

POTTER
MUSEUM
OF ART

BUXTON
CONTEMP
ORARY



Learning Experiences

2026 Program Guide



University of
Melbourne
Museums and
Collections

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples as the traditional custodians of the land where our exhibitions and learning programs take place. We acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Learning Experiences from Experienced Learners

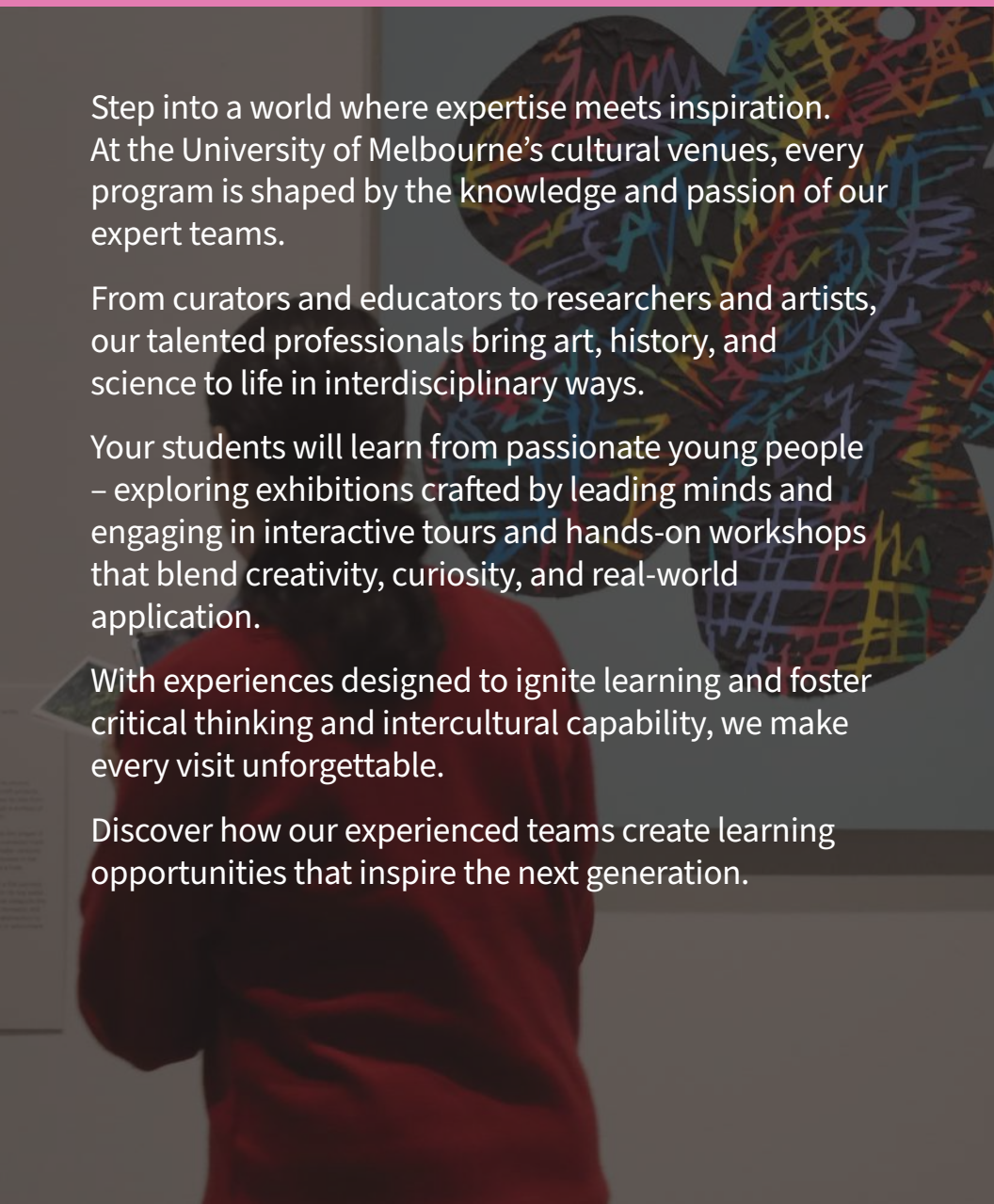
Step into a world where expertise meets inspiration. At the University of Melbourne's cultural venues, every program is shaped by the knowledge and passion of our expert teams.

