



“Completely negligent”: National Trust slammed over maintenance of Polly Woodside

“

A volunteer who has been working on South Wharf’s historic tall ship, *Polly Woodside*, for more than 40 years has spoken out against its owner for neglecting one of Melbourne’s most treasured maritime assets.

”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Neil Thomas, chairman of the Polly Woodside Volunteers’ Association, claims that the National Trust, which manages the heritage ship, had repeatedly ignored a range of maintenance issues for more than 10 years.

The net result of what Mr Thomas described as the National Trust’s “completely negligent” and “non-existent” approach to its maintenance program is a heritage asset, which he said, “isn’t 100 per cent safe” and required urgent dry docking to restore it.

Of most concern, Mr Thomas said, was the presence of black mould in the ship’s deckhouse, which is hazardous to human health.

Other serious issues include incomplete rigging, significant water ingress, rust, and decaying paintwork.

Speaking to *Southbank News* in early March, Mr Thomas said volunteers had been warning the National Trust about the mould issues for more than a month, which he claims had only responded by closing off the affected areas to the public.

“When I saw it last around two weeks ago, it [black mould] was definitely completely visible,” Mr Thomas

said. “It’s got to the stage where they’re not even opening up the galley to the school kids because of it.”

“We [volunteers] can only get in there one day a week and then it’s restricted because there are school groups in usually both the morning and afternoon. And as a result, there’s a lot of the work we want to do, but we can’t do because of the presence of the school kids.”

“The maintenance that should be done to keep the ship up to any reasonable condition is completely negligent and non-existent. We [volunteers] try to do bits, but we just can’t get the time to do it.”

“Paint work on the ship is zero,” Mr Thomas said. “There’s rust everywhere, and at present we’re trying to work on the deck house itself. The canvas on it was torn and the Trust did nothing about it no matter what we said until it reached a stage where the water was pouring in through the timber and the roof to the cabin.”

“Black mould is still present mainly in the galley more than anywhere else. We killed it in the cabins; we thought we’d killed it in the galley as well actually, but we didn’t. Once they [the National Trust] get their cleaners in to kill the mould and clean it up, we’re going to start ripping all the fittings out and rebuilding them.”

Mr Thomas said that while the National Trust had engaged marine contractor BMT to do a survey of the ship, which provided a recommended maintenance program last year, “nothing has been about it so far”.

“We [the volunteers] have gotten to the stage where our youngest member is in his 50s, but most of us are in our 80s, and one is in his 90s so there’s a limit to just how much we can do,” Mr Thomas said. “She [Polly Woodside] is well overdue for a dry dock, which she hasn’t had in more than 10 years.”

“As we’re getting older, we need to train people to replace us. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing maintenance issues with the ship, we’re losing members instead of gaining at a time we desperately need them.”

Southbank News put questions to the National Trust regarding its maintenance program, as well as the series of safety issues raised by volunteers. It didn’t respond before deadline.

Continued on page 5.

PLANNING, PAGE 07

Supermarket
plan near South
Melbourne
Market sparks
traffic concerns

COUNCIL AFFAIRS, PAGE 09

Restoration of
135-year-old
Princes Bridge
under way

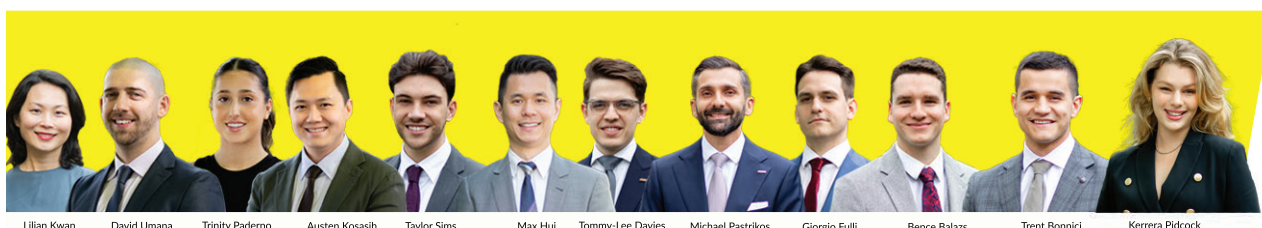
NEWS



ARTS PRECINCT, PAGE 16

Meet Melbourne Recital Centre’s 2024 artist-in-residence

Nat Bartsch, Melbourne Recital Centre’s (MRC) 2024 artist-in-residence, sat down with *Southbank News* to share her reflections on the journey thus far and her plans for the year ahead.



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Captivating artwork goes up on Arts Centre Melbourne hoarding for PHOTO 2024

A new artwork *Chamber Dance* by Melbourne-based artist Zoë Croggon is now on display on the hoarding at Arts Centre Melbourne along St Kilda Rd between Hamer Hall and the Theatres Building (under the Spire) as part of PHOTO 2024.

Zoë Croggon is one of 150 visionary photographers and artists who will feature in 100 free exhibitions held at galleries and unexpected outdoor locations across Melbourne and wider Victoria for the biennial photographic festival.

Influenced by her background in dance, Croggon’s work reflects on dance, the human body, architecture, and history.

As part of this year’s festival, Croggon was invited to comb through Arts Centre Melbourne’s Australian Performing Arts Collection to create a work that responds to the architectural and cultural changes taking place through the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation.

To create the new work, the artist spent several months raking the Arts Centre Melbourne and The Australian Ballet archives, working with dedicated archivists to go through the photographic collections.

“The area of archives I was working with were largely undigitised,” Croggon said. “It was like a pause in time – it was really exciting to access this kind of material.”

Posed with an ambitious creative concept, Croggon initially made a broad selection of images and then spent the next few months finding a way to compound the photographs into a dynamic and coherent flow.

The finished artwork *Chamber Dance* features 24 archive images from the Australian Performing Arts Collection, together with



to create a language of their own.

“I like to think of it as a concentrated visual synthesis of the arts precinct ... and all of the bodies that have gathered, moved, and danced in this space across the past 50 years,” Croggon said.

Chamber Dance is displayed on the hoarding outside Arts Centre Melbourne from March to December 2024. It is free to visit and is wheelchair-accessible.

The hoarding is part of the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation that includes significant upgrades now under way at Arts Centre Melbourne’s Theatres Building. Arts Centre Melbourne remains open throughout the upgrades and continues to welcome visitors. ●



six of the artist’s own architectural photographs. The work is also Croggon’s largest artwork to date, spanning more than 20 metres.

“Most of these images are in their original form – I really enjoyed that kind of work – it feels like you’re breathing new life into something again,” Croggon said.

By reaching back to the history of the precinct, Croggon said the new work drew on the bodies and the buildings fusing together

To learn more about the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation Scan the QR Code



Calls for South Melbourne Primary School to improve sun safety

A parent at South Melbourne Primary School has created a petition calling for better sun-smart measures at the school.

WORDS BY
MARILYN TAN



Kat Hossen, whose daughter in Grade 1 has returned from school with sunburnt arms, nose, and cheeks, is concerned for the safety of children at schools.

“They are exposed to harmful UV radiation during school hours,

especially at pick-up times, without the protection of sunscreen or adequate shade,” she said in a petition launched on change.org, which has since garnered more than 100 signatures.

The students also had to reportedly wait outdoors for parents to pick them up, even when the UV index was three or higher – the threshold where sun protection is recommended. According to Mrs Hossen, this was because the shaded area was too small to accommodate students.

The parent also said that changes were made to the Department of Education’s SunSmart policy, namely the provision of sunscreen.

In a statement, South Melbourne Primary School said, “Our school follows the global policy set out by the Department of Education, Victoria. We have based all of our work alongside their policy templates and were passed as compliant during our review year of 2023.”

However, Mrs Hossen claimed children at the school were not reminded to put on sunscreen, which she believed was not provided by the school, adding that the current school policy mentioned that this was for allergy reasons.

“I’m wondering what has led the school to believe there is an issue with sunscreen from an allergen

perspective and how this differs from the provision of other products such as hand sanitiser and hand soap,” Mrs Hossen said.

She also said that school staff could model more positive behaviours, such as wearing sun-protective clothing and applying sunscreen.

“Based on what we’ve experienced when we raised the issue last year, teachers were wearing hats for a week and then forget about it the next,” she said.

Mrs Hossen mentioned that this inconsistency might lead to “confusing messaging for parents and students, but also increases the school’s risk of claims under



Occupational Health and Safety laws”.

“It’s a big worry for me as a parent,” she said, adding that the school’s clothing policy, which requires students to wear full summer or winter uniforms, did not allow for flexibility in wearing sun-protective clothing. ●

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Southbanker

Julian O'Shea recognised with community history award



Southbank resident and online creator Julian O'Shea has made his community proud, taking home the Digital Storytelling Award at the 2024 Community History Awards on February 2 for his video series, *Unknown Melbourne*.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



The annual ceremony is presented by Public Record Office Victoria in partnership with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria to celebrate individuals who are dedicated to telling local stories through creative and unique history projects.

With millions of views across YouTube, Instagram and Tik Tok, Mr O'Shea's winning series explores the "quirky, weird and wonderful stories" of the city.

"I'm an educator at Monash University teaching media and used to run study tours across the world, but when we all couldn't leave more than five kilometres from the house, I had a bit more time and was still interested in education storytelling" Mr O'Shea said.

"I'm excited to have won; the series has been a real joy to make and it's really funny that things resonate with people and that they've enjoyed hearing these stories about Melbourne and its design."

An "engineer and designer by background", Mr O'Shea utilises some of his professional knowledge to "put together some of the pieces of the puzzle" to Melburnians'

most-pondered questions, from how the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) can be a national gallery of a state, to why so many trucks hit the Montague Street Bridge.

"I think everyone is curious about the world," he said.

"The challenge for educators and storytellers is to talk about topics which are pretty niche and technical at times but do it in a way which is fun and engaging."

Living in Southbank, Mr O'Shea has delved into numerous topics that have long intrigued residents, such as the story behind how the yellow Vault artwork outside the Australian Centre for Contemporary Arts (ACCA) ended up in Southbank, and the purpose of the 450-tonne red smokestack that sits beside it.

"It looks like an artwork, but it's actually not – it's a ventilation pipe from the underground Burnley Tunnel that is underneath it and was designed to safely exhaust fumes out of the tunnel," Mr O'Shea said.

"It's quite nice to hear that people who have lived here for a long time are learning about the city that they spend a lot of time in, because there's not a lot of mechanisms necessarily to learn about the design of our water systems or our street design or our bike lanes – it's been great to fill that gap."

This year, Mr O'Shea will also transform the series into a live show as part of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival (MIF) from March 27 to April 7, titled *M is for Melbourne: The World's Mostly Liveable City*.

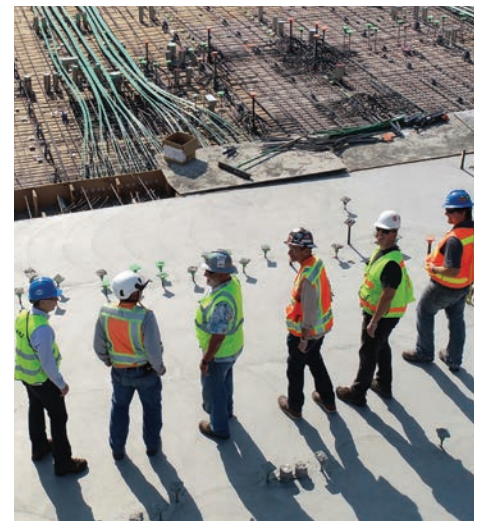
"It will be my first full-length comedy show – I'm excited and nervous," he said.

"This really is one of the great cities to live in with so much access to art and culture happening nearby, it's pretty special." ●

Council almost doubles out-of-hours construction fines

A City of Melbourne councillor has been proactive on the issue after the state government had shown "zero interest" in addressing ongoing breaches.

WORDS BY
DAVID SCHOUT



Builders who start or finish work outside permitted hours will face heftier penalties after the City of Melbourne almost doubled out-of-hours construction fines.

Declaring it an "open secret" that some builders were happy to face a \$2000 fine for working before 7am or after 7pm on a weekday (or outside the allowed 8am to 3pm hours on a Saturday), one councillor said the former fine had lost its "deterrence effect".

At a February 27 council meeting, new local laws were endorsed that will force developers to pay \$3846.20 for starting work early or finishing late, which impacts on the livelihood of residents particularly in Southbank and the CBD where large-scale construction often takes place within metres of residences.

