the plague beak, there is some fear associated with the suits, especially because they cover the face. Interestingly, the fear of a face hidden by a mask contrasts with the fear associated



with the death mask, whose job is to capture a likeness – while one conceals, the other reveals. Some doctors and nurses have pinned photographs of themselves to their chest so that they bring some humanity to the interaction.

Sitting here in my home office, writing this during Sydney's longest and most severe lockdown in winter 2021, I'm reflecting on how so much has changed in the world in the past one and a half years. Yes, there was disconnection, loneliness, illness and death before the pandemic, but now the negative has multiplied – you only have to watch the news to see it. Or, on second thoughts, turn the news off.

As well as creating

works that explore the concept of death, designers can have a hand in redesigning the objects directly linked to death. There's the urn for keeping ashes, the coffin, the gravestone. Recent redesigns of these objects include *End Cycle*, a gravestone and urn designed by Sydney design studio Gibson Karlo in collaboration with Veena Sahajwalla from the UNSW Centre for Sustainable Materials Research and Technology (SMaRT@UNSW). The gravestone and urn are remarkable, not for their appearance, but for their material design – they are made from recycled materials, including waste fabric. The designers speculate that the deceased person's clothes could be used to create the gravestone and urn, thereby recycling waste materials and saving the use of primary materials in the creation of these objects. Another such project using recycled materials is the cardboard coffin designed by Australian company LifeArt and made from a specifically-engineered cardboard called Enviroboard, which is made from 97 per cent recycled materials and produces up to 60 per cent fewer carbon emissions than regular coffins made from MDF or particle board.[6]

Architects and landscape architects can also impact our perceptions of death through the architectural and landscape designs of crematoriums and cemeteries. A plan for a new cemetery called the Acacia Remembrance Sanctuary, proposed for a bushland site on the outskirts of Sydney by architects CHROFI and landscape architects McGregor Coxall, was created in response to the firms' belief that attitudes to death are changing. The design celebrates the natural environment and responds to an increasingly secular society, with the resting place of loved ones in unmarked graves locatable through GPS. An elevated walkway draws visitors through the bushland towards a walled garden, while at the heart of the site, a semi-enclosed pavilion provides a place for burial ceremonies.

As a way of processing

his own grief, US artist Fred Wilson created a magnificent chandelier, *To die upon a kiss*, 2011, around the time of his father's peaceful death. The work, which was exhibited at the NGV Triennial in 2020–21 and supported by Professor AGL Shaw AO Bequest, is part of the artist's decades-long work with black

‘Designers can also play an important role in communication design that warns of danger, in redesigning the objects surrounding mortality, and in memorialising the departed.’

——— PENNY CRASWELL

Murano glass, as well as an exploration of the history and presence of Africans in Venice and the Shakespeare play *Othello*. This elaborate chandelier, created in the Venetian tradition, features black at the base, which slowly transitions through to clear glass at the top, symbolising the body’s dissolution through death. Wilson said: ‘When looking at *To die upon a kiss* as a completed artwork, I saw my father’s life force in the blackness of the chandelier, draining down from the body as his spirit rose out’.[7]

Mourning jewellery has existed since ancient Rome, when skulls and skeletons, along with butterflies and Cupid-like figures with the torch of life extinguished, were worn as *memento mori*. By the mid seventeenth century, the *memento mori* and mourning jewellery had combined – rings in black enamel with initials, dates and a coat of arms were worn to symbolise the death of an individual.[8] From the eighteenth century, jewellery containing human hair was common, as seen in the 1782 *Mourning pendant* from England in the NGV Collection. Hair would be given in friendship between girls and between sweethearts and, after a person’s death, a goldsmith would then place the hair, often ornately curled and tied where the hair was cut, in a brooch, a ring or a pendant.[9] In Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff steals into the drawing room where Cathy’s body lies in her coffin, opens the locket around her neck and replaces her husband Edgar’s hair with his own. Later, the servant Ellen takes Edgar’s discarded hair from the ground, twists it with Heathcliff’s hair and replaces it in the locket around Cathy’s neck, symbolising the fact that Cathy loved Heathcliff as much, or more, than her own husband.

Contemporary jeweller Susan Cohn has also created a pendant about death and remembrance. *Last the blast*, 2006, was created in response to an interview she watched on TV with a couple who lost a daughter in the Bali bombings. Cohn was deeply affected by hearing that the family of the deceased did not have a body to bury and, in fact, did not have anything left of her. In response, the necklace pendant *Last the Blast* carries a message and is designed to survive a bomb blast. She says: ‘[I]t just bubbled up. What if I made something that could send a message back? What if it was a piece of jewellery that someone was wearing?’[10] Made of steel, ceramic and titanium, the pendant is bombproof, like the dog tags that soldiers wear to war to identify them. With this work, Cohn has not just created an object to commemorate a death, although it may do so. Instead, the work is designed to outlast death, acting as a messenger for loved ones left behind.

Little ten-year-old me who saw the death mask did not think about death often – and many of us don’t for the majority of our lives. More recently, major world events such as the pandemic have brought the subject much closer. Importantly, designers, like artists, have a role in asking the big questions, including those of life and death, and in making us consider our own and others’ deaths in new ways. Designers can also play an important role in communication design that warns of danger, in redesigning the objects surrounding mortality, and in memorialising the departed. Because design isn’t about progress and it isn’t about luxury – it’s about making life better, and that means making death better too.

SCAN TO LISTEN TO PENNY CRASWELL READ HER ESSAY USING THE PASSWORD **NGVSepOct**

PENNY CRASWELL IS A DESIGN WRITER, EDITOR AND CURATOR BASED IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA. HER FIRST BOOK *DESIGN LIVES HERE: AUSTRALIAN INTERIORS, FURNITURE AND LIGHTING* WAS PUBLISHED BY THAMES & HUDSON IN 2020.



Fred Wilson *To die upon a kiss* 2011 Professor AGL Shaw AO Bequest, 2020







Unravelling golden threads







A recent addition to the NGV Collection of historical textiles, with the extraordinary generosity of Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family, is a bedcover from England from c. 1710. Featuring a vast expanse of goldwork embroidery, the work offers a fascinating insight into the influences and creative practices of textile production at the time.

BY KATIE SOMERVILLE

While we do not know the specific details of the history of this extraordinarily detailed bedcover, it is understood that it was a gift from Queen Anne of Great Britain (1665–1714) to Frances, Lady Bathurst (1653–1727), whose husband was treasurer to the royal household at the time. The documented close relationship between Lady Bathurst and the queen, alongside her husband's position at court and the date of the bedcover supports the family's established belief that the work was gifted by Queen Anne.

Existing letters attest to a close relationship between Lady Bathurst, Queen Anne, and her sister, Queen Mary. That the bedcover was passed down from generation to generation within the family and is in excellent condition certainly supports its likely status as a cherished heirloom.

From close examination the bedcover reveals subtly incongruous elements (as described in Skye Firth's conservator insight overleaf) and may have started its life as a bed set, including separate bed curtains and valance, before being adapted to form a single bedcover with built-in bolster cover. The highly refined techniques used throughout the work encompass detailed quilting of the cotton and linen ground fabric, and a richly and skilfully embroidered surface in jewel-like silks and metallic threads.

The complexity of the design, quality of the work and the extensive and expert use of metal thread work suggests that it was professionally embroidered by more than one individual. Embroidery workshops existed at this time, fulfilling commissions for wealthy clients, royalty and the church. Embroiderers' organisations or guilds existed in Europe from as early as the Middle Ages. Workshops were commonly located in London and were usually run by men but employed both men and women. Their work was regulated to ensure the highest standard of work. The skill was so highly valued that individual embroiderers were often retained by a monarch or employed by a noble household to embellish an entire household's garments, furnishings and decorations.

Professional embroiders would sometimes work with artists or designers for specifically commissioned pieces, but designers usually remain unknown. Embroiderers may have also adapted or modified existing designs from pattern books. Patterns, styles and motifs tend to mirror the dominant aesthetics styles in favour at the time and appear across multiple art forms. Stylistically this work falls into a decorative category known as the 'Bizarre Phase' popular in continental Europe and England between about 1690 and 1720. Woven silk designs sat at the heart of this trend, and were identifiable via their strange asymmetrical motifs, bold colours and lavish use of gold and silk threads. These designs were heavily influenced by a mixture of Indian, European, Chinese and Japanese elements. Initially, designs included recognisable floral and botanical motifs, but later became more idiosyncratic and free form, featuring hybrid architectural elements and Asian motifs, as well as abstract and enigmatic shapes. The striking juxtaposition of naturalist and fantastical elements was a key feature of this fascinating style, which was formally labelled 'Bizarre' in the twentieth century.

Bizarre silks were widely used for clothing and furnishings. The dense and expansive brocaded designs suited the fashions of the period, such as broad gowns, men's decorative waistcoats and heavy domestic textiles. One of the best-known proponents of this style was the Huguenot silk designer and master weaver, James Leman (c. 1688–1745), whose Stewart Street workshop was located at Spitalfields, in the East End of London. It is possible that the embroidery in this bedcover was directly inspired by one of his designs. During this period, it was typical that silk merchants would engage journeyman weavers to execute their designs, but Leman, who had apprenticed as a silk weaver to his father at age fourteen, took on the roles of both maker and designer. There are only two securely identified woven examples of James Leman's work in museum collections: one in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia and the other at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, which also holds a remarkable album of his designs.

It is interesting to note that much English embroidery of the eighteenth century was directly influenced by these fantastical woven silks. Examples that demonstrate this relationship so directly, however, are extremely rare, and so the NGV is delighted to welcome *Bedcover,* c.1710, into the Collection. Professional embroidery was seen as a legitimate alternative to woven brocade fabrics at this time, and the needlework designs often closely mirrored those of the brocade counterparts. The exquisite quality of the needlework and the extensive use of prized metal thread found in *Bedcover* would suggest that it was likely to be an outstanding example of specialist professional embroidery practices producing decorative textiles in the early eighteenth century.

This superb richly embroidered bedcover is an outstanding new acquisition that broadens the Gallery's historical textile holdings and is now on display for all to enjoy.

KATIE SOMERVILLE IS NGV SENIOR CURATOR, FASHION AND TEXTILES. *BEDCOVER*, C. 1710, IS ON DISPLAY SOON ON LEVEL 2 AT NGV INTERNATIONAL. THE NGV WARMLY THANKS KRYSTYNA CAMPBELL-PRETTY AM AND FAMILY FOR THIS GENEROUS GIFT.



‘The vast expanse of goldwork embroidery on this bedcover is truly remarkable. Made with a silk thread base, a fine strip of gold pounded impossibly thin has been wound around the silk thread into a shining coil.’

——— Skye Firth

Evidence of a life well lived

Skye Firth

While the eye may at first be drawn to the glittering lustre of gold threads across nearly half of this bedcover, a closer look reveals the fine, miniature quilting stitches covering the entire linen-cotton base of the textile. Ambling across the linen-cotton, each diamond-shaped section is filled with a stylised acanthus surrounded by repeating daisies. Beneath these tiny stitches a wisp of red-pink still exists, a remnant of the fine pouncing powder used to transfer the drawn design onto the linen-cotton base.

The NGV textiles conservation team worked on this bedcover for several months, and in this time we discovered that the current format is perhaps not original. With its strange gathered rounds and two patches of mismatched embroidery, the bedcover would not have been created this way in the 1700s. It would have been originally created with each section of embroidery complete and visible. Perhaps it was originally a bed set: bed curtains, bolster cushion, bedcover and valance. As these sections wore through use, they were likely resewn, with the worn sections disposed of and a new backing added. The presence of the gathered rounds of fabric with a covered button centre, indicating a bolster cushion, certainly supports this. Unfortunately we will likely never know how the work was originally presented.

The vast expanse of goldwork embroidery on this bedcover is truly remarkable. Made with a silk thread base, a fine strip of gold pounded impossibly thin has been wound around the silk thread into a shining coil. As the thread is bulky, passing it through the fabric, for example with a needle, is not possible. Instead, the gold thread is attached using a couching stitch, securing it back to the cotton base cloth with fine looping, yellow stitches, executed in a decorative quilting pattern. The pattern follows a fine double cross-hatching pattern, the stitches barely 1mm in length. This detail and the skill involved to create it indicate that a professional embroidery house, likely with several skilled hands, completed the work.

It is these fine silk couching threads that have been the focus of the recent conservation treatment of the work. Their age and tension has caused many to break and the goldwork beneath to come loose. Repaired with a fine buff-coloured polyester thread, almost invisible on the goldwork, we were able to realign the metal thread.

The treatment has shown how valued the bedcover must have been during its life, as there is evidence of multiple hands in previous repairs. Evidence of different hands can be shown in the choice and age of the repair threads as well as the neatness and indeed in areas, messiness of the stitching. These previous repair stitches have looped the goldwork together. While many of these past stitch repairs may not be neat or pretty, they will not be removed, as they are an important testament to the reverence in which the bedcover was held, its use, and its value to those who possessed it.

SKYE FIRTH IS NGV SENIOR FASHION AND TEXTILES CONSERVATOR.

(p. 54) **England** *Bedcover* c. 1710 (details)
Gift of Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program, 2021
(left) **England** *Bedcover* c. 1710
Gift of Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program, 2021



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TO *MAKE* IS TO BE *HUMAN*

The NGV Collection exhibition *History in the Making* brings together objects made from animal, plant, mineral and synthetic materials, employing varying modes of production and across diverse creative fields. The works on display create dialogues between the past, present and future of materials, and design histories and narratives. All share the incredible ability of design to tell powerful stories.

BY ELI GIANNINI

History in the Making aims to extend understanding of and response to the objects in the NGV Collection in by encouraging us all to think about why we make, what we make and how we do it.

Materiality is a big part of it; hence curator Simone LeAmon, NGV Hugh Williamson Curator of Contemporary Design and Architecture, has structured the exhibition around the materials that the designers and artists have used to make their objects, to ask the big questions about the modes of production and consumption that affect our relationship with the natural world and that will influence the future of making.

