



Feds and council team up  
for Kings Way undercroft

Federal MP for Macnamara Josh Burns caught up with City of Melbourne Lord Mayor Nick Reece in Southbank last month to celebrate the collaboration between the federal government and the council on funding new open space at the Kings Way undercroft. More on page 20.

Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

## Where to, now? Major blow for Beulah’s Southbank vision

“The news many had sadly been anticipating broke in February when developer Beulah placed the company managing its troubled STH BNK project into administration, casting serious doubts on its future.

WORDS BY  
SEAN CAR



In August last year, *Southbank News* exclusively first reported on Beulah’s behind-the-scenes struggles to get what would be Australia’s tallest mixed-use project off the ground as it desperately sought to cut costs amid rising economic challenges.

With more than \$5 million now owed to creditors, Beulah’s decision to place BSSPV Pty Ltd into administration on February 11 followed the project’s architects Cox Architecture and UNStudio filing a wind-up notice against it in the Supreme Court.

Despite recent speculation surrounding its sales, Beulah now faces a major dilemma in delivering for the 80 per cent of its customers who are understood to have purchased apartments, while keeping growing construction costs of around \$2 billion to a minimum.

Compounding these difficulties is the unprecedented degree of private and public amenities the project had promised to deliver for Southbank, which sits at the major nexus of City Rd, Southbank Boulevard and Southbank Promenade.

But Beulah director Jiaheng Chan said the decision to put BSSPV Pty Ltd into voluntary administration was made to allow additional time to progress the project as it now seeks alternative finance.

“We have now made the decision to place the project management entity into voluntary administration while we pursue an alternative strategy to realise the STH BNK project,” Mr Chan said.

“This is not a situation we wanted to find ourselves in, but our project is not immune to the market challenges faced across Melbourne.”

Continued on page 5.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS, PAGE 3

Council continues to monitor parking changes in Southbank Village

TRANSPORT, PAGE 11

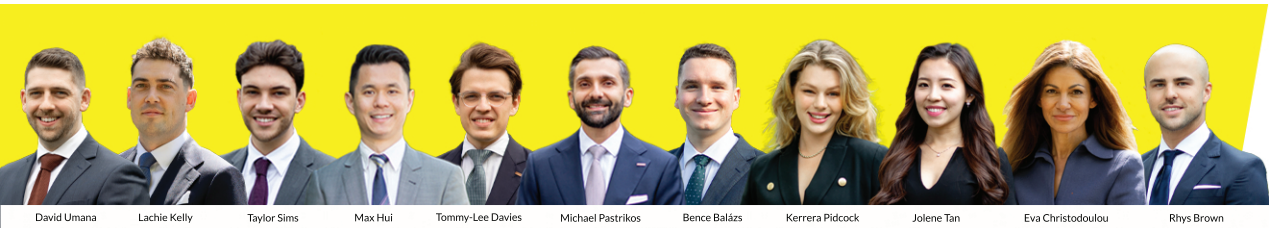
Could this new e-scooter be the answer for Melbourne?



ARTS & CULTURE, PAGE 9

## Giant new public artwork *Guardian Lion* rises over Southbank

Commuters travelling along the Westgate Freeway will soon be watched over by *Guardian Lion*, a giant neon light artwork set to be unveiled in Southbank on March 7.



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The reasons behind Southbank’s ghost towers

At 18 Moray St in Southbank, a 38-level apartment tower stands fully constructed. However, there’s one problem – it is completely vacant and has been for several years.

WORDS BY  
JON FLEETWOOD



The \$70 million tower, which comprises 115 furnished, ready-to-use apartments, was built and fitted out during the pandemic by a development company owned by gambling junket operator Cheng Ting Kong.

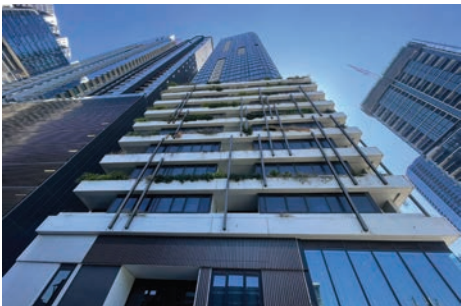
Despite an attempt to sell the property in 2022, it has never been occupied. However, this is not an isolated case, with several buildings across the city – such as the Shangri-La building in the CBD – remaining vacant after construction.

According to RMIT University Professor in Sustainability and Urban Design, Dr Andrew Butt, the issue is that holding costs and land tax do not seem to be enough to deter developers from sitting on properties and sites for extended periods.

“It seems as though it is becoming more and more evident that the problem is not enforcing good design outcomes or community expectations of development, but rather that there are finance issues, holding costs, and labour shortages,” he said.

“It’s disappointing that the [Victorian] government sees the only solution as continuing to hammer away at local government,” he said. “[It is] hammering away at the sorts of checks and balances built into the planning system around objections and design criteria.”

The *Speculative Vacancies* report released last year by Prosper Australia



revealed that in 2023, the number of empty dwellings in the City of Melbourne had almost tripled between 2019 and 2023.

In line with Dr Butt’s concerns, Prosper Australia concluded that long-term reform requires Australia to shift its tax base onto land.

Another issue with the current planning system, as pointed out by Dr Butt, is that the state government has made it easier for planning permits to be approved, despite the risks this presents in the long run.

He believes that this, in addition to high construction costs and labour shortages, has contributed to developers sitting on vacant blocks of land and choosing to delay construction.

This can be seen at 25-35 Power St in Southbank, a site next to STH BNK by Beulah, which has remained vacant for more than a decade, with a long history of proposed developments dating back to 2013.

The most recent proposal in 2021 sought approval for a 52-storey office tower in Southbank, but it was not supported by the City of Melbourne, and no new plans have been submitted to date.

President of the Southbank Residents Association (SRA), Tony Penna, said that it’s “disappointing” to see vacant buildings and blocks remain dormant for such a long period.

He suggested that the City of Melbourne should explore the option of temporarily activating the site while it remains in permit limbo. ●



Changing of the guard at YRBA

**Southbank and South Wharf traders’ group the Yarra River Business Association (YRBA) has appointed a new executive officer in Elizabeth Joldeski.**

Ms Joldeski replaces outgoing executive officer Tim Bracher, who has served in the role for a remarkable 26 years and will retire from the position at the end of April.

According to the YRBA, Ms Joldeski’s was selected from a strong field of contenders due to her long experience in dealing with small and medium enterprises through roles in government and private consultancy.

Ms Joldeski will run the YRBA alongside her current role as executive officer of Mainstreet Australia – the association dedicated to strip shopping centres throughout the country.

YRBA president Jeremy Vincent said that Ms Joldeski’s experience and qualifications would ensure that it continued as a major force, building upon the foundation built by Mr Bracher.

“This means that Liz will have a full two-month on-boarding program, during which time she hopes to engage with as many stakeholders and members as possible,” Mr Vincent said.

Southbank News will bring you more about Elizabeth Joldeski and her vision for the YRBA in the April edition. ●

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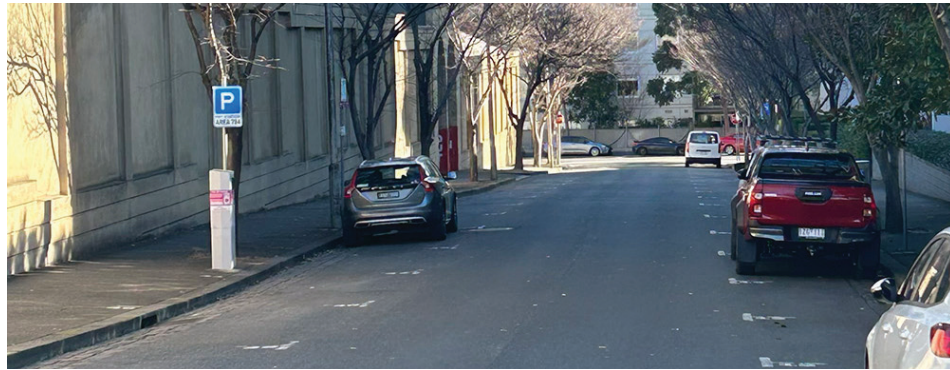
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# Council continues to monitor parking changes in Southbank Village

The City of Melbourne says it will continue to investigate further changes to new parking arrangements in Southbank Village following several rounds of community consultation.

WORDS BY  
SEAN CAR



In August last year, *Southbank News* reported on how some of the changes implemented by the council following the adoption of its new parking and kerbside management plan in May 2023 hadn't been well received among many locals.

The council's plan was created to better manage parking supply and demand for kerbside space, with new parking signs, meters, line markings and other assets having been rolled out across the city to respond to local conditions.

Since the plan was originally implemented, Southbank has seen various parking conditions amended across the suburb.

In Southbank Village, bordered by St Kilda Rd, and Grant, Sturt and Dorcas streets, the biggest shift saw many all-day spaces initially reduced to three-hour zones between 7am and 10pm, while parking was made no longer free on weekends.

An independent survey of 452 residents from around 25 apartment complexes conducted by Coventry Garden owners' corporation in November last year concluded that the changes were "unwelcoming" and "severely impacting on residents".

The former owner of 8 Miles café, which has since closed, told *Southbank News*

in August that the decision to replace the three 15-minute parking spaces out the front of his shop with three-hour spaces had resulted in lost earnings.

A copy of the survey was presented to the council as part of its latest round of consultation late last year, which has since resulted in several changes being implemented in January. According to the council, these include:

- Increasing time limits from two to three hours in the northern section of Southbank.
- No restrictions after 9pm, allowing people to park at 6pm and stay all night.
- An off-peak rate after 4pm weekdays, meaning people pay only \$2p/h after 4pm on weekdays and on weekends.
- More untimed meter parking spaces added to the southern part of Southbank.

While the council said further changes "would continue to be investigated", many residents are still unhappy about the new measures despite the recent updates.

A recent survey conducted in response to January's changes, seen by *Southbank News*, has overwhelmingly stressed that the three-hour limitations in various locations

continue to present barriers to residents welcoming friends and family.

The survey called for a return to previous restrictions, claiming that parking for guests would be "better facilitated by more friendly parking restrictions, no timed restriction after 6pm [and] no time restriction on weekends."

Lord Mayor Nick Reece said the council's parking team would continue to monitor these changes over the coming months, with the next scheduled review set for mid-2025.

"These changes are not set-and-forget – that's why we adjusted some of Southbank's parking conditions in January following community feedback," Cr Reece said.

"We've been working to make parking in our neighbourhoods simpler, fairer and more reliable."

"As no two neighbourhoods are the same, we want to ensure our parking conditions balance the needs of residents, businesses and visitors."

But Coventry Gardens owner David Ritchie said while some of the council's recent changes had been welcomed, he said more needed to be done to improve access for friends and family of residents, who he said, "were ratepayers, not customers".

"It's good that the council has accommodated the 9pm changes, but it hasn't facilitated anything for family and friends, nor any arrangements with off-street parking operators which aren't open on the weekends," Mr Ritchie said.

"While the council's intention to improve equity and accessibility with its parking arrangements is understandable, if anything, many of its current changes are resulting in an underutilisation of car parks across the neighbourhood."

According to the council, there are around 2800 on-street parking spaces within Southbank, which the council manages, and more than 26,000 residents and 45,000 workers.

It says changes to parking controls across Southbank were made to address high occupancy rates and the need to make parking spaces available more often – providing more opportunities for people to find a park when they need it.

Residents recently surveyed also suggested that the council could provide up to two free parking permits for residents in line with other municipalities to help alleviate some of the pressures of the new parking arrangements.

For residents who have either no or only one off-street parking space available, the City of Melbourne currently charges \$52 for a first permit, and \$142 for a second with limited concessions available.

The council said that further changes would continue to be investigated and that parking permits remained available for eligible Southbank properties under its residential parking permit scheme.

