



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

MEDIA CONTACTS: MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, NGV
MARION JOSEPH | 0427 147 999 | MARION.JOSEPH@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU
BRIANA TOMASINO | 0408 333 399 | BRIANA.TOMASINO@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU
BERNICE TOMOV | 0402 784 650 | BERNICE.TOMOV@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU
ANNIE ROSS | 0447 679 440 | ANNIE.ROSS@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

Melbourne Design Week 2026: Australia's largest design event showcases the future of food, fitness, furniture and more

Melbourne Design Week 2026 | Various venues across Melbourne | 14 – 24 May 2026



4 March 2026: With a program spanning cane toad couture to interior design trends, robotic limbs to sportswear for a changing climate, Melbourne Design Week 2026 is a national platform for design innovation and imagination from around Australia and the globe. Across 11 days from 14 - 24 May 2026, the Week features an exhilarating program of more than 400 events featuring **Mary Featherston, David Flack, Tom Kundig, Shunji Yamanaka, Alison Page, Ben Mazey, John Gollings, Jon Goulder with Alpha 60,** and more.

Revealing the power of design to impact every facet of contemporary life and culture, the tenth annual Melbourne Design Week program highlights practitioners working at the forefront of dining, fitness, tech, product, architecture, industrial and interior design disciplines. The 2026 program also celebrates the rich legacy of Australian design with a focus on influential luminaries, as well as projects spotlighting Australian-made design across product, innovation, retail and manufacturing by **Danielle Brustman, Studio Shields, Cult, Thomas Maxam, SKUPA with Elliot Rich, Dean Norton, and Tom Fereday.** With events held at venues across metropolitan Melbourne – from the National Gallery of Victoria, Abbotsford Convent, Victorian Pride Centre and more – the 2026 program cements Melbourne Design Week as the country's largest and leading design event.

Major highlights include a keynote lecture at the National Communication Museum from one of Japan's most influential industrial designers, **Shunji Yamanaka**, whose work blurs the boundaries between humans and machines through prosthetics, robotics and product design. A keynote and exhibition at Melbourne School of Design celebrates the twenty-five-year career of **Alison Page**, a descendant of the Dharawal and Yuin people, whose work explores how Blak design can inform and enrich everyday Australian life, and decorated American architect **Tom Kundig**, known for designing residences that connect the inhabitants to their environment, will appear in a talk at the NGV.

At NGV International, interior design takes centre stage with an in-conversation event hosted by *Grand Designs Australia* presenter **Anthony Burke** with Australian design legend, **Mary Featherston**, whose iconic body of work, created alongside her late husband Grant, has come to define Australian mid-century interior environments. **David Flack**, founder of **Flack Studio**, one of Australia's most internationally recognised interior architecture practices, reflects on the projects that have shaped his career, sharing candid insights into his own work and the

designers he most admires in a revealing conversation in a one-night-only event. The NGV's *Interior Design Day*, on Saturday 23 May in the Great Hall, is a full day of talks and discussions featuring industry stalwarts.

Revealing the intersection between design and Melbourne's world-renowned food scene, the 2026 program features a number of hospitality and dining-orientated events for audiences to sink their teeth into. A special in conversation event between executive chef **Hugh Allen** and architect **John Wardle**, *Yiaga: The Craft of Place* explores how design and craft have helped to create the dining experience at Melbourne's newest fine dining restaurant, **Yiaga**. *Table Manners*, an exhibition curated by **Georgia Smedley** at **Florian Home**, presents cutlery from the historic Kraftsman collection alongside new designs by contemporary makers, while designer and chocolatier **Ryan L Foote** presents a collection of edible chocolates inspired by architectural landmarks. Trained architect and chef-restaurateur **Audrey Shaw** of **Carnation Canteen** also hosts a cocktail-hour conversation reflecting on her journey from studio to kitchen.

Celebrating Melbourne's reputation as a sporting destination, the 2026 program puts sports and fitness design in the spotlight. *Nothing New Tournament* is a one day five-a-side soccer tournament that challenges designers and the public to create soccer kits made from materials recycled from the **2026 Asia Cup**. Fusing art and surfboard making, *Perfect Designs* sees Paris-based artist **Lucas Lecaheur** create experimental surf boards for an exhibition hosted by At The Above, and *Outdoor Futures* is an exhibition at Salomon in Emporium that explores how outdoor hiking gear is being redesigned for a changing climate.

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia will be a hub of conversation with free talks featuring emerging and established designers and industry professionals. *What I Wish I Knew Then* pairs early career and industry leaders together for candid, cross-generational conversations and Australian architectural photographer **John Gollings** discusses his creative practice in a special afternoon talk on Sunday 24 May. Commissioned as part of the inaugural MAF x NGV Commission, **Anna Varendorff** debuts a new series of her iconic *U lights and vases*, expanding her hallmark of tubular forms into a striking installation of ceiling lights, suspended vases and monumental floor vessels.