LeAmon has used a straightforward classification system – animal, plant, mineral or man-made/synthetic – to capture aspects of the complex enterprise of making and to spark a debate about our contemporary attitudes to its products: the objects.[1] By mining the NGV Collection in this way, this approach demonstrates the strength and breadth of the Collection while also allowing for a variety of approaches and themes. The works connect thematically rather than visually or chronologically.

The premise of the display is that ‘to make is to be human’ a proposition that is hard to argue with, but which leads us to ask: how do we do that in a world where we already have so many objects?

Italian designers in the 1980s thought they had the answer by suggesting, through their writings and teachings, that quality should replace quantity. In their world, the bespoke object, with its high design/craft value, must take the place of the disposable, low-value, mass-produced one, thereby resolving the environmental problems created by the over-consumption of throwaway goods. The echoes of their strategy can still be heard today in campaigns such as ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’, a slogan born in the mid-1970s exhorting us all to environmental consciousness.

However, what the Italians did not account for is the fickleness of human nature. Enter the *Hanes Men’s Short Sleeve Beefy-T®*, c. 1970. This object is included as an adjunct work in the exhibition; its guest appearance performs a very specific role of

drawing attention to the ecological impact of the manufacture of fast fashion. The popular T-shirt, which reached its one billionth sale in 2000, originated as a standard undergarment. It grew in status through various cultural associations, becoming a much-loved item of clothing in the 1970s and 1980s. Its manufacture, which incorporates the cultivation and processing of cotton, consumes 20,000 litres of water. Through the inclusion of the T-shirt in the display, the exhibition is exposing what lies at the heart of the problem, while also acknowledging how a modest object of little 'design value' can trump the designer's logic.

The *Hanes Men's Short Sleeve Beefy-T®* sits happily with *Cutlery set for the Qantas A380 project,* 2007, by Australian-born designer Marc Newson. A recent acquisition, this stainless steel cutlery cleverly employs the pressed metal (read 'cheap') aesthetics of mass production rather than the cast metal (read 'expensive') look typical of high-end craft and design goods.



Perhaps Newson wanted to make a comment on the experience of in-flight dining by referencing the low-cost forks, knives and spoons you can find in simple picnic sets. Or maybe the picnic set was his starting point, to suggest the adventure promised by travelling by plane. Either way, Newson is demonstrating the power of design to tell a story. In Newson's hands, the *Cutlery set for the Qantas A380 project* plays with our perception of the low value we place on the mass-produced object, while in fact creating the high value that a talented designer brings to the task.

Other approaches from designers, artists and craftspeople in the show make environmentally sustainable practices a central part of the story by repurposing existing objects that have become redundant, for example, or creating others from new but sustainable sources. This type of response ranges from repurposing, as in the case of Maison Martin Margiela's *Helmet bag*, 2006, a project that takes a motorcycle helmet and transforms it into a handbag, to a work that employs a new bio-material, such as Pirjo Haikola's *Urchin corals*, 2020, which is made with an experimental polymer made from purple and black sea urchins, a species that is threatening kelp forest environments.

Other artist-makers create their works as a protest against the destruction of precious habitats. *Bib*, 1998, by Manon van Kouswijk, is a recycled baby bib that has been attached to a broken antique coral necklace. The artist (who lives and works in Australia but is originally from Holland) created the work by embroidering the missing 'blood-red' beads, as the artist describes them, onto a bib (an element of traditional Dutch costumes) for a jewellery exhibition about coral (a material used in traditional Dutch jewellery).

But perhaps the work that shouts the loudest about our uneasy relationship with mass consumption is Damien Wright's *5:45pm 18/02/2020 bench seat*, 2020, which is made of three plastic chairs supporting a slab of fossilised river red gum, cut from a 10,000-year-old tree excavated from a quarry on Yorta Yorta Country in Victoria's Murray-Goulburn region. Wright's piece is not only disturbing in its juxtaposition of the ubiquitous (the chairs) with the rare (the timber), but also in the way that each element – the plastic chair and the fossilised wood – is seemingly part of a material continuum, which starts with organic matter and ends with crude oil through the natural process of decay and the human processes of exploration and extraction.

History in the Making is a complex show that focuses our attention on the many issues brought about by mass production and consumerism. It dips into these themes without judgement, for the purpose of encouraging the fruitful dialogue we have with the objects we love or hate.

The exhibition explores how we are part of the natural world and how we can act in ways that are in harmony with it – sustaining ourselves and the species around us by employing practices that reflect a superior understanding of taking from nature versus caring for it in the long term. An example of which, among others, is evident in the practices of traditional Indigenous cultures, which demonstrate a more sustainable relationship with the other species on our planet.

ELI GIANNINI IS A MELBOURNE ARCHITECT AND PRINCIPAL OF MGS ARCHITECTS.
READ MORE ABOUT THE EXHIBITION AT NGV.MELBOURNE/ESSAY/HISTORY-IN-THE-MAKING.

(p. 60) **Dale Hardiman (designer) Adam Lynch (designer) Dowel Jones (design studio and manufacturer)** *Never grow up, bench* 2019 Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2019
(above) **Marc Newson (designer) Noritake Co. Ltd (manufacturer)** *Cutlery set for the Qantas A380 project* 2007 (designed) c. 2011 (manufactured) Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2021

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A radical style

Nestled within the permanent collection of French Impressionist paintings at NGV International, for the first time, the work of Japanese artists of the nineteenth century take centre stage to contextualise the enormous influence of Japan on the evolution of European art and artists of the period.

BY AMANDA DUNSMORE AND CATHY LEAHY

(left) **Ker Xavier Roussel** *Teaching the dog (L'Education du chien)* 1893 (detail) Purchased, 1999
(p. 66) **Unknown** *Bamboo, plum blossom and mandarin ducks* 18th century Gift of Konfir Kabo through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2016
(p. 67) **Japanese** *Picnic set* 19th century Purchased, 1888

'Japonisme', the term coined by the art critic Philippe Burty in 1872, refers to the fascination for Japanese art and culture that swept across Europe and North America during the second half of the nineteenth century. After more than two hundred years of self-imposed isolation from the West, Japan was forced by the United States to open its borders to international trade in 1854. This resulted in an influx of Japanese commodities into Europe and America and triggered a revolution in Western art and design. The classic period of Japonisme extended from the late 1850s to the 1890s and was associated with Impressionism and Post-Impressionism in Europe, and the Aesthetic movement in England. Early practitioners of Japonisme copied exotic motifs across media before gradually engaging more deeply with Japanese art, adopting innovative compositional devices, exploring new subject matter and embracing Japanese art's profound respect for hand manufacture, and the decorative arts. Out of this arose Art Nouveau, a radical rethinking of design across all media, which flourished until the outbreak of the First World War and marked the beginnings of modern art and abstraction.

Following Japan's opening up of trade with the West, an influx of goods began arriving in Europe. These goods covered the spectrum of Japanese art and culture, including fans, kimonos, silks, ivories, ceramics, lacquer, bronzes, furniture and woodblock prints. Among the prints arriving were many by the great masters of the so-called *ukiyo-e*, or pictures of the floating world, school of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including Katsushika



Hokusai, Kitagawa Utamaro and Utagawa Hiroshige whose works were to become enormously influential upon European artists and designers.

From the late 1850s woodblock prints became available in Paris through a variety of outlets, including curiosity shops, tea warehouses – at which imported produce was said to have arrived wrapped in prints, and larger stores incorporating dedicated departments of Asian artworks. *La Porte Chinoise* at 36 rue Vivienne was one such shop that specialised in selling Chinese and Japanese works and its holdings of woodblock prints, including volumes of Hokusai's *Manga* (small bound volumes of printed sketches), attracted many artists and collectors.

Some of the earliest French collectors of Japanese art were leading cultural figures, including the writers Edmond de Goncourt and Emile Zola, art critics Philippe Burty and Théodore Duret, and the artists James McNeill Whistler, Édouard Manet and Edgar Degas. These cultural proponents saw Japanese art as offering fresh inspiration and a new artistic approach that had the potential to free Western art, both the fine and decorative, from the strictures of long-established, historical conventions derived from a Classical foundation. Along with these early Japonistes, Vincent van Gogh was also a voracious collector of Japanese woodblock prints whose unique design aesthetics and treatment of colour had a profound effect upon his art.

The popularity of Japanese colour woodblock prints in Paris promoted interest in the print as an original art form and inspired a surge of interest in colour printmaking during the 1890s. Colour lithography was the favoured medium adopted by many artists of this period to create colourful posters, albums of prints, illustrated theatre playbills and small journals, including original prints. The formal qualities of Japanese art were reflected in the asymmetrical compositions, unusual viewpoints, decorative patterning and flat, unmodulated colours of many of the period's most innovative prints. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's posters and prints, with their emphatic two-dimensionality, use of silhouette and vibrant colour owe much of their radicality to Japanese art. Pierre Bonnard, one of the group of young artists who called themselves the Nabis (Hebrew for prophets), was nicknamed *le Nabi très Japonard* (the ultra Japanese Nabi). His colour lithographs of the 1890s were highly inventive in their assimilation of Japanese influences, extending beyond compositional devices to also include an approach to subject matter as seen in his series *Some Aspects of Parisian Life,* 1899 and gifted to the NGV by the Felton Bequest. This important album of twelve prints presents incidental views of the modern city of Paris – corners of buildings, rainy street scenes at night – that reflect the anecdotal scenes of daily life captured in such woodblock series as Hiroshige's *One hundred famous views of Edo*, 1856–58. *Teaching the dog*, 1893, by Ker-Xavier Roussel, another of the Nabi artists, shows how the abrupt cropping of the foreground figure, the silhouetted forms of the women, the frieze of trees and the strong verticality of the composition introduces a wholly new approach to the spatial treatment of form and narrative.

Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints often depicted the pleasurable diversions available to newly prosperous Japanese urban middle-classes, including scenes of the licensed red-light districts and the dramatic performances of Kabuki theatre. These images of the urban environment encouraged Western artists to explore the burgeoning late nineteenth-century urban world of great metropolises such as Paris, London and New York. Artists depicted the life of the city and its modern streetscapes in a manner unprecedented in the canons of Western academic art. Gifted by the Felton Bequest, Camille Pissarro's painting of the *Boulevard Montmartre, morning, cloudy weather*, 1897, is one of a series of fourteen views looking east along the broad avenue that he painted between 10 February and 17 April 1897. These views show the wide thoroughfare created by the government official Baron Haussman's remodelling of the centre of Paris from the 1860s onwards, eliminating the narrow, winding streets of the medieval city. The depiction of a bustling crowd strolling through the streetscape owes much to Japanese scenes of fashionable urban life, as does the elevated viewpoint that creates the impression that we are leaning out into the street. This elevated viewpoint can also be seen in Hiroshige's woodblock print of *Sakurajima, Ōsuma province*, 1853–1856, gifted to the NGV by the Felton Bequest, which captures a rural landscape from an unusually high vantage point, quite literally from a bird's eye perspective.

The Art Nouveau style that developed from the late 1880s is widely recognised as the beginnings of modernism, through its self-conscious break with European design styles of the past. Inspired by Japanese art, Art Nouveau artists and designers drew enormous inspiration from nature, pursuing formal innovation by emulating shapes, colours and textures from the plant and animal worlds. The radicalness of the style is seen in the full internalisation of Japanese aesthetics, beyond the literal copying of motifs and techniques, enabling artists to give expression to something that was bold, modern and completely of its own place and time. Supported by the NGVWA, the *Wisteria, table lamp*, 1903–1905, by Tiffany Studios is a supreme example of Art Nouveau design directly inspired by Japanese art. The dripping panicles of the shade, crafted from more than 2,000 pieces of hand-worked glass, form a canopy of lush, cascading, wisteria blossom in a naturalistic palette of rich cobalt, ultramarine, soft lavender and pearly white. It evokes a deep sense of naturalism and pays homage to the Japanese reverence for nature, in particular the wisteria flower, which informed Japanese art so deeply. The essence of the natural world pervades every aspect of the lamp's design and its execution is a demonstration of the mastery of materials and fine hand manufacture. The mirror of Japanese art cast the gaze of Western artists back on to their own traditions, encouraging them to seek innovation and renewal, and leading them to the brink of modernity.

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TRANSCRIPT



The cosmos in a single stroke

In the paintings by South Korea–born artist Lee Ufan the personal and the universal, the singular and the infinite seem to blur. In a talk as part of the NGV Triennial 2020, Nikos Papastergiadis, Director of the Research Unit in Public Cultures and Professor at the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne, explored the significance of context and form in Lee Ufan's work, and also invited a meditation from another perspective.

BY NIKOS PAPASTERGIADIS

Lee Ufan's painting *Dialogue*, 2017, [supported by Andrew and Judy Rogers and the Professor AGL Shaw AO Bequest] is unframed and in the centre there appears a long streak of colour. At the top is a hard edge. It has a slightly bristling unevenness along the line. To the right side of the streak the colour is a deep burgundy; moving across is a sequence of reds that morph into orange ; and then on the left-hand edge it ends in morning yellow. At the bottom of the streak it appears to lift off the surface with a gentle curl. The painting is spotlit in such a way that the centre is most luminous and the focus fades as it approaches the edges of the plain canvas.

Although the painting is executed in a painstaking manner, with each element in the spectrum being gently brushed by a sequence of delicate gestures, it appears as if it was delivered in a single stroke. The colours seem to emerge as if they pressed out of a single broad brush that was guided firmly and decisively. Yet, in reality, the streak is the product of multiple applications of mineral pigment that have been meticulously aligned to build up a presence of heaviness and lightness. Lee Ufan informs us that each stroke is released in the hollow of one breath.[1]

At the beginning of his career Lee Ufan executed monochromes with speed. By contrast, the realisation of this vibrant spectrum in this work, part of the recent series of paintings called *Dialogues,* is slow. At both ends of his practice the experience of time is unbounded. The vibrancy of the colours in his later work picks up the saturation of ambient images in the contemporary city. However, they also convey the sense of suspension and openness evoked by the early monochromes. In all of Lee Ufan's paintings the length of the painted streak and the dimensions of the untouched canvas are in vital counterpoint. It is as if the resulting image carries the trace of its making and that it resonates with rawness of the surrounding space. Image and space convey a sense of sufficiency, combining to form an ecology that Lee Ufan describes as a 'living structure'. Overall, the impression that the viewer is left with is that the techne of the artist and the technology of the brush appear to be fused, the matter of the paint and the motion of the gesture are in an exquisite accord, and finally, that there is a cosmos in each painting.

