

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Minister for Health Infrastructure



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LOCAL ARTISTS TO BE SHOWCASED AT NEW FOOTSCRAY HOSPITAL

The Allan Labor Government is making significant progress on the construction of the landmark \$1.5 billion new Footscray Hospital, with local artists now being commissioned to help bring the project to life.

Minister for Health Infrastructure Melissa Horne today announced the artists whose work will adorn various spaces within the hospital, helping create a more welcoming environment for patients, staff and visitors.

Ethiopian-born, Melbourne-based artist Olana Janfa has been appointed to create 80 original works – titled 'Heal and Thrive'. The works will be inspired by community reflections that will be uncovered at a series of creative workshops with community members, local schools, hospital staff and volunteers.

Melbourne artist Jarra Karalinar Steel has also been selected to develop a visual art concept within the New Footscray Hospital precinct.

Her piece, 'Time of Renewal', will be installed on the pedestrian footbridge over Ballarat Road connecting the hospital with Victoria University – her work will also be included on the ground-level foyer of the university building.

These works will complement a 10-metre tapestry – currently being woven by the Australian Tapestry Workshop – displayed in the hospital's main entrance, designed by Maree Clarke (Yorta Yorta/Wamba Wamba/Mutti Mutti/Boonwurrung) and Mitch Mahone (Boonwurrung/Barkindji).

Other public art commissions across the new hospital include 'Journey to Footscray' by Nick Athanasiou, celebrating stories of migration to Melbourne's western suburbs, which will be featured on recessed external wall panels.

Construction is on track and the new hospital's striking external façade is now complete. The almost 1,500-strong construction workforce is now focused on the internal fit-out across the hospital site.

When complete, the new Footscray Hospital will cut wait times, reduce pressure on nearby hospitals and help families get the care they need closer to home.

Delivered by the Victorian Health Building Authority in partnership with Western Health, Plenary Health and Victoria University, major construction of the new Footscray Hospital is expected to be complete in late 2025.

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Infrastructure Melissa Horne

"As construction continues to progress at pace, these important finishing touches like artwork are now being installed – to create a welcoming and calm environment for patients and visitors when they need it most."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"The new Footscray Hospital is one of the largest health investments in Victoria's history and will provide world-class care to our growing western suburbs – these local artworks will truly enhance the state-of-the-art hospital."

Quote attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

"The beautiful tapestry at the new Footscray Hospital will be the first thing you see when you walk in – a wonderful celebration and showcase of First Peoples culture."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

“This stunning 10-metre tapestry, designed by First Nations artists and woven by the renowned Australian Tapestry Workshop, is a powerful celebration of culture and creativity—showcasing the strength of our creative industries while creating a meaningful and welcoming first impression for all who enter the new Footscray Hospital.”

Quote attributable to Member for Footscray Katie Hall

“The New Footscray Hospital is a once-in-a-generation project and the inclusion of works by local artists will add to the character of this incredible new building in the West.”

Quote attributable to Executive Director Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit Victoria University Karen Jackson

“The deep storytelling of Boonwurrung Jarra Steele’s artwork links land, sky and seasons in the new Footscray hospital VU building to our Moondani Balluk ways of embracing people, connecting Country to place, and giving strong healing to First Nations people and all who walk and engage with us.”