Greens Cr Rohan Leppert first flagged the issue almost four years ago, and was glad that meaningful change could be enacted at the municipal level.

"I initiated the process to remake our local laws for one reason because Melburnians deserve a decent night's sleep," he told *Southbank News*.

"It's an open secret that a handful of builders have been factoring penalties for out-of-hours construction work without a permit into the cost of doing business."

"Because the maximum fines under the old local laws were fixed at \$2000, they have been reducing in real terms and losing their deterrence effect."

"The effect of remaking our local laws is to nearly double those building nuisance related fines and ensure they're indexed annually, while slightly reducing all other fines in real terms."

Cr Leppert, however, said the move would not completely stamp out disruptive builder behaviour that impacted local amenity.

Since calling on the Victorian Government in 2020 to help the council better enforce

rules and deter builders from breaking the law, it was yet to receive a response.

"These changes aren't a complete fix," he said.

"Council has persistently requested that the Planning Minister pursue meaningful and enforceable deterrents against unreasonable noise and nuisance through the *Building Act* and regulations, but to date there has been zero interest from the state government on this issue."

"So, we are doing the best we can with the limited municipal powers available."

The issue of construction noise and disturbance came to a head in 2020 when, shortly after the onset of COVID-19, the City of Melbourne allowed building activity to take place from 6am to 8pm on weekdays as a way to "fast-track projects, save jobs and help limit the economic impact of COVID-19".

The special exemption allowed job sites, usually bound by the 7am to 7pm rules, extra time to offset the time lost to social distancing and other safety measures.

Normal 8am to 3pm rules on Saturdays were also extended by three hours (from 7am to 5pm), giving the industry an additional 13 hours on site per week.

With it, the council saw a significant spike in complaints from locals, many of whom were bound to their homes for large periods of the day due to lockdown laws.

The City of Melbourne made the decision "under delegation" without going before councillors, a move criticised at the time by both planning chair and Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, and Cr Leppert who said it was a "terrible, terrible policy". ●

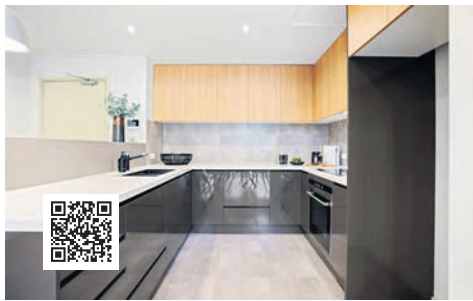
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“Completely negligent”: National Trust slammed over maintenance of Polly Woodside

Continued from page 1.

Launched in 1885 in Belfast, the *Polly Woodside* made 17 trips around the world and operated between Australia and New Zealand.

Used as a coal ship following World War Two, by 1968 it was the last square-rigged deep-water commercial sailing ship still afloat in Australasia.

Since being sold to the National Trust for a peppercorn sum, the *Polly Woodside* has welcomed thousands of visitors on board and was added to the Victorian Heritage Register in 2007.

The ship was last restored in 2008 during the redevelopment of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC), but Mr Thomas said many of the maintenance works started since its refurbishment had never been completed.

According to the National Trust’s website, the *Polly Woodside* is currently only open to the public on the first and third Sundays of each month, for an open day and a “pirate day”, respectively.

The ship’s condition and the surrounding area where it’s berthed at South Wharf has also been subjected to recent scrutiny by the Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network (MMHN), with its chair Jackie Watts describing it as a “squandered asset”.

Ms Watts, a former City of Melbourne councillor, cited a range of issues with the area’s present appearance, including degraded signage, graffiti, litter, and tired window displays.

“MMHN regards this space as the Southbank Maritime Precinct, which includes the heritage-listed *Polly Woodside* and dry dock, pump engine room, wet dock, signal pole, buoys, anchors, re-purposed goods sheds and the Merchant Seafarer memorial,” Ms Watts said.

“The site remains a degraded blight on Southbank riverside – a squandered



MMHN chair Jackie Watts at the *Polly Woodside* precinct. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

“The site remains a degraded blight on Southbank riverside – a squandered maritime asset in the public realm.”

maritime asset in the public realm.”

Part of the issue, according to Ms Watts, was establishing who had oversight over which areas of South Wharf, with multiple stakeholders in the area, including the Victorian Government, National Trust, Parks Victoria, Plenary and Vicinity.

She said the issues raised by volunteers were credible and were evidence that the National Trust struggled to both manage and finance a maritime asset like the *Polly Woodside*.

In 2022, the Yarra River Business Association (YRBA) commissioned a report into the potential establishment of a dedicated maritime precinct at South Wharf, which revealed that key marketing agencies weren’t willing to support its promotion until the heritage product offer was a lot

stronger.

“South Wharf has great potential to be Melbourne’s key maritime heritage zone, but it needs a lot of preliminary work to tidy it up and to interpret its story,” YRBA president Jeremy Vincent said.

“At this stage, no organisation seems to have the appetite, or the money, to undertake the works, so we’re hoping that Greenline’s proposed maritime precinct will also encapsulate South Wharf and so present both banks as Melbourne’s best place for visitors to experience the city’s maritime past.”

As part of Lord Mayor Sally Capp’s signature Greenline project along the north bank of the Yarra River, the City of Melbourne is seeking to establish a “maritime precinct” near the Mission to Seafarers.

Cr Capp said that with “tens of thousands of people visiting the precinct each day, we want to ensure it [South Wharf] remains a vibrant and welcoming place for everyone.”

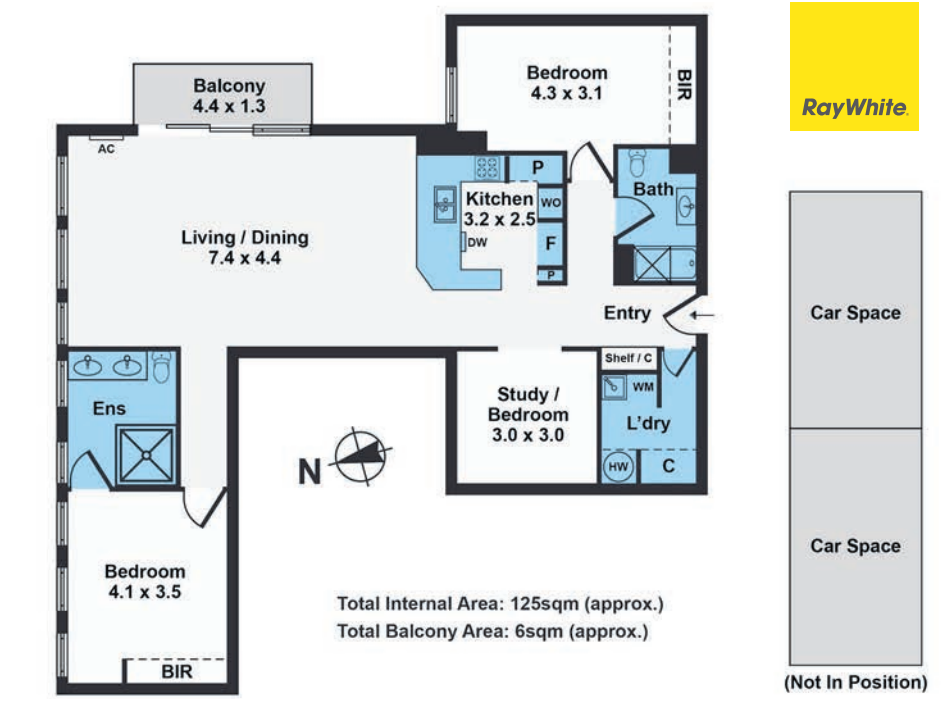
“We’ll continue to work with the Victorian Government and Parks Victoria on projects and initiatives to further revitalise the area,” the Lord Mayor said.

A spokesperson for MCEC said it had participated in master planning workshops with the City of Melbourne and other stakeholders for the Greenline project, which includes considerations for a maritime precinct across both North and South Wharves.

Southbank News also sent questions to the National Trust regarding the upkeep of its precinct surrounding the *Polly Woodside*, as well as the establishment of a dedicated maritime precinct. ●



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Planned supermarket **next to South Melbourne Market** prompts concerns of “traffic chaos”

A contentious proposal to build a supermarket as part of a massive commercial development next to the South Melbourne Market has been endorsed, despite a backlash from residents and businesses.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The City of Port Phillip gave the greenlight to amended plans which would see a 5368-square-metre super site bounded by Cecil, York, Northumberland, and Market streets developed across 15 parcels of land.

A permit was initially approved in 2019 by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for an eight-storey building, including offices, shops, and food outlets following an appeal by objectors.

But in amended plans presented to the council's planning committee meeting on February 29, Melbourne-based developer GLG Management Pty Ltd proposed to add a supermarket, a commercial car park, an office floor expansion, and more retail shops on the ground floor, as well as increasing the building's height to 10 storeys.

The supermarket would be located across the road from the iconic South Melbourne Market

– with Woolworths, Coles and Aldi supermarkets also within just a stone's throw away.

Under the amended plans, the property at 78 Cecil St contains a heritage hotel building, which is proposed to be incorporated but adapted back to its historic use as a hotel.

The amended application also proposes to provide a range of public realm works to Cecil St, as well as within the Cecil and York streets' nature reserves, including new seating areas.

But the fresh plans attracted 16 objections, including concerns that the changes would be “a transformation of the proposal”, and that a supermarket would have an adverse impact on the vitality of Clarendon St, along with non-compliance with the design and development overlay, impact on heritage, traffic impacts, car parking and the impact of loading on Northumberland St.

A council report noted that a consultation meeting was held on October 24 last year, which was attended by the Gateway Ward councillors, the applicant, objectors, and planning officers.

While the meeting resulted in "no formal changes" being made to the application, the applicant reviewed the proposed loading arrangement to the supermarket "which is now proposed to be changed so that loading vehicles would enter and exit the loading area in a forward direction".

The report also said, "the

massing of the building towards Market St protects the northern façade of the South Melbourne Market and adjoining public realm from overshadowing”.

Objecting to the plans was Jan Talacko, who has an office in Northumberland St. He said that while he supported development of the site, the plans were inappropriate and would cause "traffic chaos" around the market, among other issues.

"It's inconceivable I think that the trucks which I think are 12-and-a-half metres long, will be able to neatly and efficiently enter Northumberland St and load the market, particularly if they're prevented from doing so on market days," he said in his address to the council meeting.

Samuel Hurst, who owns an office in Northumberland St, said he did "feel there's an expectation from the community that the council also factors in common sense and also an eye to the future in their decision making".

"If you go down and stand in Northumberland St and you try and imagine a stream of 12.5-metre trucks driving into Northumberland St without causing a whole lot of negative ramifications for the area in the street, I don't think your common sense says yes to that."

In response, the council's Gateway Ward planning coordinator Scott Parkinson said the planning permit included conditions "for a loading management plan



and it can operate during market hours”, which had to go through a planning process.

"There will be a planning compliance issued that are in breach of that planning permit," he said.

Blair Parkinson of Woods Bagot architects said the development would add to their suite of "great city-defining projects".

"We really do see it as a nexus between Melbourne city and with the historic South Melbourne and it is part of the expanding capital

city growth," he told the meeting.

Mr Parkinson said after revisiting the original permit, they went back to "square one and we've put a strong focus on the ground plane and how this can really be part of that South Melbourne community".

"And we do see a symbiotic relationship between our development and the market on the future direction of the market to really be something that will strengthen it." ●

A vibrant poster for the FOVA 2024 Festival of Veterans Arts. The background features bold, flowing waves in shades of blue, purple, and orange. At the top left, the acronym 'FOVA' is rendered in large, white, block letters. The letter 'O' is replaced by a circular emblem containing icons for a camera, a guitar, a microphone, a paint palette, and a video camera. To the right of 'FOVA', the year '2024' is written vertically in white. Below the acronym, the full name 'FESTIVAL OF VETERANS ARTS' is written in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. Underneath that, the dates '15 - 24 MARCH' are displayed in a larger, bold, white font. In the top right corner, the text 'FREE PUBLIC EVENTS' is written in white. Below it is a square QR code. To the right of the QR code, the text 'FULL PROGRAM:' is followed by the website 'fova.org.au' in white. The lower half of the poster is divided into three columns, each featuring a white event title and date. The first column on the left reads 'MARCH TO ART: FORM ART EXHIBITION' followed by '15 MARCH - 25 APRIL'. The middle column reads 'CREATIVE AGENCY SUMMIT' followed by '23 MARCH'. The third column on the right reads 'LIVE MUSIC AT THE SHRINE' followed by '24 MARCH'. At the bottom left, the text 'AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL VETERANS ARTS MUSEUM' is written in white. The bottom right section contains two rows of logos. The first row is labeled 'CULTURAL PARTNERS' and includes logos for ADF Creative, Prince's Trust Australia, the Australian Navy, unforgiving60, the Australian Army, the Australian Air Force, The University of Melbourne, and the Shrine of Remembrance. The second row is labeled 'SPONSORS' and includes logos for XKG, augility, HORSELL, and the Melbourne Experience.