When we encounter Lee Ufan's paintings they are invariably placed upright on the wall. This positioning makes for an easy approach and a comforting view. However, while we encounter them on a vertical plane, this is the opposite perspective from which they are produced. Since the beginning of his career Lee Ufan has placed the canvas flat on the ground and the stroke of the hand-brush has been made from above. Lee Ufan grew up in the countryside of Korea. He recalls the stooped posture of the farmer and the constant need to face the ground. Similarly, his paintings have been completed with his body facing down. Consider, if the painting was lowered and placed back to the ground, how would we approach it, and what sort of view is affordable? What apparatus could be wheeled in to suspend the body above and allow a relaxed viewing of the painting and its surroundings?

Let us briefly review paintings that come from the ground. My first awareness of the NGV is linked to the purchase of Jackson Pollock's *Blue poles*, 1952. It was purchased by the National Gallery of Australia in 1973 and the national controversy led me to discover that there was abstract art in Melbourne. Pollock's technique of laying the canvas flat on the studio floor and thrusting the paint directly from the tin was a legendary expression of the freewheeling American avant-garde. Pollock's famous drip paintings were executed in the barn attached to his house in the Springs area outside of New York.

The iconic Indigenous Australian Papunya Tula movement is usually said to have commenced in 1971 when a teacher, Geoffrey Bardon, encouraged a group of men to paint a mural on the school wall. However, this story displaces three key elements. Bardon first witnessed the creative genius of the community in the finger drawings done by the children in the dirt of the playground. Bardon asked the children if they could transfer the symbols and techniques to hand drawings on paper in the classroom. The Elders noticed that Bardon valued these drawings and they appreciated that art could serve as both a bridge between different worlds and a medium for connecting knowledge across the generations.

The Papunya Tula artists, like Jackson Pollock, painted with their canvas on the ground. This view from above – aerial perspective – is often compared to the view from a helicopter. In a helicopter there is the advantage of hovering, but in my mind the metaphor is reductive. The helicopter pilot can survey the land from above, revealing contours that are hidden behind vertical planes, exposing the through lines of winding rivers, and rendering visible the subtle grooves of well-worn pathways. From above the trace lines of motion come alive.

For a cartographer this is interesting but the beauty of painting is more than the efficient elegance of a map. In more general terms we can note how the aerial perspective in painting also presents a different view of the human condition. How do we make sense of existential questions in these paintings? When you enter a room and there is a painting by Emily Kam Kngwarray, Jackson Pollock or Lee Ufan hanging on the wall, there is an irresistible pull towards them. Each painting has a force field. Wilfully or not, you find yourself heading towards it. Can we explain this allure by reference to art-historical categories such as perspective, context and forms? Or is something else in play?

Before we return to Lee Ufan's background and his method, I want to zoom out to some philosophical meditations on the cosmos. Marcus Aurelius was a Roman Emperor and a Stoic philosopher. While on campaigns to defend the eastern frontiers of the Empire he also wrote a famous book called *Meditations*.[2] Even though he was involved in a war, he reflected on the fellowship with all humans. He sat in his tent writing his book but he imagined that he was high above, seeing all from the cosmos. This perspective is telling on a number of levels. The Stoics believed that the cosmos was a living body, and as the seat of knowledge it was a generative principle that conveyed intelligence through the pneuma, which was both the world soul and the breath. Through this interpenetration of the pneuma, everyone and everything was interconnected with the cosmos. Pneuma as both world soul and breath is the link between every single human action and the infinite cosmos. The human was an integral part *of*, not just a detached witness *to*, the cosmos. A component of the cosmos was infused into the human body. The cosmos was also a physical entity – a sphere that was above the Earth but before the infinite void. The Stoics also imagined the cosmos as a creative conflagration – *ekpyrosis* – it was in a perpetual state of destruction and renewal. Through the repetition of this cycle they also pondered the tension between a predetermined fate and the human agency to shape your experience in the world. The Stoics revered the authority of the divine but also stressed the ethical capacity in the act of resistance and endurance, and loved human effort. Like Homer, the Stoics also used the word 'cosmos' to refer to the human activity of giving form – the cosmetic making of space, the bewitching adornment of the body, and the beguiling use of rhetoric in language. Hence, one of the meanings of 'cosmos' is aesthetic – it refers to the creation of an order that is attractive to the other. In short, the aesthetics of cosmos are linked to the idea of the cosmos as physical entity that is the source of reason and creation.

Marcus Aurelius began his book by declaring in a rather manly manner: 'I did not fall in with any sophist, or devote my time to analysis of literature or logic, or busy myself with cosmic speculation'.[3] He was writing at the end of what is referred to as the third generation of Stoics. He was preceded by great figures such as Cicero, Seneca and Epictetus. In the *Meditations* Marcus Aurelius distils the belief in the recursive cycle of death and renewal in nature, the need to achieve detachment from the ephemerality of things, and the performance of rituals that connect the body, world and cosmos. This viewpoint, which focuses on the need to submit to an all-pervasive divine reason, is found in many cosmological narratives. However, what is blurred is the evocation of human agency. The early Stoics were closer to the diabolical ways of Diogenes who had no regard for everyday customs or the authority of Emperors. They blended their spherical imagination of the cosmos with commitment to radical equality in the cosmopolis. This perspective is in sharp distinction to the Indian and Chinese cosmologies that promoted quietism. In these cosmologies there was equality as everyone was under one heaven, but the intermediary role of Emperors also tended to keep people in their place. The radical and radiant image of companionship between human creativity and cosmic order was also diminished in the successive interpretations of Stoicism from the Romans to the Renaissance. As Stoic ideals were incorporated into the mainstream they increasingly aligned philosophical virtue with political conformity.

Much is said of the moral haughtiness and emotional detachment that is promoted by Stoic philosophy. It is easy to find fault in their fantastical theory of conflagration and equate their aloofness towards the ephemerality of life with indifference towards the suffering of others, and dismiss their call for restraint as a sign of disconnection from their own passions. No physicist, moral philosopher or psychologist would use the Stoic handbooks as a blueprint. However, the Christian, Renaissance, modern and contemporary mindsets have also done damage to themselves as they have progressively narrowed the apertures, focused the lens and fractured the gaze away from the Stoics' spherical view of the cosmos.

The emperor Marcus Aurelius believed that the only way we see our common fellowship with all other humans and grasp the existence of a fragment of the cosmos in ourselves is if we look at the body and world from the viewpoint of the cosmos. Detachment from place was not an end in itself. It did not mean that the individual was floating in a vacuum. On the contrary, the continuous attachment to the cosmos meant that there was always a more diffuse and extensive connection. Therefore the Stoic ideal of detachment should not be reduced to the loss of attachment to your own emotions, relationship with others, and the world at large. However, it is equally important to distinguish the Stoic vision of the cosmic from the idealist form of transcendentalism. To reach the cosmos was not a journey of departure from the limits of the body and the confines of the world. The cosmos is already *in* both – it is immanent to this world as we are already in the cosmos. Thus, when Marcus Aurelius seeks to look from above he is also looking from within, because the cosmos is not external but continuous with life, it is made of the same matter and it comes through all acts of motion. Hence the Stoic precept that encourages all to live in accord with the cosmos is not be confused with an invitation to insulate yourself from the world.

Can we revisit the material and formal questions in Lee Ufan's work from a cosmic perspective? It is worth noting that Lee Ufan is a Korean artist who has been living in Japan for over sixty years. He is also a leading figure in the Japanese Mono-ha movement, and a commentator on aesthetics. From Heidegger and Freud he has found inspiration in his quest for an explanation of the sources of human creation. Lee Ufan is unwavering in his belief that art is the medium for bringing forth an encounter with otherness that is essential to humanity.

It is also useful to connect the complex lines of influence that criss-cross traditional Chinese ink paintings and Western minimalism. Lee Ufan embraces both Zen techniques of clearing away and acknowledges the influence of the Italian postwar movement Arte Povera. From these distant polarities Lee Ufan finds a common acceptance that decaying and ordinary objects have the capacity to convey lasting and profound meaning. However, would the mystery of Lee Ufan's painting be fully accounted for if we stayed within the apertures of the biographic and formalist methodologies? It is not an accident that we approached Lee Ufan's painting for the NGV Triennial via the *Botanical pavilion*, 2020, an immersive sculptural work by Japanese architect Kengo Kuma and Australian artist Geoff Nees [supported by Connie Kimberley and Craig Kimberley OAM]. In Lee Ufan's taught and elegant text that is published in the NGV's catalogue, he warns against the perspective that is gained through separation. Boundaries are useful for seeing things in themselves, but can anything exist in isolation from everything? Lee Ufan's work is about the singular but it is not captured by the borders of the discrete. His attention is towards the gradations – the harmonics between light and shadow. Thus he rejects the reduction of emptiness to an empty space as much as he embraces the discovery of life in both the viscous darkness of Japanese lacquerware and throughout the openness of the world.

> I want to be a living creature who breathes in empty space that is like a landscape painting combining light and darkness. White plum blossoms in the garden. A faintly lighted space spreads around them. As the small flower petal and buds are scattered through space, I too am scattered throughout this open place.[4]

I imagine the brush moving in Lee Ufan's hand, in sync with his breath, in-out, up-down, all along in one continuous flow that embraces different edges.

Lee Ufan named this painting as part of the *Dialogue*, 1996–, series. He often stated that the dialogue in his work is between the living element in nature and the found objects of our industrial world, but he also suggests that it is between the artwork and the person receiving it. The starting point of this dialogue is a shared existence. It begins with the recognition of the common spaces for humanity and aims to discover fundamental forms for communication. Lee Ufan describes the role of the artist as being akin to that of a conductor – a person who is alert to the discontent in this world, in touch with the unconscious fantasy of a better world, and who is capable bridging them through his or her art. Bridging worlds is also what the Papunya Tula artists set out to achieve. It is an uplifting ambition and it is a salutary reminder of the authority of human techne over the dread that machinic

'For Lee Ufan, to be human is to be in dialogue with the unknown. It is by communing with otherness that the streak of hope comes into this world.'

NIKOS PAPASTERGIADIS

technologies such as AI can appropriate human agency. For Lee Ufan, to be human is to be in dialogue with the unknown. It is by communing with otherness that the streak of hope comes into this world.

Allow me to now return to the role of the breath in Lee Ufan's painting and the claim in my title: the revelation of a cosmos in every single stroke. I want to approach this through another imaginary dialogue. In this instance I would like to make Lee Ufan the recipient of a letter written in the first century CE by Seneca, the Roman statesman and Stoic philosopher.[5] Seneca begins Letter LXV with the claim that the cosmos is composed of two elements: matter and cause. Matter is inert substance that is put in motion by a cause. For instance, pigment is the material for colour, but it is the artist that is the cause by which a painting comes into being. This is the standard Stoic theory of creation.

However, Seneca proceeds to consider Plato's and Aristotle's qualifications on the operation of the cause. Aristotle acknowledged the primacy of matter, but added that causation was guided by the agency with which the artist imposes a form and the goal to which the work is directed. Aristotle was very concerned with both the material conditions and motivational forces in creation. By contrast, Plato gave emphasis to the model or the idea that presents itself before or froths up in the mind's eye of the artist. This idea is for Plato eternal, immutable and dynamic. From Plato and Aristotle we gain the outlines of the idealist and materialist perspectives on creation. These perspectives continue to inform the art-historical understandings of creation. However, is this sufficient? Our disciplined approach towards contemporary art has the benefit of laser-like analysis of the micro details and with ideological diligence it can also confront wider social issues. Does this method cover what Lee Ufan calls the fundamental condition of existence? Has it lost touch with the spherical imagination that was a feature of the Stoic theory of the cosmos? It is my contention that many artists have refused to relinquish their claim that art is the link between the body and the cosmos.

Seneca concluded his letter by claiming that Plato and Aristotle miss the point about creation. The artist's agency, motivation, goal and even the idea are all dependent on the original cause, which the Stoics found in the cosmos and called creative reason. Everything else is just an accessory or an instrument that is in the fulfilment of the primal cause. Seneca also justified his quest for understanding the cosmos as an act of unburdening and acquiring 'lightness' in the soul. To contemplate the cosmos he claimed was an act of liberation – to set the eyes towards the skies was better than living with our face bent down to the ground. It allowed the soul the freedom to zoom in and out of the infinity in the small and large, and the opportunity to discover order in chaos. It seems that when Lee Ufan is also describing the role of the artist as a conductor and the execution of art as a means of clearing away and opening up attention to the widest possible horizons he is also in dialogue with his older friend. When we see Seneca in dialogue with Lee Ufan we also witness an ambient perspective: the face-down approach of material analysis is not simply countered with an idealist and transcendental vision of creation, but with a freedom to find a continuum between the body, the world and the cosmos.

Matter and motion is all that the cosmos is, and so it is for painting. Can we close our eyes, clear away all the little things that jam up the space between our bodies and open our mind to the cosmos?

'Matter and motion is all that the cosmos is, and so it is for painting. Can we close our eyes, clear away all the little things that jam up the space between our bodies and open our mind to the cosmos?'

——— NIKOS PAPASTERGIADIS

THIS IS AN EDITED TRANSCRIPT OF A PROGRAM THAT TOOK PLACE AT NGV INTERNATIONAL ON 27 FEBRUARY 2021. NIKOS PAPASTERGIADIS IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE RESEARCH UNIT IN PUBLIC CULTURES AND PROFESSOR AT THE SCHOOL OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE. THE NGV WARMLY THANKS ANDREW AND JUDY ROGERS AND PROFESSOR AGL SHAW AO BEQUEST FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF LEE UFAN'S WORK.

