



BEST OF MELBOURNE

12 ways to become more cultured in Melbourne and Victoria

Kara Irving, Herald Sun
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Subscriber only



Looking for an activity to do on the weekend where you can learn something, while having fun?

Here's some ways you can get a culture-dose in Melbourne and across Victoria.

From reading in the State Library, marvelling architecture, or checking out our regional art offerings, here are 12 ways to brush up on arts and culture.

HOW TO BEAT THE HEAT IN MELBOURNE

THESE 2019 MILESTONES WILL MAKE YOU FEEL OLD

1. Get lost in a book in the State Library of Victoria's domed reading room

This space is like something out of a movie. Norman G. Peables, an architect from Bates, Peables & Smart, designed the octagonal room, which opened in 1913. At the time it was one of the largest concrete domes in the world. The design was based on the British Museum in London and the Library of Congress in Washington.

slv.vic.gov.au

2. Take a guided walking tour of the Australian Ballet Centre

Theatre lovers can take a peek behind the curtain of the Australian Ballet Centre. The guided tour will take you through the wardrobe department to see how the company's costumes are made, explore the pointed shoe room and see the dancers taking their daily class. Groups are limited to 12 people. Tickets \$39 a person for an hour tour.

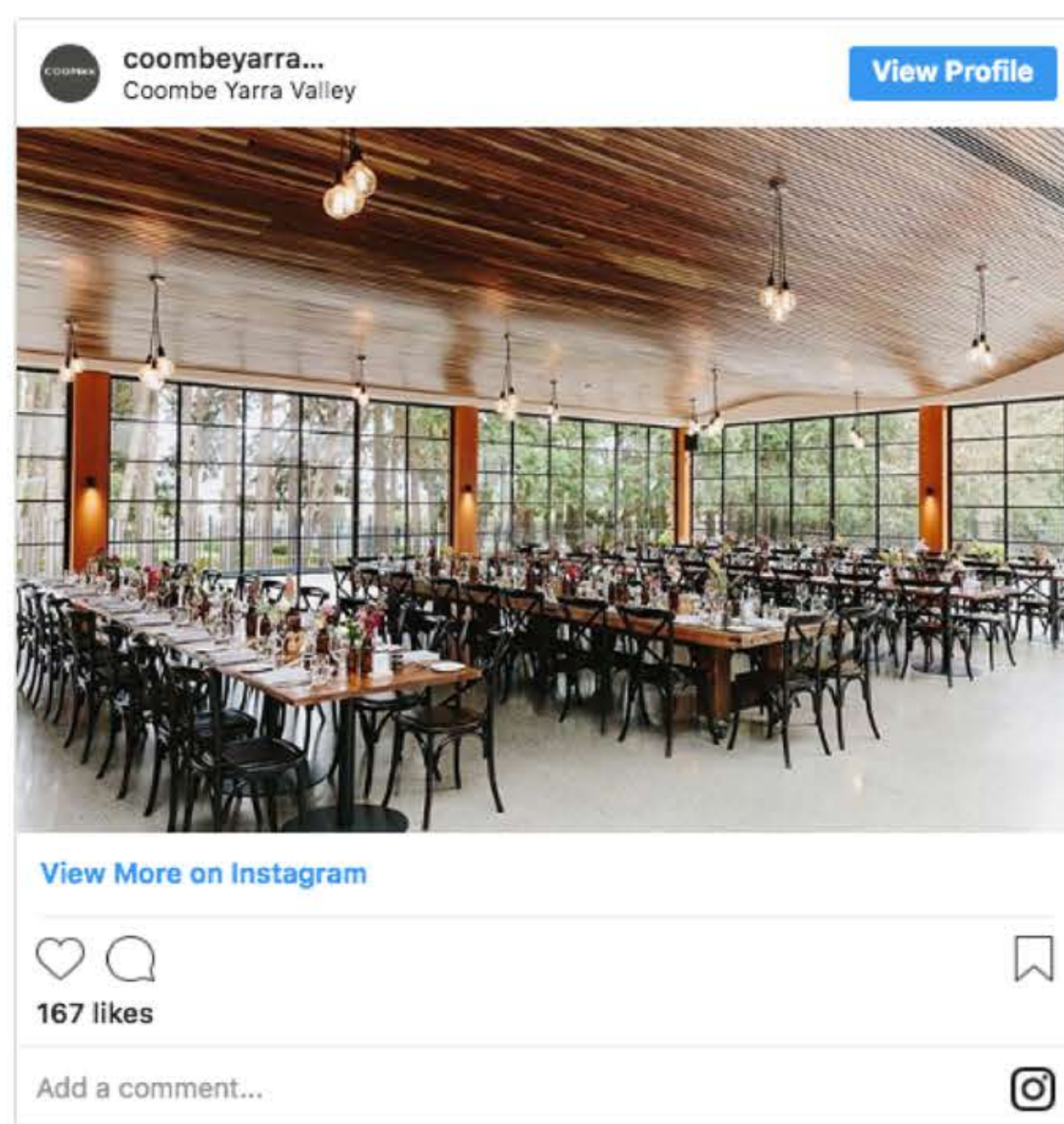
australianballet.com.au



3. Marvel at the Art Deco detail of the Manchester Unity building

The Manchester Unity tower is iconic in Melbourne, but the Art Deco wonders inside this 1930s building are a sight to behold, thanks to the ongoing refurbishment work of the dentist who bought the building. The mammoth boardroom table has survived all the refurbishments. And see Melbourne from a different perspective from the rooftop. Tours are held regularly, with a meal at the 1932 Cafe & Restaurant onsite.

manchesterunitybuilding.com.au



4. Visit Dame Nellie Melba's home grounds

Once the Australian home of world-famous opera singer Dame Nellie Melba, now Coombe Estate in the Yarra Valley is a winery, garden, restaurant, gallery and wedding venue. Pop in for a cheese plate and some wine.