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Derryn Hinch to run for Lord Mayor, declaring: "Make Melbourne proud again"

Derryn Hinch, the broadcast legend and former senator, has announced he will contend for the position of Lord Mayor of Melbourne later this year.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



Photo: Natwick

He has vowed to shake things up and ensure the city comes back to its best by tackling graffiti, illegal e-scooter behaviour, people experiencing homelessness, and traffic issues.

Mr Hinch confirmed with *Southbank News* that he would run for Lord Mayor, saying he still has the "fire in my belly" to take the reins of the city's top job.

"I was approached by people at the City Council who said, 'do you want to be Lord Mayor,' and I thought 'give me a week, I'll think about it,'" he said.

"Stealing from the NT [tourism logo], I thought well, you'll never, never know if you never, never go."

Despite being 80, Mr Hinch said he was in good health, and was "going to hospital next week [early March] just for a check-up to prove that I'm as good as I say I am".

The City of Melbourne's council election is set to take place later this year, with current Lord Mayor Sally Capp yet to reveal if she will run again.

Mr Hinch, a popular media personality who is known for his outspoken nature and relentless pursuit of justice, said there was much to do to "Make Melbourne proud again".

He said he wants to see more graffiti gone, and while he believed Lime and Neuron hire e-scooters should not be banned, rider rules should be enforced to improve safety.

"You've got to work out better ways to control them. I walked out and nearly fell over one the other day; it was sitting right on a pedestrian crossing," he said.

"I think we have to educate the users to be more responsible and also the operators.

"I'm seeing school kids in their uniforms five at a time, scooting along with the helmets on top of handlebars, which is nuts."

Mr Hinch also believes councillors need to go back to basics and not be debating the crisis in Gaza for four hours, which was the "best example where we're going wrong in my view".

"It's a very important issue, but it's not for a council. I grew up with the three Rs, which are rates, roads, rubbish. That's what we should be concentrating on."

"I think people get a bit too woke at times ... stick to your knitting. We're not the United Nations. We're trying to make the city a better place for the people of Melbourne."

He said that when he grew up, "city councillors were councillors. You didn't know what their politics were".

"You didn't have the Labor politicians on the City Council or Liberal or National. You were just the City Council because you believed in the city, and I would love to see that again."

Mr Hinch said the city had to improve traffic flow, and while he supported bike lanes, "we don't need them everywhere".

Furthermore, he is keen to explore an idea proposed by a former Lord Mayor, which was to install lockers for people experiencing homelessness "where they can put their gear and their bedding at nighttime and have some sort of pride instead of walking around with their life in a Coles basket".

Mr Hinch said he also promised to cut out travel junkets, saying "if it's a genuine trip, maybe to a sister city and to achieve something that is fine, but if it is just a junket, no way".

"Also, if I'm elected there will be no limousine parked outside Town Hall, I can tell you," he added.

Mr Hinch said he was yet to decide on a running mate but will "make an official announcement in three or four weeks".

He added age was no barrier for his candidacy, noting he was not as old as US President Joe Biden, nor singer Paul McCartney who "just finished a world tour" at 81.

"I did a thing recently [on radio] where they said there should be an age limit for politicians. And I said, 'what minimum age do you suggest?' They didn't get the joke." ●



Restoration of 135-year-old Princes Bridge under way

The City of Melbourne has begun restoration works at Princes Bridge as part of a major facelift that the council says will enhance its "distinctive historic features".

The bridge is one of the city's busiest and most prominent gateways, linking Southbank to the CBD with a range of popular cultural, historic, sporting and entertainment attractions.

Restoration works are being carried out in sections, including cleaning, repairing, and replacing bluestone blocks and restoring heritage features.

Princes Bridge was built in 1888 to accommodate Melbourne's booming population following the gold rush period. It replaced a single-span bluestone and granite arch bridge (1850 to 1884) and the wooden trestle bridge (1844 to 1852) that came before it. Over the years, the bridge has evolved with the city to accommodate electric trams after being reinforced in 1924, removing lead-based paint from the ironwork in 2006 and becoming more pedestrian-friendly with the introduction of single lanes in each direction in 2013.

It is one of the oldest river crossings in the CBD and has undergone minimal repairs in its 135-year lifetime, until now.

Detailed restoration work has begun on site and will be completed in stages over the next three years.

In announcing the works in February, Acting Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the council was doing everything possible to minimise disruption to the community during the project.

"We're restoring this 135-year-old landmark to its full glory – bringing its heritage features back to life and ensuring it can continue to connect residents, workers and visitors for years to come," Cr Reece said.

"We're doing everything we can minimise disruption to our community while we undertake these important works and thank everyone for their patience." The restoration project is also one of the first to display artwork around the site as part of the council's Creative Hoardings project – with a thought-provoking work to be installed, titled *Remembering* by Yorta Yorta man, historian, cultural educator, and artist John Patten.



The council's Creative Melbourne portfolio lead Cr Jamal Hakim hoped the new artwork would "start conversations and add more colour and creativity to our great city".

"As a long-term project and one of the first to display our Creative Hoardings artwork, it will be a prime example of how we're transforming construction sites into vibrant and appealing spaces," Cr Hakim said.

Access under and along the bridge will be maintained throughout most of the works. Melburnians and visitors will be notified of any short-term closures and diversions. For more information about the Princes Bridge Restoration project, scan the QR code: ●



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RUN for the KIDS
SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024
runforthekids.com.au



Have fun with your family
and raise money for the
2024 Good Friday Appeal.



Council overwhelms itself on Israel-Hamas conflict

City of Melbourne councillors spent four hours debating a war taking place on the other side of the world at its February 20 meeting, which expectedly drew usual questions about local government overreach.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



While everyone has their views on what the role of local government should be and which “lanes” it should remain in, this latest example of a council veering into foreign affairs should only raise the question around “good governance”.

To Docklands Cr Jamal Hakim, and many other sitting councillors, when it comes to the current war in Gaza, “good governance” is making a statement on behalf of Melburnians affected by the conflict in an effort to preserve our city’s proud multicultural values.

Cr Hakim, who brought the motion to the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, highlighted that more than 100,000 Palestinians had been killed, injured, or declared missing since the war began.

These numbers, together with the many Israeli civilians who continue to be held hostage by Hamas, are not something that any member of our community, politician or not, can ignore.

As a major international city, Melbourne is home to many people from all over the world with diverse backgrounds, all of whom will be feeling the impacts of this tragic conflict in Gaza differently.

It’s far from the first time the council has

formed a position on an international issue either. Only recently it terminated its sister city relationship with St Petersburg amid the war in Ukraine. It’s also called for the release of Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, who is a Melbourne resident.

And the conflict in Gaza is sadly having real-world impacts for the people of Melbourne. The rise of antisemitism and Islamophobia is a disgusting and unfortunate reminder of this fact.

The motion on February 20 introduced by Cr Hakim sought to take a stand for the thousands of innocent Palestinians who have lost their lives in the war against Hamas and help give voice to constituents in Melbourne feeling this pain.

But while few could disagree Cr Hakim had nothing other than the best of intentions in bringing the debate to Town Hall, it’s also not hard to argue that this process could have, and should have, been handled a lot better.

It’s understood Cr Hakim and Lord Mayor Sally Capp had agreed that the City of Melbourne ought to make a statement reflecting the pain being felt on all sides of this conflict in our city, while calling for peace and unity.

Fair enough. And “a statement”, championing peace, while condemning atrocities on both sides issued at the beginning of the meeting before the usual agenda of council business kicked off, perhaps is all it should have been.

But as the Lord Mayor prepared to go on leave amid changing circumstances and further consultation with those groups affected in the community, Cr Hakim took on the responsibility of drafting a motion – one which ultimately made its way onto the meeting’s agenda, inviting media attention, fierce debate and some 200 protestors to rally outside Town Hall.

It was often noted during the debate that

the council should be commended for providing a space for people to have their views and feelings heard on this issue. Absolutely. We’re fortunate to live in a city where this is made possible.

As beloved Melburnian and council regular Chris Thrum said during the meeting, “peace be in this room”.

But ultimately, “good governance” is a balance between practicality and pragmatism. Pragmatism is not shying away from important issues, local or global. It’s having the courage of conviction to do what’s right, and not what’s easy. But the practicality of government is also recognising reality, and the need to deliver real-world outcomes.

While symbolic, all the debate largely achieved was eat up four hours of a council meeting stacked with incredibly important items. These included the Queen Victoria Market southern site development plan, a new homelessness strategy, a developer contributions plan for Fishermans Bend, a neighbourhood planning update, a fair access sport and recreation plan, and a motion on guidelines for the adaptive reuse of city buildings.

Some of those community members who attended the meeting had to wait until after 10pm to have their say on these issues that fall under the auspice of local government, unlike the motion on Gaza which dominated proceedings.

And after close to three-and-a-half hours, Cr Hakim’s motion was ultimately voted down five to five, with Acting Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece using his casting vote to sway the outcome.

Ironically, Cr Reece then put forward an alternative motion, which in his words was “less divisive”. It was unanimously supported.

Despite Cr Hakim saying it didn’t go far enough in calling out the disproportionate response by Israel in its fight against Hamas, he too ultimately voted in favour.



▲ Acting Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece addresses the media the morning after the debate.

At the end of it all, “good governance” might have recognised the need for clear communication from the outset, which might have helped ensure a similar outcome was achieved via a simple statement read out at the beginning of the meeting.

What transpired was a ridiculously long debate, a whole range of unnecessary security concerns for people attending, and no material impacts on the war in Gaza itself.

In the future, the council would be wise to ensure that all matters relating to foreign affairs, albeit with local significance, go through a more rigorous process to provide for a more efficient outcome.

The power of good governance compels it. ●

Sean Car
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Festival of Veterans Arts 2024 comes to Southbank

The Festival of Veterans Arts 2024 (FOVA24) will celebrate the creativity and talent of war veteran artists at the iconic Southbank Arts Precinct from March 15 to 24.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



Presented by the Australian National Veterans Arts Museum (ANVAM), a veteran-led charity and cultural institution, the

festival will include exhibitions, workshops, live performances, talks, and a one-day summit focused on the creativity of the veteran community.

The first festival of its kind, organisers said the event would celebrate the lives of veterans and their service but also seek to expand perceptions of why and how veterans engage in the arts.

“Through FOVA24, we aim to celebrate and champion the veteran artist community, our culture and the invaluable contributions as artists, employees, and thought leaders,” ANVAM’s head of arts programs Tanja Johnston said.

“Creativity is a currency. It can be utilised for mental health

and wellbeing, as a pathway to employment post-service, and as a means of connecting with a community of fellow creative veterans.”

Among the event’s highlights will be a welcoming and networking event, live music at the Shrine of Remembrance, and an array of artistic engagements, an exclusive program for the veteran community featuring workshops, and a Creative Agency Summit on March 23 at the Victorian College of the Arts. ●

For more information: fova.org.au





**Your State MP
for Albert Park**

Please reach out if you need any help.

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ACTION not words.

Rough sleepers “tip of the iceberg” in homelessness crisis

The City of Melbourne has launched a new homelessness strategy to address the city’s “housing and homelessness crisis”

WORDS BY
DAVID SCHOUT



People sleeping on Melbourne’s streets were just the “tip of the iceberg” in the city’s homelessness crisis, with many more women and children sleeping in cars or on couches according to the City of Melbourne.

The council’s comments come as it put forward a new Homelessness Strategy 2024-30, which aimed to respond to a “vastly changed social and political environment” since its previous guiding document (2014-17).

A draft version of the new strategy has been underpinned by research undertaken in 2022-23 and was endorsed by councillors at the February 20 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

According to the 2021 census, 1163 people were experiencing homelessness in the City of Melbourne, and 130 people were sleeping rough.

However, these statistics were taken during COVID-19 when the Victorian Government accommodated people sleeping rough in hotels during this period, which could account for the decrease.