(p. 68) **Lee Ufan** *Dialogue* 2017 Purchased with funds donated by Andrew and Judy Rogers and Professor AGL Shaw AO Bequest, 2020

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Image: International Womens Day march, Melbourne, 1975. Image courtesy National Library of Australia

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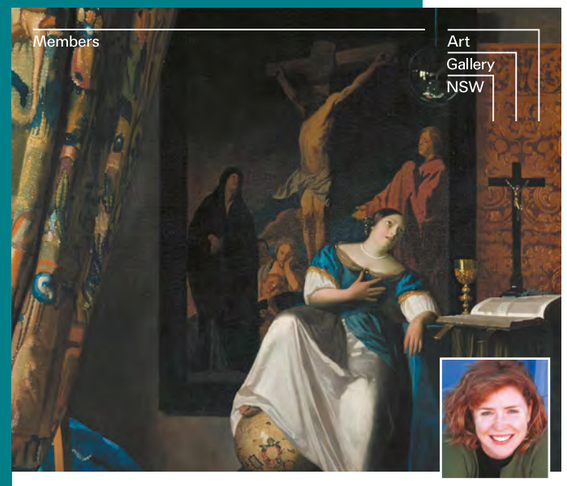
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Credits: Johannes Vermeer *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* c.1670–72 Collection: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York *(detail)*; Mitchelton winery © Visit Victoria; Old Wesley Dale Gardens, Meander Valley. Photo: Scott Wilson

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CURRENT ISSUES



Soni Jogi *Empowered mother* 2020
Purchased, NGV Supporters of Asian Art, 2021

Change and continuity *in* twenty-first century India

Transforming Worlds: Change and Tradition in Contemporary India paints the compelling picture of how contemporary artists are turning to centuries old artistic traditions to address current issues, including women's rights, global health and ecological disasters and political matters. Discover how established and emerging artists from communities across India use art as a powerful means of communication.

BY MINHAZZ MAJUMDAR

Transforming Worlds: Change and Tradition in Contemporary India is an exciting and incisive look at India through the lens of her dynamic visual languages. 'Contemporaneity 'and 'traditional' are words that are diametrically opposite yet their paradoxical pairing, as in 'contemporary traditional arts of India', heralds an exciting new trend. Traditional arts are also known as folk and tribal art, native art, Indigenous art, vernacular art, and inherited art, with each name loaded with associations, positive and pejorative. I am using the word 'traditional' to denote art that has been inherited from ancestors as part of the cultural identity of a community/tribe.

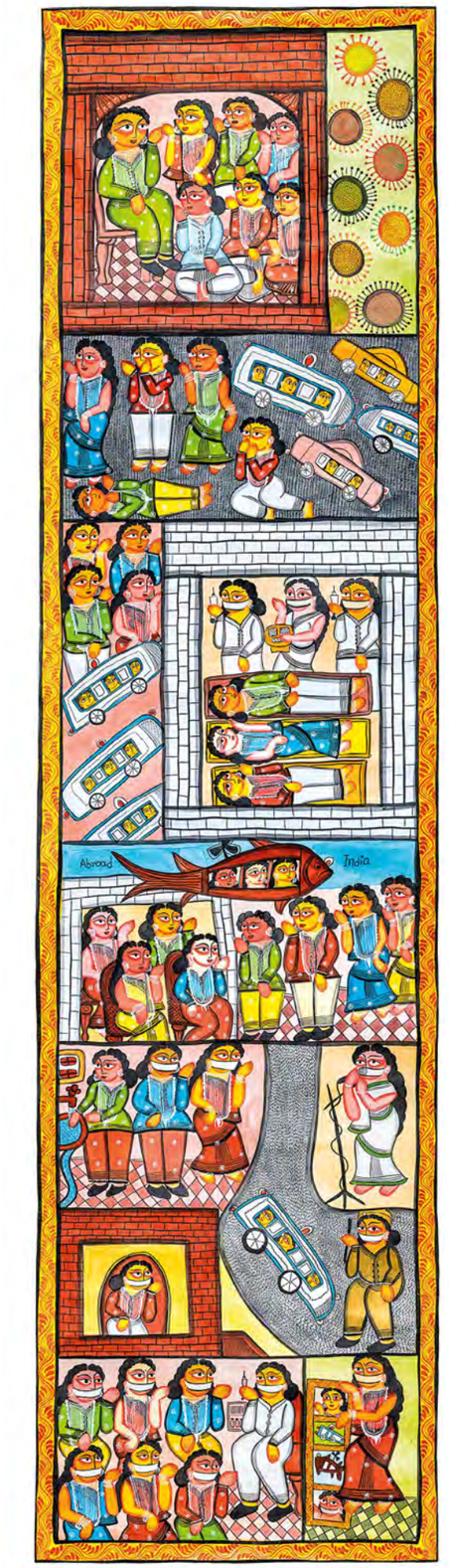
There is a saying in Hindi '*Kos-kos mein pani badle, char kos mein vani*'. This translates into 'Every *kos* (1 *kos* = 3 kilometres), the taste of water changes, and every 4 *kos*, the language changes'. This reflects the immense cultural diversity of India, with more than 2,000 languages, various religions, communities and tribes. Amazingly, for centuries, these cultures have remained largely unchanged. In the material expressions of these cultures, such as arts and crafts, innovation was not welcomed and strict observance of past norms and forms was prioritised.

These traditional arts, particularly folk and tribal art, were rarely made for sale – they were mostly made for use in rituals and ceremonies, to propitiate gods and goddesses and sometimes, as decorative elements. Some of the artworks were ephemeral – made just for a few hours for the duration of the ceremony or in the case of some wall paintings, painted over every other day. Some artworks were more or less permanent, lasting till the material disintegrated. All artworks were considered offerings to the Divine and very often, at the end of the life cycle of works on palm leaves, bark, paper, cloth or wood, they would be immersed in water or left under sacred trees. Rarely were artworks signed, anonymity was preferred as a sign of the sublimation of the ego – the art after all was an expression of Divine Grace.

Interestingly, in the last decade, something has shifted irrevocably in the cultural landscape of India as many artists and artisans are rapidly adapting to a globalised world and expanding their repertoire. In a majority of art traditions, works are now being made for sale. The information technology revolution in India has meant that even in remote villages, there is access to the outside world through mobile phones. Better roads have meant greater urbanisation and more travel to and from the villages to cities and a flow of information and influences, with new markets and new worlds opening up for the makers.

Artists have increasingly taken upon themselves the role of being chroniclers of their life and times. They are no longer the nameless, faceless carriers of tradition but increasingly viewed as individual artists within the tradition, carrying it forth but with their own personal hallmark. Deeply rooted in their customary art, these artists are bringing private preoccupations, social and global concerns into their localised art forms and thus, creating statement artworks.

Legend has it that Madhubani or Mithila painting art from the northern Indian state of Bihar began when King Janaka, the ruler of Mithila (Bihar and parts of present day Nepal) asked his subjects to create beautiful art to celebrate his daughter Princess Sita's wedding. Madhubani's (literally 'forest of honey') paintings typically depict mythological stories, the Hindu pantheon, the daily life of the villagers as well as the abundant natural flora and fauna of the region. The wedding chamber paintings known as *kohbars* are very elaborate, filled with symbolic motifs to bless the newly married couple. Stylistically, in Madhubani paintings, figures are shown in profile and there is



(right) **Sonia Chitrakar** *COVID-19 scroll* 2020 Purchased, NGV Supporters of Asian Art, 2021
(p. 81) **Sonia Chitrakar** *COVID-19 scroll* 2020 (detail) Purchased, NGV Supporters of Asian Art, 2021

elaborate patterning, such as double lines and crosshatching. While for centuries, it was a private ritualistic art made by higher caste women, today Madhubani paintings are made by men and women from different castes.

Delhi-based Pushpa Kumari is one of the first artists to take this domestic art form and make it a powerful voice against social injustice; in particular, issues related to the overt and covert violence against women in India. Initiated into the art by her grandmother, the legendary artist Mahasundari Devi, what makes Kumari special is that though she is rooted in her centuries old tradition, she has incorporated not only contemporary ideas and treatment, but also, an artistic intensity, an aesthetic ideal that is truly her own. In *Female foeticide*, 2017, Kumari portrays a heartbreaking reality in many parts of India where the birth of a female child is considered to be a burden and often, the girl child is aborted before birth. The Indian government has banned sex determination tests of the unborn child in an effort to reduce female foeticide. Kumari is not content with only showing this harsh practice – she has added a dark twist in this bold work. The girl children refuse to be born and are shown huddled up in the centre of the work. On each side, the artist depicts acts of violence perpetuated against women in a largely patriarchal society, such as being burned for not bringing enough dowry at the time of marriage or the endemic rape culture.

Sonia Chitrakar is a young *patachitra* artist from West Bengal. The Bengali *patachitra* tradition is an ancient one, featuring long vertical multi-panelled scrolls known as *patas* (paintings) or *jorana patas* (rolled paintings) since the scrolls are rolled up for storage and transportation. Painted on sheets of paper glued or stitched at the edges to form one continuous roll, these scrolls are backed by cloth (usually old saris) for greater strength and flexibility. These scrolls are made by the *Patua* or *Chitrakar* community, now mostly located in the village of Naya where art-making is a family event with men and women, young and old participating. All colours are painstakingly handmade from roots, shoots, leaves and flowers and mixed with fruit glue. Each scroll is accompanied by a song specially composed to describe the painting.

Patachitra art has always had both religious and sociopolitical themes. Prior to the advent of television and cinema in India, *patachitra* scrolls were true 'infotainment'. The *Patua* would carry a bundle of his paintings from village to village and pull out a scroll or two in the courtyard of rich households and perform for some money or food and clothing. Bengali *patachitra* presents a very effective means of communication about social issues and evils and thus, has been used to create awareness about HIV/AIDS, tree plantation and women's empowerment.

It is this contemporaneous aspect that Chitrakar focused on while making her *COVID-19 scroll*, 2020, brought into the NGV Collection through NGV Supporters of Asian Art. At first, she was totally overwhelmed by the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown. She then decided to record for posterity aspects of pandemic life and the safety protocols. In the first frame, she has depicted people talking about the virus. The second frame shows the havoc the virus has wrought, with medical staff overwhelmed by the sheer number of people hospitalised. The third frame depicts the spread of the virus with unmasked people coming from abroad. Frame four illustrates the lockdown – the streets are empty and police are preventing people from leaving their homes. People have now begun wearing masks and washing their hands. The last frame depicts the importance of wearing masks and getting vaccinated. Interestingly, she has drawn a self-portrait of herself singing her *COVID-19 scroll*. This was quite prescient because the local government invited *patachitra* artists including Chitrakar and her family to show the COVID-19 scrolls and sing the accompanying scroll song in villages to create awareness about the pandemic.

Soni Jogi is one of the few outsider self-taught artists in India, a country brimming with art traditions. She only began painting after marriage to Govind Jogi who with his parents Ganesh (deceased) and Teju Jogi and siblings (brother Prakash and sisters Sangita and Somi) created their own pictorial idiom, each unique and beautiful. Collectively, their art is often called 'Jogi Art'. The Jogis are a bardic community whose traditional occupation was to go around the village early in the morning singing devotional songs to wake people. But with changing times (and alarm clocks), they fell on hard times and became jobless labour.

Soni's artwork *Empowered mother*, 2020, also funded by NGV Supporters of Asian Art, is tiny, just 21.0 × 29.7 centimetres, and shows a woman in traditional Rajasthani attire with her head covered, confidently riding a motorbike and taking her son to school. This image is extraordinary because it represents the aspirations of millions of women crushed under the weight of patriarchy, poverty and social limitations. It is made even more poignant by the fact that Jogi for the moment can only dream of being free and powerful like this. For many married women in rural India, the four walls of the home circumscribe their world and talking to strangers is not sanctioned. Jogi has taken the first step as her art empowers her financially and hopefully, soon she will be part of a more equal society.

All the artists in *Transforming Worlds: Change and Tradition in Contemporary India* present a potent distillation of lived experiences, change and cultural mores in their artworks which make for compelling viewing. The more one looks, the more there is to discover.

MINHAZZ MAJUMDAR IS A CURATOR, WRITER AND DESIGNER WHO IS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN PRESERVING AND PROMOTING INDIAN TRADITIONAL ART. SEE NGV. MELBOURNE FOR DETAILS ON *TRANSFORMING WORLDS: CHANGE AND TRADITION IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA*.



TELL ME ABOUT

BAROQUE

The NGV collection of Baroque art from the seventeenth century highlights the scope and impact of a truly international style.

BY LAURIE BENSON

Originating in Italy, Baroque art took hold right across Europe from the mid sixteenth to the late seventeenth centuries. It was disseminated by artists at a time when travel between European countries was relatively safe. All the artists seen in this gallery worked in many countries, with the Tuscan-born Orazio Gentileschi even working as far from home as England, at the invitation of King Charles I. Knowledge of Baroque art was also spread by thousands of collectable prints that were produced at the time. Baroque art was eagerly sought by ravenous collectors across Europe, and so complete was the dissemination that Rembrandt, a quintessential Baroque artist, had a deep understanding of artistic developments in Italy without actually leaving Holland. Rembrandt owned Italian paintings and prints and would have seen more in other Dutch collections.

Baroque painting is characterised by a return to a convincingly earthy naturalism tempered by Classical ideals of beauty in the treatment of figures. Grounded, also, in accurately drawing from life, Baroque painting eschewed the sometimes bizarre treatment of the human body by sixteenth-century artists, who greatly exaggerated muscles and limbs to give their work a sense of energetic elegance, largely following the direction Michelangelo took towards the end of his career. Many Baroque artists also rejected the idealising of figures, which had been the norm since the Renaissance, and chose instead to depict everyday people. A common anecdote from the time is that artists chose their models from ordinary people they encountered on the street. They then set these figures in compositions featuring strong contrasts of light and dark (labelled 'tenebrism') used to dramatically enliven their work. There is also, by modern standards, a lack of subtlety in their approach to narrative, as clarity of message was a guiding principle for Baroque artists. Driven largely by the patronage of the Catholic Church, Italian and Spanish artists, in particular, were engaged to communicate directly the ideals and power of the Church to evoke the unequivocal veneration of God through art.

Perhaps it is the lack of subtlety in imparting a Catholic sensibility that affected the appreciation of Baroque art. The style was derisively labelled Baroque, meaning damaged, or twisted pearl, by unsympathetic critics in the nineteenth century, who abhorred this art. It was not really until the 1950s that historians took a more measured and considered approach to Baroque art. Then the artists seen here began to be studied



‘The style was derisively labelled Baroque, meaning damaged, or twisted pearl, by unsympathetic critics in the nineteenth century, who abhorred this art.’

