



## ***Mambo: 30 years of shelf-indulgence***

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square | 6 Dec 2014 – 22 Feb 2015 | Free entry

Our country's most irreverent and outspoken brands - Mambo - has turned 30 years old. With its idiosyncratic Australian sense of humour and perverse national pride, *Mambo: 30 years of shelf-indulgence* celebrates this iconic clothing label in a retrospective exhibition featuring the largest collection of Mambo works ever assembled at NGV Australia from 6 December 2014 to 22 February 2015, and a milestone publication of the same name.

*Mambo: 30 years of shelf-indulgence* presents all the ground-breaking ideas, subversive politics and off-the-wall larrikinism that have made it one of Australia's most memorable brands and includes original artworks, never-before-seen developmental work and a retrospective of the most-loved pieces of apparel produced during its controversial history, including its iconic graphic T-shirts.

From artist Richard Allan's infamous dog print to rockstar

Reg Mombassa's 'Australian Jesus' Hawaiian shirt, Mambo tackled racism, jingoism and commercialism – and even poked fun at the very subculture they were supposedly targeting with their clothing and accessories.

"*Mambo: 30 years of shelf-indulgence* presents the ideas and idiosyncrasies that have come to characterise this unconventional brand," said Tony Ellwood, director, NGV. "It looks at some of the many artists who have made Mambo a national household name: from the legendary Reg Mombassa, with his cheeky depictions of an Aussie Messiah, to Maria Kozic's strangely haunting Goddesses and Richard Allen's enduring canine – the famous farting dog – which has formed the Mambo logo for more than twenty years.

"The exhibition acknowledges the singular place Mambo holds in this country as a purveyor of fashion, philosophy, art and design," he said.

Established in 1984 by founder Dare Jennings, Mambo built its foundations on an irreverent combination of art, humour, music and surf. Pitched squarely at the average Australian, under the art direction of Wayne Golding, Mambo is credited with introducing art and humour to the previously logo-driven and humour-challenged surf wear industry.

Self-described as the 'bastard children of surf culture', Mambo gave rise to one of the most recognisable, authentic, vernacular, politically incorrect yet intensely political brands to rise out of the excesses of 1980s Australia. Mambo's social commentary and political astuteness is embodied by all 250 artists that have worked for the label over the past three decades.

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The brand's artistic reputation and voice was solidified in 1993, when Mambo was invited by the Art Gallery of New South Wales to exhibit alongside an international collection of surrealist art in the show, *Surrealism by Night*. In 2000, the label reached new international heights when it was selected to design the Australian athletes' uniforms for the Sydney Olympic Games.

Guest curated by Eddie Zammit in collaboration with Mambo's original art director, Wayne Golding, and current owner Angus Kingsmill, the exhibition and publication showcase some of the finest elements of Mambo's creative and very distinctive identity. Zammit is also the publisher of *T-world* magazine, the world's only T-shirt journal documenting graphics from the past and present.

"Here's a homegrown brand that cares about art," said Eddie Zammit. "When it comes to Australian brands, no one comes close to the creative energy of Mambo. The exhibition will showcase the enormous 30 year contribution of this icon."

*Mambo: 30 years of shelf-indulgence* will be on display at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square in the NGV Studio from 6 Dec 2014 – 22 Feb 2015. Entry is free.

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**Image Caption:**

**Reg Mombassa**

*30 Years of Shelf-Indulgence* 2014