



## MEDIA RELEASE

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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## Next generation of designers in the spotlight for the 2025 Rigg Design Prize exhibition at NGV, with Alfred Lowe from South Australia announced as winner

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia | 19 September 2025 – 1 February 2026 | Free entry



**18 September 2025:** Opening 19 September 2025 at the Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, the tenth **Rigg Design Prize** exhibition highlights the achievements of Australian designers under the age of 35 working across ceramics, glass, furniture, woodwork, metalwork, textiles, lighting, and contemporary jewellery. With participants debuting new and ambitious works, the exhibition offers a window into the ideas, creative processes, and motivations of young designers, and presents a compelling survey of the most accomplished design being produced in Australia today.

The winner of the \$40,000 prize, Australia's most prestigious accolade for contemporary design, is Adelaide based Aranda artist, **Alfred Lowe**. His ambitious ceramic vessels, *You and me, us never part*, 2025, were unanimously selected by the Prize Jury. The work comprises two large-scale figurative ceramics combining rigid and roughly textured clay with soft raffia adornments, exploring beauty, community and Country. The ceramics stand side by side, each over one metre tall, and speak to the contradictions of love and hate, pain and joy through the friction of these materials.

The prize was judged by a jury of Australian industry leading experts and past Rigg Design Prize winners, including Marian Hosking, jewellery designer (winner of the 2012 Prize) Adam Goodrum, Australian industrial designer (winner of the 2015 Prize), Paul Hecker and Hamish Guthrie of Hecker Guthrie, Melbourne-based interior design firm (winner of the 2018 Prize), and Simone LeAmon, Curator of Contemporary Design and Architecture (winner of the 2009 Prize).

On the winning work, the Jury said: 'We, the jury, are inspired by the ambitious scale and emotional resonance of Alfred's large, figurative ceramic vessels. While grounded in ceramic traditions, Alfred's work pushes decisively into contemporary territory – expressing his Aranda culture and identity in forms that enliven the storied history of design in

this country. His work reminds us that design, at its most powerful, not only shapes material culture but also reawakens our connections to place and to people. We believe these works position Alfred's practice as significant on a global stage. As an early-career practitioner, his work is inventive, accomplished and joyful, and signals a voice in contemporary Australian design with the power to contribute to international conversations on design and making in meaningful and enduring ways.'

Selected from across Australia, the finalists who were invited by the NGV to compete for the \$40,000 Prize are:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Patrick Adeney</b> (VIC, Furniture)  | <b>Nicole Lawrence</b> (VIC, Furniture)                             |
| <b>Kartika Laili Ahmad</b> (WA, Lighting)                                     | <b>Julian Leigh May</b> (VIC, Furniture)                            |
| <b>Ella Badu</b> (VIC, Jewellery)   | <b>Alfred Lowe</b> (SA, Ceramics)                                   |
| <b>Walter Brooks</b> (NT, Object Design)                                      | <b>Marlo Lyda</b> (NSW, Lighting)                                   |
| <b>Dallissa Brown</b> (NT, Ceramics)  | <b>Claire Markwick-Smith</b> (SA, Furniture)                        |
| <b>Andrew Carvolth</b> (SA, Furniture)  | <b>Simone Namunjaja</b> (NT, Object Design)                         |
| <b>Nicola Charlesworth &amp; Kim Stanek - Object Density</b> (NSW, Furniture) | <b>Nathan Nhan</b> (ACT, Ceramics)                                  |
| <b>Samantha Dennis</b> (TAS, Jewellery)                                       | <b>Annie Paxton</b> (VIC, Furniture)                                |
| <b>Carly Tarkari Dodd</b> (SA, Jewellery)                                     | <b>Douglas Powell - Duzi Objects</b> (WA, Furniture)                |
| <b>Hamish Donaldson</b> (VIC, Glass)  | <b>Amy Seo &amp; Shahar Cohen - Second Edition</b> (NSW, Furniture) |
| <b>Jack Fearon - FEARON</b> (QLD, Furniture)                                  | <b>Emma Shepherd - Sundance Studio</b> (VIC, Weaving)               |
| <b>Olive Gill-Hille</b> (WA, Furniture)                                       | <b>Shahn Stewart - Alchemy Orange</b> (VIC, Object Design)          |
| <b>Marcel Hoogstad Hay</b> (SA, Glass)  | <b>Dalton Stewart</b> (VIC, Furniture)                              |
| <b>Katherine Hubble</b> (VIC, Jewellery)                                      | <b>Georgie Szymanski</b> (VIC, Furniture)                           |
| <b>Jay Jermyn</b> (QLD, Lighting)   | <b>Kohl Tyler</b> (VIC, Ceramics)                                   |
| <b>Nicolette Johnson</b> (QLD, Ceramics)                                      | <b>Isaac Williams</b> (TAS, Furniture)                              |
| <b>Lavinia Ketchell</b> (QLD, Object Design)                                  |   |
| <b>Claudia Lau</b> (VIC, Ceramics)  |   |