coombeyarravalley.com.au

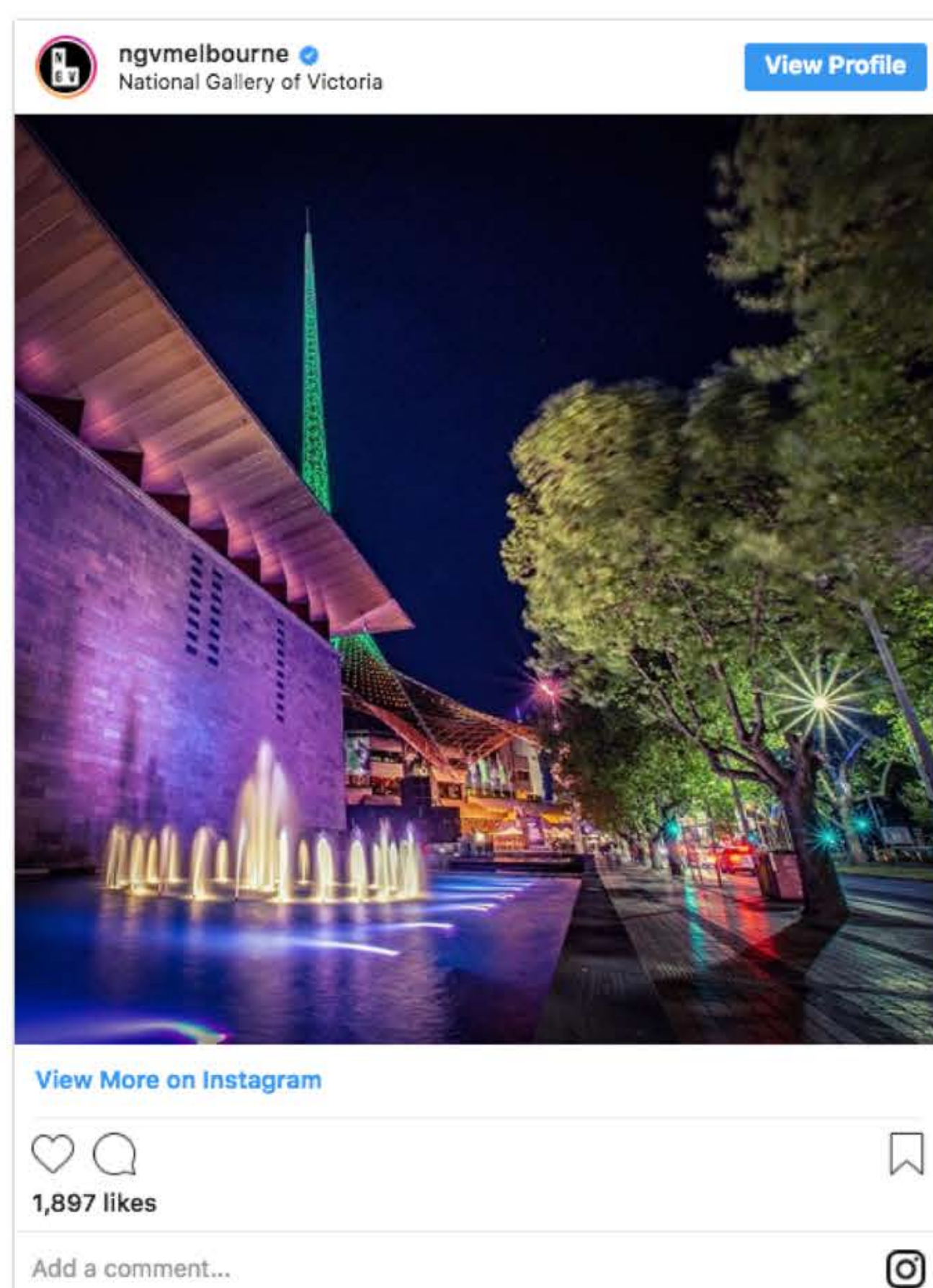


The Forum Theatre received a revamp in 2017. Picture: Craig Hughes.

5. Rock to a gig at the gorgeously gothic Forum Theatre

Melbourne's favourite venue may have received a multimillion-dollar facelift in 2017 but its 1920s look has been kept. Checkout the mosaic tile work as you step into the building. Some of the country's biggest acts have performed at the venue, including Amy Shark and Flight Facilities.

forummelbourne.com.au



6. Run your hands through the waterwall at the NGV

This iconic water feature is a work of art in itself. It's impossible for any child — big or small — to resist running their hands through and makes for some great happy snaps. But it's just the start of any trip to the National Gallery of Victoria. Inside, the Great Hall is a wonder to behold. And on until October 7, don't miss the MoMA exhibition.

