



## MEDIA RELEASE

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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## MECCA x NGV Women in Design Commission

NGV International | September 2022 - March 2023 | Free entry



**8 March 2022:** The MECCA x NGV Women in Design Commission is a major ongoing series that invites internationally renowned female designers and architects to create major new and significant work for the NGV Collection.

The five-year series is enabled by a significant contribution from MECCA Brands through its philanthropic program, M-Power, which champions and elevates women in art and design. This is MECCA's single largest commitment to an Australian cultural institution and exponentially expands the NGV's longstanding partnership with the brand.

Over five years, commissioned designers will be revealed annually at an event coinciding with International Women's Day in March, with the

final work being revealed by year's end. The partnership will culminate in a major exhibition to showcase the five bodies of work and the remarkable collection outcome.

The MECCA x NGV Women in Design Commission – the first and only one of its kind in Australia – will create a platform to present topical, world-premiere works of international significance that amplify the contribution female designers are making to shaping our world.

For the inaugural commission – to be unveiled in September 2022 – world-leading Mexican architect **Tatiana Bilbao** will create a large-scale installation combining textiles with architectural structure, drawing on her studio's use of collage, drawing and model making. The commission will be a physical expression of Bilbao's aim to free architecture from the conventions and canon of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; to propose a new trajectory that is focused on community, sustainability and ethics.

Bilbao founded **Tatiana Bilbao Estudio** in Mexico City in 2004 with the aim of conducting architectural design work from a position of social and ecological responsibility. Her work is known for challenging historical conventions, often rearticulating spaces so that they are more people-orientated and inclusive.

Regarded as one of Mexico's most exciting architects working today, Bilbao has worked across institutional, domestic, and low-cost social housing, urban planning and landscape design. Her collaborations with other architects, artists, communities and business professionals continue to enrich the cultural and built landscape of Mexico.

Prior to founding her firm, Bilbao was an advisor in the Ministry of Development and Housing of the Government of the Federal District of Mexico City. Her architectural work was presented at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2018 and is held in the permanent collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris and the Art Institute of Chicago.

The series strengthens the NGV's rich and diverse collection of contemporary design and architecture, which includes internationally significant works by Patricia Urquiola, nendo, Faye Toogood, Formafantasma, Neri Oxman, Teamlab, and Estudio Campana. Since establishing a department of contemporary design and architecture in 2015, the NGV has actively commissioned and collected work by underrepresented designers and architects of diverse backgrounds, genders and geographies.

MECCA's support will help to strengthen the NGV's collection of contemporary design works by women, creating a lasting legacy and advancing the NGV's ongoing efforts towards redressing the historical gender imbalance across its collection.

Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV, said: "The ongoing Women in Design Commission will highlight the ground-breaking work of women in this field from Australia and around the world, as well as strengthening the NGV Collection for future

generations. We are grateful to Jo Horgan and MECCA Brands for their visionary support of this Australian-first initiative and commend Jo Horgan's continued mission to empower women in the creative industries.

"Tatiana Bilbao's is a compelling voice from outside of the traditional canon of architecture, offering a unique perspective on both its history and its future. A woman from North America, an advocate and a spokesperson for change, Bilbao creates work that is as intellectually rigorous as it is visually dynamic," said Ellwood.

Jo Horgan, founder and co-CEO, MECCA Brands, said: "At the heart of MECCA is our striving to empower women and girls through our M-Power program to achieve gender equality, whether it be art, design or education. And, it is through education that sparks creativity."

"We have had such wonderful moments with the NGV through our long partnership, and I am so incredibly thrilled that it has culminated in this MECCA x NGV Women in Design Commission so that we can spotlight the creative minds of women in the design space. To collaborate with designers of such calibre, like global innovator Tatiana Bilbao for the inaugural commission, is truly so special."

Tatiana Bilbao said: "I am deeply honoured and grateful to have been chosen for the Women in Design Commission by the NGV and MECCA. This is contributing in many ways to advance the discourse of the importance of opening channels for people that have been left out of opportunities. When chosen, I took this responsibility very seriously and I am truly thankful for the opportunity."

*The 2022 MECCA x NGV Women in Design Commission will be on display from 7 October 2022 – March 2023 at NGV International, St Kilda Road, Melbourne. Free entry. Further information is available via the NGV website: [ngv.melbourne](http://ngv.melbourne).*

#### **ABOUT THE MECCA X NGV PARTNERSHIP**

Since 2016, the NGV has partnered with MECCA on a number of ongoing initiatives designed to empower and engage female artists and designers, including Naomi Hobson, Louise Zhang, Tammy Kanat, Claudia Moodoonuthi, Atong Atem, Rebecca Baumann and Tanya Schultz.

Each year, MECCA Brands and the NGV collaborate with a female artist or designer to create the brand's annual limited-edition holiday packaging and campaign, which have become sought-after collector's items. As part of the collaboration, MECCA supports the NGV to acquire work by the selected artist for the NGV Collection, helping to enrich its holdings of contemporary art and design. The acquired work is also displayed at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia each year.

The NGV has also worked with MECCA on their M-Power grant which offers emerging female artists and designers a 12-month tailored mentoring program, professional development and networking opportunities, as well as ongoing learning opportunities with industry experts.

#### **ABOUT THE NGV DEPARTMENT OF CONTEMPORARY DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE**

Established in 2015, the NGV's Department of Contemporary Design and Architecture was the first of its kind for an Australian art gallery. The collection features an ever-growing selection of important examples of 21st century international and Australian object design, product design, architecture, contemporary jewellery, craft, speculative and critical design. Exploring the ways in which design enriches culture, economy and society, the collection presents the most interesting trajectories of design and architecture today, from product design to the creation of environments, experiences and services. The NGV presents a range of contemporary design and architecture programs and projects annually, including Melbourne Design Week and the NGV Architecture Commission.

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

#### **ABOUT MECCA BRANDS**

Since opening its doors in Melbourne in 1997, MECCA Brands has completely redefined the Australian beauty landscape, championing retail innovation and delivering the ultimate beauty experience to customers. Founded by Jo Horgan, the powerhouse retailer presents the best in global beauty across over 100 Australian and New Zealand stores, six unique beauty concepts: Mecca Cosmetics, Mecca Maxima, MECCA, [mecca.com.au](http://mecca.com.au) and [meccabeauty.co.nz](http://meccabeauty.co.nz), and now, in China on [mecca.tmall.hk](http://mecca.tmall.hk).

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Images: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/iupcdiz98ydww8g/AABQ\\_zEaLXqCaTFqU2-lxyRBa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/iupcdiz98ydww8g/AABQ_zEaLXqCaTFqU2-lxyRBa?dl=0)

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**Image caption:**

MECCA X NGV Women in Design Commission 2022 Tatiana Bilbao collage

Photo: Tatiana Bilbao ESTUDIO

**MECCA X NGV**

WOMEN IN DESIGN COMMISSION