However, it said that expanding eligibility under this scheme couldn't be accommodated due to the limited supply of on-street parking. The council didn't comment on whether it was open to providing free permits to residents. ●



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# Where to, now? Major blow for Beulah's Southbank vision

Continued from page 1.

"Despite our best efforts and those of our partners and creditors, we failed to achieve a target by early 2024 that would have seen us activate construction finance at that time."

David Vasudevan and Lindsay Bainbridge of Pitcher Partners Melbourne were appointed as voluntary administrators on February 11, and a Beulah spokesperson said it would provide an update on the construction build time once it had clearer information on costs and finance.

A joint statement issued by Cox Architecture and UNStudio, which famously won an international design competition hosted by Beulah for their "Green Spine" vision in 2018, said they were unable to comment on the project's status.

"Throughout the project, we have worked closely with the Beulah team to find solutions to address the external influences that both the project and the industry more widely have been exposed to over the last five years, whilst continuing to investigate Beulah's brief and project aspirations," the joint statement read.

"Despite all of the hard work and effort of the combined team, the market environment remains extremely challenging. However, UNStudio and Cox are continuing to collaborate and explore other exciting project opportunities together around the world."

Multiplex, the builder appointed by Beulah in 2023, is also no longer involved with the project.

With the project's current planning permit set to expire on April 20, it would undoubtedly appear Beulah will be forced to go back to the drawing board to salvage its \$2.7 billion dual tower vision comprising apartments, offices and a hotel.

In August last year, a Beulah spokesperson told *Southbank News* it was embarking on a series of amendments to the project's design in response to market conditions. This included modifying the number of basement levels.

Its original approved plans sought to do what no other Southbank development had done before, which was to excavate the notoriously soft soil and substrata that dominate the area along the Yarra River to construct a six-level basement car park.

*Southbank News* understands Beulah has

unsuccessfully made several approaches to other large local and international developers about partnering and even taking over the site.

At a local level, the question remains as to what will come of this key Southbank location, with Beulah still understood to be pursuing a permit to demolish the existing former BMW showroom building.

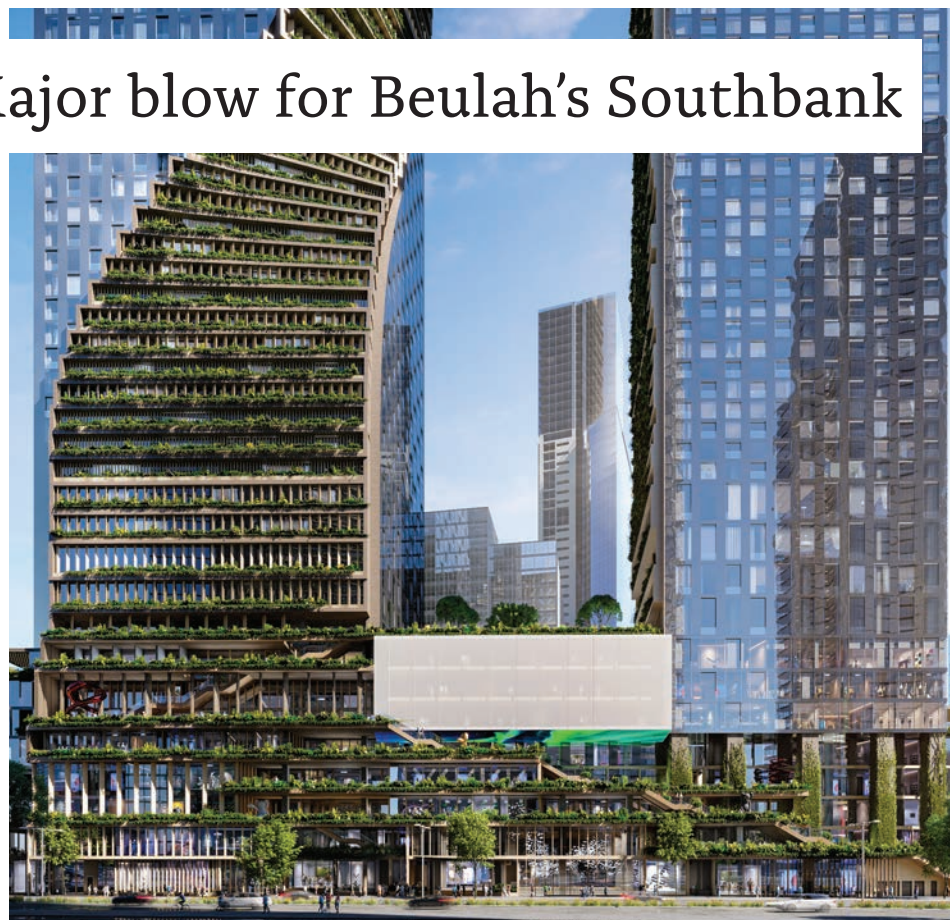
A Beulah spokesperson didn't provide a response when asked how it planned to activate the site in the interim, but it's believed its arts and cultural pop-up "BETA" at Hanover House will continue.

Southbank Residents' Association (SRA) president Tony Penna has encouraged the state government and the City of Melbourne to explore much-needed green open space for the site, even if it is only temporary.

Mr Penna said SRA was disappointed that the development was unlikely to proceed but looked forward to seeing what the site's next chapter might entail.

"It was certainly offering so much to the wider Southbank community and would have been our central focal point while complementing the promenade," Mr Penna said.

Yarra River Business Association (YRBA) executive officer Tim Bracher said the news was disappointing, "but it's not unexpected."



## Southbank Village has a new local member

The Liberals claimed victory in the Prahran by-election on February 8, with South Yarra resident and long-time Liberal Party member Rachel Westaway claiming the seat.

WORDS BY  
GEORGIE ATKINS



A true local of more than 20 years, Ms Westaway is well known in her community and currently serves as the president of the Thai Australian Chamber.

"Thank you to the people of Prahran for your support. I am humbled to have been declared elected today as your new representative," Ms Westaway wrote on social media following the result.

"I am deeply committed to serving our wonderful community and working my hardest to deliver for you."

Ms Westaway received just over 36 per cent of first-preference votes, with independent candidate Tony Lupton contributing to the Liberals' rise to more than 51.6 per cent in the two-party preferred vote.

"I feel very lucky to live in a city with the diversity of this seat, but it's been neglected for so long – and I know that because I live and breathe it," Ms Westaway said.

"I think most people would want a local who understands the issues pertaining to the seat. Southbank in particular has been neglected by the Labor Party, supported by the Greens, and it's something that I would like to ensure we cover because it is a tourist destination." ●

"I have not seen such a hyped development in Southbank in my time, so it was probably always a case of being too good to be true," Mr Bracher said.

"Even if they can flip the development, I can't see any developer being able to construct the same design in this economic climate."

Mr Bracher said the news was consistent with "a general slowdown in economic activity on Southbank, as the strip rejuvenates itself over the next decade."

Beulah's site represents a major missing link in several overdue plans, including the City Road Master Plan, stage six of the Southbank Boulevard transformation and the completion of upgrades to Southbank Promenade.

Mr Bracher implored the City of Melbourne to get on with anything it could do to revitalise Southbank while several major developments, including Beulah's, remained in limbo.

"How long will we be waiting for the completion of even stage one of the promenade redevelopment, let alone Queensbridge Square and stage six of Southbank Boulevard?" Mr Bracher said.

"The council could at least help with the come-back through redevelopment of the public realm." ●

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# “Boy from the ‘burbs”: Mark Scott joins Melbourne council team

“

New councillor Mark Scott has been elected for the first time as part of Team Reece in the recent City of Melbourne election and is eager to bring his passion for learning and listening to the council.

”

WORDS BY  
GEORGIE ATKINS



While he has been “engaged with the political process” throughout his life, becoming a councillor wasn’t initially part of his plans.

“When it came time to put together a team, Nick Reece and Roshena Campbell engaged with me and asked if I would like to be a part of their team,” Cr Scott told *Inner City News*.

“I was quite privileged and honoured to be asked, but I had to dig deep and ask myself whether I could really put in the commitment that’s required to do the job.”

With his experience as former manager of Queen Victoria Market (QVM) and owner of Ripe Cheese, Cr Scott has a first-hand understanding of the challenges small businesses face in the city.

“I used to visit the QVM as a kid, like every other kid from the ‘burbs – we used to come in every other week to do our shopping and buy our ugg boots and various other things,” he said.

“I have an incredible appreciation for the challenges of running a small business, because we had to live through COVID and, of course, survive.”

“I know how tough it is, especially coming out of COVID – things have changed a lot, I have huge empathy for how tough it is for small businesses. That was really a huge driver in me taking on this role, to champion small businesses, as well as residents.”

For Cr Scott, addressing safety and cleanliness will be top priorities in the council’s early efforts, as well as tackling the growing mental health crisis.

“A lot of the issues we have to tackle are not easy, but we’ve got to keep advocating for businesses and to government,” he said.

“Getting people back into the city is definitely a priority. If you want a vibrant city, it has to feel like it’s vibrant and alive.”

“Particularly when we talk about the issue of loneliness – if people are sitting at home and not engaging with anybody, those sorts of things do contribute to feeling alone. So, I think social interaction is really important, and a lot of small businesses rely on people coming back into the office.”

As the council’s new head of the tourism and events portfolio, Cr Scott hopes the City of Melbourne will collaborate further to reassess major events and their financial impact on the city.

For example, Cr Scott envisions a “winter solstice festival” that merges the best aspects of the city’s Firelight and Now or Never festivals.

“I’ve seen first-hand the summer night market at QVM and the popularity of that, and it’s only once a week,” he said.

“People will come out in winter, so I think if we can find something that helps to bridge the gap in the city, it would be a really great addition to our major events program.”

As a newcomer to the council, Cr Scott



COUNCILLOR PROFILE

is committed to absorbing as much knowledge as possible over the next four years, both to improve the city and enhance his personal growth.

A highlight of his time so far? Delivering a keynote speech at the Melbourne Queer Film Festival.

“It was an opportunity to stand up in front of a few hundred people and deliver a speech that I wrote myself that really spoke from the heart about the importance of queer film and telling queer stories,” he said.

“I’m a gay man with a husband – 13 years ago I came out, so I believe in living your

authentic life and truth-telling. So, to stand up and share a bit about that, and talk about the importance of inclusivity and diversity in the city, has definitely been one of my highlights.”

Though just a few months into his term, Cr Scott is already learning from his fellow councillors and City of Melbourne staff, eager to grow in the role.

“I’m here for one term, so I’m going to try and do the best job I possibly can in those four years,” he told *Southbank News*.

“I want to make a difference and walk out of here feeling like I’m a better person.” ●

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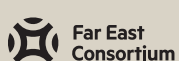
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# Giant new public artwork *Guardian Lion* rises over Southbank

“Commuters travelling along the Westgate Freeway will soon be watched over by *Guardian Lion*, a giant neon light artwork set to be unveiled in Southbank on March 7.

