

## 8 of the best places for Melbourne street art | Skyscanner Australia

**Regularly named as one of the world's most liveable cities, few Australian CBDs and inner suburbs are as cool as Melbourne when it comes to public art. The city is littered (in the nicest way!) with street art, sculptures and artworks just made for photo-bombers. Check out [Skyscanner flights to Melbourne](#) and book your street art photoshoot today.**

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### 1. Public Purse by Simon Perry

For over 20 years, a glamorous over-sized dusty pink ladies' purse has greeted shoppers as they enter the Bourke Street Mall. Is the Public Purse a piece of art to admire or a seat to rest those shopping-weary bodies? It's actually both. Its smooth marble flanks have endless stories to tell of the numerous butts that have rested for a moment. It's also one of those significant landmarks, the sort that friends use as a meeting point, as in "I'll meet you at the Purse."

Commissioned by city councillors as part of a Percent for Art programme whereby 1% of the annual budget was used to fund public art, the work is a humorous reference to both this programme as well as its central location amidst retail and department stores.

**Where:** Bourke Street Mall



*Public Purse. Photo courtesy of Tourism Victoria*

## 2. Hosier Lane

Bluestone cobbled Hosier Lane is one of Melbourne's most famous laneways, thanks to striking urban street art that lines this brick-walled thoroughfare. Tags, paste-ups, stencils and murals are all here on a brick wall canvas. Hosier Lane's art walls and installations are an ever-popular backdrop for photographers – from Instagram photo-bombers to luxury fashion shoots. Brides love dropping in for street-smart wedding shots too. The name is said to have originated from a significant graffiti artist mural (since painted over) known as Our Lady Hosier whose clothing changed over the years.

Laneway restaurants like Movida (don't even think about turning up unless you've booked a table months in advance!) and Misty are uber cool haunts for food-obsessed Melburnians. Degraeves Lane is another laneway lined with hole in the wall cafes with a fabulous gallery of street art at the northern end.

**Where:** off Flinders St, opposite Federation Square



*Hosier Lane. Photo courtesy of Ben King & Tourism Victoria*

### **3. More laneway art**

Melbourne is Australia's capital when it comes to laneway street art. A melting pot of creativity, there is so much of it that walking tours have sprung up to showcase these fascinating sites for visitors. Some of it is even funded through the city's Arts programmes. Here's a few more worth checking out:

**Degraves Lane** is lined with hole-in-the-wall cafes with a fabulous gallery of street art at the northern end.

**Union Lane**'s oversized murals were originally created by aspiring artists and their mentors as part of Melbourne's Graffiti Mentoring Project (yes, really!) of 2008. Unfortunately, less talented artists have left their tags over their years that detract from the mesmerising works.

**Yarra Place** is uber cool with magnificent, edgy street art pieces that some consider masterpieces. You be the judge.



*Union Lane. Photo courtesy of Tourism Victoria*

#### **4. Threaded Field by Simon Perry**

The creative brain behind the very popular Public Purse in Bourke Street Mall (see above), Simon Perry practises Pop Art sensibility with this fun artwork. Exploring the forces that shape our experience of public places, his giant green thread playfully loops and knots its way through Etihad Stadium concourse like an unexpected player on the field. The sculpture has become a popular playground and, like its Bourke St cousin, has become a meeting point for fans going to watch Aussie Rules.

**Where:** Near Gates 1 & 6 Etihad Stadium Concourse, Docklands



*Threaded Field. Photo courtesy of Tourism Victoria*

## 5. Blowhole by Duncan Stemler

Down on the waterfront, Docklands' prevailing winds are harnessed as a medium in this 15m tall sculpture by Sydney artist Duncan Stemler. He's created a stunning animated beacon within Docklands playground and park, channelling the area's maritime history and recent renaissance as an urban hub.

When the wind reaches sufficient velocity, the armature and cups form a complex galaxy of orbiting balls, mimicking a wind indicator on top of a yacht's mast. Intriguingly interesting when immobile, and as the wind gets up, it's fascinating to watch it lurch into life. Very clever!

**Where:** Docklands Park, Docklands



*Blowhole. Photo courtesy of Fiona Harper*

## 6. Rose Street Artists Market

Inner city Fitzroy has transformed itself over the years from grunge to urban cool, especially since the arty crowd moved in. Emerging artists and designers through to established names ply their craft each weekend in a former junkyard transformed into the Rose Street Artists Market. Based on similar concepts in London, New York and Berlin, it's no surprise to find an abundance of public art (like the work below) within the precinct.

Studios and pop-up shops are a throbbing epicentre of creativity across too many mediums to mention. The market is quirky, quaint and quintessential Melbourne – naturally there is plentiful food and coffee to sustain shoppers, browsers and wowers.

**Where:** Rose St, Fitzroy



*Rose Street Artists Market. Photo courtesy of Tourism Victoria*

## **7. Architectural Fragment**

Reminiscent of antique Greek ruins, or perhaps the ancient library of Alexandria, a bluestone architectural fragment emerges from the pavement as an archaeological artefact might. Like a fallen classical monument. ‘Could Melbourne too one day fall to ruin?’ the artist seems to ask.

Created by Dutch immigrant sculptor Petrus Spronk as part of the Swanston Street Walk Public Art Project, his inspiration was Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poem *Ozymandias*. A quote from the poem is inscribed on the pedestal: ‘My name is Ozymandis, King of Kings. Look on my work you Mighty, and despair.’

**Where:** Swanston St outside State Library of Victoria



*Architectural fragment. Photo courtesy of Mr Spronks & Tourism Victoria*

## **8. Birrarung Marr**

Another one of Melbourne's fabulous inner city public parks, the indigenous name Birrarung Marr comes from the Wurundjeri people and means 'river of mists' and 'river bank'. Back in the early 1990s, railway yards were downsized, roads were diverted and land reclaimed to straighten and widen the Yarra to create today's vast parklands.

A series of open level terraces abutting the Yarra River, there are numerous art installations throughout the park. The Federation Bells are a sound sculpture that rings melodically thrice daily via a series of 39 upside down bells of varying sizes mounted on steel poles. Nearby, a 10m tall, three-legged Angel is a beautifully crafted mosaic sculpture by Deborah Halpern. In a nod towards original pre-European settlement inhabitants, rock carvings replicate ancient Aboriginal rock art of the sort that can still be seen in remote regions.

**Where:** Between Flinders St and the north bank of the Yarra River