——— Laurie Benson



in depth, and their sophisticated technical abilities and incredible skills were once again appreciated and their art sought after by collectors and galleries.

What is very apparent in the Sir John and Lady Reid Gallery is the powerful influence that Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571–1610) had on four of the artists in the NGV Collection display: Jusepe de Ribera, Niccolò Renieri, Luca Giordano and Orazio Gentileschi, who knew Caravaggio when they were in Rome together. Caravaggio’s particular brand of Baroque naturalism and his dramatic tenebrism profoundly impacted these artists. What can easily be forgotten in art galleries is that most of these paintings would have been commissioned for particular architectural settings in churches, where their work would have been dimly lit by a single light source. This is probably the case with the Spanish artist Jusepe de Ribera, who was working in Rome when he painted the *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence*, brought into the NGV Collection through the generosity of Allan Myers AC QC and Maria Myers AC and Andrew Sisson AO. He most likely painted it for the high altar of the Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo in Lucina, which served the Spanish enclave in Rome and was near where Ribera lived. What is so striking in Ribera’s painting is that the source of light is very clearly coming from above and forward of the composition, which would most likely be in synch with the light that would typically illuminate a high altar. In employing Caravaggesque tenebrism, Ribera allowed the saint’s pale body to powerfully stand out in even the most dimly lit church.

However, not all Baroque artists followed Caravaggio’s lead. There was a further school that favoured uniformly bright compositions using intricate chromatic schemes to balance their work. The French-born Nicolas Poussin, who spent much of his working life in Rome, epitomises this approach. Gifted by the Felton Bequest, his *Crossing of the Red Sea*, 1632–34, exemplifies the Classical Baroque, with him drawing details and imagery from ancient Greek and Roman forms.

The cosmopolitan nature of the Baroque extends also to the Flemish master, Anthony van Dyck, who worked throughout Europe and spent six years in Italy. Although influenced by the artists he saw there, he maintained the flair and energy of his Flemish heritage, particularly in his treatment of drapery. His posthumous portrait *Rachel de Ruvigny, Countess of Southampton*, c. 1640, also gifted through the Felton Bequest, blends typical Baroque lighting with the artist’s flamboyant qualities. Painted in England, where his presence altered the direction of art British art, it typifies the expansive impact of Baroque art.

LAURIE BENSON IS NGV CURATOR OF INTERNATIONAL ART. THESE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY BAROQUE PAINTINGS ARE DISPLAYED ON LEVEL 2, JOHN AND LADY REID GALLERY, AT NGV INTERNATIONAL.

(p. 83) **Jusepe de Ribera** *Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence* 1620-1624 Purchased with funds donated by Allan and Maria Myers and Andrew Sisson, 2006
(left) **Anthony van Dyck** *Rachel de Ruvigny, Countess of Southampton* c. 1640 Felton Bequest, 1922
(above) **Nicolas Poussin** *The Crossing of the Red Sea* 1632–1634 Felton Bequest, 1948

SECRET LIFE OF ART



Dame Elisabeth Murdoch at Cruden Farm at Langwarrin in Victoria, 19 January 1988. Photo: The Age / Andrew de la Rue
(p. 88) **England / Scotland** *Hangings c.* 1700 Gift from the Estate of the late Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, 2018. Photography taken during conservation

Dame Elisabeth's

EMBROIDERED GARDEN

Two ornate bed curtains, generously gifted to the NGV Collection by the Estate of the late Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, offer a fascinating insight into crewelwork, a type of embroidery using wool, as well as a history and story that has informed their unique conservation treatment.

BY KATE DOUGLAS AND DIDEE KNIGHT

Undulating vine tendrils, beautifully ornate pomegranates and carnation flowers, squirrels and exotic parrots cover two densely embroidered bed curtains. The scene is of a natural world run riot in a rich variety of stitches, without care for strange juxtaposition or sensible scale. It is easy to appreciate why Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, with her love of nature and gardening, would have been drawn to crewelwork embroidery. The story of these two bed curtains demonstrates the resurgence of interest in crewelwork over the centuries and Dame Elisabeth's enduring love of embroidery and textiles.

Thought to have been produced in England between 1690 and 1710, the two curtains are heavily embroidered with wool 'crewels' and depict a 'Tree of Life' theme which was popular at that time. These curtains would have originally been used around a four-poster bed, providing its occupants with both warmth and privacy.

In 2018, the bed curtains were gifted to the NGV by the Estate of the late Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, continuing the long and generous association that Dame Elisabeth and Sir Keith Murdoch have had with the NGV. Like many bed curtains from this era, they have been treasured and re-purposed over the centuries as crewelwork moved in and out of fashion. For decades, Dame Elisabeth hung the bed curtains at windows either side of an external door entrance to the sitting room in her beloved home at Cruden Farm,[1] Langwarrin, however over time their use became challenging due to their increasing deterioration. When the works entered the NGV Collection, the Gallery's Textile Conservators undertook careful analysis of the materials and techniques used, and condition and provenance of the works, to devise a conservation treatment plan for the two bed curtains.

The term 'crewelwork' is associated with a style of heavy and dense woollen embroidery created in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and taken by the English to colonial America. Crewelwork embroideries were stitched by upper class women and their households to produce elaborate bed curtains for four-poster beds. The 'Tree of Life' design features vertical trees adorned with various exotic and local English flora and fauna, all set upon a rolling ground known as 'terra firma'. This design is thought to be influenced by Indian cotton palampores imported into England by the East India Company in the seventeenth century.[2]

Due to the weight and the density of crewel embroidery it was worked on a strong twill cloth of either linen, or a mixed linen warp and cotton weft, and the inclusion of a wide variety of stitches provided creative freedom for the embroiderer. The popularity of crewelwork has enjoyed numerous resurgences over the centuries, contributing to the re-purposing of historic pieces for window and furniture coverings. Though strong, the ground fabric inevitably weakens with age and the weight of the dense wool embroidery. Traditionally, to continue a crewelwork curtain's use as a functional textile, the embroidery was cut from the damaged ground and re-stitched to a new linen



ground with an additional crewel yarn stitched around the cut embroidered edges to disguise their re-application.

Dame Elisabeth's long-held love of textiles, including embroidery, crewelwork and tapestry are evidenced by various gifts to the NGV, including a similar designed needlework panel donated almost seventy years ago in 1953[3] and a collection of Roger Kemp tapestries that hang resplendently in the Great Hall of NGV International on St Kilda Road.[4] While at high school Dame Elisabeth knitted singlets for the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne and as a young mother used her little sitting room at 'Heathfield' (the Murdoch's grand residence in Toorak between 1933 and 1941) to take afternoon tea and to sew.[5] Later in life, Dame Elisabeth also made practical hand-stitched repairs on the linings of the bed curtains as confirmed by Cruden Farm staff.

Sadly, Dame Elisabeth passed away in 2012; however, her garden and home at Cruden Farm remain largely as she left them, having been gifted to the public.[6] Initially, it was hoped the crewelworks could be retained as window curtains for the home, however the extensive nature of the restoration process led to the decision to gift the bed curtains to the NGV where they would receive the conservation treatment required and avoid the stresses of use as functional curtains.

It is not clear exactly where Dame Elisabeth may have acquired the curtains, however, a conversation between Dame Elisabeth and her biographer John Monks in the early 1990s suggests the curtains may have come from 'Heathfield':

> 'So we bought it, but I never had any grand ideas about refurnishing and renovation and spending a fortune – one just went on gradually replacing things in those days, unlike today' … says Elisabeth, who to this day, can point to curtains from Heathfield still hanging in the sunny rooms of Cruden Farm.[7]

Dame Elisabeth valued soft furnishings for both their beauty and practicality, as her head gardener Michael Morrison wrote 'at the height of summer Dame Elisabeth kept her home's heavy curtains drawn'.[8]

As to their origin and date of production, factors that support the bed curtains being made in England between 1690 and 1710 are the density of the overall pattern, the colour palette and motifs selected. Interestingly, textiles conservators discovered that a surface stitch similar to the modified Romanian stitch generally associated with American crewelwork, was used throughout. Examples of this stitching method are occasionally found in English needlework of this era, however the possibility that the works were completed in America cannot be dismissed.[9]

In planning the appropriate conservation treatment for the work, conservators assessed one crewelwork embroidery that had been cut from its linen twill ground and another that was intact but had sustained damage over time. Retaining the damaged ground of the intact textile was seen as an important part of the history of the work. The first would be meticulously re-stitched to a new linen ground, matching the original weave as close as possible, while the second would be kept intact and anchored to an additional lining with conservation couching stitches used to stabilise the damage.

More than half of the first bed curtain has now been conserved. As the bed curtains are likely to be displayed together and to retain an historical appearance, the new linen ground was dyed an aged colour to match the second hanging. The embroidery pieces were laid onto the new linen ground, with old and new weaves carefully aligned and cut edges tucked under then secured with entomological pins. The edges of the embroidery are now being meticulously stitched in place using colour-matched cotton threads and curved needles.

The bed curtains are a wonderful example of crewelwork and represent the enduring love that Dame Elisabeth Murdoch had for textiles. They were treasured in her home over many years and contributed to the cosy, warm and historic environment that existed in the sitting room at Cruden Farm. After a long life as functional curtains and being generously donated to the NGV, through careful and thoughtful conservation, the works will join other textile treasures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the NGV Collection and, along with Dame Elisabeth's much-loved Cruden Farm, be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

KATE DOUGLAS AND DIDEE KNIGHT ARE NGV CONSERVATORS OF TEXTILES. THE NGV WARMLY THANKS THE ESTATE OF THE LATE DAME ELISABETH MURDOCH FOR GENEROUSLY GIFTING THESE WORKS.

GLOSSARY

Crewel
A thin, loosely twisted, worsted yarn used for tapestry and embroidery

Worsted
A fine, smooth yarn spun from combed, long-staple wool

Palampore
A hand-painted and mordant dyed cotton textile made in India for the export market and traded directly to England from the mid-1600s

Entomological pins
Extremely fine stainless-steel pins traditionally used for securing insect specimens

ART GALLERY OF BALLARAT

BALLARAT INTERNATIONAL FOTO BIENNALE

CITY OF BALLARAT

CREATIVE VICTORIA

Hospitality partner

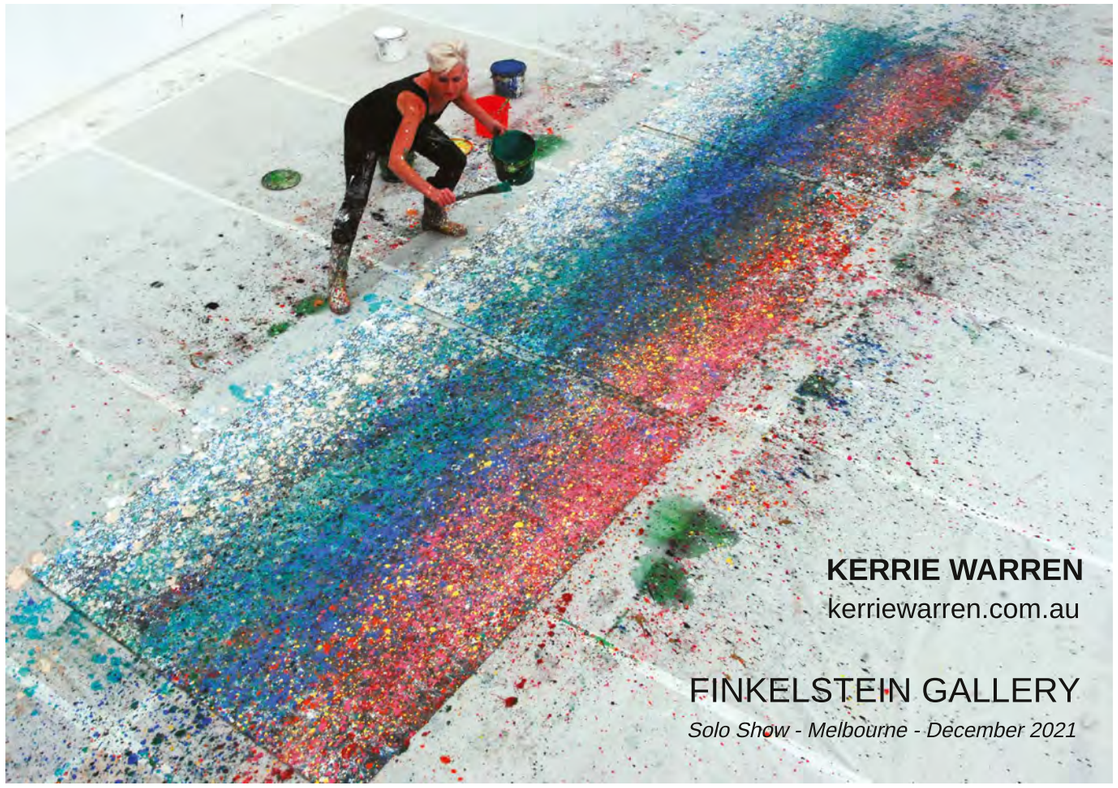
BLUE PYRENEES estate



Robert Fielding
Alec Baker from series *Mayatjara*, 2020
(detail)
type C photograph, 60 x 60cm.
Courtesy Mimili Maku Arts. © the artist.