WORDS BY  
DAVID ALLEN



Measuring almost 19 metres long and more than 15 metres high, *Guardian Lion* was designed by acclaimed Melbourne-born artist Troy Emery for the southern wall of the Melbourne Square development. The multi-coloured, laser-cut aluminium display will illuminate nightly and be easily visible to commuters on the Kings Way, Sturt St, the West Gate Freeway and in surrounding neighbourhoods. Mr Emery said he was honoured to have his first permanent public artwork installed in his hometown and to contribute to Melbourne's roster of iconic public imagery. "I hope this colourful art wall becomes a

beloved city landmark, acting as a guardian to the city and standing as a welcome protector to visitors and residents alike," he said. Mr Emery said *Guardian Lion* was inspired by long-standing Victorian folklore of large cats, panthers, pumas or lions, said to live in bushland in the Grampians mountain range in the west of the state. Sightings of the Grampians's big cats date back two centuries, fuelled by stories of circus animal escapes and animal mascots brought to Australia by American servicemen during World War II. Scientists have also linked the local descriptions of the giant felines to the native *Thylacoleo*, an Australian species of lion thought to have been extinct for more than 30,000 years. City of Melbourne Lord Mayor Nick Reece likened the *Guardian Lion* to the famous Skipping Girl neon sign in Abbotsford and said it was destined to become a city landmark. "It's a brilliant addition [to] the thriving and evolving public art scene in Melbourne – solidifying our position as Australia's leading art city," Cr Reece said. Melbourne Square developer OSK Property Australia said the neon artwork underpinned its commitment to the Southbank community. OSK in December won the Best Apartment Development category at the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards for their BLVD project, the latest of the six towers planned for the precinct. The \$3 billion development is expected to be completed by 2031. OSK Property Australia CEO Chong Boon Woon said, "*Guardian Lion* is a testament to



our vision of making Melbourne Square a cultural and social hub for Southbank." "This symbol of Melbourne's creative and inclusive spirit is our contribution and one that we hope continues to thrive for many years to come." Cr Reece and Mr Emery will attend *Guardian Lion*'s first illumination in a ceremony at Melbourne Square on Friday, March 7. ●

# Beautiful and thriving: three-year trial to choose plants for giant new Southbank garden

A giant garden at the heart of the Melbourne Art's Precinct Transformation Project will have plant species specially tested for its urban environment.

WORDS BY  
DAVID ALLEN



The University of Melbourne's Burnley campus will conduct a three-year research project evaluating which plants will best suit the 18,000 sqm public space. Laark Boorndup will stretch from Hamer Hall to Southbank Boulevard, bordering the Arts Centre, the National Gallery Victoria and its new gallery The Fox: NGV Contemporary. University of Melbourne Associate

Professor in Green Infrastructure Claire Farrell said it was "a gamechanger" to have this scale of plant research embedded in an infrastructure project. "The plant trials expand our existing

knowledge of plants for green roofs and will help guide plant selection ... to ensure they are both resilient and beautiful", Ms Farrell said. The research will use shallow rooftop garden beds to mimic the conditions at the future garden in the hopes of identifying species able to flourish year-round and foster biodiversity. More than 1000 plants across 125 species will be assessed. The transformation project's website says both indigenous and introduced species of fauna will be planted. Melbourne Arts Precinct Corporation director and CEO Katrina Sedgwick said, "this partnership will see leading Australian scientists deliver meaningful data to underpin the creativity of Laark Boorndup – setting up our fabulous, world-renowned designers for success in a challenging landscape." The garden is expected to be a warm and dry environment, and the trial will factor in

future changes to Melbourne's climate. The name "Laark Boorndup" was given to the garden by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder Aunty Gail Smith. "To me [Laark Boorndup] means a beautiful place for all people to visit and recognise our Country and our Wurundjeri ancestors," Aunty Gail said. "It's not just a placename, it brings Sky Country, the heavens, and everyone back together on Country." The trial will be run in partnership between The University of Melbourne, MAP Co, Development Victoria, design practice Hassell, plant practice Super Bloom and international horticulturalists James Hitchmough and Nigel Dunnett. The Arts Precinct Transformation Project is expected to be completed by 2028. Work began last year on updates for the Arts Centre's State Theatre while construction of The Fox: NGV Contemporary is projected to begin this year. ●

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*Queen Victoria Market*

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# Could this new e-scooter be the answer for Melbourne?

A safer e-scooter has recently been developed by Singapore-based company Ario, and its executives believe they have found a “solution” that addresses the City of Melbourne’s concerns.

WORDS BY  
JON FLEETWOOD



In August last year, the council prematurely terminated its contracts with e-scooter share hire providers months before the trial was meant to end, citing safety risks and misuse of the e-scooter as the rationale behind the decision.

However, Ario is currently in discussions with Victorian councils and the state government and is confident that it has developed a “smarter” and “safer” e-scooter model for the state.

Head of strategic communications at Ario, Trent Williams, told *Southbank News* that the company had the capability to roll out what it believed would be the first “community-compliant” e-scooter program.

“We were created to solve the problems that have plagued the e-scooter industry for a while,” he said.

According to Mr Williams, what makes Ario scooters safer is their three-wheeled design and the use of AI and innovative technologies to ensure they are used appropriately.

Key features include remote re-parking technology, adaptive speed control, AI-powered camera systems that detect and deter unsafe riding behaviours, and

helmet locks to ensure helmets are always available.

Additionally, Mr Williams believes the scooters will play an important role in the city’s transport mix, helping to alleviate pressure on the public transport system and supporting the local economy by making it easier for people to travel into the city.

Following Ario’s successful trial in Townsville, Queensland, and its launch in Christchurch, New Zealand, Mr Williams is hopeful that the scooters may one day find a home in Melbourne.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece told *Southbank News* that ending the previous trial was the right decision for the City of Melbourne due to the high number of injuries caused.

“Riders were doing the wrong thing, and e-scooters littered across footpaths were creating a safety hazard,” he said. “Unlike e-scooters, bicycles have not led to the same safety and amenity concerns.”

It is understood that Ario and the City of Melbourne are not yet in discussions about a renewed trial.

However, the council confirmed that it continued to engage with shared scheme operators following the conclusion of the trial, and any decision to enter into a future agreement would be subject to council approval.

President of the Southbank Residents Association (SRA), Tony Penna, said that he would welcome a new trial if the scooters were safer.

While he acknowledged that last year’s trial had its flaws, he believes that e-scooters are an “important” part of Southbank’s transport mix, given so many residents do not have cars.

“If [Ario] thinks that they’re filling that gap, the SRA would certainly be interested in exploring this with them further,” he said. ●



## Boyd Village tops out

Developer PDG’s Boyd Village development has reached its peak in construction and Lord Mayor Nick Reece helped to celebrate the milestone at a ceremony on February 24.



The build-to-rent (BTR) project, dubbed “Indi Southbank” at 132 Kavanagh St, forms part of the City of Melbourne’s Boyd Village precinct, which includes the much-loved Boyd Community Hub and adjoining Boyd Park.

The ceremony, held on level 43 of the soon-to-be-completed building, marked the successful completion of its major structural phase following two years of construction.

PDG together with the project’s builder Hamilton Marino welcomed the Lord Mayor as well as representatives from

investment manager Investa and Oxford Properties Group who are partnering on the development.

“Build-to-rent is an important pillar in Melbourne’s diverse and inclusive housing market,” Cr Reece said.

“The Boyd Village offering delivers superb modern living, in sought-after Southbank. This milestone signals ongoing confidence in Melbourne as the best city to invest, build, and live.”

PDG founder and managing director Vince Giuliano said, “Indi Southbank will offer an unparalleled living experience at Boyd Village in the heart of Southbank, blending residential charm with expansive parks, green spaces, and a variety of leisure and co-working areas.”

“These will perfectly complement the existing communal facilities at the heritage-listed Boyd Community Hub, which includes the library, café, and art studios.”

The project features 434 apartments, including at least 40 affordable rental homes.

Indi Southbank will form part of Investa’s BTR platform, while Oxford will retain ownership of the building, except for part of the ground floor and Level 1, which will house City of Melbourne-managed council facilities.

Indi Southbank is scheduled for completion in mid-2025 with residents moving in shortly after. ●



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# Council “actively engaging” with ACCC after Citywide sale blocked

City of Melbourne CEO Alison Leighton says the City is still in active discussions with Australia’s consumer watchdog after it blocked the council’s sale of Citywide to private waste management giant Cleanaway late last year.

WORDS BY  
SEAN CAR



In June last year the council made the surprise announcement that it was selling Citywide, and that ASX-listed Cleanaway had been “chosen as the best operator to deliver world-class waste collection services.”

The deal included Cleanaway’s \$110 million purchase of Citywide’s waste and recycling business and assets, as well as a \$35 million investment to redevelop the ageing waste transfer station at Dynon Rd in West Melbourne. The redevelopment was to be boosted by a further \$10 million from the council.

But with the sale subject to regulatory approval, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) in November said that the “proposed acquisition of Citywide Waste raises concerns.”

“We are concerned that the acquisition will extend Cleanaway’s already strong position in Melbourne by expanding Cleanaway’s existing network of waste disposal facilities”, ACCC Commissioner Dr



Philip Williams said.

“Our preliminary view is that the proposed acquisition would remove the close competitive tension between Cleanaway’s and Citywide Waste’s waste disposal facilities, particularly in the central and west regions of metropolitan Melbourne.”

“We are concerned that the expansion of Cleanaway’s waste disposal network may enable Cleanaway to charge downstream collection providers higher prices and reduce service quality.”

“Rival waste collectors, particularly commercial and industrial collectors, require access to waste disposal facilities at competitive rates, and competitive service levels, to compete effectively for customers.”

During public question time at the February 18 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting, former City of Melbourne

councillor and shareholder activist Stephen Mayne asked the council how it had signed the deal without any public consultation or disclosure.

With Citywide, which is chaired by former Premier John Brumby, having recorded a near \$8 million loss during the 2023/24 financial year, Mr Mayne asked the council whether this was the reason behind the sale of its “crown jewels.”

“It looks like you’ve suffered an unprecedented loss, and you’ve decided to sell off the crown jewels,” Mr Mayne said. “What’s happening with the deal and why did you do it so secretly?”

The council’s CEO Alison Leighton responded by saying that the matter was still under active consideration by the ACCC after it released a statement of issues with the sale in November.

“There is an active dialogue taking place

right at the moment between the City of Melbourne and also Cleanway in relation to their [the ACCC’s] assessment of the proposed transaction,” Ms Leighton said.

“It’s fair to say that given that there was a very significant degree of commercial-in-confidence information in relation to the process that council undertook to assess its options and to engage with the market around potential bidders ... meant that it was appropriate that it was a confidential consideration.”

“As soon as there was an ability to make a statement to the public around council’s intention, that was done.”

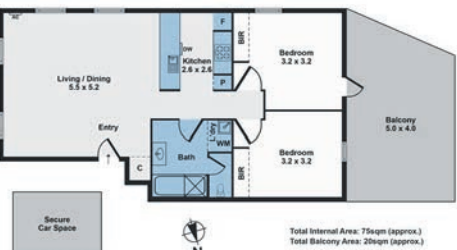
But Mr Mayne said after his efforts to sell Citywide during his time as the council’s finance chair had fallen on deaf ears, “I fell off my chair when they just announced a done deal with no public consultation and no advertising process.”

“I thought it was a very untransparent process. Really shocking,” Mr Mayne told Ali Moore’s ABC Drive program on February 20. “Then the ACCC comes out and said ‘no ... you’re creating a monopoly, and everyone’s prices are going to go up.’”

“Why are you [the council] doing this deal if you’re going to put everyone’s prices up just because you’re embarrassed you’ve lost \$8 million?”

Citywide is a wholly owned subsidiary of the City of Melbourne, which established the business in 1995 after then Premier Jeff Kennett implemented compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) to force local governments to compete for contracts.

Having invited public submissions on its statement of issues until November 28, the ACCC originally said that it expected to publicly announce its final view by February 13 but that this “timeline may change”. ●



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## FREE information sessions for new residents

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To register for the next information session, go to our website:  
[www.southbankresidents.org.au](http://www.southbankresidents.org.au)

Next Session Date: Tues, 11th March at 7:30pm  
Location: Boyd Community Hub,  
207 City Rd, Southbank VIC 3006

Printed and circulated with the assistance of a City of Melbourne Community Grant



## “Champion for local business”: The Clarendon and Coventry Streets Business Association

“

The Clarendon and Coventry Streets Business Association is continuing its efforts to support local traders in South Melbourne and breathe life back into one of Melbourne’s most iconic precincts.

”

WORDS BY  
JON FLEETWOOD



Established in December 2021, the association is a committee of dedicated volunteers who own and operate businesses in South Melbourne and are passionate about collectively building, strengthening, and activating the local business community.

Despite the association being in its infancy, it has already had a tremendous impact on the South Melbourne community.

