

KHT

**BLAK
DESIGN**

**TREADING
LIGHTLY**

Exhibiting Artists

Vicki Burgess

Moonbird People

Kylie Colemane

Darug, Wiradjuri

Clinton Hayden

Wiradjuri

Jasmine-Skye Marinos

Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Kaytej, Warumungu,
Pitta Pitta

Luke Morgan

Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, Baraba Baraba/Barapa Barapa

Treading Lightly is the outcome of KHT's fifth iteration of the ground-breaking Blak Design program, which provides an opportunity for talented, Victoria-based First Peoples artists and designers to further develop their individual skills and professional practice, while fostering broader design collaboration. The exhibition presents more than thirty eight fashion and textile pieces, and accompanying accessories designed and produced by Vicki Burgess (Moonbird People), Kylie Colemane (Darug, Wiradjuri), Clinton Hayden (Wiradjuri), Jasmine-Skye Marinos (Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Kaytej, Warumungu, Pitta Pitta), Luke Morgan (Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, Baraba Baraba / Barapa Barapa), Megan Paine (Kuku Yalanji).

Treading Lightly provides an insight into the rich cultural traditions of First Peoples from South East Australia, as reflected within the recent fashion and textile pieces made by participants. The participating designers weave together cultural experiences and personal stories using a variety of materials and techniques that reflect Country, memory and Community, to create unique pieces that underscore individual experiences.



SCAN TO ACCESS THE
TREADING LIGHTLY
DIGITAL CATALOGUE.

BLAK DESIGN PROGRAM

The Blak Design program, an Australian first, fosters First Peoples' cultural innovation within Victoria's design sector, providing a platform for sustainable Indigenous design practices. To date, 47 metropolitan and regional artists have participated in this highly successful initiative. The program's focus has evolved annually: the first two years centered on contemporary jewellery, the third year on ceramics, and the fourth and fifth year on fashion and textiles.

Throughout the year, participants engage in a series of intensive, hands-on design and making workshops. These are complemented by small business skills sessions and access to industry and cultural mentors, design professionals, and practitioners. This comprehensive approach equips artists with the tools and networks necessary to develop sustainable design practices and is underpinned by the *International Council of Design's International Indigenous Design Charter – Protocols for Sharing Indigenous Knowledge in professional design practice*.

KHT's annual Blak Design program is generously supported by the Ian Potter Foundation and the RMIT University School of Fashion and Textiles, a global leader in fashion and textiles education.

The Treading Lightly exhibition is proudly supported by the KHT's exhibition partners Creative Victoria, City of Melbourne, the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body, the Australian Government through the Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program, Viva Energy Australia, and ANZ.

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The Ian Potter
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RMIT
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Clinton Hayden

Wiradjuri

Future Deadly

Waagan Clutch

2025

PLA filament (corn-based)

MARGAMANHA SUIT

2025

cotton (mesh), cotton (tape), cotton (french terry),
cotton (calico), bamboo–elastane (jersey), elastic,
cotton (fastenings)

Collection of the artist

“It was a real shift – learning to think through fabric, to listen to what it wants to do. The biggest discovery was how design itself can be an act of care. Each stage – drafting, cutting, sewing – slowed me down and taught me to make with intention. That’s part of Yindyamarra Winhangha: approaching design with respect, patience, and attention to detail. I also built that respect into the production methods – using circularly sourced fabrics and working with minimal waste. It’s another way of caring for Country through process.”

– Clinton Hayden, 2025.

Clinton Hayden

Wiradjuri

Future Deadly

BURWURR

2025

possum skin

Lap Lap

2025

cotton (shirting), cotton thread

Mudyi T-shirt

2025

cotton (French terry), mesh (wool/cotton), cotton thread

Collection of the artist

“I’ve been exploring how Wiradjuri linework can live within contemporary design and fashion — both in the surface patterns of fabric and in the way garments are constructed. In Wiradjuri Culture, linework maps relationships between people, Country, and story. I wanted to see how those same ideas could guide how a garment is shaped, stitched, or moves on the body.”