Statistics from 2020, for instance, indicated more than 300 rough sleepers in the municipality, many of whom congregate in the CBD.

The new strategy reiterated that homelessness was something people experience rather than “who they are” and underlined that it “can happen to anyone at any point in their lives”.

“In our city, we are facing a housing and homelessness crisis, a situation mirrored across Australia and the world,” the document stated.

“Visible homelessness, people sleeping rough on the streets, is just the tip of the iceberg in our homelessness crisis. Many more women, children and families are part of the hidden problem – sleeping in their cars, on other people’s couches and in severely overcrowded or temporary accommodation.”

The strategy prioritises four cohorts: Aboriginal people, people experiencing long-term homelessness, women, and

young people (aged 15 to 25).

The council said that these groups had “unique needs not currently met within Melbourne’s homelessness system”.

Aboriginal people, for example, were “vastly over-represented” in Melbourne’s homelessness population.

Despite accounting for just 0.5 per cent of the City of Melbourne’s population, five per cent of people experiencing homelessness and 15 per cent experiencing chronic homelessness were Aboriginal peoples.

People experiencing long-term homelessness (for 12 months or more) are identified within the new strategy as having “multiple and complex needs”, which often involved mental health difficulties.

The cohort has elevated rates of depression and substance abuse, often used as a method used “to cope with the dangers, stress and anxiety they face”.

“It is now widely understood that housing alone is unlikely to be an adequate or lasting solution (for this group). Many who have been sleeping rough for an extended time have experienced deep trauma and violence, have complex needs and require physical and mental health support.”

The strategy indicated that the number of women with young children who don’t have anywhere to live has “risen dramatically in the past five years”, with family violence the “primary cause”.

It also indicated that one in six clients of homelessness services in Melbourne are aged 15 to 24, yet the current system “focuses on adults”.

“Young people are caught in this system, and their unique service and housing needs go unmet.”

Research underpinning the strategy identified “many problems” with the homelessness service system at present, including short-term and unstable funding and timely access to healthcare (including mental health).

Police have improved system for rough sleepers, cracking down on fake beggars

Through Operation Protocol, a partnership outreach program with the Salvation Army and the council, Victoria Police say they’ve helped lower the number of rough sleepers in the CBD and better balanced supporting people experiencing homelessness while maintaining safety and amenity.

“No one should ever sleep or be left on the street. It is not a safe location to sleep,” Area Commander for Melbourne East Inspector Dale Huntington told *Southbank News*.

Inspector Huntington said people



causing more issues, particularly at the nearby southern end of Elizabeth Street in the CBD, but also in Southbank, were not rough sleepers that were known to police.

Rather, they were people posing as beggars who travel into the city and “take advantage” of “Melbourne’s generosity”.

“We’ve got a really robust system now in looking after those people (rough sleepers) and engaging with the appropriate government authorities in relation to people who need to be housed and supported,” he said.

“These are not those people. We can comfortably say now that we’re dealing with these people behind the scenes who need assistance.”

“This is a different thing we’re looking at. This is a thing that’s impacting people walking on the streets, especially those with a disability, and impacting businesses who are trying to make a dollar.”

“We’re looking out for those who need help – the homeless. But for people who are coming here to do the wrong thing they will be moved along, if not processed in some shape or form.”

In 2022 the police and the council confirmed that a group of people were travelling into the CBD to beg on the streets despite having accommodation, with much of this activity reported to be taking place along Southbank Promenade.

Inspector Huntington said that, for

traders, improvements were possible, starting with better lines of communication, and urged businesses to report issues.

“We’re saying we want you to ring in, we want you to be part of the solution and help us address this issue.”

“When people set up their piece of cardboard out the front of your premises ... if you’re competing with someone who hasn’t got a person begging out the front, you’re losing customers. We want you to report those people in.”

Locals urged to have their say

Community consultation for the draft homelessness strategy is open until April 7, and the council has committed to undertaking “tailored engagement” with people with a lived experience of homelessness, and key local stakeholders including traders and residents.

Health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio lead Cr Olivia Ball said where the council set its priorities and objectives was “critical to this strategic work” and welcomed public

For more information:
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au



The 2024 Southbank Directory is out now

The Directory is a guide to, and celebration of, business throughout Southbank, as well as our world-class waterfront surrounding Yarra River.

To explore all that the precinct has to offer or find a local business, visit southbankdirectory.com.au.

To get your copy, advertise, contribute or feature your business, please contact jack@hyperlocalnews.com.au





Head to the banks of the Yarra River, Birrarung Marr and the Alexandra Gardens for the platinum jubilee of Australia’s largest community festival this Labour Day long weekend.

Moomba has been enchanting Melburnians with free, family-friendly fun since 1955 – proudly owned and delivered by the City of Melbourne.

Join us this year for skate competitions, world-class water sports, face painting, dance workshops, live music, kids’ yoga, carnival rides, karaoke, bubble and magic shows, ukulele lessons and much more across five magical days.



ACCESS AND INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

We’re introducing relaxed hours for people who are sensitive to bright or strobing lights, loud music and sounds on Friday 8 March from 4pm to 6pm.

People with hidden disabilities are also invited to collect free sunflower lanyards on-site throughout the festival. These are a discreet sign to our trained staff that you may need extra assistance.

MOOMBA MONARCHS: DOWN MEMORY LANE

This year’s Moomba monarchs are children’s entertainer Emma Memma and comedian Peter Helliard.

The tradition of crowning Moomba monarchs dates back as long as the festival itself.

In the earliest days, a queen was chosen in a beauty contest. Finalists were judged on their self-confidence, poise and ability to answer tough questions like: “How many sheep are there in Australia?”

A string of non-Australian monarchs later caused controversy, and none more so than the 1977 King of Moomba – Mickey Mouse. Mickey received a pie to the face and a mock crowning of Blinky Bill was staged in protest.

Dame Edna Everage and Molly Meldrum were among the local personalities crowned in the following years.



A PARADE OF ALL NATIONS

The Moomba Parade is the much-loved centrepiece of the festival, promising a special kind of magic driven by the community.

Around 1800 people from dance troupes, cultural performance groups and marching bands participate in the

parade alongside a fleet of impressive floats and giant puppets. Look out for the giant new ladybugs this year.

The image below shows Tia Hutajulu wearing a beautiful costume designed and made by Ganda Marpaung in last year’s Moomba parade.

Hailing from Indonesia, Tia belongs to the Bonapasogit Victoria community and the ExtravaGanda group.

“I enjoy being in the parade because I’m not just watching, but participating directly in the very famous, colourful and amazing Moomba festival,” Tia said.

“The parade gives me the opportunity to share my country’s cultures by wearing our traditional costumes and by doing traditional dance.”




KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay connected with all the latest news from the City of Melbourne, follow us on social media and subscribe to *Melbourne News* at news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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CITY OF MELBOURNE



Moomba Monarchs Emma Memma and Peter Helliart

MOOMBA ARTEFACTS ON SHOW

In celebration of 70 years, a special Moomba collection has been curated at Melbourne Town Hall with a showcase of all things Moomba from over the years – from monarchs’ robes to a bottle of vintage spumante.

Tours of our Art and Heritage Collection are free and available year-round, however this special collection will be on display until 8 March. Bookings essential. Search for the Art and Heritage Collection Tour at whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au

SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMY

Moomba has been certified carbon neutral since 2022.

The Alexandra Gardens will be powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity, and our organic waste collection alone will divert more than 4.5 tonnes of food waste from landfill. That’s equivalent to 450 watermelons or 22,5000 curly potatoes.

The event also supports more than 800 jobs across a range of sectors, including the arts, creative, construction and services industries.



People watching the parade in 1987

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/moomba

MUST-SEE MOOMBA MOMENTS

MOOMBA MASTERS

All weekend

Ooh and ahh as an elite field of Australian and international water ski and wakeboard athletes complete on the Yarra. There’ll be slalom, tricks and jumps galore as participants vie for the coveted Moomba Masters title.



Moomba Masters athletes

BJORN AGAIN

Saturday 9 March

Dancing queens and super troupers can relive the magic of ABBA’s 1977 Moomba performance at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl when world-renowned tribute show Bjorn Again takes to the stage as the sun sets.



A firefighter takes the leap for charity



Children enjoy a carnival ride

BIRDMAN RALLY

Sunday 10 March

See courageous competitors don inventive homemade flying devices and hurtle themselves over the Yarra in the Birdman Rally from 11am. It’s all in the name of charity, and good fun.



Cultural dancers in the parade

MOOMBA PARADE

Monday 11 March

See larger-than-life floats, dance troupes, community groups and performers pass by as the epic Moomba Parade weaves through the leafy surrounds of Linlithgow and Birdwood avenues, finishing near the Shrine of Remembrance and Royal Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre. The parade begins with a smoking ceremony at 10.45am. If you can’t make it, tune in to Channel 9 from 1.30pm.

IN BRIEF

OUT AND ABOUT ACTIVITY GUIDE OUT NOW

Discover why Melbourne is a great place to age with our latest Out and About Guide.

Our updated guide has a variety of free or low-cost events, activities, services and support information in the City of Melbourne that promote healthy ageing and social connection.

From regular community meals to gardening groups, tech help to historical tours and plenty more, there’s something to suit all interests and to help keep both body and mind active.

Pick up a free copy at your local library, neighbourhood centre or community hub, or read it online at melbourne.vic.gov.au/outandabout



PASSIONATE ABOUT PARKS?

Expressions of interest are open to join City of Melbourne’s Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee. People from all backgrounds, with experience or an interest in parks and gardens, horticulture, ecology, landscape design or health and wellbeing are invited to apply.

Committee advises Council on a range of technical and community issues involved in sustainable management of the City of Melbourne’s parks, gardens and urban landscapes.

For more information and to express interest before 8 March, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/parks-gardens-committee

NEW SMALL CBD PARK PROPOSAL

A new small park is being proposed for the corner of MacKenzie and Victoria streets in the CBD. Review the plans and have your say before 11 March at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/mackenzie-street-greening



Artist’s impression of the proposed park

Australian National Veterans Arts Museum honoured with community award

A world-first Veteran’s Public Arts Trail that weaves together history and the creativity of war veterans, extending from the CBD to Southbank, has been recognised with a prestigious award.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



Designed by The Australian National Veterans Arts Museum (ANVAM), the trail is a four-kilometre path from Little Collins St to the Victoria Barracks in Southbank and features 20 public artworks and buildings created by about 20 different members of the war veteran community.

In recognition of their outstanding initiative, which was made possible with the collaboration of Open House Melbourne, ANVAM was honoured with a commendation as part of the Public Record

Office Victoria’s Community History Awards.

ANVAM chairman and director Mark Johnston who led the trail, which concludes at the former Repatriation Clinic at 310 St Kilda Rd, said it served as a power narrative in showcasing the individual experiences and perspectives of veterans.

“As a museum, it’s important to us to be working with a modern-day veteran community and to showcase the stories of contemporary veterans to the broader community and to help facilitate contemporary veterans to tell their story through the arts,” Mr Johnston said.

“Part of that is looking to our history and our heritage within the veteran community, what veterans have done not on the battlefield but in the arts, which has happened in and around the battlefield.”

“Trench art, for example, is a form of art that that emerged out of WWI and maybe earlier, but certainly WWI which is a way veterans kept themselves busy and



occupied.”

The public arts trail includes 3D sculptures and 2D murals as well as buildings and other landmarks designed or sponsored by veterans as artists, architects, and arts patrons.

Veterans include the world’s oldest practicing veteran artist, Erwin Fabian, of North Melbourne who lived to 104 years old; Nora Heyesen, who was the first woman to win the Archibald and is one of 14 veterans to have collectively won more than a third of all Archibalds, and Sir Robert Risson, who was credited with saving Melbourne’s tram network.

There’s also a sculpture on St Kilda Rd of Australia surgeon Sir Edward “Weary” Dunlop, created by Peter Corlette, whose father served in WWII.

The statue at Kings Domain is part of the City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection, and honours Dunlop’s leadership while being held prisoner by the Japanese during WWI.

“It is just one of many such life-size sculptures around

Melbourne,” Mr Johnston said.

“I started on the journey to look at the local examples of that and there was just such a plethora of that around Melbourne and South Bank and Melbourne, CBD and Southbank, that it became an obvious thing to want to showcase that to the public.”

The commendation was part of the Local History Project Award category, which Mr Johnston said was a “source of pride” as he believed the trail was “the only one of its type in the world”.