Last year alone, following a successful lobbying and advocacy campaign to restore heritage verandahs along Clarendon St’s historic Emerald Hill precinct, the project was completed.

This was in addition to a range of other initiatives, including a signal box activation project and the orchestration of the widely successful Porsche and Coffee Festival.

The association’s president Anne Michaels is proud of what it has achieved to date, telling *Southbank News* that the business association existed to “advocate” and “champion” local businesses in the area.

“Whether it’s our members or the public sector, anyone can come and speak to us,” Ms Michaels said.

This year, the association is continuing its advocacy efforts to help “save” the South Melbourne Town Hall, which suffered a roof collapse in 2018.

The Town Hall has been home to the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) since 1996, and ANAM has been developing a plan to restore the building, providing a safe and secure home for its operations.

However, with insufficient funding secured, the business association, alongside ANAM, is calling on the federal government to commit financial support to facilitate the project’s full restoration.

Under the current design by Peter Elliott Architecture, the Town Hall would be transformed into a landmark public performance and community venue.

Due for completion in 2028, the redevelopment would deliver a 350-seat auditorium, a 150-seat performance space, two meeting rooms, and rehearsal studio facilities.

Once finished, Anne Michaels believes a revitalised Town Hall would be of tremendous value to the area.

“It would allow for performances most nights of the week and provide a compelling reason to visit the precinct in the



From left to right: Anne Michaels (Current Committee Member, President), Darren Williams (Current Committee Member), Luke Harris (Ex Committee Member), Simon Ansell (Porsche Liaison), Glenn Storey (Current Committee Member, Treasurer), Steve Felice (Ex Committee Member), Andrew Scawen (Current Committee Member).

evening, complementing the daytime drawcard of the South Melbourne Market,” Ms Michaels said.

Alongside its advocacy efforts, the business association is gearing up for another successful Porsche Festival in and along Clarendon and Coventry streets on Sunday, March 9.

With the support of a \$20,000 grant from the City of Port Phillip, this year’s festival is expected to further enhance local business activity and provide a strong economic boost to traders in the precinct.

Additionally, the City of Port Phillip and

the Australian Grand Prix Corporation are collaborating in 2025 on a South Melbourne Live Music Walking Trail on March 15 and 16.

Music will be programmed at South Melbourne’s famous heritage pubs, all walking distance from the racetrack and from each other, featuring local artists. ●

For more information:  
[experiencesouthmelbourne.com.au](https://experiencesouthmelbourne.com.au)



## Free community picnic for Southbank

Southbank residents are being encouraged to spend an afternoon on the green at Boyd Community Hub on March 29.

WORDS BY  
DAVID ALLEN



A free sausage sizzle, free slushies, a scavenger hunt, lawn games and karaoke are on offer for locals as part of *Outside, Side by Side*.

The event is being organised by the City of Melbourne neighbourhood volunteer program’s Southbank crew.

It will be suitable for all ages, and fur babies can attend on leash.

Southbank crew organiser Bonnie Lu said, “locals should feel free to bring a picnic and enjoy some time together in the park at Boyd Community Hub.”

“This is a great opportunity to make new friends and connect to community groups.”

Ms Lu said the neighbourhood volunteer program hoped to bring locals together in Southbank’s public spaces through events like *Outside, Side by Side*.

“We’re hoping this can start a discussion with locals about Southbank’s open spaces,

and what they would like to see in them in future,” Ms Lu said.

“In City of Melbourne’s most recent pulse check survey, Southbank’s young people responded they did not feel engaged, but almost 50 per cent of this suburb’s residents are young couples.”

“That’s why we decided on karaoke and scavenger hunts in the hope that will draw out a young crowd,” Ms Lu said.

Flyers promoting *Outside, Side by Side* will be displayed in Southbank ahead of the event.

More information is available online at the event’s Facebook and Eventbrite pages.

People are encouraged to register their attendance in advance. ●



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## Unlocking Australia's performing arts history: behind-the-scenes tours of Arts Centre Melbourne's Collections Store

Arts Centre Melbourne is not just a destination for world-class performances – it's also home to an exclusive experience that takes you inside the heart of Australian performing arts history.

WORDS BY  
GEORGIE ATKINS



Through truly unique tours of its extraordinary Collections Store, Arts Centre provides access to the Australian Performing Arts Collection (APAC), the largest and most significant assemblage of its kind in Australia.

With more than 850,000 items, the Collections Store is a treasure trove of original artefacts from across circus, dance, music, opera, and theatre.

These guided tours offer a rare opportunity to explore this extensive collection and delve into the stories of the performers, creatives, and companies that have shaped Australia's rich performing arts legacy.

"It's very back-of-house, very behind-the-scenes. We want people to understand what it takes to preserve a collection," head of curatorial, Margot Anderson said.

The APAC is not only nationally significant, but is also of international importance, dating back to the late 1970s, with major early acquisitions including the J.C. Williamson Theatre Archive and the Dame Nellie Melba Collection.

Today, it boasts notable contributions from icons like Kylie Minogue, Nick Cave, Barry Humphries, Bell Shakespeare, and The Australian Ballet.

On the tours, passionate and



knowledgeable front-of-house staff guide visitors through the Collections Store, sharing the fascinating history behind the items and showcasing the painstaking processes involved in their preservation and display.

One highlight is being able to view the Arts Centre's conservation lab, where delicate costumes, photographs, and objects are expertly restored.

Currently, the collection includes a costume worn by Dame Joan Sutherland in the 1972 Vancouver Opera production of *Lucrezia Borgia*, which was carefully preserved as part of the Arts Centre's internship program.

However, the team frequently rotates the displays to keep the experience fresh and engaging for returning visitors.

The tours also offer a glimpse into the often unseen aspects of preservation, such as how fragile items are stored and transported, and how custom packaging is created for 3D set designs.

"It's not designed to be an exhibition space; it's a working storage area," Ms

Anderson told *Southbank News*.

"Our goal is to show visitors how we carefully pack, move, and protect these objects."

Although the tour doesn't cover the entire 850,000-item collection, the team thoughtfully curates a selection of the most captivating and culturally significant pieces, organising them into themed compactors for display.

These include ballerina costumes, pointe shoes, set design models, Dame Edna spectacles, a lion stand, original trapeze ropes, and much more.

Whether you're a passionate student of the arts, part of a school group, or a curious traveller, the Collections Store Tours provide a unique chance to engage with Australia's performing arts heritage.

Even if you're new to the world of performing arts, the tour provides a captivating introduction to a rich history that the Arts Centre team is devoted to preserving for future generations.

Collections Store Tours run every Sunday until June 2025. ●

## Malthouse Comedy returns for Melbourne International Comedy Festival

“

Southbank's Malthouse Theatre is set to host a stellar roster of local and international guests as part of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival (MICF) from March 26 to April 20, with more than 200 shows performed over 22 nights across four stages.

”

WORDS BY  
GEORGIE ATKINS



Now in its 38th year, MICF has established itself as a cultural landmark, providing a platform for comedians to showcase their craft and for audiences to enjoy world-class live comedy.

Renowned for its diverse programming, the festival continues to bring together comedy superstars from around the globe alongside Australia's finest comedic voices.

The 2025 lineup is set to be one of the most impressive yet, featuring more than 700 performers delivering a dynamic mix of stand-up, sketch, improv, satire, musical comedy, and more.

*Malthouse Comedy* is returning to Southbank as part of the festival, offering an exciting lineup of live comedy with a jam-packed schedule curated by the Malthouse team.

The program will feature a diverse array of talent, including Michelle Brasier, an

award-winning singer, songwriter, actor, author, and comedian, and a one-of-a-kind performance from Elf Lyons, who will present the first-ever comedy show performed entirely by a horse.

British comedian Tom Allen will share personal stories and life updates with Australian audiences in his new show *Completely*, and local cabaret sensation Reuben Kaye will also take the stage at Malthouse with *The Kaye Hole*, a late-night variety show described as "the evil love child of Liza Minnelli and Jim Carrey".

Additionally, Malthouse will host the Victorian premiere of *Breaking the Musical*, written by Stephanie Broadbridge; an original production reimagines the story of an Australian Olympian's path to the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Upstairs in The Playbox, Malthouse will showcase some of the brightest emerging

comedy talents.

Award-winning clown Jeromaia Detto will bring his interactive and spontaneous show *When I Grow Up*, responding to audience suggestions each night, and rising comedian Con Coutis will also perform *Escape from Heck Island*.

For younger audiences, Malthouse presents *Signor Baffo*, a hilarious and interactive kids' comedy.

Having entertained UK audiences since 2013, this wildly silly show turns mess-making into fun and chaos.

Festival-goers can enjoy the convenience of seeing multiple shows in one night, all while savouring delicious food and drinks in Malthouse's outdoor courtyard.

With the kitchen open late and food trucks on hand, there's plenty to enjoy before and after the performances. ●





# Mads Barnes: exploring the art of storytelling at PSC



**PHOTOGRAPHY  
STUDIES COLLEGE**

MADS BARNES



“

For Mads Barnes, photography isn't just a hobby; it's a passion and career in the making.

”

**WORDS BY  
GEORGIE ATKINS**



Now a second-year student at Photography Studies College (PSC), Mads's journey into photography began in 2017 while stationed overseas in the military.

"I picked up a camera while traveling and started taking landscape shots," Mads said.

"It wasn't long before it became more than just a hobby. I started booking events, shooting portraits, and it grew from there."

In 2023, Mads left the military and moved from the United States to Australia to pursue a degree at PSC.

"I wanted to study photography more seriously and eventually make it a career

that supports me," they said.

Although Mads started with an interest in landscape photography, their interests have shifted toward portraiture, live music events, and documentary photography.

Now in their second year, Mads is thriving in the creative environment at PSC.

"The classes are great, and I've grown a lot as a photographer. The teachers and students here are amazing," they said.

"It's been a really supportive community, and I've learned so much."

One of Mads's current projects they're working on at PSC is a documentary piece about a transgender friend, documenting

them as they undergo their medical transition.

"I'm kind of documenting the behind-the-scenes process of that; it's been going really well so far."

Looking ahead, Mads envisions a career that allows them to blend their love for music and travel with their passion for social impact.

"I'd love to be a travel documentary photographer," they said.

"I want to focus on marginalised communities around the world, share their stories, bring awareness to the issues going on around the world that people might not

know about, and use photography as a tool to empower others."

"I've done a bit of traveling out there and I would love to go back not as a tourist, but as a travel documentary photographer to places like Thailand, Laos, Malaysia, and Vietnam and just talk to the people."

The best piece of advice Mads has received at PSC so far? To avoid clichés in photography.

"That's always stuck with me whenever I'm shooting, just to capture things that aren't typically the norm and just go for those more candid moments. It doesn't always have to be so perfect." ●

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Image by Paul McMurrick



# A family day at Yayoi Kusama's NGV exhibition

My partner and I decided to take our four-month-old baby to revered Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's exhibition on Valentine's Day.

WORDS BY  
JANELLE WARNER



Taking such a little one to an art exhibition might not seem like the easiest (or engaging) outing, but Yayoi Kusama, which runs at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) until April 21, turned out to be a worthwhile experience for all three of us.

With bold colours, structured patterns, and interactive installations, the exhibition offered something for all ages – even those as young as ours, who was so stimulated by what she saw she eventually fell asleep towards the end!

From the moment we walked in, our baby was alert and engrossed in her surroundings. Kusama's signature polka dots, bright colours, and mirrored installations created an immersive environment, and one which was already familiar to our daughter who had been gifted a copy of the artist's *Lots of Dots* kids book a few weeks earlier by our relatives who had also visited the exhibition.

Watching as she "connected the dots" between the book and reality was a joy for us parents to take in.



The Infinity Mirrored Room was particularly striking. The reflections and twinkling lights gave the impression of an infinite space, allowing us to play with our perceptions.

Another key feature was *The Hope of the Polka Dots Buried in Infinity Will Eternally Cover the Universe* – a striking six-metre-tall installation created using giant balloons and covered in Kusama's yellow-and-black polka dots. This towering piece features large extending tendrils. Its sheer scale and bold design made it a standout.