Across the city, brands, galleries and showrooms are staging exhibitions, talks and workshops that connect industry and audiences, including at **Tait**, **Jardan**, **Riva Ceramica**, **Made by Morgen**, **APATO**, **Pieces of Eight**, **Ma House Supply Store**, **Artbank**, **C. Gallery**, **Sophie Gannon Gallery** and **Animal House**. *Muji Made*, an exhibition curated by **Marsha Golemac** and presented by **Muji Australia**, features some of the Japanese lifestyle brand's most enduring products alongside new interpretations by Australian designers. *Aesop: In Response to Place* is an exhibition celebrating the interior architecture of some of the Australian brand's most notable Melbourne storefronts.

Presented by **Stylecraft** and **NGV**, the **Australian Furniture Design Award** (AFDA) will this year reward thought-provoking furniture and lighting designs responding to the 2026 theme 'Living Well Living Small'. AFDA is one of the nation's most significant furniture and lighting design competitions with a \$20,000 biennial prize. The winner will also receive the opportunity to develop a commercial range or product with Stylecraft. An exhibition of the shortlisted works by finalists **Joanne Odisho**, **Isabel Avendaño Hazbún**, **Nika Biggs**, **Besley & Spresser**, and **Aileen Sage** will be presented in the new Stylecraft showroom on Collins Street with the winner announced on May 13.

The **Melbourne Design Week Award**, presented by **Mercedes-Benz Australia** for the seventh-year running, will be awarded to a designer or project for their outstanding contribution to Australia's largest international design event. The winner will be announced upon the opening of Melbourne Design Week. In 2025 the award went to Melbourne-based decorative lighting practice, Volker Haug Studio.

The **Melbourne Art Book Fair**, presented as part of Design Week, has its annual Stallholder Fair from Friday 15 – Sunday 17 May at NGV International. Transforming the Great Hall into a thrumming marketplace of local, national and international publishers, this year's Fair highlights the outstanding work of imprints from South-east Asia, Latin America and the Australian Chinese diaspora. Building on the Fair's celebration of graphic design, there will also be an exhibition of techni-colourful posters drawn from the archives of the **International Poster Biennial of Mexico**, and local artist and designer **Blinkerfluid** will create custom, hand-drawn bookmarks for visitors in his distinctive style influenced by 90s b-boy aesthetics and street art.

With more than 100 exhibitions taking place across the city, the 2026 Design Week program reveals the breadth of design practice in Victoria. *Transformative Repair* at Useful Objects brings together emerging and established Australian artists, designers and craftspeople to reinterpret broken objects through innovative approaches to repair and reuse, including **Lucy McRae**, **Trent Jansen** and **Johnny Nargoodah**. At the Abbotsford Convent, *100 Chairs* presents one hundred Australian-made designs by local designers; and *Lost Hide*, curated by **Emma Elizabeth** and presented by **Local Design**, explores how leather can be reimagined as a vehicle for experimentation, narrative and transformation through bespoke and limited-edition works in upholstered leather. As a closing program at the Abbotsford Convent is a symposium which explores how Australian graphic design is shaped by place — culturally, geographically, socially and experientially presented by AGI, **Michaela Webb** and **Andrew Ashton**.

An initiative of the Victorian Government, Melbourne Design Week has grown in scope and scale from just over 100 events in 2017 to more than 400 in 2026. In 2025, more than 100,000 attended Melbourne Design Week, the largest crowd on record and highlighting the demand for contemporary design experiences in Victoria.

Minister for Creative Industries, Colin Brooks, said: ‘Melbourne Design Week is a spectacular celebration of Victoria’s world-class design industry, which employs thousands of Victorians. From cutting-edge architecture to world-leading tech, this Week highlights the creativity, skill and imagination that makes Victoria a global design destination.’

NGV Director, Tony Ellwood AM, said: ‘Melbourne Design Week is a powerful demonstration of how design can be used to shape the way we live – from the interior of our homes, to the way we eat. In 2026, the program is an expression of the thoughts, concerns and ideas powering the industry – and it’s our privilege to be able to share the talents of our Australian design community with audiences.’

Melbourne Design Week 2026 runs 14 – 24 May 2026 at venues across Victoria. Further information available via the Melbourne Design Week website: [designweek.melbourne](https://www.designweek.melbourne), with the full program to be announced in April 2026.

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Images:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/k3h3uhkz6ff3t97e21u1v/AKi_uNc2p3yUtq3oMjS5my4?rlkey=6fbb63igpo6ixcfuslr1z6la&st=7q8vbxm4&dl=0

Image Caption (L to R): David Flack, Flack Studios, Courtesy of the designer; Ruby Shields, Studio Shields, Photo: Sean Fennessy; Billy Crellin, Studio Dokola, Photo: Sean Fennessy.

Media Contacts:

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

0427 147 999 | marion.joseph@ngv.vic.gov.au

Briana Tomasino, Senior Publicist, NGV

0408 333 399 | briana.tomasino@ngv.vic.gov.au

Bernice Tomov, Media and Public Affairs Coordinator, NGV

0402 784 650 | bernice.tomov@ngv.vic.gov.au

Annie Ross, Media and Public Affairs Assistant, NGV

0447 679 440 | annie.ross@ngv.vic.gov.au

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