ANVAM hopes to recruit volunteers who would like to host the trail, and welcomes expressions of interest via anvam.org.au/volunteer

Tours of the trail were held last year and will be staged again as part of Festival of Veterans Art 2024 in March and the Open House Melbourne weekend in July.

ANVAM has applied for grant funding to support the development of its capability to regularly host the unique trail through Melbourne and Southbank. ●

Elevate your events at AC

AC Hotel by Marriott Melbourne Southbank puts effort into the details and experiences that really matter to create memorable events.

Discover unique and versatile spaces to host a conference, meeting, or special occasion.

At the heart of the hotel lies Miro, a sophisticated venue designed to raise events and gatherings to new heights. Overlooking Melbourne’s skyline from level six and featuring an expansive outdoor terrace, Miro sets the stage for memorable moments, fostering creativity, collaboration, and connection.

Ideal for a corporate meeting, a product launch, or a private celebration, Miro provides a versatile canvas for creating

unforgettable experiences. With seating for up to 100 guests or space to host up to 200 guests in a cocktail-style reception, every event is tailored to perfection.

Guests can enjoy a specially curated menu with a variety of canapes by executive chef Ryan Flaherty and a wide selection of drinks. Miro offers the flexibility to be divided into smaller spaces and features state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment which is complimentary for all guests, an abundance of natural light by day and a backdrop of stunning city lights by night.

Adjacent to Miro, Bar de Buceo is a relaxed, casual space overlooking the hotel’s pool deck and outdoor terrace.

Perfect for social events and celebrations, guests can order a drink at the bar before enjoying city vistas under the glass-roofed all-weather outdoor terrace. Bar de Buceo can cater for up to 100 guests or combined with Miro, host a function for up to 380. The perfectly precise experience extends past the event spaces and into the 205 thoughtfully designed guest rooms and suites, inviting and multi-functional public spaces, heated infinity pool,



Spanish-inspired dining at Sorolla restaurant and the sleek ambience of Bar Triana, where AC signature gin and tonics offer a refreshing conclusion to the day’s adventure. Venture beyond the hotel and discover Melbourne’s iconic attractions, from the sun-kissed shores of St Kilda to the bustling stalls of the South Melbourne Market and nearby CBD laneways.

With each step, uncover the city’s rich

tapestry of culture, art, and cuisine, all within easy reach of AC Hotel by Marriott Melbourne Southbank. ●

For more information:
achotelmelbournesouthbank.com



Pedestrian safety biggest issue on online Southbank page

Pedestrian safety has emerged as the biggest issue on a new online Southbank portal, the City of Melbourne has revealed.

WORDS BY
DAVID SCHOUT



In its first review of 10 online hubs, launched in late 2022, and covering each suburb across the municipality, the council revealed that Southbankers were particularly concerned with walking through postcode 3006.

The portals, introduced as part of the council’s Neighbourhood Model in 2022 that sought to better understand and work with different communities, are dedicated spaces allowing residents to keep up to date with all things, have a say on their area’s future

and share local issues.

This includes details of upcoming events, construction activity and general local news and information.

One issue, the council said, came through loud and clear.

“Pedestrian safety has emerged as a key priority in Southbank following several truck incidents along City Rd and some near-misses involving bicycles and e-scooters along Southbank Promenade,” the review stated.

The terms “City Rd” (36 times) and “pedestrian safety” (29) are the two most-used terms on the Southbank page to date.

This was followed by “green space” (26), “dog park” (14) and “police presence” (13).

In 2023, council consultation on the Southbank Pedestrian Study resulted in 1160 pins being dropped on a Southbank map identifying areas of safety concern.

At the February 20 Future Melbourne Committee

meeting, councillors backed a motion for a “pulse check” on the Neighbourhood Model, which aims to “measure changes in community perceptions” since the last consultation in 2022.

The council’s health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio chair Cr Olivia Ball said the pulse check represented the “next stage in the evolution of our Neighbourhood Model”.

“We already, of course, have the neighbourhood portals, which are online places where we have two-way interaction between the community and the council,” Cr Ball said. “We have this knowledge bank where we are building up that information and drawing conclusions from it, partly with AI.”

“This innovation of what we’re calling a pulse check is to retest the validity of the models that we’re using so far and to fill the gaps where we know that certain groups in the community are underrepresented, such as young

people defined as under the age of 30, local businesses and the full gamut of multicultural communities, to make sure we are hearing their voices in proportion to their presence in the community.”

As part of the Neighbourhood Model, the council has employed a “partner” for Southbank (and all nine other neighbourhoods), who acts as the main point-of-contact on specific issues within the area.

Southbank’s neighbourhood partner, the council said, had been working with building managers to better understand communication channels within individual high-rise buildings. Some buildings already offered digital platforms to enable residents to communicate with each other and exchange second-hand items.

“Through the brokering work of the Neighbourhood Partner, some buildings have set up new physical noticeboards, and others have updated their policy so people can utilise the noticeboards in the

mailrooms,” the report stated.

“Southbank Library has recently reported an increase in attendance (with 1500 more visitors in May compared to April) at their library following targeted information being shared by the Neighbourhood Partner through the new noticeboards and other channels within high-rise buildings.”

It is hoped that, long-term, the initiative will allow the community to better connect with the council by helping share its ideas for the future. The City of Melbourne has previously acknowledged that there were vast differences in different suburbs within the municipality (for example, between Southbank and East Melbourne) and said the “place-based” neighbourhood approach would ensure it could understand and respond to unique communities.

Findings from the pulse check will come back to councillors by June 30. ●

Community and sustainability in our vertical villages

On Monday, February 12, I had the privilege of welcoming an assembly of leaders to the Strata Community Association's Senior Leaders Forum, held in the heart of our city.

WORDS BY
CR JAMAL HAKIM
CITY OF MELBOURNE



This gathering, spanning two days, cast a spotlight on the evolving landscape of strata management, and its critical role in the sustainable development of urban communities like Southbank, and in particular large-scale complex buildings.

Our city, with more than 76,000 residential apartments, is a testament to the allure of vertical living. Indeed, more than 83 per cent of Melbourne's residents choose this lifestyle, a choice I personally resonate with as a Docklands apartment dweller.

This preference reflects not just a trend but a significant shift towards a compact, efficient, and socially vibrant urban life.

However, the charm of high-rise living comes with its unique challenges, particularly when it comes to fostering a sense of community on the ground level.

In Southbank, where the streets are alive with an array of interactions, building a cohesive community requires more than just shared postal codes. It demands an additional layer of effort, a commitment to nurturing connections not just within, but between the towering structures we call home.

The Senior Leaders Forum delved into these issues, aligning closely with the City of Melbourne's own ambitions, especially in areas like accessible affordable housing, climate change, and the critical retrofitting of buildings to meet modern sustainability standards. These discussions are not academic; they are vital, touching directly on the lives of every residents.

Our city's skyline, dotted with cranes, signals robust growth and development. Yet, this physical expansion underscores a pressing need for effective strata management, ensuring the wellbeing and satisfaction of our residents.

The recent construction boom, promising more than 6200 new dwellings, is a double-edged sword. It provides much-needed homes and jobs but also highlights the

urgent necessity for sustainable urban planning and community integration.

Tackling these challenges is essential, and success hinges on our collective effort to enhance our community. The power of collaboration and open dialogue is evident in the achievements of groups like Southbank3006, who, in partnership with the City of Melbourne, have significantly fostered community spirit.

Our learnings and shared experiences to shape communities here will offer unique opportunities to advance the development of new areas like Fishermans Bend and Macaulay.

Yet, as we forge ahead, we're confronted with the reality of our environmental impact. Buildings are the silent giants of carbon emissions, accounting for 66 per cent of the city's total. Our ambitious goal to decarbonise the grid by 2030 and achieve zero net emissions by 2040 hinges on our ability to retrofit existing structures. This task is daunting but necessary, as more than 80 buildings annually need upgrading to meet these targets – a stark leap from the current average of seven.

Collaboration with the strata sector is vital in navigating this path to sustainability. Our Retrofit Melbourne plan, is not just a city project; it's a community mission. We must co-design this journey with the myriad owners, managers, and residents who make up our city's fabric.

The forum was not just a meeting of minds but a call to action. The decisions made by our strata leaders resonate through the lives of thousands, shaping the legacy of our urban landscape.

As we continue to build up, we must also reach out, ensuring that our vertical communities are integrated into the bustling life of Southbank and beyond. This integration is crucial for the health, happiness, and sustainability of our urban environment.

The SCA's Senior Leaders Forum was a reminder of our shared responsibility. As residents, and leaders, we must work together to ensure that Southbank, and Melbourne at large, remains not just a collection of buildings, but a community of diverse, vibrant, and sustainable homes. ●

Energy efficiency, energy costs and investment in renewables

The Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program is the largest energy efficiency program in Australia, giving all households and businesses the opportunity to save on energy costs through discounted energy efficient products and services.



WORDS BY
NINA TAYLOR
VICTORIAN MP FOR ALBERT PARK

More than 530,000 Victorian households and businesses benefitted from energy efficient upgrades through the VEU program in 2022, saving an estimated 7.8 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

More than two million households and 150,000 business premises have participated in the VEU program since it commenced in 2009.

This equates to around 78.5 million tonnes in greenhouse gas emissions savings.

The program has reduced Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions by more than 75 million tonnes to date with average annual bill savings of \$110 for participating households and \$3700 for participating businesses.

What is government doing to ensure a reliable and affordable energy supply for businesses?

The Victorian Government is ensuring a reliable and affordable energy supply for businesses through the range of nation-leading targets, programs, and projects that it is delivering as part of our renewable energy transition.

We've laid the groundwork for the creation of new, cheap, renewable energy through our energy policy framework, which includes:

- emissions reduction targets of 75 per cent to 80 per cent (on 2005 levels) by 2035 and net zero by 2045
- renewable energy targets of 65 per cent renewable energy generation by 2030, and 95 per cent by 2035
- energy storage targets of at least 2.6 gigawatts of energy storage capacity by 2030 and 6.3 gigawatts by 2035

- offshore wind targets of at least two gigawatts of offshore wind capacity by 2032, four gigawatts by 2035 and nine gigawatts by 2040.

We're helping deliver the initiatives that will boost the amount of renewable energy in our system, including wind, solar and energy storage projects such as:

- the 204-megawatt Bulgana wind farm, part of the Bulgana Green Power Hub in central-west Victoria,
- the 102-megawatt Glenrowan solar farm near Wangaratta (one of hundreds of megawatts of renewables projects to be delivered through the second VRET reverse auction), and
- the 300-megawatt Victorian Big Battery in Geelong, the biggest lithium-ion battery in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Victorian Government is working to empower gas-reliant Victorian businesses to embrace sustainable alternatives to fossil gas and improve access to an affordable, secure, reliable, and safe energy supply.

What about energy dense businesses like data centres?

I recently attended the opening of the 927-kW solar PV system at the Equinix Port Melbourne data centre. The solar facility has been supported by the Victorian Government's Victorian Energy Upgrade (VEU) Program.

The project is being delivered by Planet Ark Power and the VEU incentive is being facilitated by Northmore Gordon Environmental, a VEU Accredited Provider. The VEU discount covered approximately 25 per cent of the total system cost and helping to save approximately 7678 tonnes of greenhouse gas. ●

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METRO MELBOURNE



Department of Transport and Planning



Yentl returns to Melbourne at Malthouse

Yentl's highly anticipated return to Melbourne for a second season hints at a sensational run, playing from February 29 to March 17 at Malthouse Theatre in collaboration with Kadimah Yiddish Theatre.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



Based on the iconic short story by Isaac Bashevis Singer, which gained widespread recognition through Barbra Streisand's 1983 musical film, this original theatre adaptation explores "gender, identity and love" and pays homage to traditional Yiddish culture.

"When Kadimah Yiddish Theatre approached me about working on this project, I read the original short story and was just so shocked and astounded at how different the short story is from the film, and really how much deeper and darker and more complex and more nuanced it is," director and co-writer, Gary Abrahams said. Yentl tells the story of a young woman with a "burning desire" to study religious scripture, challenging the societal and cultural barriers of her time that forbid women from studying. When her father dies, Yentl emancipates herself and dresses in male guise to pursue her studies, but must confront the collision of religion, gender, and sexual politics

with her Yiddish culture.

"It's the story of a young woman's fight for recognition, for freedom, for equality," Mr Abrahams told *Southbank News*.