One of the most engaging (and free) experiences as part of Kusama for Kids was *The Obliteration Room*, which proved to be a hit among children, who along with their parents were given colourful dot stickers to place anywhere in a completely white space, slowly transforming it into a vibrant,



Photos: Sean Fennessy



multi-coloured environment.

I loved how children were encouraged to take part in creating the artwork rather than just looking at it. It was a great reminder that art can be playful, interactive, and accessible to all ages.

The Kusama experience also extended beyond the gallery. Trees along St Kilda Rd are wrapped in pink-and-white polka dots, and NGV's Great Hall featured floating spheres. The gallery's renowned water-wall also had an installation inspired by the Japanese art icon.

I wasn't sure whether an art exhibition would capture my baby's attention or not, but Kusama's own unique sense of playful creativity proved to be the ultimate introduction into the artistic world for our daughter.

The bright visuals, interactive elements,

and mirrored spaces collectively made it an inviting experience. It demonstrated that contemporary art can be approachable and enjoyable for a wide audience, including families with young children.

For those interested in visiting, Yayoi Kusama at NGV offers a unique and well-curated exhibition that is all insightful, visually striking and interactive. Whether visiting alone or with children, it provides a fresh perspective on Kusama's incredible lifetime of work.

Yayoi Kusama is on display at NGV International until April. Entry fees apply. ●

For more information:  
ngv.melbourne



# Sunday Market relocates to Southbank Promenade

After more than 20 years positioned around the Arts Centre, Southbank's Sunday Market, which last year relocated to Southgate, will now be situated along the scenic Southbank Promenade.

WORDS BY  
GEORGIE ATKINS



The Sunday Market at Southgate celebrates Melbourne's vibrant local artisans.

Visitors can come to explore the market, meet the makers and artists face to face,

and gain insight into the products and the inspiration behind their creations.

Previously operating undercover within Southgate, the move to the promenade allows the stallholders to become more visible, ensuring the community spirit of the market continues to flourish.

"The Sunday Market move to Southgate has allowed stallholders to continue trading at a time when closure seemed inevitable," senior marketing manager at ESR Australia and New Zealand Fran Hutcheson said.

"Now, along the Southbank Promenade, the market offers them exposure to more than 40,000 visitors daily, opening new opportunities to grow their customer base."

Long-standing Sunday Market trader Jackie Sanders, whose business Crafty Jack has been a market staple for more than 25 years, welcomed the change.

"Visually, it's fantastic because people can see us now. There were people who didn't know where we'd gone, so it's great seeing more customers coming back," Ms Sanders told *Southbank News*.

"We're really appreciative to Fran and the team for giving us this opportunity to expand the market, it's been wonderful."

Currently, around 20 traders are part of the market, with plans to welcome more soon. The variety of businesses on offer makes for an exciting and diverse experience for visitors.

"The relocation is a new beginning for the Sunday Market, sparking the creativity of many vendors," Ms Hutcheson said.

"In recent weeks, we have seen a notable surge in stallholder applications, speaking volumes about the potential they see at the Southbank Promenade." ●



## Poolhouse Coffee

Poolhouse Coffee is a little oasis tucked beneath the Melbourne City Baths, offering tasty sandwiches, rice paper rolls, pastries and a range of treats. They roast their own coffee beans including a seasonal house blend and single origins.

Feel free to eat in and have a chat to the friendly staff.

Opening Hours  
Mon–Thu: 7am–3pm  
Fri: 7am–2pm

6 Franklin St  
poolhousecoffee

Supporting  
business

SUPPORT  
LOCAL



Construction partner:  
Design & Construction

CYP-BS00446



## Your forever home awaits in the heart of Melbourne

640 Bourke Street is the quintessential Melbourne address, where heritage and modernity converge in a landmark development designed for contemporary living.

Anchored by the historic Eliza Tinsley building, an elegantly sculpted 68-storey tower rises, offering a refined collection of one-, two- and three-bedroom residences that speak to Melbourne's timeless character.

Designed by Rothelowman, each residence is purposefully crafted with generous floor plans, curated finishes, and an intelligent approach to spatial design. Inspired by the best in global apartment living, these homes offer a rare level of sophistication, balancing functionality with an eclectic design aesthetic. From the reimagined kitchen island and dining table to intricate art deco-inspired tiling, every detail has been considered.

Across 3000 square metres of amenities, residents can curate their own daily rhythm. The Social House fosters connection with a whisky lounge, billiard room,

and discreet speakeasy, while The Wellness House offers a fully equipped gym and restorative bathhouse. For select residents, Eliza Tinsley House provides an intimate retreat, complete with a cinema, art therapy room, and mindfulness lounge.

At street level, a new public plaza and boutique retail precinct create a vibrant city hub. Moreover, 640 Bourke Street offers breathtaking views of the city, with higher floors providing unobstructed panoramas of Melbourne's skyline, Port Phillip Bay, and beyond.

Positioned in the heart of Melbourne's most storied boulevard, residents are steps from Flagstaff Gardens, Queen Victoria Market, luxury shopping, and iconic laneways. With tram and train connectivity at the doorstep and arterial routes nearby, the entire city is within easy reach.

With residences from \$640,000 to \$3,950,000 and off-the-plan stamp duty savings available until October 2025, 640 Bourke Street presents a rare opportunity to secure a forever home in the heart of Melbourne. The Display Gallery opens late February, offering an exclusive preview before construction begins.

[640bourkest.com.au](http://640bourkest.com.au) •



## Could you sum up how much you love your family in a single tweet?

Now imagine having just 66 characters – including spaces – to express a lifetime of love, grief, and remembrance. That was the limit given to families of Australian soldiers lost in World War I for the epitaphs on their headstones.

WORDS BY  
HANNAH SAINTY



This restriction struck a deep chord with Queensland-based embroidery artist and veteran Sacha de Wit.

A former naval officer and founder of Draw Stitch Smile, Sacha has been creating embroidery-based artwork since 2020.

This year, she is unveiling her first major work, *The Unknown Widow*, at the Festival of Veterans Arts (FOVA), from March 21 to 30 in Melbourne's Southbank Arts Precinct.



At last year's festival during a walk on the Veterans Public Arts Trail, Sacha learned about the 66-character limit and was stunned.

"I had no idea that families were given so little space to express their grief – if they were given it at all," she said.

"Eighteen-thousand families were denied even that, including the family of the soldier now resting in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Australian War Memorial."

This discovery led to *The Unknown Widow*, an immersive exhibition using textiles, embroidery, woodwork, and music to explore the experiences of those left behind in war.

Visitors to the exhibition will encounter a life-sized washing line strung with handkerchiefs, each bearing an original epitaph hand-stitched onto the fabric. They are encouraged to pick up the handkerchiefs, read the words, and then fold and transfer them to a basket – a symbolic gesture of remembrance.

The installation accompanies a soundtrack from fellow naval veteran and musician Kirshy McAinch, creating a deeply reflective atmosphere.

A final interactive element invites visitors to attempt writing their own epitaph on stamped cards, mirroring those on the handkerchiefs. Could you capture love, loss, and memory in just 66 characters?

"I chose the handkerchief because it was something every household would have

had. I imagined the emotions of a grieving family member wringing it in their hands or crying into it at night when the day's chores were done," Sacha said. "An everyday item carrying the weight of lost dreams and broken hearts."

She describes the process of creating the work as unexpectedly emotional.

"At first, I was stressed about choosing just 66 epitaphs. Then, when I reached the final stitch, I felt guilt – guilt that it was only 66, and what about all the others? In that moment, I understood the widows' struggle in a way I never had before."

You can experience *The Unknown Widow* and engage with this powerful installation as part of the annual March to Art exhibition during and beyond FOVA25, from March 21 to April 24 at the Australian National Veteran Arts Museum, 312 St Kilda Rd.

FOVA25 also features art exhibitions, workshops, live performances, and the FOVA Family Colour Parade, hosted across some of Melbourne's most renowned venues in the Arts Precinct.

For more information and the full program, visit [fova.org.au](http://fova.org.au), and learn more about ANVAM at [anvam.org.au](http://anvam.org.au). •

# St John's

Southgate

## Every Sunday

## 9am Worship

Check our website for updates

20 City Road Southbank

Telephone 9682 4995

[www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au](http://www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au)



# The latest from Southbank Sustainability Group

Sunflowers have been blooming in several of the raised garden beds in the community garden in front of the Boyd Community Hub. You can't miss the bright yellow flowers that follow the sun during the day. They are very attractive to bees as well.

WORDS BY  
MARIA TARRANT



We grow them each year for their colour and their seeds which can be used to grow the flowers next season or to eat. Their scientific name is *Helianthus* being made up of the Greek words for "sun" and "flower" – helios and anthus.

Sunflowers are said to have originated in the Americas around 1000 BC. It is also said that sunflowers symbolise loyalty in some cultures, while in China they symbolise long life and good luck. There is some suggestion that including sunflowers in teas, massage oils and evening cooking are all practical forms of self-care.

Sunflowers have another role today. Some people will wear a sunflower badge or carry a lanyard with a picture of a sunflower on it. It is the way that person chooses to let you know they have a "non-visible" condition that may mean they need some support or extra time as they carry out their daily tasks.

For more information: [hdsunflower.com/au](https://hdsunflower.com/au)

It is not just the sunflowers that have enjoyed the combination of sunlight, warmer weather and the occasional rain in February. Southbankers have been harvesting plenty of lettuces, carrots, beans, eggplants and herbs including basil, sage and chives.

It is always fun to meet the locals who wander through the garden early in the morning and harvest something from the garden to add to their lunch or dinner. We have just planted more coriander which will be ready to harvest in another month. The cherry tomatoes have plenty of fruit. We just need to be patient for another few weeks until the fruit ripens.

Southbankers are always on the lookout

for parkland opportunities. Work is coming together on the urban garden to be located in the Melbourne Arts Precinct.

The garden, known as Laak Boorndap, will feature plants that can survive hot, dry conditions in shallow soil. You can see examples of what will be in the garden and learn more about a range of sustainability topics including the choice of plants for the new garden, biodiversity and climate change at a "test site" now located at Federation Square on the deck of the skyline car park.

There will be a range of activities during March. More information can be found at [fedsquare.com/events/test-garden](https://fedsquare.com/events/test-garden).

Southbank Sustainability Group is on both Facebook and Instagram. We are looking for volunteers who would like to assist in keeping these sites up to date. Email [southbanksustainability@gmail.com](mailto:southbanksustainability@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping.

And, if you enjoy some hands-on activity in the garden join us Saturday between 10am and noon every second weekend for a little gardening (no previous experience required) and discussion.

We are located in the community garden in front of the Boyd Community Hub. Upcoming meet-up dates are March 15 and 29.

Visit our Facebook page if you are looking for information on how to live more sustainably. There are guides on subjects as diverse as sustainable travel, reducing the impacts of your pets on the environment, volunteering and food composting.

**About the group**

Southbank Sustainability Group is a



solutions-focussed community group of Southbank residents working to bring positive change in sustainability practices. Reach us at [southbanksustainability@gmail.com](mailto:southbanksustainability@gmail.com) or [facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup](https://facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup) or Instagram on [southbanksustainabilitygroup](https://southbanksustainabilitygroup).

If you are interested in getting involved with Southbank Sustainability Group join us at a Saturday meet-up or send us an email. ●

## SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

### An opportunity for a park?

The announcement last week that Beulah International has put the project manager of its STH BNK project at the old BMW site on the City Rd into administration was a massive surprise.

This project would have transformed City Rd and created a central shopping precinct for Southbank. Its proposal was certainly ambitious and with the post-COVID supply chain cost increases maybe we should have expected this; after all construction companies have been falling like dominoes post COVID.

I guess the big question now is, what's next? I believe the land with its development

approval is on the market to be sold, so we may see another attempt at developing the site, however I would suspect not as spectacular. In any case, it is likely to be many more years before any further progress.

