



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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NGV ARCHITECTURE COMMISSION 2021: PINK POND INVITES VISITORS TO PONDER OUR FUTURE

NGV International | November 2021 - April 2022 | Free entry



11 May 2021: A beautiful architectural installation, replete with a pink pond evocative of Australia's inland salt lakes, has been revealed as the winner of the NGV's 2021 Architecture Commission in the Grollo Equiset Garden at NGV International.

Designed by a Melbourne-based team comprising architecture firm Taylor Knights in collaboration with artist James Carey, the installation, entitled *pond[er]*, offers a space for visitors to cool off during the summer months and reflect on their relationship with the environment.

Referencing Sir Roy Grounds's open-air courtyards in the original design of NGV International, this architecture and landscape installation comprises two key design elements: a body of indigenous plants and a body of water. The body of water is coloured pink, making direct reference to the many inland salt lakes in Victoria and highlighting the scarcity, importance and political implications of water as a natural resource. The installation also includes beds of Victorian wildflowers, designed in association with Ben Scott Garden Design, that bloom at different times throughout the installation seeks to highlight the beauty, precariousness and temporality of our natural ecology.

Envisioned as a space that becomes part the NGV garden rather than a separate architectural object, *pond[er]* invites audiences to move through a series of interconnected walkways and accessible platforms. Visitors can immerse themselves within and explore the spaces of flora and water and can even step down and wade through the pink pond.

In response to the 2021 competition brief, the materials that have been selected for the project are locally sourced and manufactured, and, wherever possible, are intended to be distributed and used again by various Landcare, Indigenous and community groups upon deinstallation, including the Willam Warrain Aboriginal Association.

Pond[er] was selected the winner from a strong shortlist consisting of Aileen Sage Architects with Michaela Gleave, *Listening to the Earth*, which explored interconnectedness between people at a time of restricted human interaction; Common + Enlocus, *At the Table*, an installation offering a sensorial, productive, and edible garden; MDF / Manus Leung + Duncan Chang + Fu Yun, *Ring Ring Swing*, a playful and evocative installation that embraced the social and communal potential of the swing to foster human connection; and Simulaa with Finding Infinity, *Gas Stack*, an ecologically minded and engaging installation that evokes both a biotech lab and the vertical city.

Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV, said, 'Through an elegant interplay of architectural and landscape elements, this work draws our attention to the challenges facing Australia's many catchments and river systems, whilst also ensuring that the design itself has minimal environmental impact by considering the future lifecycle of the materials used.'

On behalf of Principal Partner Macquarie Group, Tim Joyce, Executive Director Macquarie Capital said, "Through our longstanding partnership with the NGV, Macquarie Group is pleased to support the Architecture Commission and recognises the importance of this work for the broader community."

"Consistent with previous winners, *pond[er]* demonstrates the alignment of values of the NGV and RMIT University that continue to underpin our partnership. Climate emergency, social inclusion and care for Country emerge through this thoughtful project. RMIT University is proud to be the Design Partner of the NGV and a major sponsor of the NGV Architecture Commission which provides support and recognition for emerging Australian architecture practices, and

artists," states Tim Marshall, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Design and Social Context, and Vice-President, RMIT University.

Each year, the annual commission is selected via a two-stage national competition, in which architects or multi-disciplinary teams are invited to submit a design for an engaging temporary structure or installation to activate the NGV's Grollo Equiset Garden, one of Melbourne's great civic and cultural spaces.

The NGV Architecture Commission has previously been designed by Yhonnie Scarce and Edition Office (2019), MUIR + OPENWORK (2018), Retallack Thompson and Other Architects (2017), M@ STUDIO Architects (2016), John Wardle Architects (2015).

The 2021 NGV Architecture Commission will be on display from November 2021 – April 2022 at NGV International, St Kilda Road, Melbourne. Free entry. Further information is available via the NGV website: NGV.MELBOURNE

ABOUT THE DESIGNERS

Taylor Knights is a Melbourne-based architecture and interior design studio with projects spanning metropolitan and rural settings. The studio focuses on craftsmanship and a thoughtful response to the environment and civic generosity.

James Carey is an artist and lecturer in Interior Design, School of Architecture and Urban Design, RMIT University. He is also an artistic director at BLINDSIDE Gallery in Melbourne. His recent PhD by project at RMIT School of Architecture and Urban Design foregrounded duration and temporal practices within the discipline of Interior Design.

ABOUT THE NGV ARCHITECTURE COMMISSION SERIES

Following the founding of the Department of Contemporary Design and Architecture at the NGV in 2015 the Gallery developed the NGV Architecture Commission series to offer a unique opportunity for Australian architects and designers to propose a compelling design idea for presentation within one of Australia's great civic and cultural spaces – the Grollo Equiset Garden at NGV International.

Seeking to exhibit leading architectural ideas in the context of the NGV, the series was instigated in 2015 with John Wardle Architects' *I Dips Me Lid*, a playful steel, timber and textile structure which provided a theatrical centrepiece offering shade, retreat and a place for performance and workshops.

In 2017 M@ Studio's hyperreal suburban carwash *Haven't you always wanted...?* won the Melbourne Prize in the Victorian Architecture Awards. In 2018 Retallack Thompson and Other Architects' *Garden Wall*, a maze-like series of open-air passageways, corridors and rooms was awarded a commendation in the Victorian Architecture Awards Small Projects category. In 2019 Muir + Openwork's *Doubleground* was awarded the Australian Institute of Architects national award for small project architecture and the Victorian chapter's Kevin Borland award for small project architecture. In 2020 Yhonnie Scarce and Edition Office's *In Absence* won the Victorian chapter's Kevin Borland award for small project architecture and the global award for small building of the year at the 2020 Dezeen Awards.

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IMAGES: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/70h6i7nziq275eq/AAA_Qf3wAWDp2_JqYf5fBnmva?dl=0

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Image credit:

Courtesy of Taylor Knights and James Carey

The NGV Architecture Commission 2021 is proudly supported by:

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