ngv.vic.gov.au

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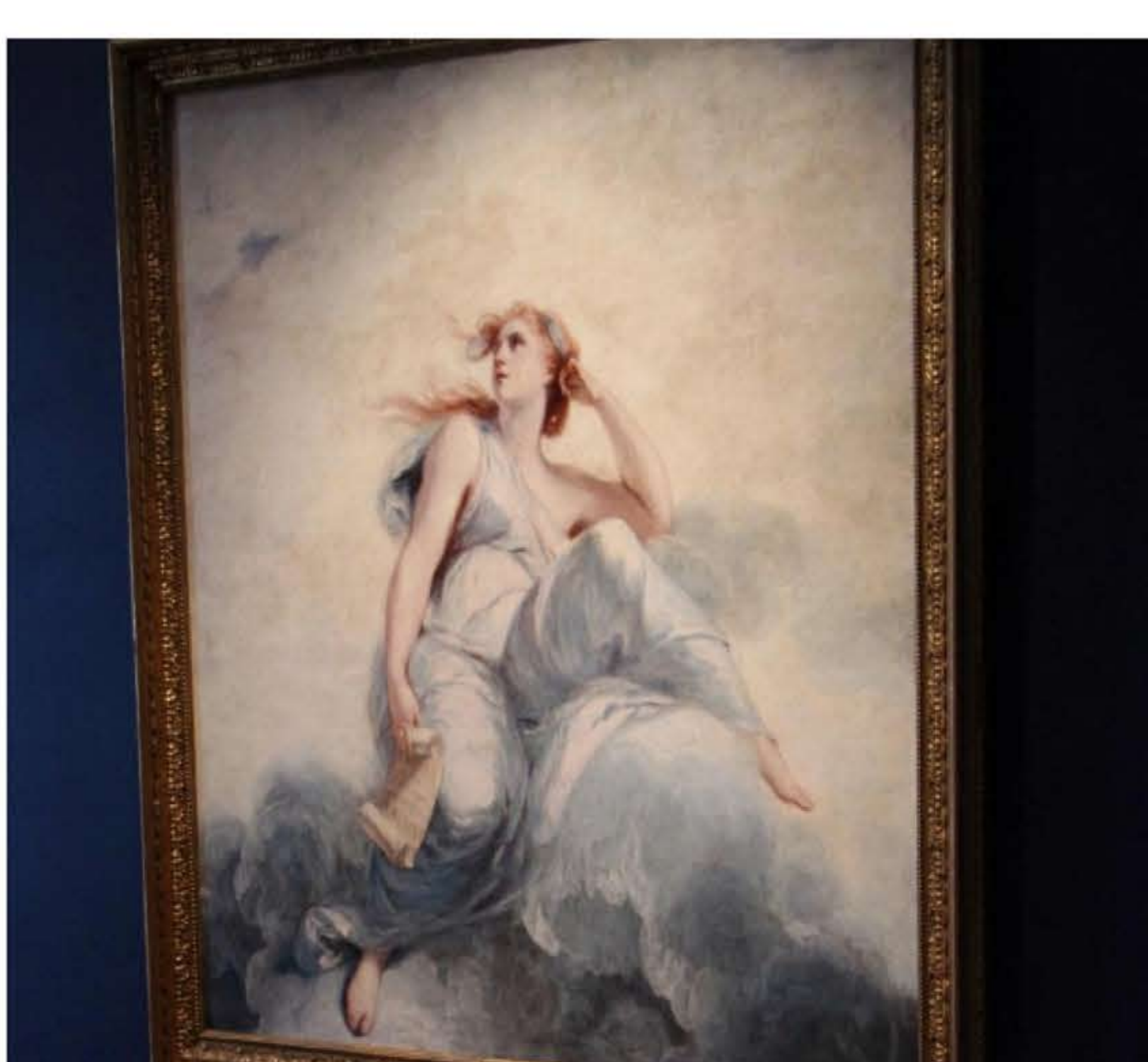
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Joshua Reynolds' Theory is just one of the works sent to the Bendigo Art Gallery. Picture: Sarah Nicholson

7. Admire the art at the Bendigo Art Gallery

Bendigo Art Gallery is one of the Australia's oldest and largest regional art galleries, showing Australian art from the 1850s, 19th century European paintings and sculptures and modern and contemporary collections.

bendigogallery.com.au



Feel like playing captain for a day? Check out this 105-year-old paddle-steamer. Picture: Andy Rogers.

8. Steer a 105-year-old paddle-steamer and see the paddle wheels in motion

Set out from Echuca on the PS Canberra, the oldest river boat in the Murray River Paddlesteamer fleet, and step back in time for an hour as you cruise along the Murray.

murrayriverpaddlesteamers.com.au



The Princess Theatre. Picture: Josie Withers/Visit Victoria

9. Watch a show at the Princess Theatre, but don't sit in Federici's seat

The ghost of the Princess Theatre, Frederick "Federici" Baker continues to haunt one of the city's favourite theatres, after dying of a heart attack mid-performance. Federici's ghost has been seen on many occasions. A seat is left empty at the theatre on opening night of a new show.

marrinergroup.com.au/venues/princess-theatre



Heartbeat of the Murray laser light show. Picture: Supplied

10. Check out the Murray Laser Light Show

On the banks of the Little Murray River, the 360-degree multimedia show uses light, laser, water, sound and special effects to tell the Murray story.