– Clinton Hayden, 2025.

Megan Paine

Kuku Yalanji

Bana

Bonnet

2025

cotton (undyed)

Forage Bib

2025

cotton (undyed)

Go Bush Shorts

2025

cotton (undyed)

Collection of the artist

“You discover things as a wearer – kind of like the joy you experience when you put on a jacket from the year before and you find things in the pockets. Little surprises, like when you open an old book and find a receipt or a flower. I am always open to new possibilities. Everything I have done is made of natural cotton, canvas and natural fibres, but they also have to be sturdy and well-made, as well as having some sense of intrigue.”

– Megan Paine, 2025.

Megan Paine

Kuku Yalanji

Bana

Waymbul Flag

2025

cotton (undyed)

Praise You Skirt

2025

cotton (undyed)

Garden Dress

2025

cotton (undyed)

Collection of the artist

“I found that the more I threw out any expectations, this extended what I thought was possible within the techniques we were being taught. I really got excited the day we did screen-printing – it opened up so many possibilities and I think that helped define where I wanted to go with it all.”

– Megan Paine, 2025.

Kylie Colemane

Darug, Wiradjuri

‘We gather our stories by Hand’

Maanma Dhamarra Gunalunalung

Emu Feather Earrings

2025

emu feathers, leather, metal

Paper Bark Corset

2025

paperbark, raffia, bees wax, native honey, eco friendly
lacquer

Natural Dyed Dress

2025

synthetic (satin, eco dyed)

Collection of the artist

“Food, medicine and clothing are related to identity, and I am interested in them all as part of a sustainable, low-toxic way of living. I think what is unique to First Nations people is that intersection between food, medicine and clothes – that all these things are used to tell their stories, that all come back to family and the inner circle of Community.”

– Kylie Colemane, 2025.

Kylie Colemane

Darug, Wiradjuri

‘We gather our stories by Hand’

Maanma Dhamarra Gunalunalung

Emu Feather Shorts

2025

cotton, satin ribbon, emu feathers (fastenings)

Raffia Clutch

2025

raffia (dyed), quandong seed

Collection of the artist

“You use your hands and you touch the material, and the constant connection is a message of reconciliation. I don’t think activism has to be loud. It can be quiet and soft. We collect on Country to get the true dye – the moment you put in a chemical, you divert. Everything I do is naturally designed to fade, which goes against consumerism. The processes and results speak for themselves.”

– Kylie Colemane, 2025.

Vicki Burgess

Moonbird People

Kangaroo Top (collaboration with Trina Dalton-Oogies (Wadawurrung/Gunditjmara), styled with Kangaroo Pelt Necklace by Trina Dalton-Oogies) 2025

kangaroo pelt, raffia (dyed) (top); raffia, emu feathers, jasper (stone) (necklace)

Silk Slacks

2025

silk (crepe)

Quandong seeds Necklace

2025

quandong seeds, initi seeds, sandwood nuts, gum nuts,
wax thread

Shell, Emu feathers Necklace and Earrings

2025

shell (upcycled animal material), emu feathers

Echidna Quill Necklace

2025

echidna quills, wax thread

Vicki Burgess

Moonbird People

**Cockatoo Kaftan (collaboration with Kate Dean
(Trawlwoolway/Palawa))**

2025

digital print on silk (satin)

Collection of the artist

“It has been great with people sharing their knowledge with me on how the Ancestors would have made certain things, so I have felt a really strong connection, it is really special.”

– Vicki Burgess, 2025.