"It's a very feminist story, but there's also a really interesting sort of non-binary and trans argument at the heart of the story because Yentl feels she's got the body of a woman but the soul of a man, so she kind of moves forward trying to reconcile those two sides of her." Featuring a talented ensemble of just four actors, Mr Abrahams describes the show as "highly theatrical", exploring "big issues in a very funny, Shakespearean kind of way".

"The whole thing comes alive like a pop-up storybook, like a fable," he said.

"There's a certain sort of Tim Burton-esque quality to the way we're telling the story which reveals the sort of fable and the morals and the lessons at the heart of the story."

While it's "rare in Australia with original works that you get more than one season", the return season of Yentl is a truly unique addition to Malthouse Theatre's 2024 program.

"The Malthouse Theatre is one of my favorite theatres in Melbourne, I love this venue - it's such a pleasure and a privilege to be here and be showcased here," Mr Abrahams said.

"If the audience think they know the story, then this will kind of upend any notions they have - it's a very modern piece of theatre and it's very entertaining." •



◀ Evelyn Krape and Amy Hack
Photo: Jeff Busby

Meet Nat Bartsch: MRC's 2024 artist-in-residence

Nat Bartsch, Melbourne Recital Centre's (MRC) 2024 artist-in-residence, sat down with *Southbank News* to share her reflections on the journey thus far and her plans for the year ahead.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



A pianist, composer, owner of her own record label, Amica Records, and "proudly neurodivergent", Ms Bartsch has recorded eight studios albums and toured domestically and internationally, and has received two ARIA nominations for her albums *Forever More* and *Hope*.

Weaving through jazz and neoclassical landscapes, her work is meditative, lyrical, and enjoyed by people from "all walks of life".

"I came from a family that really valued music. People in my family were musicians themselves, so I started learning piano at a really young age," Ms Bartsch said.

"It took me a long time to get to a place where I realised I wanted to try and do music as a career, but I slowly found my way in terms of becoming a solo artist."

The invitation to join MRC as their artist-in-residence marked a pivotal moment for Ms Bartsch, arriving during a period of personal and professional pressure.



"When I got the email, I just cried. There's no formal application process for the residency, they just select someone each year, so I didn't see it coming at all," she told *Southbank News*.

"The invitation came at a time where I was completely overwhelmed with the business of self-managing my solo career and was just kind of collapsing under the collective weight of it all. It felt like all that hard work was appreciated and acknowledged, and that my commitment to music had been noticed by someone else - it was like this reassurance that I was on a good path."

During the first half of her residency, Ms Bartsch is gearing up for the release of her new single, *Hope (for orchestra)*, on March 8, followed by a performance with her jazz quartet on May 17 of her piece *Busy/Quiet*.

The performance will form part MRC's broader Intimate Salon Experiences program, which Ms Bartsch hopes will "reach the neurodivergent community in a meaningful way".

"I found out that I was autistic and ADHD after I

became a mother, it was a complete perspective shift and my whole family environment changed," Ms Bartsch said.

"I want to create a really neuro-affirming narrative for people like me who might have just been diagnosed and maybe don't feel so much yet that it's a superpower like I do."

"It certainly suits a neurodivergent brain to be a professional musician - there are a lot of skills that you need and a lot of commitment and passion that neurodivergent people often have. But in saying that, there are some real challenges working in the industry for neurodivergent folks."

Ms Bartsch says that "things like networking and going to other people's gigs and industry events is really difficult", which she aims to address through a series of artist meet-ups for the neurodivergent community.

"I'm basically trying to design a social event for people that kind of hate social events," she said.

"Even if you don't end up coming, just the knowledge that there is this community and this space where you're welcome is really valuable."

Describing Southbank as her "creative heartland", Ms Bartsch is looking forward spending the year in a place where "the arts is really valued".

"In this area of Southbank, you feel really accepted and embraced for who you are, which is really beautiful," she said. "It's a sense of community that I've only experienced in Southbank and nowhere else - it's amazing." •



CHRIS MAY

Capturing “abstraction and construction” with Chris May

Mature age photography student Chris May is pushing the boundaries of digital photography, capturing the “beating heart” of cities through his geometric lens.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



Previously working as an art director and graphic designer, Chris eventually made the decision to “pick up the camera” himself and pursue a Bachelor of Photography at Photography Studies College (PSC).

Now in his fourth and final year of study, Chris is still balancing the challenges that come with a full-time academic workload.

“I explore photographic abstraction, which addresses themes centred around architecture and the inner-urban environment while at the same time acknowledging early 20th century and late 20th century influences from the Bauhaus period,” he told *Southbank News*.

“Most of my family were in building and construction in one way or another – I remember when I was a kid, colouring in my father’s architectural drawings. It’s kind of stuck with me, that whole emphasis on building and architecture.”

Fascinated by “the subject of the city”, Chris utilises his “graphic designer eyes” to dive beneath the surface of our urban environments.

“Cities are always changing, they become monuments to human progress I think,” he said.

“People are always tinkering with the city, like Dan’s Big Build, for instance – his construction blitz is something that fascinates me, that’s a project I’m working on now.”

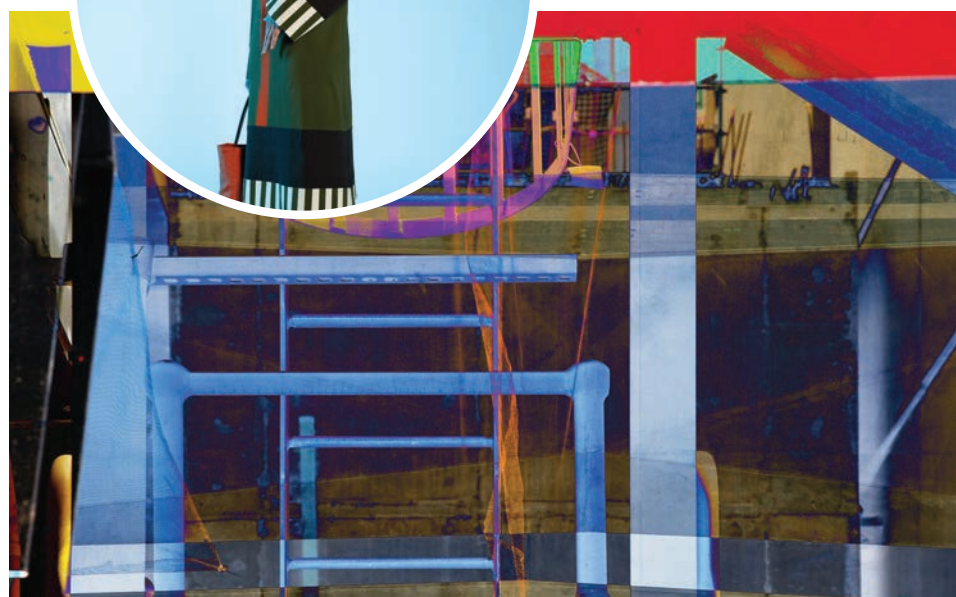
A strong proponent of informed photography, Chris emphasises the significance of research in his creative process.

“I like researching. I said to myself when I went to college that I want my photography to come from an informed position, because before then I would go out with a camera and just shoot and wonder why I was shooting something,” Chris said.

“It really backs up my work because it’s abstraction, but it’s not a genre of that is particularly well documented in this country – I feel like I’m on a bit of a crusade with that and I’d like to promote it more somehow in the future.”

Looking ahead, Chris aspires to “exhibit and establish relationships with curators” in the art world, as well as navigating his final year at PSC.

“I mix quite well with the young ones, they kind of respect me and I certainly respect them – they’re doing such amazing, interesting things and they inspire me quite a bit,” Chris said. ●



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Police presence rides out of town

The expansion of the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) campus also signals the end of the small permanent police presence Southbank had, as it encompasses the takeover of the Police Stables.

The stables are all that remains of a police presence in our area and dates back to 1912. Victoria Police has relocated its stables to a facility in Attwood. Some of the \$42.5 million being spent on the VCA project will contribute towards the relocation of the facility.

A Victoria Police spokesperson said the police were looking into options to return the horses to a CBD location.

“We are currently assessing suitable sites for a staging post in the Melbourne CBD,” the spokesperson explained.

“We are working with Arts Victoria to identify an appropriate way in which to reflect the legacy and significance of the site to Victoria Police.”

For its part, the VCA has stated it is very keen to preserve the police history of the stable building it inherits.

“We’re determined to ensure the police presence here won’t be forgotten. That’s what’s good about the arts, we’re great at adapting,” VCA’s Professor Barry Conyngham said.

“We don’t need to knock buildings down and build new ones. Where there are sturdy buildings in place, we’re more than happy to adjust and renovate.” ●



Photo: Leroy Miller

“Get to know a student’s experience studying at The University of Melbourne’s Faculty of Fine Arts and Music. **Amina Briggs** is studying a master of fine arts at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA).”

What attracted you to your study?

The beautiful location and spacious studios provided to students, along with access to main faculties such as the metal and woodwork areas, each with its own breathable space.

What was it like studying Visual Arts at the VCA? How would you describe a typical day or week?

Studying at VCA is fun, classes are usually research and critique class; a beautiful blend between analysing your own art practice and critiquing other people’s art practice.

A typical day begins with saying “hi” to the same barista who knows your order, followed by a stroll through campus, waving or chatting to classmates, teachers, and other faculty members. Finally, when you reach your studio to start creating art you begin chatting to the people walking by your studio. Lots of talking, but it’s all a part of the creative atmosphere!

What’s been your favourite experience?

Any time we got to critique someone’s artwork in class. It may not look like it, but crit class is a unique team-building exercise. Not only are we looking at a beautiful piece of artwork and discussing it for up to an hour, but everyone is slowly getting to know each other. At the start of the course, everyone is unfamiliar with each other but

over time, we come to understand and respect our fellow peers, gaining an insight into their art-making process and how they navigate the art world.

What inspires you and your creative practice?

My culture and humour. I enjoy starting from a familiar place because it allows me to explore different possibilities, merging humour with my culture. It’s a bit like the “know the rules so you can bend them” approach.

What advice would you give to someone considering your program of study?

To recognise the wide variety of networking opportunities, artist talks, and workshops available to VCA students. I recommend attending some of these events – they’re incredibly helpful and contribute significantly to developing your skills.

How do you feel connected to your industry through your studies?

I feel connected to my industry primarily through my studies, especially with the teachers. They are incredibly talented, experienced, and possess a much deeper understanding of the industry. They are great people to talk to for advice on practically everything within the industry. I’m genuinely grateful for the knowledge I’ve gained through conversations with them.

What are your goals for the coming years?

To expand on art practice and exhibit my work in galleries more frequently. By building upon that, I aim to achieve another goal, which is to have my work exhibited internationally one day.

What do you think a “career” for a creative looks like?

A “career” for a creative is never one thing. You continually develop additional skills to broaden your practice. For instance, you might be a sculptor and learn film editing to share your work on social media. Or a painter, acquiring graphic design skills enabling you to translate your artwork into the digital realm. Being a creative is never boring. I’ll tell you that much.

Can you tell us a little bit about any recent exhibitions or projects you’ve been working on, for instance the Keep the Wilin Burning project you were involved with?

Keep the Wilin Burning is an AR project I worked on. I was given an audio concept to work around. It was my first time interacting with AR, and I didn’t know the possibilities or limitations, but I was up for the challenge. I knew I wanted to create something that was colourful and bright, so the work was very much inspired by Alice in Wonderland, with its vibrant colours and wild creations. ●

CONNECT WITH YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Southbank community Hub is a free online space to connect with fellow Southbank locals, stay in the know, post requests for help, share skills and local knowledge, ask for recommendations, discover local services, classes, retailers, events and more

SOUTHBANK NEWS



If you’re a local resident or business you can join up here

Metro Tunnel brings world-class art to the daily commute



The major public artworks that will feature at Melbourne's five new underground train stations will create a world-class art trail when the Metro Tunnel opens in 2025.

The permanent works were revealed to the public for the first time earlier this month, marking another huge milestone for the city-shaping project.

They range from an eight-metre-high etched glass landscape featuring Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung women at State Library Station to an abstract textured tile installation at Parkville Station.

The creators of the works are among

the nation's foremost artists, chosen by an expert advisory panel including leading figures from Victoria's creative industries.

Each work has been created with its location and the people of Melbourne in mind.

