



# Melbourne Place Kennedy Nolan

**Location** Melbourne, Australia

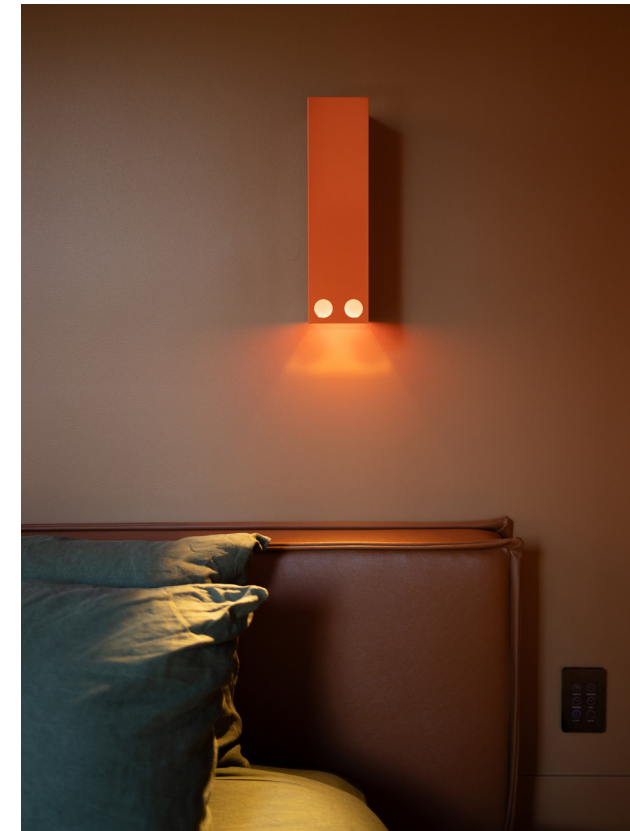
**Words** Virginia Jen **Photography** Sean Fennessy

The name of the latest luxury boutique stay in the heart of Australia's arguably most creative and cultural mecca is a declaration of intention, purpose and identity. Melbourne Place, a long-awaited CBD hotel, is unparalleled in the way it is defined by its location, its moniker a nod to the Victorian-era laneway that encircles it. At 130 Russell Street, the 14-storey, 191-room accommodation features an impressive, highly modelled, tinted precast concrete and Corten steel facade with deep red and metal accents, which contrasts with the building's accompanying pressed-brick offside. This intriguing presence is a seamless addition to the CBD skyline.

With architecture by Kennedy Nolan, the project is a response to place, its tonal intricacies and generous angled planes representative of a contemporary typology that acknowledges the city's brick-and-masonry heritage. The T&G Building, Cavendish House and neighbour Hero, the old telephone exchange and post office, all influence the considered outcome.



Kennedy Nolan's design for Melbourne Place is marked by plenty of natural light, attention to texture and detail, and a muted yet dramatic tonal palette.



Another element that sets Melbourne Place apart is the sheer scale and commitment to local creative talent, whose work fills every nook and cranny of the suites. In an unabashed and fiercely proud manner, the hotel fit-out – painstakingly realised by Kennedy Nolan, with furniture procured by JFR Furniture – places leading Australian talent front and centre. It’s a veritable list of who’s who, with pieces from the likes of Dowel Jones, Zachary Frankel, Coco Flip, Mark Tuckey, Daniel Barbera, Ross Didier and John Bastiras.

Specially commissioned elements include atmospheric lighting by Volker Haug Studio and Ross Gardam, Robert Gordon basins by Bobby Gordon, indulgent bathtubs to soak in from Mains Water Co, custom terrazzo tiles from Fibonacci and Joy chairs from Jordan. Even the artworks have a local flavour, curated by Andy Dinan.

The carefully cultivated atmosphere of the suites – which range from Everyday and Urban to

the Penthouse – is complemented by the intimate front-row views of the cityscape that allow guests to observe and luxuriate in an elegant escape. Tasked with both architecture and interior design, Kennedy Nolan has achieved a cohesive whole with Melbourne Place, with the interior and exterior inextricably linked. The quality of light, the attention to texture and detail and the rigorous use of a muted yet dramatic tonal palette are woven together, seen in the external neutral brick, moody, soft-lit tones and the West Australian jarrah featured in the rooms. The result is a building of significance and substance that embodies the creative spirit and depth of the local design community.

Due focus has been given to the hospitality venues, no mean feat in a city known for its exceptional dining experiences. Nicholas Deligiannis will head the culinary program for both the hotel’s catering and in-room dining service, as well as the rooftop restaurant,

Mid Air. Industry stalwarts Ross and Sunny Lusted, who have worked with Aman Resorts on a dozen hotel openings, have been tapped and are establishing the Iberian-Coast-inspired 90-seater Marmelo and basement supper club bar Mr Mills.

The Lusteds aren’t the only seasoned hotel professionals whose expertise has been called upon for Melbourne Place. Executive general manager Tracy Atherton, formerly of Jackalope Hotels, is looking to curate a market-first, creative-focused guest experience. “Melbourne Place will redefine the Paris end precinct of Melbourne,” says Atherton. “It will be the place to be, providing guests with a unique lifestyle and cultural experience situated among the best offerings in the city. It is the ultimate location to experience the pinnacle of Melbourne’s life and spirit.”

Melbourne Place is set to be a peerless example of everything its namesake city offers, celebrating culture and creativity in a fearlessly idiosyncratic way.

