

Internationally renowned glass maker, Kirstie Rea announced as the 2020 DESIGN Canberra festival designer-in-residence

New commission revealed in response to the theme of 'care'



Canberra, Australia: Internationally celebrated Canberra-based glass maker **Kirstie Rea** has today been announced as the 2020 DESIGN Canberra designer-in-residence. Rea was commissioned to create a new work that responds to the festival's 2020 theme of *care*. The glass sculpture will be exhibited during the annual three-week event, presented across the nation's capital from 9 until 29 November, celebrating Canberra as a global city of design and a living design laboratory.

Craft ACT CEO and Artistic Director Rachael Coghlan said, *"Kirstie embodies the concept of 'care' in everything she does; not only in the care she takes in the craftsmanship of her work and her exploration of ideas and techniques in glass but also more broadly in her connection with the Australian natural landscape and her generous spirit and contribution to community. We are thrilled to be able to celebrate Kirstie's phenomenal contribution to the development of Australian glass within the international arena and welcome her as DESIGN Canberra's 2020 designer-in-residence."*

Now in its seventh year, DESIGN Canberra showcases the city's thriving design community and in 2020 will present a diverse program of events, exhibitions, talks, tours, activations, markets, collaborations, artists' studios and open homes. Kirstie Rea was commissioned to create the 2020 signature artwork, *With care*, which will feature in a Craft ACT exhibition and throughout the festival's visual communications. The work has been created in response to the 2020 festival theme of care and the festival's celebration of the ways that care and caring is valuable and vital during these unprecedented times.

Composed of her signature glass blankets, balanced in a threshold, Rea's new work, *With care*, is a work relevant to this time. **Kirstie Rea explained**, "*The form of the blanket is used as a generic symbol for comfort and care, but the glass 'blanket' has an obvious fragility attached to it. The doorway structure represents the inside and outside and the comings and goings of our lives over the threshold. The stack of 'blankets' symbolising care whether coming or going.*"

"*Glass, the material at the heart and core of my studio practice calls for care. Care not only in handling the material but embedded in an understanding of the material, the glass processes attached to explorations and to mastering the skills needed to work with it. The care we embed within the making reflects the care that those who taught us put into the sharing and passing on of skills, processes and knowledge and love for materials and making*" said Rea.

With a career as an independent maker spanning more than 30 years, Kirstie's practice has been recognized at both a national and international level, featuring in numerous solo and group shows, a recent survey exhibition and esteemed public and private collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

ENDS

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IMAGES: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KpHyFHQaFQ1hIkPSY9ptNd1gLeZxOpk?usp=sharing>

Image Caption: Kirstie Rea, *With care*, 2020. Image Lean Timms

About DESIGN Canberra

DESIGN Canberra is the primary outreach program for Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre, a non-for-profit membership-based organisation which supports artists, craft practitioners, designers and makers at every stage of their careers. DESIGN Canberra seeks to develop new and expanded audiences for design and craft, whilst forging marketplace connections and unexpected collaborations, and acting as a source of inspiration. The festival is delivered in collaboration with industry, associations and educational institutions committed to the design arts and creative industries in Canberra. DESIGN Canberra is presented by Craft ACT: Craft and Design Centre. www.designcanberrafestival.com.au

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Craft ACT: Craft and Design Centre is a 50 year old membership organisation supported by the ACT Government, the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy - an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments, and the Australia Council for the Arts - the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body.

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