

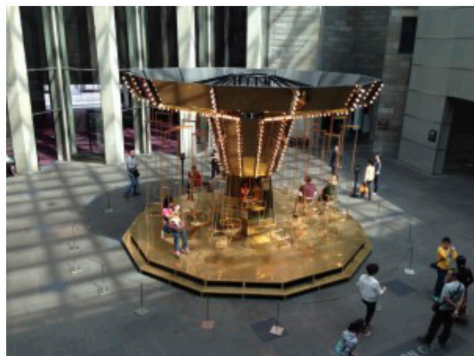
## Interaction in Melbourne

by GILL on FEBRUARY 15, 2015



I visited the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne- NGV – for the first time, and had a great time there. And that was because I saw some really interesting artwork, most of it acting as an invitation to join in, to interact in some way. Relational aesthetics has been around for a while now, but it hits home how enjoyable it is to engage with artwork in a way that involves you, that is active

and not passive.



First up was Golden Mirror Carousel by Carsten Holler, literally a carousel offering a free ride – except this meant one full circle took five minutes, something the young children behind me found bewildering and annoying. They got off after two minutes. Holler was showing us how we live in a fast full-on world, needing constant stimulation. I loved it.

It was also a nice link to the Luna Park in St Kilda, close to where I am staying, which is full of rides that have been there since it opened in 1912, and so are also about time.



On the same floor was a David Shrigley show called Life and Life Drawing, which builds upon his Turner Prize exhibition a few years ago. Funny and interactive, it's a crowd pleaser. One of the best things is a huge rucksack sitting quietly on the floor. Upstairs in the contemporary collection is a work by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer called Please empty your pockets. It's a small version of a typical X-ray machine you see at airports. You are invited to place objects from your bag etc onto the machine which scans it

to leave a digital trace; a collection of objects that builds up over time. I scanned my phone, then literally emptied my bag onto it- great idea and it creates an interesting notion of who we are by the objects we deem important to us, in my case, hand cream, a fan, a notebook, a pen, a purse, a passport and mosquito cream. I tried to then scan my actual bag, but the security guard wasn't allowing that. Somewhat ironic given that's the one thing you have to scan at airports; and links me back to Shrigleys enormous rucksack.



NGV have two separate buildings, and over in the other one on Federation Square, was a show by Australian artist Emily Floyd. Interesting work that saw text being used as sculpture, and in a recent installation, she joined forces with designer Mary Featherston to create a space for children to play. Informed by the children suggesting they made sure there were seats for adults to sit on, the result is a learning environment seen as expanded sculpture. Both adults and children were enjoying creating sentences within the space. It felt warm, inviting and something for families to do together.