Arden Station's *Come Together*, by Sydney-based multi-disciplinary artist Abdul Abdullah, features two large-scale aluminium hands reaching out to each other, set against graphic mosaic tiling that depicts historical imagery of the area.

Internationally renowned artist Patricia Piccinini's *Vernal Glade* at Parkville Station is a collage of vibrant hand-glazed ceramic tiles that acts as a gesture of care to the users of Melbourne's leading healthcare and research precinct.

Contemporary artist Danie Mellor has used photographic images of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung women in his work for the main entrance at State Library Station. His work acknowledges Victoria's First Peoples and honours their social, familial, and cultural contributions to Melbourne.

Further south at Anzac Station, Rafaat Ishak's bright and colourful *Future Wall Painting* at the station's Albert Rd entrance features abstract representations of iconic St Kilda Rd landmarks, such as 19th century tent cities and the Shrine of Remembrance.

Finally, pre-eminent First Nations artist Maree Clarke has created a line-wide artwork called *Tracks* featuring a collection of oversized animal footprints, modelled on the tracks of Kulin Nation animals. The



footprints will be stamped across the platforms of the five new underground stations.

Permanent artworks have also been installed at the Metro Tunnel's two entrances at Kensington and South Yarra.

Metro Tunnel project director Ben Ryan said the artworks would add a cultural dimension to the Metro Tunnel stations. ●

SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Too much mess on the streets of Southbank

Why are we receiving lip service about the cleaning of our streets? It has really started to irritate me of late.

Once upon a time, not too long ago, these issues weren't as critical, and when reported, were actioned within reasonable time.

Late last year, as I was walking around Southbank, which I do daily (according to my pedometer I average around 12km daily), I started to photograph all the full and overflowing rubbish bins.

Over the space of about six weeks I had a collection of around 80 photographs at varying locations. I collated them into their locations, recording the time the picture was taken.

It was quite revealing that certain locations were consistently overflowing, and some by about midday.

I also queried how council determines the placement of rubbish bins as it was notable some of the high foot-traffic areas were low on bins. For example, City Rd is a high-traffic street and there



are only two rubbish bins near the Power St intersection (163 City Rd, and front of Foodworks), yet if you walk along Kavanagh St, there is a rubbish bin almost every 50 metres where there is significantly less foot traffic.

In any case, I noted this was not only a problem around Southbank, but at certain points within the

CBD I would also frequently see the same rubbish bins overflowing, day-in day-out.

Over the past few months I have also made around 70 graffiti removal request with mixed results. Sometimes I am advised "appropriate action has been taken" only to return and see the graffiti is still present.

Other times, the requests have been referred to another authority such as Metro, VicRoads or other government institutions to learn that under their evaluation the reported graffiti may never be removed anytime soon.

And then, when some of these items have been addressed, I find that the graffiti removal team has

done a slapdash

job and left me cringing.

For example, merely writing over the graffiti with the appropriate background colour but now it is the same words just in a matching background colour, or they have not painted careful lines around the affected area and left it with markings outside area boundaries ... just lacking attention to detail.

I think the council can, and should, do better.

I encourage you to keep reporting any issues via the council's website, it is easy to use and you will receive a ticket number and kept abreast of the progress.

We are looking for someone from our community whom is social media minded to manage our social media for us. If you think this might be something you are interested in, please reach out at info@southbankresidents.org.au. We are always on the look out for volunteers from our community. ●

Tony Penna

PRESIDENT





QUESTION:
What was the highlight of your summer?

Faces of Southbank



ANTON
Discovering more of Melbourne



MATTEO
I'm a tourist; it's nice to meet people



NIKKO
Going to Phillip Island



OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

Are you a new unit owner? Make sure you attend the first annual general meeting

For a long time in Victoria, it was a common practice for the developer of residential towers to ensure that they arranged their affairs to benefit them before they settled on the lots and handed over control of the owners' corporation (OC) to lot owners.

This often involved the appointment of a caretaker/facilities manager for often very long periods of time (10 years plus) as well as long-term essential services contractors (fire inspectors) OC managers, cleaning contractors, embedded networks, high-speed internet services, security contractors, rubbish contractors and the like.

One of the dirty secrets of the OC industry is that some developers would seek a payment for appointing these contractors as a quid pro quo.

However, this messy practice has been overhauled by the Victorian Government as part of its reforms and amendments to the Owners' Corporation Act 2006.



So, it is now not possible for an OC manager to be appointed for a term beyond the first meeting of the OC. That means that it is up to lot owners to reappoint them once they have taken possession of their units.

The reforms also make it clear that any other service contract that the developer has signed the OC up to will only be valid for a maximum term of three years.

Unfortunately, the reforms can only go

so far. What usually happens in practice is that all of these contracts are placed on the agenda for the first annual general meeting (AGM), however no alternatives are proposed on the agenda either.

The developer or OC will tell owners that they have no choice but to reappoint these persons otherwise the building won't function. They'll say anything; the power will go out, bills won't get paid, the rubbish will pile

up, the internet will be suspended, etc., etc.

Perhaps naively, the owners present at the first meeting raise their hands to reappoint these entities. And that's how OC gets stuck with these non-competitive, expensive and long-term contracts.

The case law of the Supreme Court is of no assistance to OCs here, because if an OC independently affirms the contract at these meetings, then they are bound. And it will be no excuse to run an argument that not many owners turned up to the meeting, or that lot owners had no alternate choice.

If you are settling on an apartment in the next few years, make sure to get yourself along to the first AGM, and ask for those contracts to be deferred to the next meeting once the committee of owners has formed, and once independent quotes have been sourced. ●

Tom Bacon

STRATA TITLE LAWYERS

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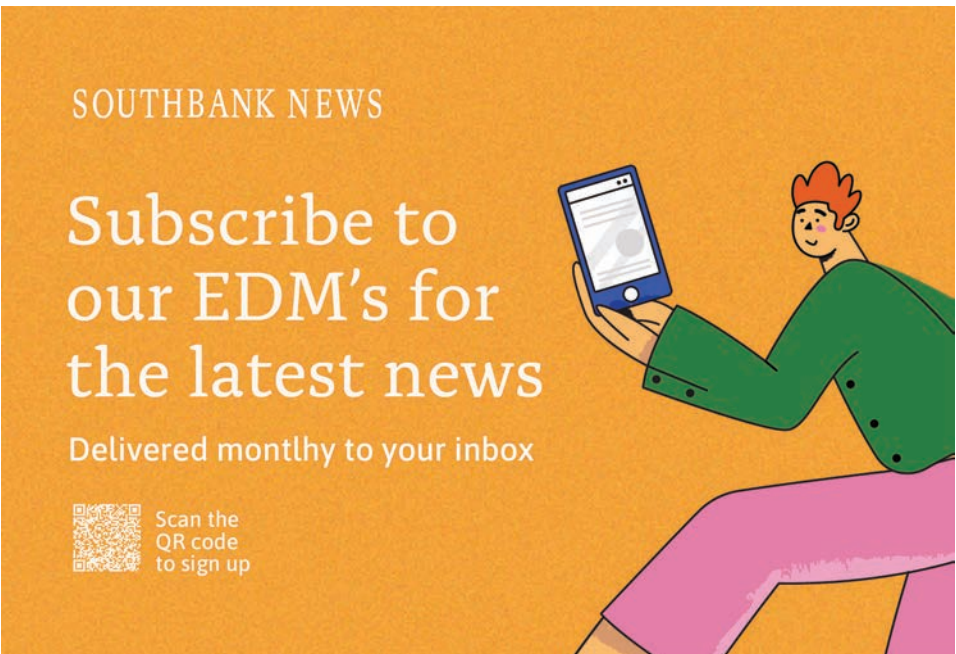
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Improving air quality in Southbank

It has been lovely to talk to members of the Southbank Sustainability Group (SSG) and passers-by about the beauty of harvesting food from the Southbank community garden.

WORDS BY
ANN HERMANN

We have also been sharing recipes that use the garden's produce. And, there is even a restaurant which harvests some of our herbs.

To maintain the health and beauty of our garden produce and green spaces in Southbank, we might wish to think about some of the relevant environmental factors. In this edition, let's focus on air quality and particularly, pollution from cars in Southbank.

The ABS provides some amazing data that suggest Southbankers are quite the environmental heroes: we are 32 per cent below the Victorian and national level of car ownership and frequency of car use with 40 per cent of Southbankers not owning a car.

Only 15 per cent of us drive to work compared to around 50 per cent for all of Victoria and Australia.

The rest of us Southbankers walk, cycle or use public transport.

However, while we are making wonderful progress in this area, we seem to have dropped the ball with the increased ownership of heavyweight passenger vehicles (SUVs, four-wheel drives and dual cab utes).

There are many reasons, of course, why Southbankers might require a heavyweight passenger vehicle such as mobility issues, a person's height, the need to pull or carry extra heavy items and more.

The statistics, however, are rather upsetting: heavyweight passenger vehicles seems to be more likely to fatally strike pedestrians than standard cars and seem more likely to kill the occupants of standard cars in a crash.

Further, it has been noted that standard cars are less likely to kill or seriously injure cyclists, pedestrians and children compared to heavyweight passenger vehicles.

Yes, SUV, four-wheel drive and dual cab ute drivers are relatively safer in their cars, however, this is at the direct expense of drivers of standard cars, so the argument of increased safety seems to be an ethically and morally thorny one.

In relation to sustainability and pollution, the damage heavyweight passenger



vehicles are doing to roads is well above standard cars and consequently, more resources are needed to maintain our infrastructure.

Heavyweight passenger vehicles also use up to 20 per cent more petrol than standard cars and this has a direct impact on the air quality in our suburb, the health of our community and our green spaces including our beautiful Southbank community garden.

So, what can I do?
Hire a standard car or heavyweight passenger vehicle or use a car sharing service. Walk, jog, cycle, skateboard and use public transport, if you can.

Buy a lightweight vehicle, an electric vehicle or a hybrid, if possible. Share your car with other people so its use is maximised.

If you are interested, come to one of the upcoming gardening meet-ups – every second Saturday at 10am behind the Boyd Community Hub on March 16 and 30. ●

For more information:
facebook.com/southbank-sustainabilitygroup or email southbanksustainability@gmail.com



Building a stronger Southbank community by embracing diversity

In the vibrant tapestry of our neighbourhood lies its true strength: diversity.

WORDS BY
DAVID HAMILTON - PRESIDENT

Our community is a mosaic of cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives, each contributing to the rich fabric of our collective identity. However, like any intricate artwork, it requires careful attention and nurturing to maintain its beauty and integrity.

Southbank3006 in 2024 wants to address the importance of embracing diversity and fostering inclusivity within our community.

Diversity is not just a buzzword; it is the cornerstone of a thriving society. It encompasses differences in race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, and more.

Embracing diversity means recognising and celebrating these differences, rather than merely tolerating them. It means creating an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and included, regardless of their background or beliefs.

One of the most significant benefits of diversity is the opportunity for learning and growth it provides. Exposure to different cultures, traditions, and perspectives broadens our horizons, challenges our assumptions, and fosters empathy and understanding. It allows us to break down barriers, bridge divides, and build meaningful connections with those who may be different from us. By embracing diversity, we open ourselves up to a world of possibilities and enrich our lives in ways we never imagined.

So, how can we foster diversity and inclusivity within our neighbourhood? Here are our five targets in 2024:

Promote dialogue and understanding
We shall be organising community events, workshops, and discussions that encourage dialogue and exchange of ideas among residents from diverse backgrounds.

Our aim is to promote safe spaces for open and honest conversations to help break down stereotypes, dispel misconceptions, and foster mutual respect and understanding.

Celebrate diversity
We will hold the third annual Merry Friend-mas event in early December to celebrate the diverse traditions, cuisines, and art forms represented within our community. This event not only showcases the richness of our cultural heritage but also provides opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and appreciation.



The Merry Friend-mas event at Boyd in December, 2023.

Support inclusive policies and practices
We will continue to advocate for policies and practices that promote inclusivity and equity within our community. This may include supporting affordable housing initiatives, advocating for accessible public spaces, and promoting diversity in leadership positions within local organisations and institutions.

Create welcoming spaces
Work to ensure that public spaces, businesses, and community organisations are welcoming and accessible to all residents, regardless of their background. This may involve promoting children's reading and literacy and other language programs for families.

Empower marginalised voices
We will take proactive steps to amplify the voices of marginalised groups within our community. Provide platforms for individuals from underrepresented backgrounds to share their stories, perspectives, and experiences. By centring their voices, we can work towards addressing systemic inequities and create a more inclusive community for all.

