



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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From Pets to Pumpkins: A week of art-tastic adventures for families at NGV Kids Summer Festival 2025

NGV International & The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia | 11–17 January 2025 | FREE



20 December 2024: Celebrate the new year with a burst of creativity and fun at the **NGV Kids Summer Festival**, running from 11–17 January. This year's festival offers an exciting lineup of free events for families featuring hands-on workshops and engaging performances inspired by NGV's newest exhibitions. Highlights include pet-themed events to celebrate *Cats & Dogs* at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, interactive activities inspired by *Yayoi Kusama* at NGV International, and artist-led sessions designed to spark young imaginations.

The festival will kick off with an action-packed launch day on Saturday 11 January across Fed Square. Children will receive free entry to *Cats & Dogs*, joining a lineup of pet-themed activities, including live dog shows with Farmer Dave Graham on the Fed Square stage, designing cat or dog ear headbands, and a face-painting station. An evening screening of the film *Best in Show* will complete the day's festivities.

Throughout the week, the NGV will host artist-led, drop-by pet portrait sessions where children can draw their pets, and engage with local artists including Deanne Gilson, Bushra Hasan and Tab Sejo. Families can also gather for *Dog and Cat Tales*, a dedicated story time for young children featuring picture books by Australian and First Nations authors, including *Yurri's Manung* by Sue Atkinson. Led by Koorie Heritage Trust educator and artist Tania Rossi, these sessions will bring the magic of storytelling to life for young audiences.

Families can also drop by NGV International for the *Lots of Dots* activity, letting kids create their own dotted pumpkin designs inspired by Yayoi Kusama's *Dancing Pumpkin* on display in NGV's Federation Court. Adding to the excitement, the Mercedes-Benz "Design your very own car wrap" activity will offer kids the chance to join in a unique drawing workshop where participants can create their own bespoke car wrap designs. There will be one prize pack awarded to one lucky winner each day of Kids Summer Festival, with thanks to Major Partner, Mercedes-Benz.

Kids Summer Festival also includes [Relaxed Mornings](#), held on 14 and 16 January, offering before-hours access to Yayoi Kusama's *The Obliteration Room*, 2002 with reduced sensory stimuli for families who benefit from a quieter environment in the Children's Gallery.

For families unable to visit NGV, the Kids on Tour program will bring the festival to over 150 venues across Victoria, from regional galleries to multicultural community centers, offering a series of free enriching art activities for young Victorians.

Colin Brooks, Minister for Creative Industries, said: 'Australia's most popular gallery delivers again with the return of these incredible, free kids programs, ensuring kids of all ages can continue to learn, create and have a whole lot of fun over the school holidays. No matter where you live, the free NGV Kids on Tour and NGV Kids Summer Festival programs are just two ways we are providing more Victorians with access to quality, free creative experiences this summer.'

Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV, said: 'This year's festival extends NGV's commitment to inspiring young minds, with exciting new activities and art experiences designed to foster creativity and bring families together.'

The NGV Kids Summer Festival is free and runs from 11–17 January, 2025. For more information, please visit the NGV website.

IMAGES: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/pfkqgkv6dqj40kt7bfxst/AMKD91831C_z94uVwU-Lgnk?rlkey=8q7ss0moawnstvz1i13x0i7go&st=8o71u7rv&dl=0

IMAGE CAPTIONS: A child wearing 'Furry Friends' headband activity. Photo: Eugene Hyland; Family enjoying activities as part of NGV Kids Summer Festival. Photo: Tobias Titz; Lots of Dots with Yayoi Kusama activity as part of NGV Kids Summer Festival 2025. Photo: Eugene Hyland; Dog activities with Farmer Dave Graham. Photo supplied

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