ROBERT FIELDING: MIIL-MIILPA

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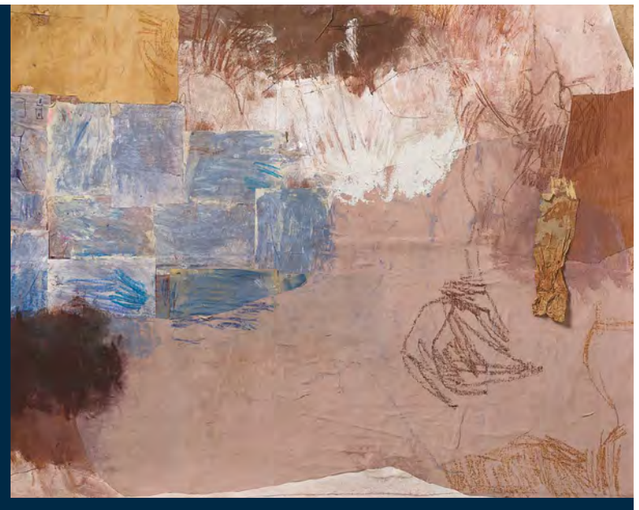
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BOROONDARA ARTS

Material Reverie

TOWN HALL GALLERY
SAT 2 OCTOBER –
SAT 11 DECEMBER 2021

Robert Brown
Teelah George
Lou Hubbard
Shigemi Iwama
Cassie Leatham
Jahnne Pasco-White
Louise Saxton



Jahnne Pasco–White, detail from 'Making Kin', 2020, natural dyed fabrics (avocado, black bean, sunflower, copper beech leaves, carrot, crab apple), earth pigments, violets, olives, crayon, pencil, recycled paper, linen, cotton, acrylic and oil stick on canvas, three panels; total 213.0 x 456.0 cm approx. Image courtesy of the artist and STATION. Photography by Christo Crocker.

BOROONDARA City of Harmony

BOROONDARA.VIC.GOV.AU/ARTS

HAWTHORN ARTS CENTRE
360 Burwood Road, Hawthorn, Victoria
03 9278 4770



Image: *Caroline Zilinsky The Wedgwood Heart* (Jonathan Dalton, artist)
oil on linen 138 x 122cm

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Salon des Refusés 2021

The Salon des Refusés exhibition from Sydney's S.H. Ervin Gallery comes to Adelaide for the first time!

Known as the popular alternative to the esteemed Archibald and Wynne Prize, Salon features works not chosen for the official exhibition but rather those recognised for their quality, diversity, humour, and experimentation.

Presented in partnership with the
National Trust S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney

NATIONAL TRUST
S.H. ERVIN GALLERY

Salon des Refusés 2021
9 October to 11 December 2021
Tuesday – Saturday | 10am to 4pm

Exhibition Entry
$12 Adult $10 Concession $8 National Trust members
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The David Roche Foundation 241 Melbourne Street, North Adelaide SA 5006 | T. (08) 8267 3677 | www.rochefoundation.com.au

A Geelong Gallery exhibition

4 September—
28 November

Frederick McCubbin
Whisperings in wattle boughs 1886
oil on canvas
Private collection, Sydney
Courtesy of Smith and Singer Fine Art

Frederick McCubbin—

Whisperings in wattle boughs



Exhibition partners

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Indemnification for the exhibition is provided by the Victorian Government

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NECESSITY

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national wool museum

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Harry Walter Wilton wagga quilt, c1895,
National Wool Museum Collection

MAKING NEWS



NEW ACQUISITIONS

BANJO PATTERSON MURAL, 1973–1974, BY KEVEN CHARLES (PRO) HART, MBE

Misha Agzarian

The NGV is delighted to welcome the first work by celebrated Australian painter Kevin Charles (Pro) Hart, MBE, into the NGV Collection through the generosity of NGV Foundation Board member Neville Bertalli and Diana Bertalli.

Hart had an interest in drawing and painting from an early age. Growing up on a sheep station near Broken Hill, he would later work as a miner before pursuing art on a full-time basis. He worked predominantly in oils and acrylics, and his vibrant and distinctive depictions of Australian landscapes and Australian rural activity continue to have wide and popular appeal.

Banjo Patterson mural, 1973–1974, is a large-scale, multi-panel work that presents a series of vignettes painted by Hart and inspired by the work of Australian poet Banjo Patterson. In 1974, Hart contributed images to a collection of poems by Australian poet Banjo Patterson and this work featured in the publication.

We warmly thank Neville and Diana Bertalli for this very generous gift, and we are delighted to display the work on level 2 at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia.

MISHA AGZARIAN IS NGV ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FUNDRAISING AND EVENTS.

ART AND LITERATURE

MARKING THE 700TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF DANTE ALIGHIERI

Cathy Leahy

September 2021 marks the 700th anniversary of the death of the Italian poet, Dante Alighieri, whose epic poem *La Divina Commedia (The Divine Comedy)* is one of the greatest works of all medieval European literature. The inventive imagery of Dante's poem, which presents an allegorical journey through hell, purgatory and heaven has inspired many artists, from the Renaissance painter Sandro Bottiicelli in the fifteenth century to the Surrealist Salvador Dalí in the twentieth century. William Blake, artist and poet of the Romantic era, spent the last three years of his life between 1824 and 1827, working on a series of 102 radiant watercolours illustrating *The Divine Comedy*. Thirty-six of these watercolours have been in the NGV Collection since 1920 when they were gifted through the Felton Bequest and are among the Gallery's greatest treasures. They are the crowning achievement of Blake's long career and are recognised for their imaginative response to Dante's text, their expressive force as well as the great richness and subtlety of their watercolour technique.

CATHY LEAHY IS NGV SENIOR CURATOR, PRINTS & DRAWINGS. VISIT NGV.MELBOURNE FOR NEWS ON UPCOMING EVENTS TO COMMEMORATE THE 700TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF DANTE ALIGHIERI, AND EXPLORE NGV'S SIGNIFICANT COLLECTION OF WORKS BY WILLIAM BLAKE.

RESEARCH

VISIT THE NGV CENTRE FOR FRAME RESEARCH ONLINE

Jessica Lehmann

Delve into the history and stories of the framers who worked with Melbourne's leading nineteenth-century artists, through the recently launched NGV Centre for Frame Research virtual hub on the NGV website. Generously supported by the Professor AGL Shaw AO Bequest, the NGV Centre for Frame Research supports and promotes excellence in picture frame research, production and preservation. A picture frame provides a work of art with a visual and historical context, influencing our experience of viewing the artwork. The virtual hub features more than thirty richly illustrated essays and articles, including biographies and a timeline of prominent Melbourne frame makers, tips on caring for frames, and a peek into the toolbox of a frame maker, written by specialists from the NGV Conservation department. Frame conservation and reframing projects completed on a range of NGV Collection works also feature on the website, along with plenty of content to watch. The virtual hub will evolve over time, as we continue researching this important area of art and design. We invite you to explore this exciting resource and hopefully take a closer look at the frames on display next time you visit the NGV.

JESSICA LEHMANN IS NGV CONSERVATION PROJECT OFFICER. VISIT THE NGV CENTRE FOR FRAME RESEARCH VIRTUAL HUB AT NGV.MELBOURNE/CENTRE-FOR-FRAME-RESEARCH

CONSERVATION

PGAV X NGV CONSERVATION COLLABORATION

MaryJo Lelyveld

The Public Galleries Association of Victoria (PGAV) is the peak body representing over fifty art galleries and art museums across metropolitan and regional Victoria. The NGV regularly collaborates with PGAV and is committed to supporting its role in developing public galleries in Victoria and beyond.

Developed by the NGV, the Gallery's Conservation department is proud to present a series of monthly webinars focusing on material specialty preservation practices and innovations in collections care, to support the many small to medium galleries without dedicated conservation staff.

Topics include the preservation of paper-based, photographic, painting and frames collections; setting environmental guidelines to meet preservation and sustainability aims; and virtual condition reporting in the absence of physical couriers who cannot travel with their works of art due to travel restrictions. Over seventy collection managers, registrars, technicians and directors of regional and local galleries attended the May and June 2021 sessions, with an additional twenty-five members accessing online recordings. Attendee feedback has been positive, with 90 per cent of respondents rating their experience as excellent, with many applying their learnings from the webinar to their work practice.

The series continues the success of webinars the NGV presented throughout 2020 on caring for collections during closure and collections disaster preparedness and response.

All 2021 sessions are being delivered online with plans to extend to in-house and hands-on sessions into the future to support ongoing professional development across the Victorian gallery and museum sector.

MARYJO LELYVELD IS NGV COORDINATING CONSERVATOR. LEARN MORE AT PGAV.ORG.AU/PGAV-NGV-CONSERVATION-WEBINAR-SERIES~6475

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

In the final NGV Magazine issue of 2021, we celebrate the opening of *Queer*, the Australian-first exhibition that presents the powerful, moving and sometimes untold queer stories imbedded in the NGV Collection. Spanning five gallery spaces and featuring more than 300 artworks across historical eras and cultures, from Peter Behrens's 1898 print *The kiss* to Zanele Muholi's photographs from her 2015–16 *Somnyama Ngonyama* series, the exhibition will be an expansive thematic presentation of works relating to queer stories.



We also explore the rich collection of important works on bark by women artists from Buku Larrngay Mulka Centre, in Northeast Arnhem Land with the exhibition *Bark Ladies*, and many more stories inspired by the NGV Collection.

(left) **Kevin Charles (Pro) Hart** *Banjo Patterson mural* 1973–1974 Gift of Neville and Di Bertalli through the Australian Governemnt's Cultural Gifts Program, 2020 (above) **William Blake** *Antaeus setting down Dante and Virgil in the Last Circle of Hell* 1824-1827 illustration for *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri (*Inferno* XXXI, 112-143) Felton Bequest, 1920

QUIZ

Can you guess the purpose and origin of these works from the NGV Collection?

BY ELIZABETH GAGE AND MONIQUE NOLAN



1

How was this seventeenth-century ceramic intended to be used?

- **A** Purely for decorative purposes
- **B** As a flower vase
- **C** A drinking fountain
- **D** A jewellery stand



2

This piece from Milan design studio Memphis is a:

- **A** Coat rack
- **B** Room divider
- **C** Game
- **D** Sculpture



3

What is this object by architecture, art and design studio Great things 2 People (gt2P)?

- **A** Stool
- **B** Bedside table
- **C** Vase
- **D** Clay oven



4

Who wore this U-shaped yoke from Mesoamerica?

- **A** Citizens
- **B** Priests
- **C** Ball players
- **D** All of the above – it was the fashion

ELIZABETH GAGE AND MONIQUE NOLAN ARE NGV EDUCATORS. EXPLORE THESE WORKS ONLINE AT NGV.MELBOURNE/EXPLORE/COLLECTION.

Ettore Sottsass (designer), Memphis, Milan (manufacturer and retailer) Carlton room divider, 1981
Answer: B Room divider
The Milan-based Memphis design group challenged the design world with their bold colours, clashing patterns, radical approach and combination of styles. Led by Austrian-born Italian architect and designer Ettore Sottsass (b. 1917–2007) the group included designers from around the world. Influenced by the Art Deco movement and Pop Art, the group was keen to distinguish themselves from the mid-century design of the 1950s and 1960s and the minimalism of the 1970s.

1 De Grieksche A Pottery (Adriaen Kocx) – The Greek a Pottery, Delft (manufacturer) Pyramidal flower vase, c. 1690.
Answer: B As a flower vase
The Pyramidal flower vase, c. 1690, manufactured by the Delft potters was an extraordinary achievement for its time. The base, in the shape of a hexagon, is topped with recumbent frogs that support six tiers. Each of these tiers serve as a water reservoir and are ornamented with open-mouthed animal-headed spouts, intended to hold a variety of flowers, including tulips and roses.

El Tajin, Veracruz, Gulf Coast, Mexico Frog yoke, 400 CE–800 CE
Answer: C Ball players
The U-shaped object, or yoke, was made from granitic rock, weighed approximately 22 kg, and was worn around the waist for ceremonial purposes. The *Frog yoke* dates back to 400 CE–800 CE, and represents the wooden, straw or leather yokes worn around the waist of players of a Mesoamerican ball game during active play. The rules of the ball game vary, although the main objective was to keep the ball constantly in the air between two teams.

Great Things to People (gt2P), Santiago (manufacturer) Revolution stool L, 2016
Answer: A Stool
Revolution stool L by gt2P is a boulder-like stool made from stoneware and coated in re-melted volcanic rock. Experimenting with pieces of cooled lava from Chile's Villarrica volcanos since 2014, gt2P collects a porous lightweight black rock known as basaltic andesite from the volcano slopes to produce the lava coating they call Quitralco, which means 'fire water' in Mapudungun, the language of the indigenous people of south-central Chile and west-central Argentina.

DESIGN STORE & BOOKS

‘Good Design. Good Glass. Good Times’

HOTHAUS FOR NGV DESIGN STORE



Hothaus glass pieces for NGV design store. Photo: Selina Ou

Available now at the NGV design store is a curated selection of glass pieces by Hothaus – a Melbourne glassblowing studio based in Heidelberg West, founded in 2019 by Amanda Dziedzic and Laurel Kohut. We asked Hothaus about the inspiration and creation behind the works.

NGV: What led you to found Hothaus glass studio in 2019?

Amanda Dziedzic and Laurel Kohut: We have been working together since 2015. We would rent time at other private studios in Melbourne to blow glass, often driving all over Melbourne to make our work. We have dreamed of opening our own studio for many years and it took a lot of savings and hard work to finally make it happen in 2019, in a building that has beautiful light and lots of space for us to grow into. 2020 was a tough year because of the pandemic, but we’ve come through it and are finally hitting our stride and seeing beautiful pieces being made in the space that we’ve built.

NGV: Can you describe the inspiration behind your selection for the NGV design store?

Amanda and Laurel: The inspiration was taken from some of the paintings in *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*. We wanted to use the same pastel colour palettes that are iconic in paintings such as *Meadow with poplars*, c. 1875, by Monet, or *Woman with a parasol and small child on a sunlit hillside*, c. 1874–76 by Renoir. We were inspired by the buttery yellow summer tones and the spring greens with pops of pinks and lavender blues.

NGV: Can you take us through the typical process and materials used to craft these pieces?

Amanda and Laurel: We melt our own clear glass from our furnace, which we built ourselves in the studio. The colours we use are made in Germany and come in the form of coloured glass bars, chips or powders. There are various methods of applying the colours to our glass and depending on what you choose you will get different looks. We particularly enjoy layering chunks of the coloured glass and swirling them through our glass as the colours will combine to give quite random and beautiful patterns and effects.

We handblow and handshape all of our pieces using traditional Italian glassblowing techniques, so that every one is unique. Glassblowing is more efficient and more fun in a team, so we have a couple of fantastic assistants who come in and help us with the work. Even though it has been a long road to set up the studio, we are extremely grateful that we get to come to work everyday and create beautiful things by doing something we love.

