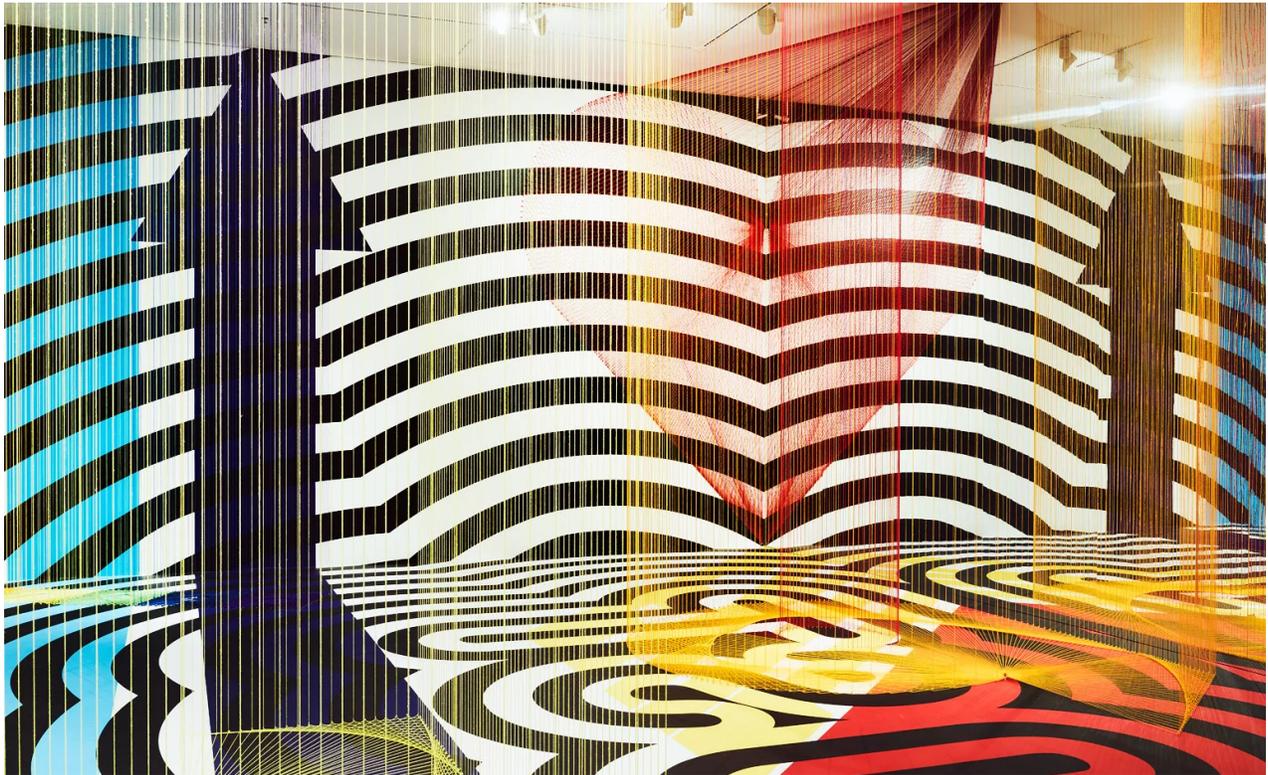


# Wallpaper\*

Pae White: "NGV's new blockbuster Triennial brings together over 100 artists and designers"

By Dimity Noble

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Untitled, 2017, by Pae White. Photo: Shaughn and John

Recognising the dissolution of boundaries between artistic and commercial design practices, the inaugural Triennial at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) surveys the work of over 100 participants from 32 countries. Beyond its tactile, interactive and technologically impressive veneer lies an epically immersive exhibition. 'We wanted to evoke a journey of discovery and encourage participation from our audiences with a range of awe-inspiring and confronting pieces,' asserts NGV director Tony Ellwood.

Registering a world where resources are depleting and old power structures and borders are falling, it also acknowledges emerging alternatives. Featuring tapestry, sculpture, [fashion](#) design, painting and drawing in addition to virtual realities, architecture, animation, performance and film,

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the Triennial examines the consequences of globalisation on a cultural, scientific, political and psychological basis. 'The artists, designers and innovators are at the forefront of their practices ... working with a range of cutting-edge technologies including robotics and 3D scanning and printing,' adds Ellwood.

Twenty large-scale works have been commissioned including Ron Mueck's most ambitious to date: *Mass*, a modern-day memento mori. An enormous human skull peers beyond the 18th and 19th-century European collection rooms as a glaring reminder of our mortality in an age of material and narcissistic pursuit. Another chamber is stacked with oversized resin-cast skulls recalling iconic images documenting the human atrocities conducted within extremist regimes, whilst serving as a looming reminder of those currently living within them.

Many pieces focus on the movement of people, with several critiquing the refugee crisis. Richard Mosse's video work, *Incoming*, uses a telescopic thermal black and white imaging camera developed for military use to document journeys by refugees. The blurred yet intimate imagery creates an uncomfortable friction, giving clarity to their urgent stories.

A crowd-pleaser is Japanese collective [teamLab's immersive digital installation](#). Aquatic whirlpools and ripples register underfoot in response to people's presence and movement, reflecting a borderless world where communities must unite to navigate a better future for natural ecosystems. Alexandra Kehayoglou's *Santa Cruz River* symbolises the pitfalls of foreign investment in financially struggling countries. Merging traditional rug-making techniques with detailed site analysis and drone footage, her textural 100 sq m carpet is inspired by Argentina's last free-flowing river currently under threat by Chinese investors eager to convert it into hydroelectricity dams.



*Victoria Amazonica*, 2017, by Estudio Campana, Yarrenyty Aritere Artists, and Elliot Rich. Image credit: John Gollings

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Italian design duo Studio [Formafantasma](#) provide productive solutions to tackle e-waste with [products crafted from recycled hi-tech electronics](#). 'Ore Streams' reinterprets the modernist office with hybrid equipment. Accompanying interviews with manufacturers, Interpol, recyclers, academics and engineers argue that a global economy must develop a universal system of recycling.

Celebrating communities in harmony with the land is *Victoria Amazonica*, an enormous dome featuring intricate embroidery illustrating stories of nature's rejuvenation via rain and rivers. Brazilian designers [Fernando and Humberto Campana](#) collaborated with the indigenous Australian community arts enterprise Yarrenyty Arltere Artists to illustrate the potential of harmonious cross-cultural relationships.

One of the most interactive commissioned works is [Yayoi Kusama's Flower Obsession](#), staged inside a fully furnished apartment. Visitors are given a red flower sticker to place where they like inside. Over the duration of the exhibition the walls and objects will be obliterated, revealing an infinity field of red florets. Its universal message, like so many pieces in the Triennial, is that our actions impact our immediate surroundings more profoundly than most of us acknowledge.



Pae White, *Spearmint to Peppermint*, 2013. Courtesy of the artist and 1301PE, Los Angeles

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