In 2023 we lead the way in Southbank opening opportunities for residents to know and experience First Nations culture. In 2024 we need to go wider and deeper in developing our understanding of our community.

Have your say on the future of Southbank
The City of Melbourne (CoM) is checking on the priorities Southbank shared in a previous consultation. It wants to be certain they're continuing to do what's important for residents. You can help shape the future of Southbank by taking the CoM Neighbourhood Survey.

Your ideas could help inform Council's future budgets and the next four-year Council Plan. Take the survey by 31 March – participants have a chance to win a \$200 Queen Victoria Market voucher. You will find a link to the survey at: southbank3006.com/#events ●



St Johns

Southgate

Every Sunday

9am Worship

Check our website for updates

20 City Road Southbank Telephone 9682 4995 www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au

WHAT'S ON
March



As we welcome autumn we welcome a huge month in Southbank's event calendar. Keep up-to-date with everything happening in postcode 3006.



RIFIPI: JEAN JULLIAN FOR KIDS
The children's gallery at the NGV is transformed into an underwater world inspired by art, having fun and caring for the environment – a sea adventure that welcomes the youngest and oldest of visitors.
Buxton Contemporary, Dodds St, Southbank

UNTIL APRIL 7, 10AM - 5PM



MERCEDES BENZ CLUB VICTORIA
The Mercedes-Benz Car Club of Victoria is holding a display of vehicles both historical and modern, covering the history of Mercedes-Benz from the first, built by Karl Benz in 1886, to the latest electric version
Queensbridge Square, Southbank

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 10AM - 3PM



SONGBIRDS
Songs, rhymes and stories will engage your budding bookworm's mind and introduce them to the fun and rhythm of language.

Southbank Library at Boyd

FEB 5 - MARCH 28, 10.30AM - 11AM




MECCA X NGV WOMEN IN DESIGN COMMISSION: BETHAN LAURA WOOD
Women in Design Commission ingeniously combines a range of elements, including furniture, textiles and scenography, to delve into the gendered history of education.
NGV International, 180 St Kilda Rd

UNTIL JUNE 30




NGV TRIENNIAL
NGV Triennial 2023 is a powerful and moving snapshot of the world today as captured through the work of 100 artists, designers, and collectives at the forefront of global contemporary practice.
NGV International, 180 St Kilda Rd

UNTIL APRIL 7, 10AM - 5PM



NADINE CHRISTENSEN: AROUND
The first major survey exhibition of Melbourne-based artist Nadine Christensen's career brings together key works spanning two decades of her practice, alongside ambitious new commissions.
Buxton Contemporary, Dodds St, Southbank.

UNTIL APRIL 7, 11AM - 5PM



DADFIT
We're a growing community on a mission to make dadding a team sport again, meeting regularly for workouts and dad chats and challenges.
For more information: dadfit.au

MARCH 25, 7PM @ BOYD PARK



LIVE MUSIC AT PJ O'BRIEN'S
Their stage hosts Live Music every Tuesday to Sunday, traditional Irish Music, duos playing laid back tunes as well as party bands to get you on the dance floor.

TUESDAY TO SUNDAY, FROM 6PM




LADAKH: RACE AGAINST TIME
Acclaimed Indian travel and lifestyle photographer, Aman Chotani, best known for his project *The Last Avatar*, has released a series of works devoted to the northernmost region of India, Ladakh.
Mystik River, 3 Southgate Ave.

UNTIL MARCH 24



RUN WITH US MELBOURNE
Run With Us Melbourne is not just a running club, it's a lifestyle. The group meets every Sunday and embarks on a 10km journey through Melbourne's diverse cityscape.
Malthouse Theatre, 113 Sturt St, Southbank.

SUNDAYS, 9AM - 12PM



TECH CONNECT – TECH HELP FOR OLDER PEOPLE
Tech Connect offers FREE weekly one-on-one hour sessions and monthly group workshops with trained and skilled 'Lively Tech Helpers'. South Yarra Senior Citizens Centre, 65 Toorak Rd West, South Yarra.

LAST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH, 9.30AM - 12PM

Business Directory

FUNCTIONS



Facilities hire Beautiful venue for weddings and memorial services Concert venue with excellent acoustic and comfortable seating Spacious function room Meeting rooms Kitchen

20 City Road Southbank
Telephone 9682 4995
www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au

PHYSIOTHERAPIST

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Mezzanine Level, 13-15/1 Freshwater Place, Southbank
PHONE: 8640 0328 WEB: www.elitesportsphysio.com.au

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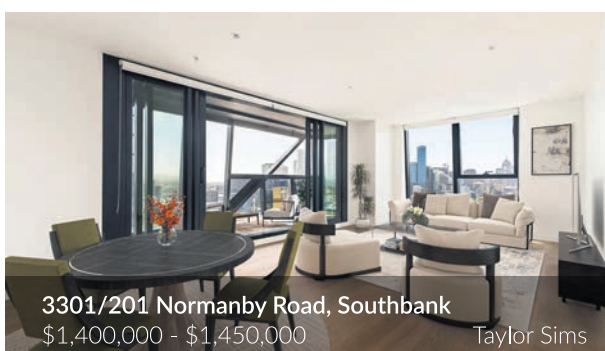
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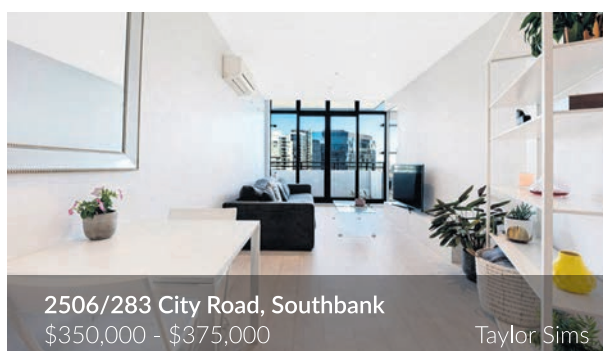


Call us on 8102 0200 or email us via southbank.vic@raywhite.com to book an appraisal for sale or rental. Visit raywhitesouthbank.com.au for more details.



3301/201 Normanby Road, Southbank
\$1,400,000 - \$1,450,000

Taylor Sims



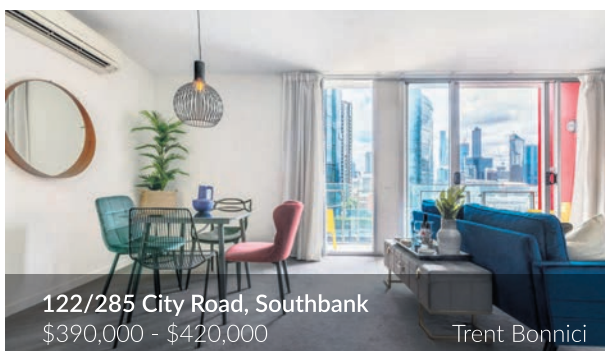
2506/283 City Road, Southbank
\$350,000 - \$375,000

Taylor Sims



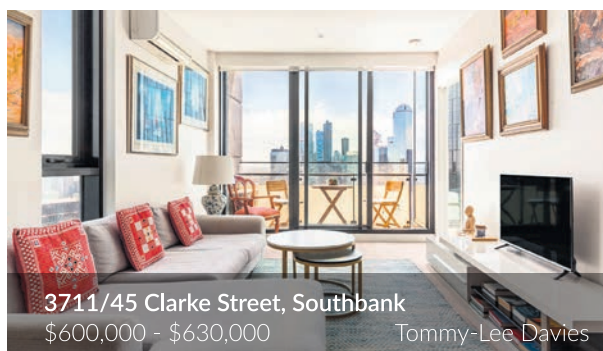
1212/60 Kavanagh Street, Southbank
\$750,000 - \$770,000

Trent Bonnici



122/285 City Road, Southbank
\$390,000 - \$420,000

Trent Bonnici



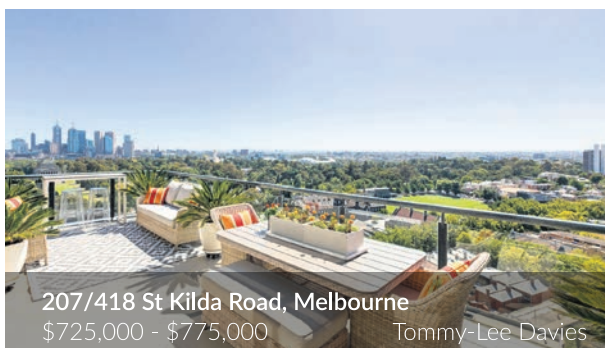
3711/45 Clarke Street, Southbank
\$600,000 - \$630,000

Tommy-Lee Davies



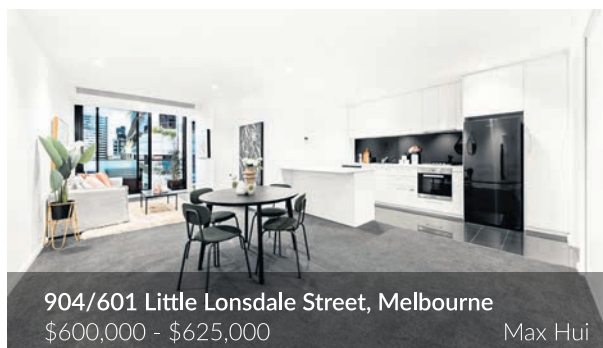
3801/35 Spring Street, Melbourne
\$3,100,000 - \$3,400,000

Trent Bonnici



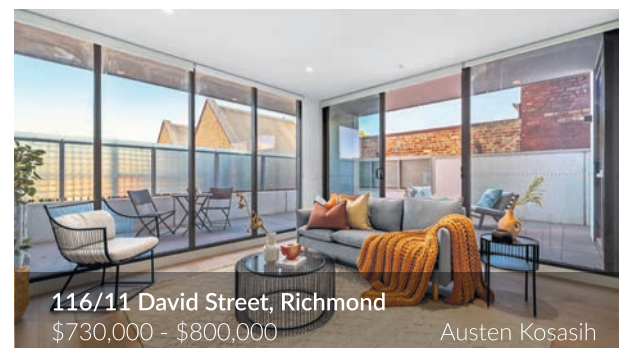
207/418 St Kilda Road, Melbourne
\$725,000 - \$775,000

Tommy-Lee Davies



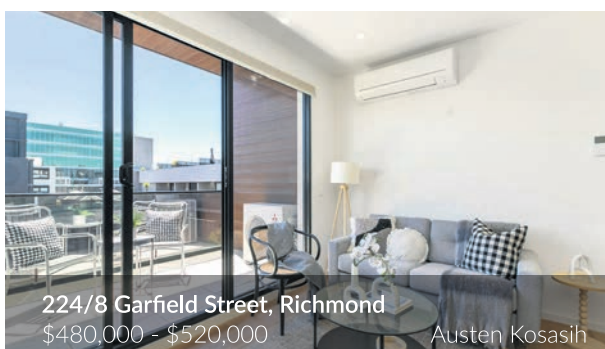
904/601 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne
\$600,000 - \$625,000

Max Hui



116/11 David Street, Richmond
\$730,000 - \$800,000

Austen Kosasih



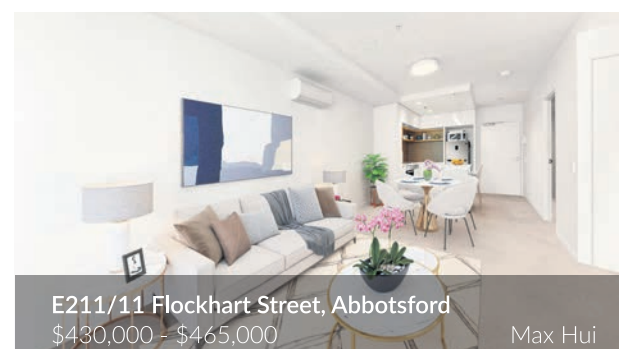
224/8 Garfield Street, Richmond
\$480,000 - \$520,000

Austen Kosasih



501/17 Lynch Street, Hawthorn
\$525,000 - \$575,000

Max Hui



E211/11 Flockhart Street, Abbotsford
\$430,000 - \$465,000

Max Hui



205/150 Dudley Street, West Melbourne
\$390,000 - \$420,000

Trent Bonnici



107/63 William Street, Abbotsford
\$630,000 - \$680,000

Max Hui

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Austen Kosasih: 0422 396 900
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