

MEDIA RELEASE

13 October 2025



HEIDE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER AND NEXT CHAIR

Heide Museum of Modern Art is pleased to announce the appointment of Philip Crutchfield KC to the Board of Directors. Mr Crutchfield will assume the role of Chair from 1 January 2026, with the unanimous approval of the Board.

Philip will succeed Steven Skala AO, who has served with distinction as Chair for the past decade. The Heide Board and staff express their immense gratitude to Mr Skala for his outstanding leadership, vision, and dedication during his tenure.

Artistic Director Lesley Harding comments: "Since joining the Board in 2016, Mr Skala has overseen the development of a new masterplan for the Heide site, the successful restructure of Heide's management, and the achievement of notable fundraising initiatives, including the museum's inaugural Giving Day and the Mirka for Melbourne campaign. His steady stewardship ensured Heide's resilience during and after the pandemic challenges, while his ambitions for cultural programming saw the realisation of some of the museum's most successful exhibitions in its history. Amongst other things, he championed major international exhibitions of the work of Georgia O'Keeffe, Barbara Hepworth and Lee Miller, and more recently, the landmark *Molto Bello: Icons of Modern Italian Design* and the critically acclaimed *Man Ray and Max Dupain*."

Reflecting on his time as Chair, Mr Skala said: "It has been a privilege to serve Heide, a place where art, history and community come together so meaningfully. Quality, scholarship and thoughtfulness have always been at the forefront of what I have sought for Heide. I am proud of what we have achieved and confident the museum will continue to thrive under Philip's capable leadership."

Mr Crutchfield is a highly respected barrister and King's Counsel, with a long-standing record of leadership across the arts, education, and legal sectors. He is the current Chair of Bell Shakespeare, and a board member of The University of Melbourne Humanities Foundation, The University of Melbourne Law School Foundation, The Victorian Bar Foundation, as well as various listed and unlisted companies.

A Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law and former President of the Commercial Bar Association of Victoria, Mr Crutchfield brings deep expertise and extensive governance experience to Heide. He holds Commerce and Honours Law degrees from the University of Melbourne, as well as a Master of Laws from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

On his appointment, Mr Crutchfield said: "Heide is a unique Australian cultural institution and I am honoured to take on this role. I look forward to working with my fellow Board members, the wonderful Heide team, and the whole community to build on its extraordinary legacy."

The Board warmly welcomes Philip and looks forward to working with him in this new leadership role and also welcomes Amy Crutchfield to Heide.

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IMAGES, including site and portrait shots, available [here](#)

CURRENT EXHIBITION

Man Ray and Max Dupain

6 August – 9 November 2025

Heide Museum of Modern Art, 7 Templestowe Road, Bulleen, Victoria 3105

heide.com.au

IMAGES available [here](#)

ABOUT HEIDE

Heide is a public art museum and sculpture park located on a stretch of the Birrarung/Yarra River in Naarm/Melbourne that has long served as a meeting point and as a creative hub.

Once a significant Wurundjeri gathering place, the site later attracted the artists of the Australian Impressionist School before becoming the home of art patrons John and Sunday Reed in 1934.

The Reeds and their circle of artists and writers embraced the brave and the new in art and ideas and their spirited legacy inspires the museum's activities today, from collaborating with emerging and mid-career artists to celebrating those who have made major contributions to Australian and international art.

Set on 6.5 hectares of parkland with five gallery spaces, award-winning architecture and a distinctive collection of more than 3,600 works of art, Heide holds a special place in the cultural landscape of Australia.