But maybe there is an opportunity here?

The City of Melbourne has been challenged with finding a suitable site for green open space around our neighbourhood. Could this be that site?

Considering the likely hundreds of millions the proposed City Link decking was expected to cost, which the council had outlined in the 2010 Southbank Structure Plan (therefore indicating there was always an expectation for such a significant cost of some sort) before recently removing this from the plan (without any community consultation), then

owing to this site's size and location it would be ideal. It even has access to sunlight!

I suspect the purchase of the land and its development would still be significantly cheaper than what any City Link decking was going to cost.

While this might be a sound, and obvious, solution to Southbank's open space dilemma, I suspect the council will have no appetite to even consider it owing to cost sadly.

In the meantime, there is a fenced-off empty block of land at 25-35 Power St. This has been empty for around 10 years.

I was of the understanding the council expected developers of undeveloped sites to temporarily transform them into open space. I am not sure why this site has not been subject to such conditions.

Southbank Residents' Association (SRA) believes this would also be an ideal site for temporary green open space. Our SRA committee has decided to actively pursue this with the council so watch this space.

SRA will be holding its AGM soon. If you are passionate about your community and would love to assist with our advocacy, then please reach out as we would love to hear from you. We can be reached at [info@southbankresidents.org.au](mailto:info@southbankresidents.org.au) ●

**Tony Penna**

PRESIDENT



**KATHERINE COPSEY**  
MP FOR SOUTHERN METRO

**STEPH HODGINS-MAY**  
SENATOR FOR VICTORIA

**YOUR LOCAL VOICES**

**THE GREENS**

Authorised by S. Hodgins-May, Australian Greens Canberra



## Southbank's future begins now

The title of this piece could be "believe it, achieve it", "build it and they will come" or "dreams do come true."

Before I explain, let me take a step back and ask you a question: if you could change one thing about Southbank, what would it be? Hold onto that thought.

When my partner and I moved into our Southbank apartment in 2019, we knew little about the area. We had been to several disappointing inspections throughout Melbourne when I saw an ad pop up for a new apartment building in Southbank, swung by for a visit and made a decision that same day to set down roots.

Just a few days after moving in, while waiting to cross City Rd, a truck of cattle drove by leaving a plume of manure in its wake just a block away from Melbourne's prized tourist waterfront.

I couldn't believe my eyes and searched the faces of those standing around me for the shock and dismay I was feeling. Nothing. Business as usual.

I turned to my partner, "Why isn't anyone else upset about this? How is it okay for farm animals to be transported through a neighbourhood?" I vowed to speak up and do something.

That moment became the impetus for me to connect with several other community members who shared a vision for a better Southbank and, even more importantly, a philosophy about how to go about creating change.

Together we formed the non-profit advocacy group Southbank3006. The core tenet of our group, and what sets us apart, is our belief in being solutions-focused and collaborative with stakeholders and leaders.

We do not whine and complain. Rather, we engage with council, state and federal leaders thoughtfully, as partners not adversaries, coming to the table with ideas and a cooperative approach. We've earned the reputation of being problem-solvers, change-makers and idea-creators in the quest to make Southbank a great place to live and work.

Fortunately, Southbank is blessed with dedicated leaders who listen and care with literal boots on the ground beside us, walking the neighbourhood, hearing our concerns, experiencing those problems firsthand and envisioning our dream of Southbank's potential.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece, Federal MP Josh Burns, State MP Nina Taylor, Greens Senator Steph Hodgins-May and City of Melbourne Neighbourhood Partner Ash Lee – all have invested time meeting with us and connecting with community members to better understand and address issues in Southbank.



leadership and resolve of Cr Nick Reece and the hard work he began with us when he served as Deputy Lord Mayor.

There have been other benchmarks for Southbank3006. Our creation of Southbank's first community-wide celebration, A Very Merry Friendmas, has inspired other groups to bring similar events to fruition.

We came up with the idea to convert the crushed-rock space next to the ACCA into community green space and garnered the support of council, state and federal leadership with Nina Taylor MP spearheading funding to turn that dream into a reality. Our engagement with Josh Burns MP and the Lord Mayor contributed to the now funded Kings Ways undercroft plan.

After several years of building a strong reputation as solutions-focused partners with City of Melbourne, Southbank3006 is poised to be a key contributor to its new initiative, Envisage Melbourne 2050 – a plan for all of us to develop what Melbourne might look like in 25 years as a major metropolis that is vibrant and liveable to which Southbank is a key component.

This is a bold initiative by the council to break out of operating from crisis to crisis to proactively deliver vision-based leadership inspired by solutions-focused partnerships with residents.

Southbank3006 has been ready for this moment for a long time and has developed well thought out initiatives to bring about a more people-friendly Southbank that is safe, green and uncongested.

Which brings me back to my question, if you could change one thing about Southbank, what would it be?

To which I respond, what are you waiting for? The vehicle for seeing your dreams come true exists, you need only jump on board. ●

**MaryKay Rauma**

COMMUNITY@  
SOUTHBANK3006.COM  
SOUTHBANK3006.COM



You may have heard that a glimmer of my dream came true on January 1, 2025, with a voluntary 12-month trial allowing live-stock trucks to use the Burnley and Domain tunnels instead of detouring through Southbank. The trial is due in large part to the

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SOUTHBANK LOCAL NEWS

## Dianne takes a step closer to Mars

Southbank resident Dianne McGrath has progressed to the final 100 candidates around the world to be selected to travel to Mars.



The 45-year-old was one of more than 200,000 people from around the globe, who applied for the project known as Mars One, which offers a one-way ticket to the red planet.

Southbank Local News first met Dianne in July last year after she made the first cut of 705 applicants. Having now passed the second last stage of the process, she said she was thrilled to be in the running for the final group of 24.

"It's been an incredible experience so far and I can't wait to go through the next phase which is all about the group challenges before we get down to that 24," she said. "That involves eight years of training to be ready to be an astronaut that might potentially step on Mars, which would be incredible."

Should Dianne progress to the final 24, she will train in a team of four until the launch in 2023. From there, one of the four teams will be chosen. Once the initial four are settled in, Mars One will send more astronauts every two years to the base.

For now though, she faces a series of rigorous group activities and isolation training, which will test whether candidates possess the mental and physical capability to survive eight months of travel in a space shuttle.

"The biggest challenges are going to be the mental, psychological and emotional challenges that we have of being so isolated and not seeing loved ones again," she said.

"I met with a prisoner who has been in solitary confinement for three years out of a decades and decades long sentence just to find out how he deals with it."

"I'm doing a lot of study to help myself get there but I've got to keep fit to make sure I stay healthy."

While many might quiver at the thought of space travel, Dianne said she would be proud to leave behind a unique legacy to future generations and was excited for the challenge ahead.

She said while those close to her were initially apprehensive towards the idea of her one-way journey into space, they had all quickly adjusted and continued to provide support.

"My folks have become fantastic support, and, in fact, I think mum's got a little bit of a scrap book these days!" she said. "My partner's also been amazing. She helps me get ready for any interviews or activities I have to do, practising and testing me on aspects of Mars and the science and the technology, which is incredibly helpful." ●

## OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

## Sign up today for solar panel grants for apartment buildings

If you live in an owners' corporation (OC) with between three to 50 residential units, your building can sign up for a grant of up to \$140,000 to fund the installation of solar panels on the building's rooftop.

Solar Victoria is currently offering grants of up to \$2800 per apartment (\$140,000 max per building) as part of an initiative to get more apartment buildings to reduce emissions and reduce their electricity costs.

Applications are currently open on the Solar Victoria website, but the grants are being taken up quickly.

Building eligibility now includes strata townhouses and units under the control of an OC and sharing a common property rooftop.

By adopting solar, an average household in a multi-unit development can save up to \$500 a year on their energy bills.

However, to access this rebate, participating OCs must bear the upfront costs, which can then be reimbursed through the government rebates. More importantly, OCs must follow proper legislative procedures under the *Owners' Corporation Act 2006* when deciding to install solar panels, as this may involve an upgrade of the common property roof. Nevertheless, the recent government changes to the Act have meant that the approval processes for participating OCs have become somewhat less stringent.

A decision to approve the installation of solar panels will sometimes be one for the committee and will sometimes be a special resolution of the entire OC depending on certain circumstances.

For instance, a special resolution will

be needed if the solar installation is an "upgrade" to the common property. In other words, the solar installation will be considered "upgrading works" if it meets either of the following criteria: (a) the cost of the installation is estimated to be more than double the OC's annual fees; OR (b) the installation requires either a planning permit or a building permit before the solar panels can be installed.

In summary, the committee of an OC would be empowered to make a decision about installation of solar panels in the following scenarios:

- if the committee has not been limited when it was appointed to expenditure as to a dollar amount, or in relation to specific subject matters;
- no planning permit or building permit is required;
- the proposed system is not so expensive as to be twice the amount of the annual

fees of the OC;

- the addition is not a "significant alteration to the use or appearance of the common property"; and
- the OC has sufficient funds in its administrative fund and does not need to borrow from its maintenance fund, raise a levy or enter into a loan to pay for the solar panels.

That's a lot of ifs, buts and maybes. OCs should take some tailored legal advice about their own situation. But one thing is for certain – \$140,000 is nothing to be sniffed at. OCs should jump at this limited opportunity, before it is too late. ●

**Tom Bacon**

STRATA TITLE LAWYERS

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# Mac.Robertson Girls High School – corner Kings Way and Albert Rd

On the fringe of Southbank stands Mac.Robertson Girls High school, Victoria’s premier girls’ high school.

In 1933, McPherson Robertson, manufacturer of chocolate delights such as Freddo Frogs and Cherry Ripes, donated £100,000 to Victoria to celebrate the 1934 Centenary of Victoria. A sum of £40,000 was earmarked for a new girls high school on the edge of what would become Southbank.

The site was excised from the north-east corner of Albert Park, a move that attracted considerable opposition as it was seen as whittling away at public land. But the building provided much-needed employment opportunities, and the students were able to use the nearby public space for recreation. All of the structures supported by Robertson featured either his name or the name of one of his products.

A public competition for its design was held, and the successful architects were the leading modernists, Seabrook and Fildes.

Seabrook’s design was a radical departure from traditional school design, owing much to European Modernism. Distinguishing features of Victoria’s first modernist school included flat roofs, biscuit-coloured small bricks relieved by highly glazed brilliant blue bricks and bright red steel doors, surrounds of the steel-framed windows, rectilinear interlocking facades, open air classrooms, an industrial aesthetic and a modern interior fit-out.

The façade of the building comprises interlocking cubic forms of differing heights, offset by the vertical clock tower. Seabrook selected local Glen Iris cream bricks at a time when they were only being used sparingly in buildings.

Internally shades of red, blue, yellow, green and black were used. Practical floor finish material such as linoleum was used for classrooms, terracotta tiles for corridors and granolithic materials for the stairs and services rooms.

This modernist approach set a trend for many future buildings in Victoria by

applying and adapting European modernist design principles to a broad range of civic, industrial, commercial and residential buildings.

The school can trace its history from the opening of the Melbourne Continuation School in 1905 and is linked to the boys’ school at Melbourne High School. It achieved further acclaim when occupied by the US Marines during World War Two.

Academically, it remains one of the top high schools in the state and past students have many fond memories of their time at the school.

It was listed on the Victorian Heritage Register in 1998 due to its architectural, historic and social significance to the State of Victoria. ●



**Robin Grow**  
AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN  
OF SOUTHBANK  
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## METRO TUNNEL



### Hundreds of drivers trained to drive through Metro Tunnel

More than half the drivers needed for the new state-of-the-art Metro Tunnel have now been trained, in another step towards opening the tunnel and stations to passengers later in the year.

The project has trained 250 drivers, with more than 400 drivers needed for the start of passenger services in the tunnel.