HOTHAUS PIECES ARE AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE AT NGV.MELBOURNE/STORE.

DESIGN STORE & BOOKS



Golden Shells and the Elegant Games of Japan published by National Gallery of Victoria, 2021

Golden Shells and the Elegant Games of Japan

Edited by Wayne Crothers, with contributors

Golden Shells and the Elegant Games of Japan celebrates the beauty and artistry of *kai-awase,* the historical Japanese 'shell matching' game, and documents the creation of the only complete *kai-awase* set known to be in existence. Consisting of two large lacquer *kai-oke* (shell boxes) and 720 gilded shells decorated with paintings of Japanese and Australian flowers, this unique project commissioned by Dr Pauline Gandel AC explored new mediums of botanical illustration and revived historical lacquer techniques.

This publication includes insightful texts by lacquer artist Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo, academic specialist Yamazaki Tatsufumi, and authors Liza Dalby and Marni Stuart on the creation of this new *kai-awase* set and its broader context, as well as photographs of the contemporary *kai-oke* and all 720 *kai-awase* shells in the project. Japanese incense games and other historical lacquer works are also examined in the book, giving a further insight into aristocratic pursuits of the past and the symbolism of shells in Japanese art.

AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE AT NGV DESIGN STORE ONLINE AT NGV.MELBOURNE/STORE.



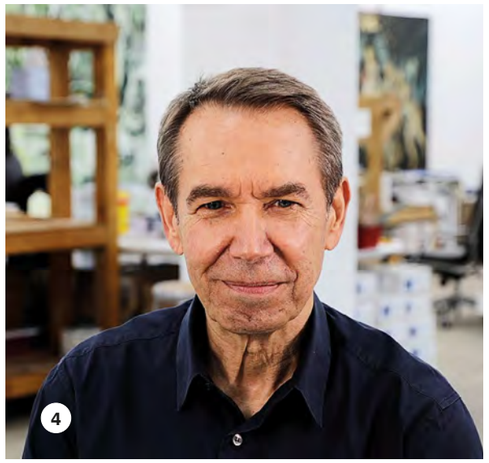
NGV EVERYDAY


1


2



3


4



5

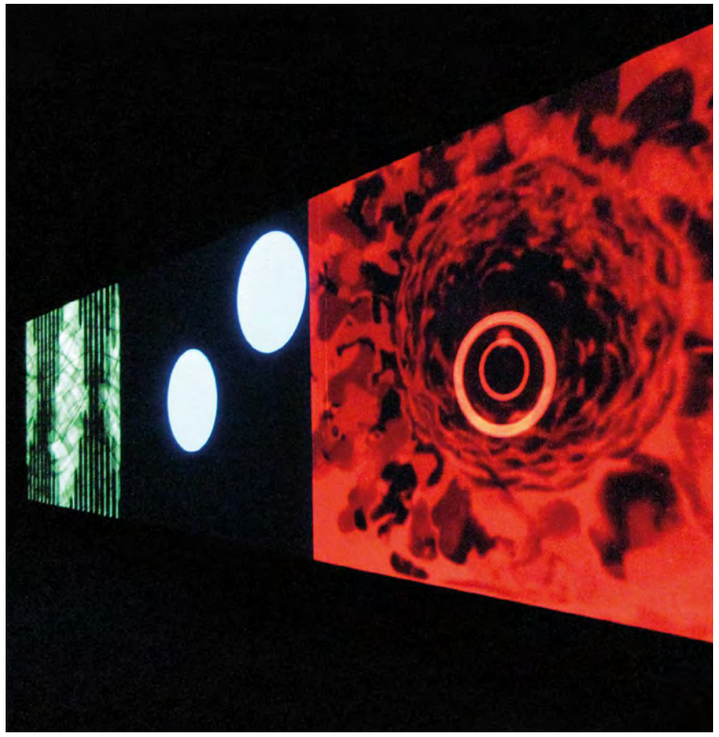

6



7

1. Visitors enjoying Melbourne Winter Masterpieces *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* at NGV International. 2. Tony Ellwood AM, NGV Director, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM, NGV Trustee and Foundation Board member, Danny Pearson, Victorian Minister for Creative Industries, and Janet Whiting AM, President of the Council of Trustees of the National Gallery of Victoria, at the announcement of the NGV summer exhibition *Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto* at NGV International 3. Florian Seidler, Manager Director and CEO, Mercedes-Benz, and Gisela Maier at the Melbourne Winter Masterpieces *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* supporters event at NGV International. 4. Artist Jeff Koons in conversation with Tony Ellwood AM, NGV Director. 5. Brett Wickham, Manager Director, ACCIONA, presents as the Major Partner of *Goya: Drawings from the Prado Museum* at the exhibition's supporters event at NGV International. 6. Artist Camille Henrot in conversation with Pip Wallis, NGV Curator of Contemporary Art. 7. Artist Maree Clarke talks about making possum skin cloaks in a video created for the exhibition *Maree Clarke: Ancestral Memories*. Visit ngv.melbourne to enjoy artist videos, interviews and more.

AROUND VICTORIA



SOUL FURY

Until 24 October 2021
Venue Bendigo Art Gallery
42 View Street, Bendigo

bendigoartgallery.com.au

SOUL fury is a new exhibition of work by contemporary female artists from across the globe. Presented by Bendigo Art Gallery in collaboration with Nur Shkembi, independent curator and scholar of contemporary Islamic art, this premier exhibition brings together the work of leading Australian and international contemporary artists working across sculpture, photography, painting, installation, video and textiles. Gleaned from artists' studios and major national collections, the work of sixteen artists with diverse artistic practices, social perspectives and cultural traditions is delicately threaded to reflect on the essential nature of female agency in the current social and political climate.

RAUMLICHTKUNST

Until 11 February 2022
Venue Australian Centre for the Moving Image
Federation Square, Flinders Street, Melbourne

acmi.net.au

This exhibition presents one of the first multimedia projections ever made, Oskar Fischinger's *Raumlichtkunst*, c.1926–2012, a reconstruction of his multiple-screen film events, first shown in Germany in 1926, and restored by the Center for Visual Music (CVM) in Los Angeles. Working with Fischinger's original 1920s nitrate film, CVM restored the 35 mm film via traditional photochemical processes, transferred it to HD, digitally restored the colour, and reconstructed this three-screen version of his performances. Originally accompanied by live avant-garde percussion, CVM chose two versions of 'Double Music' by John Cage and Lou Harrison, and 'Ionisation' by Edgard Varèse.

FUTURE U

Until 23 October 2021
Venue RMIT Gallery
344 Swanston Street, Melbourne

rmitgallery.com

Speculative and emotionally charged, *Future U* responds to the complex possibilities of the rapid acceleration and convergence of technologies and its impact on what it means to be human. Featuring Bettina von Arnim, Holly Block, Karen Casey, Duckworth Hullick Duo, Peter Ellis, Jake Elwes, Alexi Freeman, Libby Heaney, Leah Heiss, Pia Interlandi, Amy Karle, Mario Klingemann, Zhuying Li, Christian Mio Loclair, Maina-Miriam Munsky, Patricia Piccinini, Stelarc, Uncanny Valley and Deborah Wargon. Curated by Associate Professor Jonathan Duckworth and Dr Evelyn Tsitas. Supported by the Goethe-Institut.

THE MARK OF TIME: CELEBRATING ARARAT'S WOOL HERITAGE

Until 7 November 2021
Venue Ararat Gallery TAMA
82 Vincent Street, Ararat

araratgallerytama.com.au

Ararat Gallery TAMA (Textile Art Museum Australia) holds a distinctive place amongst Australia's public galleries through its longstanding celebration of textile and fibre art. *The Mark of Time* features work by photographer Andrew Chapman OAM taken in April 2021 throughout Ararat and the surrounding region. The exhibition is an ode to the district's association with wool production, capturing the Australian wool story of local properties featuring classic woolsheds, wool growers, and sheep as a reminder to value our past.

WITH THANKS TO THE PUBLIC GALLERIES ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (PGAV). VISIT PGAV.ORG.AU FOR MORE EXHIBITIONS AND THE LATEST COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR VISITORS ATTENDING PUBLIC GALLERIES.

Oskar Fischinger *Raumlichtkunst* 1926/2012
Three screen installation. Reconstruction by Center for Visual Music, USA © Center for Visual Music



CLIFTON PUGH (1924-1990)
Aftermath Fire 1965
oil on board
triptych
signed lower right
120.5 x 90cm
EXHIBITED
The Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1982
(loan label verso)
Estimate: $30,000–50,000

Final Entries Invited

Australian & International Art

Auction 17 October 2021

Enquiries | Deanna Baxter 03 9500 2607
deanna.baxter@gibsonsauctions.com.au

GIBSON'S

gibsonsauctions.com.au

ANOTHER LOOK

French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston celebrates the radical artists at the centre of the French Impressionist movement, including Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Berthe Morisot, Camille Pissarro, Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, Mary Cassatt and Alfred Sisley, all of whom boldly rejected artistic convention of the time in a commitment to experimentalism that would have enduring appeal nearly 150 years later.

MY TOP PICK

By Nour Abdullatif



While it is hard to pick a favourite work in *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* I am drawn to one particular painting: *Fruit displayed on a stand*, c. 1881–82, by Gustave Caillebotte. This work offers me a moment of stillness and calm away from the world's current reality, and for me there is a wonderful sense of nostalgia that comes with the work. There's a saying that every immigrant parent's love language is cutting up fruit to serve to their children at random hours of the evening. For me, that phrase rings true and every time I view this work I'm taken back to different points of my childhood.

I can't help but smile at this painting: I'm remembering the pride in my dad's face as he picks his first batch of figs from the tree in his new home in Melbourne. He picks about ten ripe figs and places them in a wooden bowl to serve to my two younger brothers and I, as we wait in excitement. My dad tells us that the first thing my family did when they left their homes in Syria and Lebanon and reunited in Melbourne was to build the house that we sat in and my grandmother's only request was to have a similar garden as she did back home in Beirut, with room to grow enough fresh veggies and fruit to support our growing family.

I have lived out of the family home for ten years and, even until this day, I am still greeted with a plate of my favourite fruit whenever I visit my family. There is a special feeling that comes with being able to connect with a painting on a personal level – every time I view this piece, I feel as though I am with my family across the globe.

NOUR ABDULLATIF IS NGV TEAM LEADER, FRONT OF HOUSE. THE NGV WARMLY THANKS PRESENTING PARTNER VISIT VICTORIA, PRINCIPAL PARTNER MERCEDES-BENZ AUSTRALIA/PACIFIC, PREMIUM PARTNER HSBC, MAJOR PARTNERS EY AND TELSTRA, AND LEARNING PARTNER THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF *FRENCH IMPRESSIONISM FROM THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON*.

(left) Installation view of *French Impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* at NGV International. Photo: Liz Sunshine
(above) **Gustave Caillebotte** *Fruit displayed on a stand* c. 1881–82. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Fanny P. Mason Fund in memory of Alice Thevin (1979.196)

LIST OF REPRODUCED WORKS AND END NOTES

(cover)
Lavinia Fontana
Mystic marriage of St Catherine c. 1575
oil on copper
48.5 × 33.6 cm.
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2021

pp. 16–17
Kyoko Hashimoto
Guy Keulemans
Bioregional rings 1–12 2021
coal, Yellowblock sandstone, Hawkesbury sandstone, oyster shell, coral, beach stone, drift wood, sea sponge, fishing line, sand, ash, neodymium magnet, glue and sterling silver
Collection of the artists
© the artists
Photo: Trianos Pakioufakis

pp. 20–1
Georgia Nowak
Eugene Perepletchikov
Aurum 2020 (still)
digital video
21mins 19sec
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased by NGV Foundation, 2021

p. 26
Lavinia Fontana
Mystic marriage of St Catherine c. 1575
oil on copper
48.5 × 33.6 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2021

p. 28
Prospero Fontana
Holy Family with Saint Jerome, a female martyr and the infant Saint John the Baptist c. 1552–55
oil on wood panel
102.2 × 82.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1961

p. 29
Lavinia Fontana
Self-portrait 1577
oil on canvas
27.0 × 23.8 cm
National Academy of San Luca
Rome, Italy

pp. 34–5
Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo
Kai-awase shells (*Kai-awase no kai*) 2015 (detail)
shell, gilt, lacquer, colour pigment
various, 6.5 × 8.0 to 8.0 × 9.5 cm (each)
Pauline Gandel Collection of Japanese Lacquer
© Courtesy of Kitamura Studios

p. 36
Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo
Chrysanthemum kai-oke shell boxes (*Kiku maki-e kai-oke*) 2015
lacquer on wood (*maki-e, chinkin*), gold, silver, silk
65.0 × 58.0 × 58.0 cm (each)
Pauline Gandel Collection of Japanese Lacquer
© Courtesy of Kitamura Studios

p. 37
Unryuan Kitamura Tatsuo
Kai-awase shells (detail) (*Kai-awase no kai*)
Hibiscus mutabilis (rose of Sharon or cotton rose) フヨウ 2015
shell, gilt, lacquer, colour pigment
various, 6.5 × 8.0 to 8.0 × 9.5 cm (each)
Pauline Gandel Collection of Japanese Lacquer
© Courtesy of Kitamura Studios

pp. 42–3
Berthe Morisot
La Broderie 1889
oil on canvas
50.0 × 61.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Proposed acquisition with funds donated by Barry Janes and Paul Cross, Paula Fox AO and Fox Family Foundation, Norman Bloom and Pauline Bloom, Myriam Boisbouvier-Wylie and John Wylie AM, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family, Ken Harrison AM and Jill Harrison OAM, John and Rose Downer Foundation, Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax and donors to the 2021 NGV Foundation Annual Dinner and 2021 NGV Annual Appeal, 2021

p. 49
Neri Oxman (designer)
Mediated Matter Group, Cambridge, Massachusetts (designer)
Stratasys LTD, Eden Prairie, Minnesota (manufacturer)
Mask 2, Series 3 2016
Vespers, Series 3 from *The New Ancient* collection
synthetic polymer resin
23.1 × 15.4 × 10.8 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by an anonymous donor, 2018
© Neri Oxman and members of The Mediated Matter Group