From curators and educators to researchers and artists, our talented professionals bring art, history, and science to life in interdisciplinary ways.

Your students will learn from passionate young people – exploring exhibitions crafted by leading minds and engaging in interactive tours and hands-on workshops that blend creativity, curiosity, and real-world application.

With experiences designed to ignite learning and foster critical thinking and intercultural capability, we make every visit unforgettable.

Discover how our experienced teams create learning opportunities that inspire the next generation.





Buxton Contemporary

Opening its doors in 2018, Buxton Contemporary continues the ethos of Michael and Janet Buxton's approach to collecting: supporting contemporary artists and a sustained engagement with the development of artistic practice.

Buxton Contemporary's dynamic program of solo and thematic exhibitions, artist commissions, publishing and learning initiatives connects contemporary art to young audiences, and demonstrates the transformative potential of creative thinking and art-led exchanges of ideas.

Potter Museum of Art

The Potter is one of the homes of the University of Melbourne Art Collection, with work spanning antiquity to contemporary practice. While the principal focus of the Collection is Australian art, a range of international works include gifts from distinguished alumni and teaching collections that demonstrate the strong connections between the University's cultural collections and its academic programs.

Notable for its breadth, the Collection – now numbering some 18,000 works – is uniquely connected to the University's history while also responding to our evolving cultural landscape.

Our school program provides engaging, hands-on, curriculum-aligned educational tours and workshops that connect closely to our exhibitions and the world.

Exhibition Schedule

2026 TERMS	1	2	3	4
Buxton Contemporary	Hany Armanious: Stone Soup (Nov 2025 – Apr 2026)			
		Conceptualism and the 1990s in China (May – Oct)		
				The Egg and the Eye: A History of Clay in California (Oct 2026 – May 2027)
Potter Museum of Art	A Velvet Ant, a Flower and a Bird: Telling Intelligence Otherwise (Feb – Jun)			
			Ngarn Wa'ngal: Art of the Gum Tree (Jul – Nov)	





Exhibition Overviews

Buxton Contemporary

Hany Armanious: Stone Soup

Nov 2025 – Apr 2026

Hany Armanious: Stone Soup is the fourth exhibition in the series at Buxton Contemporary that focuses on an artist from the Buxton Collection. Building on the exhibition of the same name recently shown at the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, this major solo exhibition will include works from throughout Armanious' career including new and recent works. Encompassing the entire museum, this exhibition will be accompanied by a publication jointly produced with the Henry Moore Institute.

Conceptualism and the 1990s in China

May – Oct 2026

Two exhibitions titled Analysis: New Measurement, from 1988 to 1995 and Stipulated Amount and Free Fall: Qian Weikang, from 1990 to 1996 serve as significant art historical case studies and a nuanced introduction into conceptual art from China from the 1990s. The exhibitions will be accompanied by commissioned work and have been curated by Carol Yinghua Lu and Liu Ding in partnership with Inside-Out Museum, Beijing.



The Egg and the Eye: A History of Clay in California

Oct 2026 - May 2027

The Egg and the Eye explores the dense history and diversity of the ceramic medium in California. With a particular focus on the period from the 1950s to the 1990s, the exhibition will map the idiosyncratic historical narrative of clay from its earlier functional, decorative, and ceremonial contexts, through to its emergence and acceptance as an abstract and sculptural form. The Egg and the Eye is guest curated by artist Ricky Swallow and will be re-presented at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, in 2027.



Potter Museum of Art

A Velvet Ant, a Flower and a Bird: Telling Intelligence Otherwise

Feb – Jun 2026

This exhibition re-enacts a ‘garden of knowledge’ structured around three entities: a Velvet Ant, a flower, and a bird. In it, historic and contemporary material culture and art co-mingle to envision intelligence as living, continually evolving, interconnected and interdependent. As the theory of quantum paradigm proposes, here everything affects and is influenced by everything. Curated by Spanish-born philosopher and art historian, Chus Martínez, the exhibition features works from the University of Melbourne’s Art, Classics and Herbarium collections, as well as important loans and commissions of new works.

