

MEDIA RELEASE

HEIDE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
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Museum of
Modern Art

Heide

8 May 2018

DESIGN FOR LIFE: GRANT AND MARY FEATHERSTON

Heide Museum of Modern Art presents the first major exhibition dedicated to the iconic work of two of Australia's most important and influential designers.



Opening 30 June 2018, *Design for Life* explores the career of Grant Featherston, arguably Australia's most significant modernist designer, and his partnership with Mary Featherston, who is renowned for her design of learning environments for children.

It charts Featherston's rise to celebrity status in the 1950s and how his work captured the imaginations of ordinary Australians in their quest to be modern. Tracing his explorations of new materials and technologies and production of innovative furniture, including collaborations with Mary during the 1960s and 70s, the exhibition and accompanying publication highlight the holistic nature of the couple's practice, which included interiors, exhibitions, photography, sculpture, glass objects and promotional design.

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An unapologetic idealist, Grant Featherston believed that design should benefit everyone and campaigned for professional, aesthetic and environmental standards. He shared this vision of ‘design for life’ and social responsibility with his partner Mary, with whom he established Featherston Design in 1965. Beginning with the landmark 1967 Montreal Expo Chair they focused on culturally and socially significant projects, and experimented with the potential of plastics to produce beautiful, affordable design for all.

As guest curator Denise Whitehouse says:

“Featherston’s designs exemplified a new, cosmopolitan mode of living for Australia’s post-war generation, and today his chairs are actively sought after by their grandchildren, showing their enduring influence and appeal.”

Mary Featherston explains:

“Grant and I shared the belief that the role of design is to enrich everyone’s everyday life.”

“I’m delighted that our work continues to speak to new generations of Australians and I look forward to this exhibition, which brings together objects and archival material to tell the story of our careers more fully than has been done in the past.”

The exhibition will showcase more than 120 objects including the iconic (and oft copied) R152 Contour Chair, rare designs and previously unseen material from the Featherston Archive.

Design for Life: Grant and Mary Featherston

30 June – 7 October 2018

Heide Museum of Modern Art

Guest Curators: Denise Whitehouse and Kirsty Grant

This exhibition is supported by Gordon Mather Industries and Grazia & Co. Heide thanks the Gordon Darling Foundation for their support of the exhibition publication.



Image: Grant Featherston, *R152 Contour Chair* designed 1950, manufactured 1951, hardwood, plywood, linen, other materials, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, purchased 1955, © Grant Featherston/Licensed by VISCOPY, Australia 2018

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Heide Museum of Modern Art
7 Templestowe Road, Bulleen, VIC 3105
heide.com.au

Museum opening hours
Tuesday–Sunday, 10am–5pm. Closed Mondays.
Admission fees apply: Adult \$18 | Concession \$14 |
Children (12 and under) free.