

MEDIA RELEASE

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Opportunity, innovation and outstanding designs at Furnitex 2009

Furnitex 2009 proved that the Australian furniture and furnishings industry is stronger than ever, as over 14,200 visitors from Australia and overseas flocked to glimpse the latest industry trends and order products from Australia's leading furniture manufacturers and wholesalers.

The four day show, staged from July 16th to 19th at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre, Southbank, is Australasia's largest furniture and furnishings trade fair. Australia's next wave of design talent was showcased at the VIVID – Vibrant Visions in Design competition, whilst the fair unveiled the latest furniture and furnishings launching in the next year.

Marie Kinsella, Managing Director, Australian Exhibitions & Conferences Pty Ltd said "The number of visitors and new exhibitors at the 2009 Fair and the wealth of Australian made products proved that our industry is surging ahead. We were thrilled to welcome new exhibitors such as Geddes and Fenton Warehouse, and to see the return of favourites such as Colby Furniture, Silver Lynx and Molmic".

The 2009 **VIVID** design competition displayed over 50 outstanding designs from new and emerging designers in Student, Commercial, Concept and Green award categories. The winner for the Student category was Kieran Choy from UTS with *Aura Stool*, a beautifully finished, functional design made from Urethane foam and fibreglass resin. Corey Baker took the Commercial Award with his *Lofoten Lounger*, noted for its flowing form, whilst Tim Coffey received the Concept Award for his *Prototype Chair*, a boundary-breaking piece made from salvaged timber. Green Award winner Joanna Butler's *Flip 'n Latch* was acclaimed for its high level of research sourcing sustainable materials.

"The entries for this year's VIVID awards were of outstanding calibre, proving that adversity certainly brings forth opportunity and innovation. The winning entries were all skilfully finished, developed from innovative materials and showed exceptional attention to detail" said Curator Uli Hasel.

This year's **International Industry Seminar Series** welcomed Paul Simmons of controversial UK textile label Timorous Beasties. Paul's seminar on The Evolution of Textiles drew from the classic and contemporary, giving the audience an insight into the traditional toiles and city streetscapes that influence Timorous Beasties' prints.

Taking place over three days, the Seminar Series also welcomed colour guru Mark Woodman, Founder of American consultancy Mark Woodman Color & Design, and Dutch trend forecaster Milou Ket of Milou Ket Styling & Design. Australian experts included Dean Gaylor of Mance Design; Peter Davidson of LAB Architecture; and Chris Stone of Chris Stone Design.

Co-located with Furnitex was **Decoration + Design Melbourne**, the country's premier exhibition of soft furnishing and interior products. A highlight of Decoration + Design Melbourne was **Sampling Future Materials**, a display which featured the internationally renowned Innovation Sample Bank from Belgian Decotec, alongside installations by leading Australian designers and architects.

"Sampling Future Materials offered visitors a glimpse of the textiles of the future, and displayed some of the most forward-thinking materials from around the world and Australia. This theme encouraged visitors to look beyond traditional furnishings for inspiration in the realms of science and technology", said organiser Barbara Marshall.

FURNITEX 2010 and DECORATION+DESIGN Melbourne 10

Plans are already in place for FURNITEX 2010 and DECORATION + DESIGN Melbourne 10 which will be held from Thursday 15 – Sunday 18 July 2010. Application forms are available from Australian Exhibitions and Conferences. For more information call (03) 9654 7773.

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