p. 50
Susan Cohn
Last the blast 2006 (detail)
stainless steel, ceramic fibre, ceramic cement, titanium, silk cord, digital prints on aluminium and plastic
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2007
© Susan Cohn

p. 51
Ron Mueck
Mass 2016–17
synthetic polymer paint on fibreglass
(1-100) 550.0 × 1487.0 × 5081.8 cm (variable) (installation)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 2018
© Ron Mueck

p. 53
Fred Wilson
To die upon a kiss 2011
glass, steel, plastic
183.0 × 172.0 × 172.5 cm
artist's proof ed. 2/2
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Professor AGL Shaw AO Bequest, 2020
© the artist and Pace Gallery / Photo: Kerry Ryan McFate

p. 54
England
Bedcover c. 1710 (details)
linen, silk (thread)
211.0 × 218.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2021

p. 56
England
Bedcover c. 1710
linen, silk (thread)
211.0 × 218.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2021

pp. 60–1
Dale Hardiman (designer)
Adam Lynch (designer)
Dowel Jones (design studio and manufacturer)
Never grow up, bench 2019
synthetic polymer paint and fibre-tipped pen on European beech (Fagus sylvatica)
91.0 × 141.4 × 53.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2019
© Dowel Jones

p. 62
Marc Newson (designer)
Noritake Co. Ltd (manufacturer)
Cutlery set for the Qantas A380 project 2007 designed, c. 2011 manufactured
stainless steel
(a) 21.0 × 2.0 × 0.5 cm (knife)
(b) 18.0 × 2.0 × 0.5 cm (fork)
(c) 18.0 × 2.0 × 0.5 cm (soup spoon)
(d) 14.0 × 1.0 × 0.5 cm (teaspoon)
Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living Australian Artists, 2021

p. 64
Ker Xavier Roussel
Teaching the dog (L'Education du chien) 1893 (detail)
colour lithograph
32.5 × 19.2 cm (image) 58.0 × 41.0 cm (sheet)
ed. 7/100
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1999

p. 66
Unknown
Bamboo, plum blossom and mandarin ducks 18th century
two panel folding screen: ink, gold paint, pigments on gold leaf on paper, lacquer on wood, silk, brass, copper, paper
171.0 × 186.0 cm (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Konfir Kabo through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2016

p. 67
Japanese
Picnic set 19th century
lacquer on wood, gilt, metal, pigment
(a-k) 35.5 × 34.3 × 20.2 cm (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1888

p. 68
Lee Ufan
Dialogue 2017
oil on canvas
227.0 × 181.9 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Andrew and Judy Rogers and Professor AGL Shaw AO Bequest, 2020
© Lee Ufan, courtesy The Pace Gallery, New York

p. 76
Soni Jogi
Empowered mother 2020
ink on paper
21.0 × 29.7 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, NGV Supporters of Asian Art, 2021
© Soni Jogi, courtesy of Minhazz Majumdar

p. 79
Sonia Chitrakar
COVID-19 scroll 2020
natural pigment on paper, cotton
208.5 × 54.0 cm (image) 212.0 × 56.0 cm (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, NGV Supporters of Asian Art, 2021
© Sonia Chitrakar, courtesy of Minhazz Majumdar

p. 81
Sonia Chitrakar
COVID-19 scroll 2020 (detail)
natural pigment on paper, cotton
208.5 × 54.0 cm (image) 212.0 × 56.0 cm (image and sheet)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, NGV Supporters of Asian Art, 2021
© Sonia Chitrakar, courtesy of Minhazz Majumdar

p. 83
Jusepe de Ribera
Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence 1620–24
oil on canvas
206.2 × 154.5 cm irreg. (image) 207.5 × 155.2 cm (canvas)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Allan and Maria Myers and Andrew Sisson, 2006

p. 84
Anthony van Dyck
Rachel de Ruvigny, Countess of Southampton c. 1640
oil on canvas, wood
222.4 × 131.6 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1922

p. 85
Nicolas Poussin
The Crossing of the Red Sea 1632–34
oil on canvas
155.6 × 215.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1948

p. 88
England / Scotland
Hangings c. 1700
linen, wool
(a-b) 202.0 × 150.0 cm (each)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift from the Estate of the late Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, 2018

p. 94
Kevin Charles (Pro) Hart
Banjo Patterson mural 1973–74
oil on composition board
(a-e) 120.0 × 950.0 cm (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Gift of Neville and Di Bertalli through the Australian Governemnt's Cultural Gifts Program, 2020
© Pro Hart Holdings Pty Ltd

p. 95
William Blake
Antaeus setting down Dante and Virgil in the Last Circle of Hell 1824-1827
illustration for *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri (*Inferno* XXXI, 112-143)
pen and ink and watercolour over pencil and black chalk, with sponging and scratching out
52.6 × 37.4 cm (sheet)
Butlin 812.63; Butlin & Gott 27
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1920

p. 96
(left)
De Grieksche A Pottery (Adriaen Kocx) – The Greek A Pottery, Delft (manufacturer)
Pyramidal flower vase c. 1690
earthenware (tin-glazed)
(a-g) 97.8 × 29.8 × 26.5 cm (overall)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, NGV Women's Association, 2014

(right)
Ettore Sottsass (designer)
Memphis, Milan (manufacturer and retailer)
Carlton room divider 1981
wood, thermosetting laminate, metal, plastic
(a-c) 196.0 × 189.7 × 40.2 cm (overall) (closed)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with the assistance of the National Gallery Women's Association, 1985
© Ettore Sottsass

p. 97
(left)
Great Things To People (gt2p), Santiago (manufacturer)
Guillermo PARADA (designer)
Tamara PÉREZ (designer)
Sebastián ROZAS (designer)
Victor IMPERIALE (designer)
Revolution stool L 2016
from the *Remolten N1: Revolution* series 2016
basaltic andesite, stoneware
44.5 × 34.0 × 35.0 cm irreg.
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017
© great things 2 People (gt2P)

(right)
El Tajin, Veracruz, Gulf Coast, Mexico
Frog yoke 400 CE–800 CE
serpentine
46.0 × 39.0 × 13.1 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Presented anonymously, 1980

p. 104
Oskar Fischinger
Raumlichtkunst
Three-screen installation
Reconstruction by Center for Visual Music, USA
© Center for Visual Music

p. 107
Gustave Caillebotte
Fruit displayed on a stand c. 1881–82
oil on canvas
76.5 × 100.6 cm
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Fanny P. Mason Fund in memory of Alice Thevin (1979.196)
Photography © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. All Rights Reserved

LIST OF REPRODUCED WORKS AND END NOTES

END NOTES

pp. 24–5
Making With
1. High Altitude Research Stations Jungfraujoch and Gornergrat, <www.hfsjg.ch/en/home>, date accessed 2 May 2021.
2. ibid.

pp. 40–5
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1. Albert Wolff, 'Le Calendrier parisien', *Le Figaro*, 3 Apr. 1876.
2. Ibid.
3. Émile Porcheron, 'Promenades d'un flâneur: Les Impressionnistes', *Le Soleil*, 4 Apr. 1876. Alfred de Lostalot, 'L'Exposition de la rue Le Peletier', *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité*, 1 Apr. 1876.
4. Denis Rouart (ed.), *The Correspondence of Berthe Morisot with Her Family and Her Friends: Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, Degas, Monet, Renoir, and Mallarmé*, trans. Betty W. Hubbard, E. Weyhe, New York, 1959, p. 98.
5. Émile Cardon, 'Avant le Salon: L'Exposition des révoltés', *La Presse*, 29 Apr. 1874.
6. Rouart, p. 80.
7. Anne Higonnet, *Berthe Morisot*, Harper & Row, New York, 1990, p. 88.
8. Émile Bergerat, 'Revue artistique: Les Impressionnistes et leur exposition', *Journal officiel de la république française*, 17 Apr. 1877.
9. All of the known reviews of the eight Impressionst exhibitions were reprinted in French, in Ruth Berson, *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886. Documentation. Volume I. Reviews*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, 1996.
10. Ernest Chesneau, 'Groupes sympathiques: Les Peintres impressionnistes', *Paris-Journal*, 7 Mar. 1882.
11. Rouart, p. 107.
12. Rouart, p. 110.
13. Paul du Charry, 'Beaux-Arts', *Le Pays*, 14 Mar. 1882.
14. Armand Silvestre, 'Le Monde des arts: Expositions particulières: Septième Exposition des artistes indépendants', *La Vie moderne*, 11 Mar. 1882.
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16. Armand Sallanches, 'L'Exposition des artistes indépendants', *Le Journal des arts*, 3 Mar. 1882.
17. Rouart, pp. 110, 112.
18. Philippe Burty, 'Les Aquarellistes, les indépendants et le cercle des arts libéraux', *La République française*, 8 Mar. 1882.
19. Albert Wolff, 'Quelques Expositions', *Le Figaro*, 2 Mar. 1882.
20. Rouart, pp. 110–11.

pp. 46–53
Deep Read
1. MIT team, quoted in Ali Morris, 'Neri Oxman's new death masks contain pigment-producing microorganisms', 26 April 2018, *Dezeen*, <https://www.dezeen.com/2018/04/26/neri-oxman-vespers-death-masks-pigment-producing-microorganisms/> , accessed 23 July 2021.
2. Van Badham, 'Skull and bones: Ron Mueck's outsized installation gets under the skin', 25 Dec. 2017, *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2017/dec/25/ngv-triennial-an-arresting-exploration-of-identity-and-exile>, accessed 23 July 2020. For more on the death mask, see 'Death mask', *Britannica.com*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/death-mask>, accessed 23 July 2021.
3. Emily Miranker, 'Pirates, poison, and professors: a look at the skull and crossbones symbol', 19 Sep. 2016, *New York Academy of Medicine*, <https://nyamcenterforhistory.org/2016/09/19/pirates-poison-and-professors-a-look-at-the-skull-and-crossbones-symbol/>, accessed 23 July 2021.
4. Alice Rawsthorn, *Hello World: Where Design Meets Life*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 2013, p. 30.
5. Alissa Eckert, quoted by Alice Rawsthorn, 'Alissa Eckert on designing the "spiky blob" Covid-19 medical illustration', 26 Sep. 2020, *Wallpaper*, <https://www.wallpaper.com/design/design-emergency-alissa-eckert-designs-covid-19-illustration>, accessed 23 July 2021.
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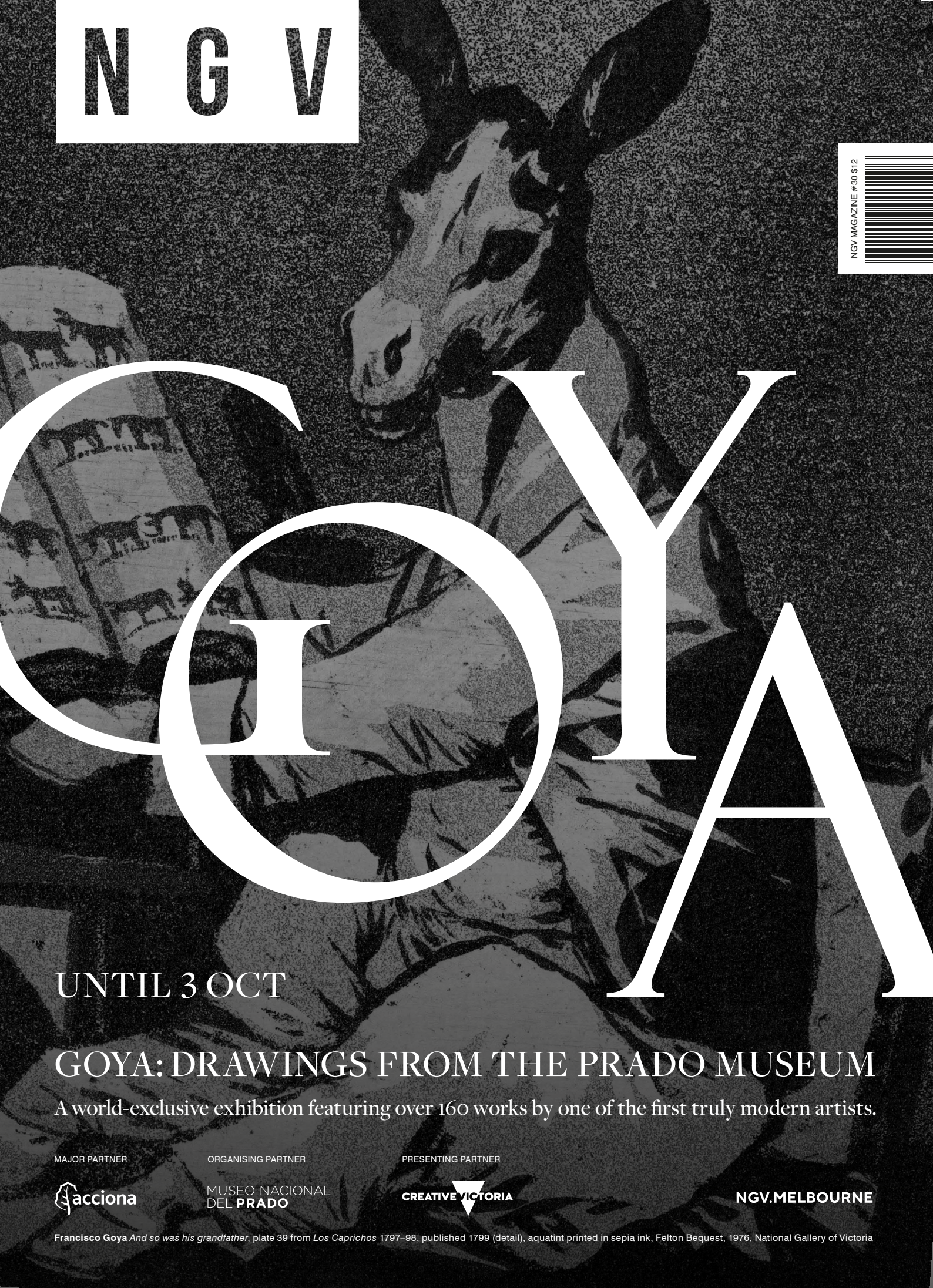
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