Each Metro Tunnel driver is undertaking around 150 hours of extra training on the cutting-edge systems and technology that will be used on Victoria’s newest train line.

Eventually this number will rise to more than 1000 drivers trained – the majority of drivers on the metropolitan network.

More drivers are set to be trained inside the tunnel over the coming months, as trains run for hundreds of kilometres back and forth to stress test the new systems and technology that will run services.

**How are drivers trained?**

Drivers start with classes to learn the new cutting-edge signalling system that

will control trains as they move through the tunnel.

They then move on to the High Capacity Metro Train cabin simulator, where they learn to drive the trains using the new system in a safe environment, before practical training on the network starts.

The final step is training inside the new tunnels.

While driver training ramps up as part of the project’s trial operations phase, station staff are also being trained in the many processes and procedures that will be needed to operate the new stations safely.

More than 200 station staff will work across the Metro Tunnel’s five new stations – Arden, Parkville, State Library, Town Hall and Anzac.

With construction on the first three new stations finished last year, work is continuing at pace on the final two stations – Town Hall and State Library.

At Town Hall, crews are working on the glass canopy above the station entrance in a revitalised City Square, while at State Library Station 27 escalators and 19 lifts have been installed.

The Metro Tunnel is the biggest upgrade of Melbourne’s train network since the City Loop opened in 1981 and will transform the way people move around the city.

The Metro Tunnel will free up space in the City Loop by creating a new end-to-end rail line from Sunbury in the north-west to Cranbourne and Pakenham in the south-east – via a new tunnel under the city. ●

## FEDERAL MP



### Vital open space at the Kings Way

Southbankers need more open space. And we’re delivering that, underneath the Kingsway overpass.

**WORDS BY**  
JOSH BURNS - MACNAMARA MP

In every conversation with the Southbank community the lack of open space always comes up.

The facts are Southbank is one of the most densely populated areas in Melbourne, and it’s a young and growing community.

We know that urban infrastructure can transform cities, and really bring communities like Southbank to life. The way we do that is through all levels of government working together to ensure the sustainability of our communities for years to come.

That’s why in July 2023, Minister for Infrastructure Catherine King formed the Urban Policy Forum with experts from across the country to support the government’s work on the design and implementation of a National Urban Policy Framework.

For years, the northern undercroft, under the Kings Way overpass, has sat there, redundant. It’s a concrete jungle which has so much potential to revitalise our Southbank community.

From improving connectivity to public transport, to building new open space for communities to gather – the undercroft space has been long underutilised.

The City of Melbourne has conducted community consultations and put forward a vision which would be a real gamechanger for Southbank.

But I know that this vision for Southbank has been something the community has long advocated for.

Which is why I was so proud to stand with Lord Mayor Nick Reece and announce that we have secured \$4.1 million from the federal government to revitalise the Kings Way undercroft from a concrete jungle to an activity zone for our community.

We will be transforming the area into a real community space, with an outdoor park, basketball courts and art installations.

Green space is so precious, and this huge piece of land which has for too long been left alone, is going to be the new centre of life for our community.

This is not only a fantastic partnership between the Federal Government and the City of Melbourne, but it’s testament to the advocacy of the local Southbank community, which recognised just how important this project will be for the future of our city.

Government projects take time. They take collaboration with other layers of government and detailed planning. But good governments can get outcomes for communities, especially for projects that stack up and are needed by the community.

I’m proud of the huge amount of work to get this far, but we’re only just beginning.

Together, let’s get this done, and so much more – for our wonderful community in Southbank. ●



## The cost-of-living crisis: corporate greed is driving Australians to the brink

Our Southbank survey received so many responses, so, thank you to everyone who took time to respond. Cost of living was a consistent concern, and you're not alone.

**WORDS BY**  
SENATOR STEPH HODGINS-MAY  
AND KATHERINE COPSEY MP



Australians are struggling. Rent is through the roof, groceries cost more than ever, and insurance premiums are out of control.

Over the past three years, some Southbank residents have seen their rents increase by a staggering 60 per cent.

But while everyday people are cutting back and stressing over bills, corporate giants are making record profits. Billionaires are hoarding wealth, and multinational corporations are dodging tax.

This isn't just bad luck or inflation – it's a political choice.

Governments have let a handful of powerful corporations control entire industries, push prices up, and exploit everyday people. But it doesn't have to be this way.

The Greens are fighting to put people before profits, and we have a plan to make life more affordable.

Coles and Woolworths control most of Australia's grocery market, which means they can drive up prices while forcing farmers into unfair deals. Last year, both made over \$1.5 billion in profits – yet they claim price hikes are unavoidable.

Less competition means higher prices, and Australians are stuck paying whatever these giants demand while a handful of executives get richer. We need to break up this monopoly, introduce stronger price-gouging laws, and support small grocers to bring back real competition.

Insurance companies are no better. Premiums have skyrocketed – some by as much as 50 per cent in just a year – forcing many Australians to go without cover. Climate disasters are getting worse, yet insurers are abandoning high-risk communities, leaving people stranded.

Meanwhile, their profits are soaring

– some up 91 per cent in a year. Their business model is simple: charge more, cover less, and put shareholder returns above people's security.

We need to stop them from price gouging and withdrawing from entire regions. A public insurer could guarantee fair, affordable coverage for everyone.

And while everyday Australians are struggling to get by, billionaires and multinational corporations are getting away with paying nothing. More than 1200 major companies paid zero tax in 2022-23. In the past year, billionaire wealth jumped by \$28 billion. Australia's richest are making \$67,000 an hour – 1300 times more than the average worker – while wages barely move. This is a policy failure.

The Greens want to close tax loopholes, introduce a billionaire wealth tax, and make big corporations pay their fair share. A super-profits tax alone could raise tens of billions – money that could be used to lower the cost of living, build housing, and invest in public services.

This crisis isn't inevitable – it's the result of political inaction.

The Greens are taking a stand. We're listening to people like you and fighting to break up the supermarket duopoly, stop price gouging on groceries, regulate the insurance industry so people aren't left stranded, and tax billionaires and big corporations to lower living costs and invest in the essential services Australians rely on.

The money is there – it's just in the wrong hands. We believe it's time to put people before profits.

We are only a phone call away so please get in touch if there are further issues that you'd like to share with your local Greens representatives. ●



## New artwork goes up on Arts Centre Melbourne hoarding to celebrate Asia TOPA

**A new artwork *Dominus Aeris* by Thukral and Tagra is now on display on the hoarding at Arts Centre Melbourne along St Kilda Rd between Hamer Hall and the Theatres Building as part of the Asia-Pacific Triennial of Performing Arts (Asia TOPA).**

The artwork was commissioned by the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation (MAPT) to celebrate the 2025 Asia TOPA festival.

For this year's festival, Delhi-based artist duo Thukral and Tagra (comprised of Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra) are presenting their new project *Bread, Circuses and Home*, a free public installation at Fed Square.

Thukral and Tagra created the stunning large-scale artwork *Dominus Aeris* in response to *Bread, Circuses and Home* and its ideas on migration and resilience. The eye-catching artwork explores themes of family, aspirations, and value.

The work draws inspiration from the architecture of Indian state Punjab, echoing the houses of Thukral and Tagra's ancestors.

These houses, symbolic of migration, are portrayed as fleeting, transient homes.

To create the work, the artists used the motif of water tanks and hot air balloons to celebrate the ambition and adaptability of Punjab's communities.

"Art is the only way that offers a profound way to navigate and make sense of today's ever-changing world," Thukral and Tagra said.

The artists have been working collaboratively for more than two decades on immersive and multi-modal sensory installations that engage in the cultural and political landscape of India and the world.

The artwork was commissioned by MAPT in collaboration with Arts Centre Melbourne to transform this part of the Arts Precinct into an outdoor gallery.

*Dominus Aeris* will be displayed on the hoarding outside Arts Centre Melbourne from February to December 2025. It is free to visit and wheelchair accessible.

Asia TOPA runs until March 10, 2025, presenting a full program of breathtaking performances, art after dark, and world premieres, exhibitions and larger-than-life installations.

Explore the program here:

[asiatopa.com.au](https://asiatopa.com.au) ●

## ST JOHNS SOUTHGATE

### Connections

**I feel strangely nostalgic for the Coronavirus years of 2020-21. While the disease threatened and terrified us, and some institutional responses were adverse, good things also happened.**

**WORDS BY**  
PASTOR JAMES WINDERLICH  
ST JOHNS, SOUTHGATE

People connected with each other. They checked in on their vulnerable neighbours and organised grocery drops.

They gathered in any way that they could and revived quaint interests from sourdough baking to crocheting and book clubs.

We turned towards each other and connected in good ways.

As we turned to each other the overwhelming health, social, political and economic clamour that the pandemic caused erupted.

Big people with loud voices and strong opinions stood out and provided both useful and questionable commentary on what the pandemic would and should mean. Some of that commentary helped, but other parts of it confused us and intensified our anxiety.

We needed to decompress and normalise our days. We did that through our connections. Kindness became our dominant social ethic. We "checked in" on each other.

In these past months I'm again feeling a little compressed, vulnerable and isolated. It's not because of a viral pandemic, but because of the impacts of local and international political movements and the media noise that amplifies them all...

More big people with loud voices and strong opinions telling us how things are

and should be, promoting the not-so-new social ethic of self-interest. This clamour can turn us away from, and even against each other.

At the beginning of this century the political scientist, Robert D. Putnam observed a degeneration of social and community connections in his own USA setting (*Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon and Schuster, 2001/rev 2020; and *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again*, Simon and Schuster, 2020).

He reported shifts from communitarianism to individualism and its effects on the construction or erosion of social capital as people became disconnected from family, friends, neighbours and other social structures and institutions.

This absurdly led to an entirely new, "Species of association whose members never actually meet". This, in his view, has contributed to political polarisation, bitter public discourse and a breakdown of the

healthy connections that hold people and communities together.

Putnam goes on to observe that local connections and associations are the effective counterbalance to the negative social effects of individualism and the "big voices" that demand our anxious complicity.

We limit the adverse impacts of the "big voices" when we connect and gather to do the hard and enriching work that comes when we are with people who are "not-always-like-us". Those connections ground us, build social capital and hush the rancorous clamour.

In my nostalgia for 2020-21 I've dampened my media feeds and investigated the various community and social groups in the Southbank setting. This includes a deepening appreciation for the very real human and sacred connections that my church setting at St Johns provides me.

Those connections aren't "big" or "loud", but they are alive.