Vicki Burgess

Moonbird People

Emu Feather Shoulder Cloak

2025

emu feathers, possum fur, banksia (fastenings)

Collection of the artist

“I decided to do an emu feather shoulder cloak with a possum pelt on the bottom. I wanted the back to look like an emu’s bum, where it is really pronounced and the feathers shoot out, like a big butt, so I worked out how to do that. And I was so proud to finally hand that piece in. Going through all this process and being out of my comfort zone: it really taught me valuable lessons about mapping out how you are going to do your design. It taught me a lot about myself, too, and it was actually a great, positive distraction for me – an opportunity to grow, not just creatively but with my life purpose. I can grab a project with all my might and do what I feel good at doing.”

– Vicki Burgess, 2025.

Luke Morgan

Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, Baraba Baraba / Barapa Barapa

LYTM

Love You Too Much

LYTM (Jacket)

2025

reclaimed fabric (jaquard)

LYTM (Jacket)

2025

reclaimed fabric

LYTM (Tracksuit Set)

2025

reclaimed fabric (jersey)

Collection of the artist

“Sure, I had done some textiles at school, and I have always really loved shoes, but I never thought ‘this is what I am going to be doing’. People said I should be a plus-size male model: from age 18 I was always big, and I always kept up with the trends, and I thought that maybe one day I’ll have my own brand and become a fashion icon. This is what I want to do, to create today’s fashion from upcycling old blankets.”

– Luke Morgan, 2025.

Luke Morgan

Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, Baraba Baraba / Barapa Barapa

LYTM

Love You Too Much

LYTM (Robe)

2025

reclaimed fabric

LYTM (Jumper)

2025

reclaimed wool blanket

Collection of the artist

“I love working with mob. It has opened up so much for myself that I wanted to do, learning so much from the teachers and other participants and I can’t wait to see what the future holds. I have people ringing up already saying can you make me this, make me that.”

– Luke Morgan, 2025.

Jasmine-Skye Marinos

Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Kaytej, Warumungu,
Pitta Pitta

Threads of Sovereignty

Land, Sea and Sky Dress

2025

red ochre screen print on cotton, jute, gumnuts, emu
feathers, shells (animal material)

Collection of the artist

“It is a sign of belonging and presence, it is like your signature. And using the colours of my desert mob, red ochres, has a lot of special meaning about my presence and my belonging, incorporating all the colours of my Country that I love.”

– Jasmine-Skye Marinos, 2025.

Jasmine-Skye Marinos

Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Kaytej, Warumungu,
Pitta Pitta

Threads of Sovereignty

Blak Design Hoodie

2025

screen print on cotton (brushed), laser etched possum
fur, kangaroo pelt, red ochre

My Sovereignty Leggings

2025

digital print on polyester (recycled)

Collection of the artist

“It is all about the journey I had to make to gather all those materials... Overall, Blak Design has given me the opportunity to explore and showcase my skills, especially those Aboriginal practices we don’t often see in fashion.”

– Jasmine-Skye Marinos, 2025.

Jasmine-Skye Marinos

Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Kaytej, Warumungu,
Pitta Pitta

Threads of Sovereignty

Hat with Woven Blossoms and Two Black and Red Cockatoo Feathers

2025

felt, raffia (dyed), cockatoo feathers

Eucalyptus Blossom Dress

2025

cotton, raffia (dyed)

Handwoven Eucalyptus Leaf Earrings

2025

raffia (dyed)

Collection of the artist

“I got to learn from a very young age how to sew buttons, do cross-stitching, crochet and knit – so I have been doing textiles all that time since, making things for family and friends and mob... I believe deeply in sharing skills and knowledge – quite often in the modern world, we don't get a lot of kids knowing how to sew on a button or how to fix a garment, so being able to share things was special for me.”

– Jasmine-Skye Marinos, 2025.

Jasmine-Skye Marinos

Arrernte, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Kaytej, Warumungu,
Pitta Pitta

Threads of Sovereignty

Handwoven Eucalyptus Leaf Earrings

2025

raffia (dyed)

Aboriginal Flag Earrings

2025

raffia (dyed)

Collection of the artist

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