Through their boundary-pushing approaches to materiality, form and function, early-career practitioners play an important role in the future of Australia's design industries and creative culture. Bringing fresh perspectives, experimenting boldly with materials and processes, and demonstrating a commitment to excellence within their fields, the participants of the Rigg Design Prize 2025 are shaping the next chapter of Australia's craft and design landscape.

**Minister for Creative Industries, Colin Brooks**, said: 'The NGV continues to put our local stars on the global stage and the latest Rigg Design Prize is another great example of this. The exhibition showcases the country's flourishing designers who are looking at a range of materials from ceramics to jewellery, lighting and glass, and the Victorian Government is proud to back this exhibition which celebrates creativity in every form.'

**Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV**, said: 'The 2025 Rigg Design Prize turns the focus to the early-career designers of our country and gives them a career-defining platform to share their work with a wide audience. This prize is an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding creative achievements of our early career designers and will show an incredible breadth of skill and ability from a group who are on the rise in their careers and professional practice.'

**Simone LeAmon, Curator, Contemporary of Design and Architecture, NGV**, said: 'It's a privilege to work alongside this new generation of designers — their talent, imagination, and drive offer a powerful and optimistic glimpse into the future of Australian design. Their work reminds us that design is not only alive and well in this country — it's evolving in bold, brilliant ways that deserve to be seen and celebrated.'

#### **About the Rigg Design Prize:**

The Rigg Design Prize is awarded as an outcome of an exhibition that takes place every three years at the Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia. Exclusive to the NGV, the triennial prize is valued at AUD\$40,000 and awarded to the winner as a non-acquisitive cash prize.

Now in its tenth edition, the prize is Australia's highest national accolade for contemporary design bestowed by an Australian public gallery and seeks to profile a different field of design practice every three years. Since its inception in 1994, the exhibition has featured over one hundred designers across a range of disciplines including interior design and decoration, advertising and communication design, object and furniture design, vessels, ceramics, metalwork, textiles, jewellery and furniture design.

Past award recipients of the prize include Adam Goodrum (2015) for object and furniture design, Hecker Guthrie (2018) for interior design and Leo Burnett Australia (2022) for advertising and communication design.

The Rigg Design Prize is a generous legacy of the late Colin Rigg (1895–1982), a former secretary of the NGV's Felton Bequests' Committee. Previously known as the Cicely and Colin Rigg Contemporary Design Award, the invitational prize was established in 1994 to recognise contemporary design practice in Victoria.

The Rigg Design Prize 2025 will be on display from 19 September 2025 to February 2026 at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Fed Square, Melbourne, Australia. The winning designer will be announced on 18 September. Free entry. Further information is available via the NGV website: [NGV.MELBOURNE](https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au)

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#### IMAGES:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/x9osfvzwnwc1xl6pwlqg7/AE1wt9sF4hzuDOr7lilQwsQ?rlkey=vtol0c9marnl806mzb9a5pspa&st=096mcqjj&dl=0>

**Image caption:** Installation view of Rigg Design Prize 2025, on display 19 September 2025 to 1 February 2026 at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia. Photo: Madeleine Burke

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