[james.winderlich@lca.org.au](mailto:james.winderlich@lca.org.au) ●



- ## QUIZ SOLUTIONS

1 Bachelor of Screen Media 2. A carved stamp used as a personal signature 3. Bangleadesh 4. 75,000 5. Keith Haring, David Larwill, Juan Davila, and Howard Arkley 6. Purse 7. 1972 8. Bay of Fires 9. 1972 10. Fences 11. The northern undercroft below Kings Way near City Rd 12. 11

## No. 310

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## SOLUTIONS

OASIS, BOOST, ERASE, STRUM, EASES

PUZZLES AND PAGINATION  
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March, 2025

## No. 045

EASY

2			8				9	
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## SOLUTIONS

EASY									
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7	2	3	5	8	4	9	1	6	4
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HARD

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The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

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R	B	I	Q	B	U	S	I	S	O	C
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T	D	R	U	E	E	H	E	N	E	I
C	E	E	E	T	E	N	V	I	T	T
U	N	L	S	T	A	N	A	R	R	E
R	O	O	I	I	T	L	I	M	Y	C
T	T	C	N	M	G	A	I	G	O	T
S	S	E	N	T	S	N	P	S	N	R
T	S	I	N	R	E	D	O	M	M	E

Secret message: Built environments

## No. 045

1 Constable (9)  
6 Matures (4)  
10 Eggs (3)  
11 Booking (11)  
12 Pseudonyms (3,5)  
13 Project (6)  
14 Wildcat (4)  
15 Teased (7)  
20 Expresses  
disapproval (7)  
21 Tract (4)  
25 Come back (6)  
26 NY theatre  
district (8)  
28 Bases (11)  
29 Bedridden (3)  
30 Artist, – Ono (4)  
31 Adorn with  
glitter (9)

1	Punctually (8)	30			
2	Studying (8)				
3	Grain (6)	19	Colour (4,4)		
4	Be naughty (9)	22	Sly (6)		
5	Benchmark (4)	23	Hit (6)		
7	Ushered (6)	24	R & R spot (3,3)		
8	Did wrong (6)	27	Wound with a knife (4)		
9	Axe (7)				
16	Infamous (9)				
17	Gatecrash (7)				
18	Surfing (the web) (8)				

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**SOLUTION**

[illegible]

## No. 045

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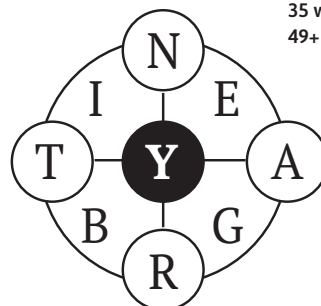
## SOLUTIONS

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C	U	D	Y	E	B	W	K	N	R	G	X	H
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

## No. 045

Today's Focus:  
20 words: Good  
35 words: Very good  
49+ words: Excellent

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural words ending in "s"



## SOLUTIONS

**Reference:**  
Collins Concise  
English Dictionary

[illegible]



## WHAT'S ON March



Discover Southbank this March  
with a great selection of events  
for the whole family



### ASIA TOPA: SHADOWS IN TWIN CITIES

A project by artists Jessica Wilson and Gijong Yoo bringing together children from Korea and Australia, in unusual conversations about their city landscapes. Join for ArtPlay workshops and screenings.

Fed Square + ArtPlay

UNTIL MARCH 10, 10AM – 5PM



### MOOMBA PARADE

Since 1955, big and little kids have witnessed a flurry of Moomba magic as the parade sweeps through the city. Catch dance troupes, floats and of course, the famed Moomba Monarchs, Sooshi Mango.

Kings Domain, Alexandra Ave

MARCH 10, 10.45AM – 11.45AM



### HARMONY WEEK STOMPERS

This week is a celebration that recognises diversity in Australia. Join in for some special storytimes to celebrate multicultural communities. For ages 18 months to three years.

Southbank Library at Boyd

THURS 20 MARCH, 10.30AM – 11.15AM



### MELBOURNE YOUTH ORCHESTRA: REFORMATION, ROMANCE & REBELLION

Conducted by Brett Kelly, this concert combines ideas of romance, reformation and rebellion in an exploration of the human condition.

Melbourne Recital Centre

SUNDAY 30 MARCH, 2PM – 4PM



### MELBOURNE HOLI FESTIVAL

Experience live music and multicultural dance performances by talented artists. Play with eco-friendly colours provided at the venue and participate in cultural workshops showcasing the spirit of Holi.

Tom's Block, Linlithgow Ave

15 & 16 MARCH, 12PM – 10PM

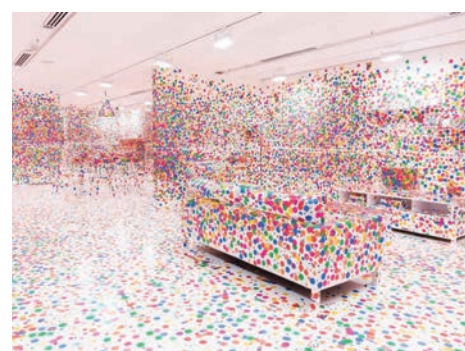


### NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SOUTHBANK "COFFEE WITH A COP"

Join us for a friendly chat with local police officers. The mission of Coffee with a Cop is to break down the barriers between police officers and citizens.

Melbourne Square

SUNDAY 30 MARCH, 10AM – 12PM



### KUSAMA FOR KIDS

At the NGV, Yayoi Kusama invites everyone to 'obliterate' the rooms by adding bright, colourful dots to the white furniture, objects and surfaces.

National Gallery of Victoria

UNTIL 21 APRIL, 10AM – 5PM

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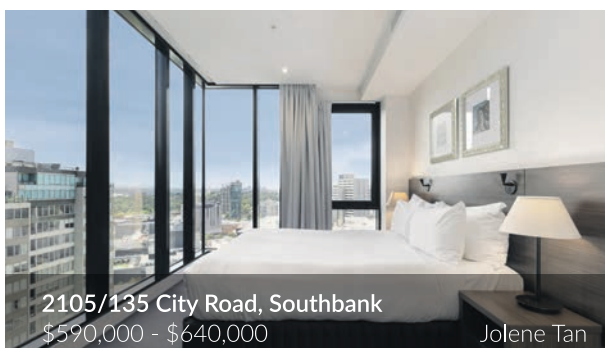
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# Here today, gone tomorrow

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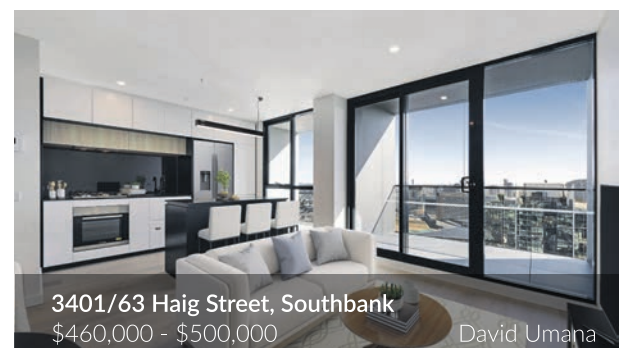
**2105/135 City Road, Southbank**  
\$590,000 - \$640,000

Jolene Tan



**2406/57-61 City Road, Southbank**  
\$290,000 - \$318,000

Max Hui



**3401/63 Haig Street, Southbank**  
\$460,000 - \$500,000

David Umana



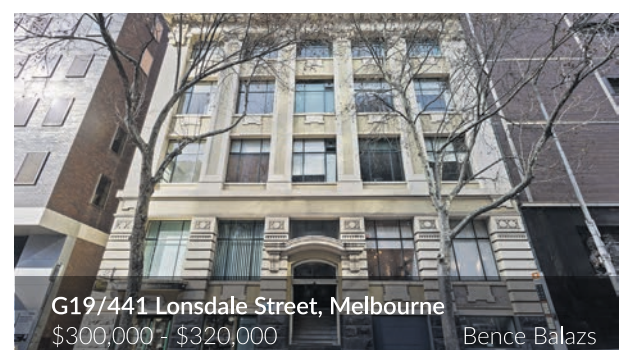
**94/285 City Road, Southbank**  
\$600,000 - \$660,000

Kerrera Pidcock



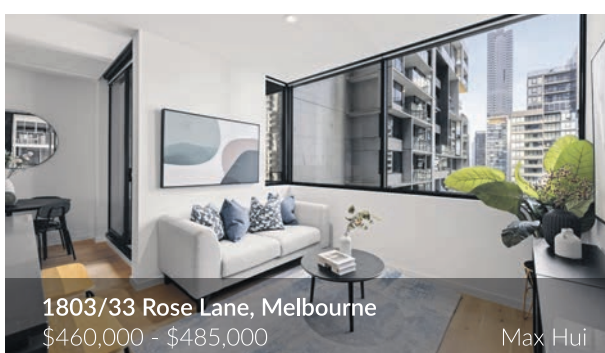
**206/557 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne**  
\$390,000 - \$420,000

Jolene Tan



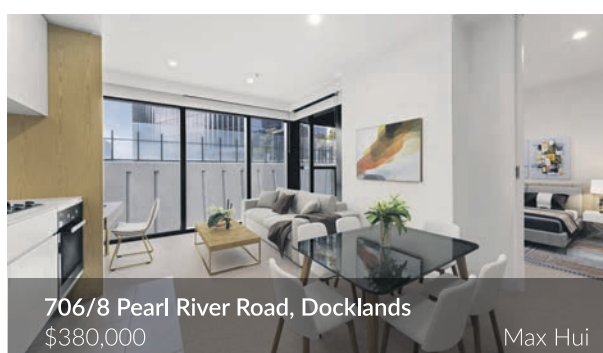
**G19/441 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne**  
\$300,000 - \$320,000

Bence Balazs



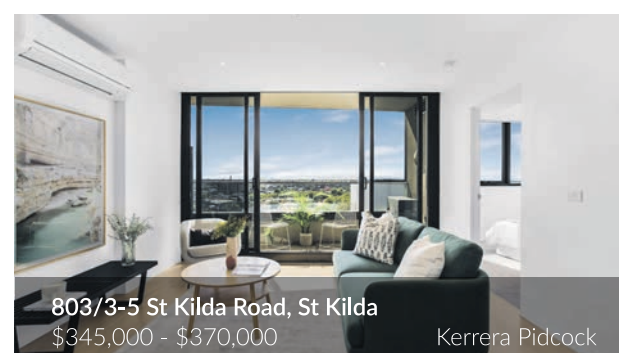
**1803/33 Rose Lane, Melbourne**  
\$460,000 - \$485,000

Max Hui



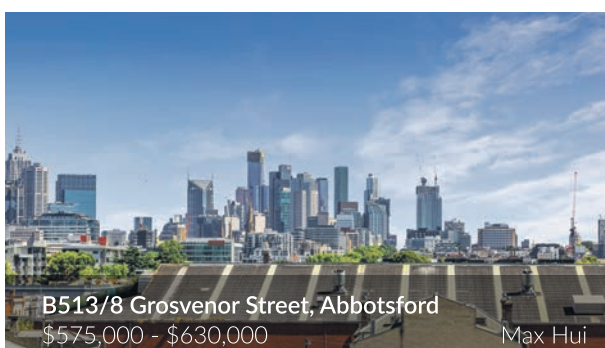
**706/8 Pearl River Road, Docklands**  
\$380,000

Max Hui



**803/3-5 St Kilda Road, St Kilda**  
\$345,000 - \$370,000

Kerrera Pidcock



**B513/8 Grosvenor Street, Abbotsford**  
\$575,000 - \$630,000

Max Hui



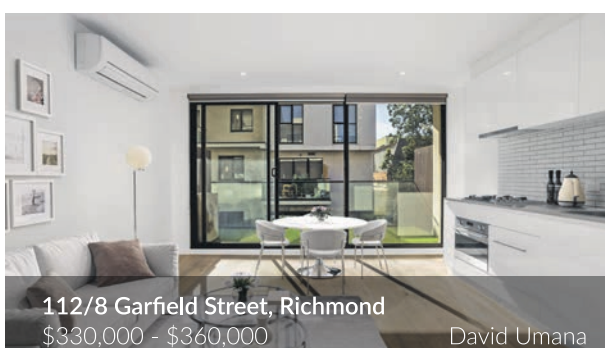
**B306/8 Grosvenor Street, Abbotsford**  
\$355,000 - \$390,000

Max Hui



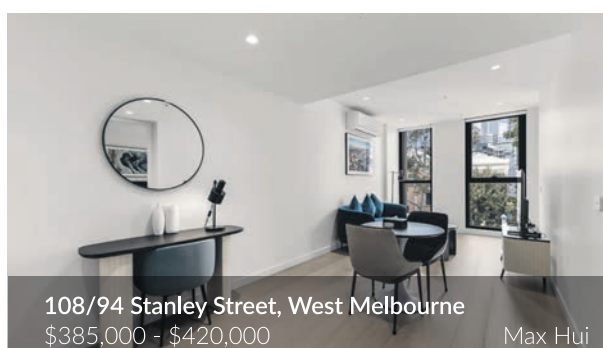
**E411/11 Flockhart Street, Abbotsford**  
\$430,000 - \$460,000

Max Hui



**112/8 Garfield Street, Richmond**  
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David Umana



**108/94 Stanley Street, West Melbourne**  
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**Taylor Sims:** 0403 485 210  
**David Umana:** 0481 222 376  
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