Ngarn Wa’ngal: Art of the Gum Tree

Jul – Nov 2026

Ngarn Wa’ngal explores the gum tree as a source of creative inspiration and traces its evolution through art history and in contemporary art practice. The title, Ngarn Wa’ngal translates to ‘breathing for us’ in Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and has been chosen in consultation with Uncle Bill Nicholson. This exhibition will explore our physical and emotional responses to this important Australian symbol, which inhabits many diverse environments across the continent. It brings together historical and contemporary connections to our iconic tree and be a catalyst for the discussion of issues including Indigenous sovereignty, Australian identity, climate change, and bushfire management. Curated by Alisa Bunbury and Sophie Gerhard, this exhibition features works from the University of Melbourne’s Art and Medical History Museum collections, books and other material from Archives and Special Collections, as well as important loans and commissions of new works.



John Pule, Hao, 2024
 Courtesy the artist and Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland



Mumble, 2023, pigmented polyurethane resin,
 gouache, 6 × 8 × 7.7 cm.
 Courtesy Fine Arts, Sydney



Christian Thompson AO, Black Gum 3 (from the
 Australian Graffiti series), 2008, Type C photograph,
 100 x 100 cm, © Christian Thompson. Image
 courtesy the artist and Sarah Scout Presents

When you look with your own eyes upon such bitter need, then all the arguments and passions which surround such things as fire elections, plagues, and wars, and

"It was the most exciting thing we have seen in many years," a teacher of English in Tirane told me by telephone today. "We are so excited here. We don't know what is going to happen next. We are also afraid."



Interactive Exhibition Tours

In this facilitator-led experience, students will be guided through solo and thematic contemporary art exhibitions. Using their deep knowledge of the exhibition, Learning Experience Facilitators will introduce students to key concepts and ideas through group discussions, writing, and making activities, prompting them to think critically about the works. Teachers receive access to an exhibition resource pack, filled with engaging audio-visual and text-based content providing detailed insights into the exhibition, its content and creation.

Key Themes: Art collections; contemporary art; artmaking materials, techniques and processes; ideas and inspiration; role of the curator; solo and thematic exhibitions; exhibition design; installation and conservation

Students will:

- Learn about key exhibition ideas and themes.
- Build confidence interpreting art, including contemporary art.
- Gain inspiration for their own art making practice.
- Participate in facilitator-led group activities and discussions that prompt critical thinking and evoke curiosity.
- Be guided by talented facilitators – who are practicing artists, curators, researchers and university students – and learn about diverse post-school pathways.

Curriculum Connections:

- VCE Art Making and Exhibiting
- VCE Art Creative Practice
- Visual Arts 7-10
- Intercultural Capability
- Critical and Creative Thinking

Details:

Location: Buxton Contemporary,
Potter
Museum of Art
Available: Terms 1 – 4

Levels: Year 7-10 and VCE
Capacity: 30
Duration: 1.5 hours

Curate It!

Inspire and challenge your students with Curate It! at Buxton Contemporary. This exciting program gives students (and teachers!) the opportunity to deep dive into the Michael and Janet Buxton Collection to imagine how they would curate their own exhibition. Students become curators for the session and work in teams to develop an exhibition proposal. They will investigate the artworks in the collection using our education collection database, exhibition catalogues, gallery floor plans and wall elevations. Each group presents and takes home their exhibition proposal.

Key Themes: Curating, contemporary art, art collections, exhibition design.

Students will:

- Learn about artworks in the Michael and Janet Buxton collection.
- Collaborate to select artworks and develop exhibition themes.
- Design exhibition layouts using gallery floor plans and wall elevations.
- Choose and describe exhibition design elements.
- Present exhibition rationales to their peers.

