

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP
Minister for Development Victoria
Minister for Precincts
Minister for Creative Industries



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GLOBAL EXCLUSIVE YAYOI KUSAMA EXHIBITION UNVEILED AT THE NGV

Melbourne's cultural calendar is welcoming a stunning new addition, with the highly anticipated global exclusive *Yayoi Kusama* exhibition opening this Sunday – thanks to the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks today joined NGV Director Tony Ellwood AM to preview the exhibition, which features 200 works and has been curated especially for Australian audiences.

95-year-old Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama is an icon of contemporary art and recognised globally for her distinctive bold and colourful work. Across eight decades Kusama has created immersive, thought-provoking and personal art that transcends cultures.

Spanning her incredible career, the NGV's latest blockbuster exhibition includes sculpture, painting, collage, fashion and films alongside immersive artworks, including the global premiere of Kusama's new awe-inspiring infinity mirror room.

The exhibition also includes the Australian debut of *Dancing Pumpkin, 2020*, a towering five-metre-tall yellow-and-black polka-dotted bronze sculpture, which has been acquired by the NGV.

The *Dancing Pumpkin* forms part of the free access program that also includes a dedicated children's gallery *Kusama for Kids* which will feature *The Obliteration Room, 2002–present*, an interactive installation that kids and families to cover a white domestic interior in a kaleidoscope of coloured polka-dots.

In January, the Kusama exhibition will also be a focal point for the free NGV Kids Summer Festival, which will take over NGV venues in Melbourne, and the NGV Kids on Tour program which will present free family-friendly activities at more than 150 venues across regional and outer metropolitan areas.

The NGV will also present a range of public programs during the exhibition, including NGV Friday Nights which will see the NGV open until late with food and live music alongside the exhibition.

Yayoi Kusama adds to the NGV's run of successful exhibitions such as the recent Melbourne Winter Masterpieces presentation of *Pharaoh* which attracted more than 336,000 visitors – 22 per cent of whom travelled from outside Victoria to attend the Melbourne-exclusive exhibition.

The Kusama exhibition is part of a blockbuster pipeline of major events in Victoria, which also includes the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, the Australian Open, the Boxing Day Test, Pro Kabaddi League Melbourne Raid and the Frida Kahlo exhibition in Bendigo – contributing to the state's \$39.2 billion visitor economy.

Yayoi Kusama is on display at NGV International, St Kilda Road from Sunday 15 December until 21 April 2025, with further information and tickets available via the [NGV website](#).

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

"Crowds at the NGV are going to be awestruck by Kusama's works and securing this exhibition is yet another example of why the NGV is Australia's most popular gallery and why Melbourne is Australia's cultural capital."

"This exhibition will be a hot ticket and it's fantastic that there are also many free, family-friendly ways to experience Kusama's work, by checking out major sculptures across the NGV foyer or visiting the free children's gallery."

Media contact: Lloyd Skinner 0457 138 806 | lloyd.skinner@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

“Time and time again the NGV hosts major, globally-recognised exhibitions, from Pharaoh earlier this year to Kusama over summer and French Impressionism next winter – this gallery continues to be a world leader and we’re so proud to be supporting these events.”

“This exhibition is going to be a massive drawcard for tourists from interstate and around the world, who will not only flock to the NGV but fill our hotels, restaurants and bars – providing a huge boost for our economy.”

Quote attributable to Member for Albert Park Nina Taylor

“This global exclusive exhibition is an incredible opportunity for Albert Park residents to experience world-class art right on their doorstep, showcasing the south of Melbourne as a vibrant cultural hub that is home to one of the highest concentrations of arts and cultural organisations anywhere in the world.”

Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

“Melbourne continues to cement its place as the home of major events, with this summer alone offering visitors the chance to see globally exclusive art at the NGV then walk across to the Boxing Day Test, see India’s best Pro Kabaddi League players in action or take in the Australian Open – there’s no other place in the world where you can do that.”

Quote attributable to National Gallery of Victoria Director Tony Ellwood AM

“There are few artists working today with the global presence of Yayoi Kusama. This world-premiere NGV-exclusive exhibition allows local audiences and visitors alike the chance to experience Kusama’s practice in deeper and more profound ways than ever before. We are indebted to Kusama for allowing us to share her worldview and creativity with Australian audiences.”