pioneersettlement.com.au/heartbeat

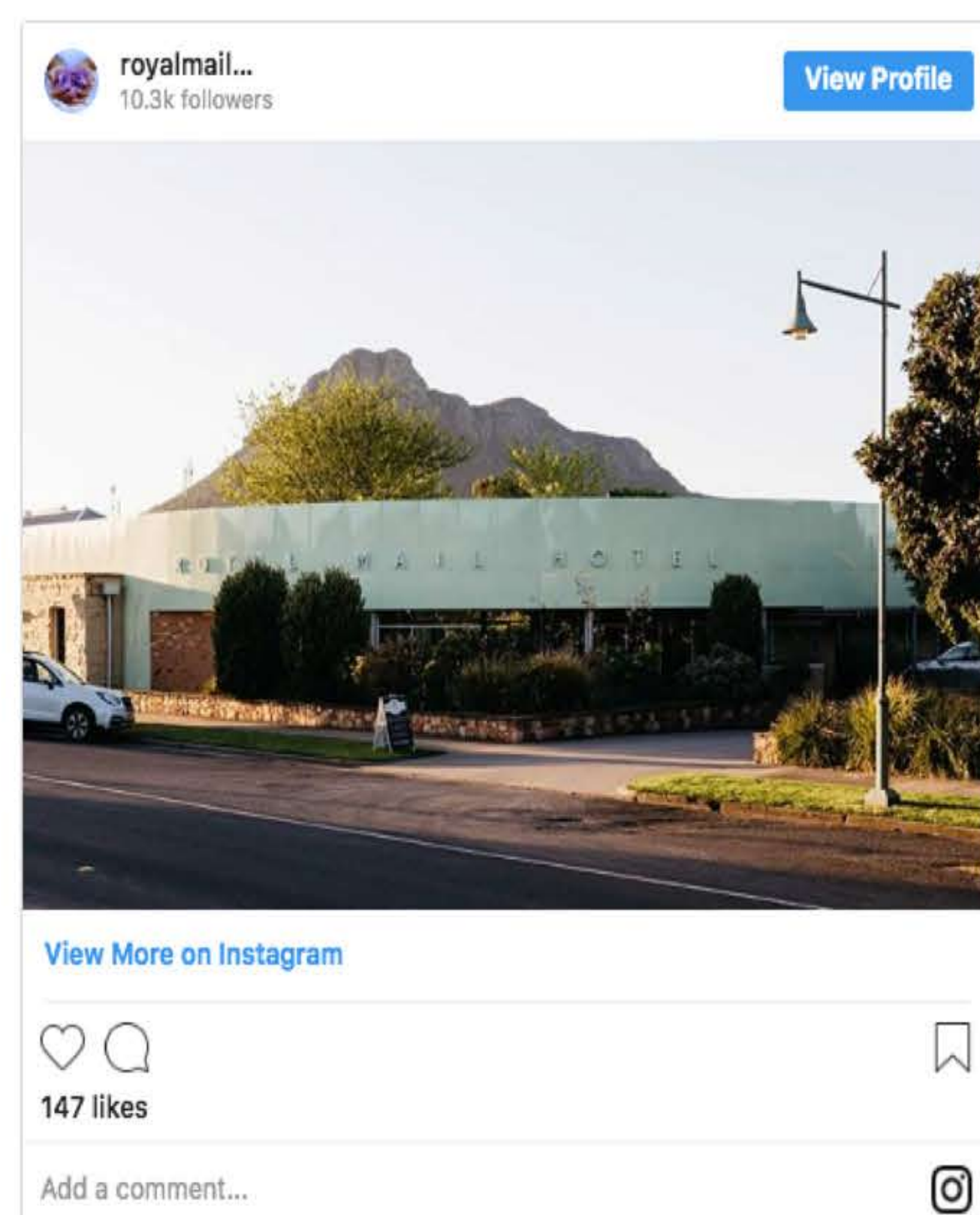


Stan Buckingham gets ready for the Clunes Book Town Festival. Picture: Rob Leeson.

11. Find a rare book at Clunes Booktown

The tiny town of Clunes, about 30 minutes north of Ballarat, attracts 18,000 people for its annual Booktown event. There are author talks, plus writers and creatives can discover the largest collection of rare, out-of-print and collectable books in the country. The festival's on each May.

clunesbooktown.com.au



12. Tour the Royal Mail Hotel at Dunkeld

Add the Royal Mail Hotel to (your very long list) of foodie places to visit in Victoria. The venue has amazing reviews for its exceptional produce, but should also be commended on its tours and facilities. While staying at the hotel, guests can do daily kitchen garden and wine cellar tours. There are also walking tours through the Wonderland Trail.

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