Curriculum Connections:

- VCE Art Making and Exhibiting
- Personal and Social Capability
- Critical and Creative Thinking

Details:

Location: Buxton Contemporary
Available: Term 1 – 4
Levels: 10 – 12

Capacity: 25
Duration: 1.25 hours

Digital Sculpting

In this hands-on experience, students will explore 3D forms through drawing, clay sculpting and digital sculpting software. The workshop takes exhibition and collection artworks as a starting point, providing the opportunity for students to develop an iterative and collaborative contemporary practice using multiple mediums. After drawing and sculpting in the gallery, students will learn how to use Nomad Sculpt software on iPads to digitally render organic and geometric forms.

Key Themes: Contemporary art materials, techniques and processes (drawing, sculpting, digital technologies, collaboration)

Students will:

- Investigate sculptural forms through 2D, 3D and digital media.
- Learn about collaborative and iterative contemporary art practice.
- Learn how to use Nomad Sculpt using iPads and Apple Pens.
- Collaborate with peers to make contemporary art.

Curriculum Connections:

- VCE Art Making and Exhibiting
- VCE Art Creative Practice
- Visual Arts 7-10
- Personal and Social Capability
- Critical and Creative Thinking

Details:

Location: Buxton Contemporary
Available: Terms 1 - 4
Levels: Years 7-10 & VCE

Capacity: 20
Duration: 1.25 hours

Victorian College of the Arts Studio Tour

Enhance your learning experience with a tour of the neighbouring Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) studios. Tours are guided by emerging artist-alumni facilitators and Faculty staff to share a glimpse of artmaking practices and facilities on campus. Showcase pathways and connect to tertiary learning through this one-of-a-kind opportunity.

Key Themes: tertiary pathways, art making practices and facilities, artist engagement

Students will:

- Explore art studios at the Victorian College for the Arts, University of Melbourne.
- Learn from and speak with artists, educators, and UoM alumni.
- Explore tertiary student artworks in development.

Curriculum Connections:

- VCE Art Making and Exhibiting
- VCE Creative Practice
- Career Education Key Skills and Attributes – Know Your World

Details:

Location: Buxton Contemporary Levels: 10-12

Available: Capacity: 30

Term 1 (March 3 - 6)

Duration: 30 minutes - 1 hour

Term 3 (August 5 to 8)



Experiences for D/deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Learners

Our Art Museums are places for young people who identify as D/deaf or Hard of Hearing to have an accessible learning experience in the arts.

Co-designed by Deaf Teachers and art educators, these experiences – available in Auslan and English – are created with Deaf learners in mind.

We invite Schools for the Deaf and those that have Deaf Facilities to contact us if you are interested in finding out how your students can connect with our venues.

Throughout the year, we also host school holiday programs young people from the Deaf Community, including Children of Deaf Adults (CODAs).

These experiences are made possible with the support of the Beth MacLaren Smallwood Foundation.

For more information, please contact: school-bookings@unimelb.edu.au



Step into a World of Art.

Enhance your learning experience with a tour of the neighbouring Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) studios. Tours are guided by emerging artist-alumni facilitators and Faculty staff to share a glimpse of artmaking practices and facilities on campus. Showcase pathways and connect to tertiary learning through this one-of-a-kind opportunity.

Interactive Tour	\$16 per student
Interactive Tour + Workshop or VCA Studio Tour	\$21 per student
Interactive Tour + Workshop + VCA Studio Tour	\$31 per student
Self-Guided Exhibition Visit	\$50 education service fee per group

\$50 education service fee applies to all bookings



Bookings

To book a program, go to the School Learning Experiences page of the venue's website and complete the online request form.

Self-guided gallery visits

If you want to explore the exhibition independently with your class during gallery opening hours, bookings are required, and an education service fee applies.

Access

We have limited funding available for low-SES (ICSEA <1050) and regional schools to access a discounted rate. Access funding is limited, so please note in your booking request form and our team will confirm if funding is available for your school to access this discounted rate.

Teacher Professional Learning

Teachers are lifelong learners. Throughout the year, opportunities for teachers to participate in professional learning will be circulated through our newsletters and social media channels.

Contact us

For enquiries about how we can take your school excursions to the next level, email school-bookings@unimelb.edu.au or call 03 8344 9469

Want to stay in the loop about Learning Experiences across the Museum and Collections Department? Sign up for our school mailing list on our website.

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