

---

## The Anton Gerner Exhibition

*Eleanor Thomas*

A new National exhibition is showing that traditional techniques can be used to make the most contemporary sculptural furniture, while also demonstrating that ultra-modern pieces can show Victoria's heritage homes in a new light.

Furniture designer and maker Anton Gerner will stage an exhibition of his work—a culmination of almost a decade—at Caulfield's Labassa for just two days in September 2019.

Anton couldn't pass up the sheer opulence of Labassa when searching for the perfect setting to exhibit his "modern art deco" furniture—even though heritage homes are usually furnished with a very conventional antique style.

"It's this amazing, totally extravagant Victorian mansion, which is the perfect contrast for my pieces. It's almost like a set has been purpose-built for it," he says.

"Many of my clients have antiques in quite contemporary homes, and I've always appreciated that contrast. I've just flipped it on its head for this exhibition."

That's not all that's flipped for this exhibition. Despite (or perhaps because of) his mastery of the fading art of traditional joinery and veneer matching techniques, Anton's furniture never quite does what you'd expect—an exposed cabinet with no obvious front, back or sides, and a "lump" of Huon pine that looks as soft as butter and functions as a shapely set of drawers.

Anton has been making high-end furniture for clients since around 1990, and the modern-day krimper has tinkered with the traditional tools in his workshop for a mind-boggling number of hours over that time. His works have been selected for group shows in the past, but for his first solo exhibition, a National Trust house makes the right statement about where his furniture sits now, and where it will be seen in generations to come.





For the exhibition's 14 pieces, both inspiration and materials have come from unlikely places.

Take his hypnotically beautiful and deceptively simple Brazilian Rosewood piece. An endangered species these days and almost impossible to source, Anton's veneer dates back to the 1960s and an encounter with Melbourne's renowned Rosando Brothers furniture makers.

"This rosewood comes from the Rosandos' huge veneer store, and from before it was considered endangered. It's been sitting here for years and I haven't been brave enough to use it."

A stickler for drawings, renders and visualisations for his clients, Anton relies on inspiration and intuition for his sculptural pieces, and the diagonal rosewood grain was adornment enough for this piece.

"Because that timber is so striking and so rare, I wanted to highlight how precious it is and showcase it as the sole feature," he says.

There are similarly engaging stories behind the rest of the exhibition's pieces, from the Hydrowood's tales beneath the lake to the painstaking joints and mitres in the Fiddleback Blackwood cabinet. Fortunately, Anton will be on hand to

recount them during the two days at Labassa, and visitors will be able to interact with the furniture pieces in a way that's seldom possible, in a setting rarely seen as a backdrop.

And for those who want more, the exhibition won't strictly close at the end of the weekend. The pieces will be on show in Anton's studio, and available for purchase by appointment.

*The Anton Gerner Exhibition*  
7 and 8 September 2019  
Labassa, 2 Manor Grove, Caulfield North  
[www.antongermer.com.au](http://www.antongermer.com.au)

*For more information contact:*  
Eleanor Thomas  
0437124885  
[eleanorbourke@yahoo.com](mailto:eleanorbourke@yahoo.com)

*Images: Andrew Curtis Photography*

**GARGOYLES & DRAGONS**  
ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTORS SINCE 1978  
21 Newlands Road, Reservoir, Victoria, 3073  
[www.gargoylesanddragons.com.au](http://www.gargoylesanddragons.com.au)  
Ph. 03 9462 0721

HANDMADE  
HEIRLOOMS

**anton**  
ANTON GERNER FURNITURE

- 24 Victoria Rd, Hawthorn East Vic 3123
- Phone (03)9813 2422
- Showroom by appointment
- [www.antongermer.com.au](http://www.antongermer.com.au)

**HOLST**  
Fine Art

Sarah Holst • Jillian Holst  
Painting Restoration  
Conservation & Valuation

(03) 9815 0011  
Located in Hawthorn 0409 213 662  
[www.holstfineart.com.au](http://www.holstfineart.com.au)  
[holst@holstfineart.com.au](mailto:holst@holstfineart.com.au)

BEFORE

AFTER

**skepsi**  
GALLERY

Australian  
Contemporary  
Ceramics  
Excellence

[skepsi@skepsi.com.au](mailto:skepsi@skepsi.com.au)  
[www.skepsigallery.com.au](http://www.skepsigallery.com.au)

Inquiries: Anna Maas  
0416 085 002

John Daly, Bowl, ceramic, lustre glazed interior

WANT TO DISCOVER THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOUSE?  
A SPECIAL PLACE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?  
OR A PROPERTY FROM YOUR FAMILY HISTORY?

**THE HISTORY DEPT.**  
CONSULTING HISTORIAN ABIGAIL BELFRAGE MPHA  
0405 527 770 [www.thehistorydept.com.au](http://www.thehistorydept.com.au)

**PETER the POSSUM MAN**  
Pest protection for your home

PHONE 03 9646 4222  
[peterthepossumman.com.au](http://peterthepossumman.com.au)

We provide sensitive solutions to domestic possum problems plus many other pests

A DIVISION OF ADAMS PEST CONTROL