



Issue no. 87/January 2012

**Special issue**  
**Melbourne's Top 100**



**Bright lights, big city**  
Melbourne's most influential, inspirational,  
provocative and creative people for 2011

**the**  
**(top 100)**  
**2011**

+ Larissa Dubecki's top eight summer dishes /How to put your barbecue to better use/Marieke Hardy on surviving air travel



**They push boundaries, create masterpieces, help those in need, agitate for change and make Melbourne a better place to live.**

000/100

Provocateurs, Power Partnerships, Cause and Effect, Social Glue, Bright Ideas, My First Time, 20/20, Global Sensations, Changing Lives, Music, From These Hands

Meet the **(melbourne)** magazine's Top 100 for 2011.

One extraordinary city,  
100 remarkable stories.





**They're not in it to make friends. They're in it to change the world, right wrongs, have their voice heard, get up the nose of their competitors. Here's a dozen feisty folk you'd want on your side in an argument...**

**PROVOCATEURS**

Photography/  
Derek Swahwell,  
Daniel Mahon  
Words/Greg Foyster



**Age**  
**07-Dec-2011**  
**Page: 1**  
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**You've heard of the** corridors of power – well, this is the hallway of hope. Opposite the council flats on Brunswick Street in Fitzroy sits a shabby building with the words PIZZA TAKE AWAY FOOD splashed across the faded red exterior. Standing in the second-floor passageway is the executive director of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre, 41-year-old human rights lawyer David Manne. You wouldn't think this small office could have a significant impact on national policy, but it has – and the effects are yet to be fully felt.

In August, Manne and his team successfully challenged the Federal government's "Malaysia solution" for offshore processing of asylum seekers in the High Court, removing a central plank of Labor policy and leaving the Immigration Minister, Chris Bowen, casting about for alternatives.

Manne repeatedly denies the suggestion he set out to scuttle the government's plans. In fact, the way he tells it, the case landed in his lap almost by chance – and just in the nick of time. It was Saturday, August 6, and he was cooking dinner for his family when a call came from a lawyer in South Australia. Word had spread that a group of asylum seekers on Christmas Island needed legal help. Later that evening, Manne talked to a spokesperson for the group who pleaded with "Mr David" to challenge government plans to remove the asylum seekers to Malaysia and to instead have their cases assessed in Australia.

Sensing the urgency, Manne assembled a team and submitted documents to the High Court by 4pm the next day. It was only when the case was heard at 6pm that he discovered just how urgent the matter was. "We learnt then that 16 of the 36 men had been

earmarked for expulsion from Australia to Malaysia the next morning, Monday, 11.30am."

Justice Kenneth Hayne ordered that the asylum seekers not be deported, and three-and-a-half weeks later, a majority of High Court judges ruled that the expulsions to Malaysia were illegal. Prime Minister Julia Gillard slammed the decision, but Manne argues the case has been mischaracterised as radical when it was actually quite conventional. "The people that we acted for, these vulnerable people, did something very normal and reasonable. They wanted to ask the court whether what the government proposed to do to them was lawful." A consequence of the case, says Manne, was seeing "politics pushed aside", bringing "a sense of sobriety" to Australia's heated boat-people debate. "We need to bring an end to the unfortunate political jousting over this issue, which is really reduced to which side can be tougher in its treatment of vulnerable people," he says.

You could say Manne was destined to enter the asylum-seeker debate: in the 1930s his grandparents fled the Nazi regime to settle in Australia; in the 1970s his uncle, academic Robert Manne, lobbied the Fraser government to accept Indochinese refugees; and at primary school, one of his friends was the son of a Vietnamese refugee: "I consider myself one of the earliest Australians to taste really good Vietnamese spring rolls," he says. He developed an interest in human rights during high school, and at university in Hobart he volunteered to help settle newly arrived refugees from El Salvador. He joined the legal centre in January 2001. "I love it," he says. "There's a sort of simple beauty and pleasure in waking up each day and going to work and helping people."





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**002**

**Lyn White**  
*animal welfare campaigner*



**Provocative pics:** In May, animal advocate Lyn White's shocking footage of Indonesian abattoir workers mistreating Australian cattle aired on Four Corners, sparking petitions, protests and eventually a month-long suspension of the live export trade to Indonesia. White knows the power of arresting images: the 48-year-old former police officer was first inspired to expose animal cruelty when she saw a photograph of a caged bear at a bile farm in China in 1997.

**New friend:** Princess Alia bint al Hussein of Jordan became an unlikely ally after she viewed footage, passed on by White, of a bull being brutally slaughtered in a Jordanian abattoir. "From that moment onwards, we've been great friends," says White.

**Sworn enemy:** In August, senator Chris Back claimed in a Senate inquiry that the Indonesian abattoir workers were paid to abuse cattle for the cameras. White said the claims were "not only baseless but professionally and personally insulting".

**Controversial comment:** "Australia's live export trade will be condemned in history in the same way that the slave trade is now considered one of our darkest chapters."

**003**

**Marcia Neave**  
*judge*



**Against the grain:** While tabloid columnists and victims groups call for ever-harsher sentencing, in September this year Justice Marcia Neave of the Court of Appeal bucked the "tough on crime" trend by suggesting sex offenders could be dealt with outside the traditional courts in a technique known as "conferencing", where they meet and hear from victims (or their representatives). It's not the first time Justice Neave has gone out on a legal limb; the former chair of the Victorian Law Reform Commission has been described as one of the state's "longtime advocates for law reform".

**Alternative career:** A fast reader, Justice Neave loves fiction (Hilary Mantel's recent historical novel Wolf Hall is a favourite) and in January this year she was a guest on ABC Radio National's The Book Show, telling listeners, "If I come back in another life, I'd like to come back as a poet rather than a judge".

**004**

**Rachel Lowry**  
*conservation campaigner*



**Making a difference:** Rachel Lowry has done the impossible. Through a cleverly pitched campaign (and the help of some very cute animals), the 29-year-old director of wildlife conservation and science at Zoos Victoria has persuaded the notoriously parochial Australian public to care about the fate of a foreign species in faraway lands. Launched in 2009, her Don't Palm Us Off campaign highlighting the link between unsustainable palm oil production and the looming extinction of orang-utans generated 163,000 petition signatures and directly inspired two food companies (Woolworths and Unilever) to commit to sustainable sources by 2015. The campaign won a Banksia Environmental Foundation People's Choice award. "What started as something quite small here in Victoria just grew legs," she says.

**First job:** Lowry started at the zoo as a "live encounters" officer, which involved dressing up in a butterfly suit. "The abdomen was quite thick, and you'd really work up a sweat on hot days," she says.



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**Robert  
Clark**

*Attorney-General and Minister for Finance*



**005**

Since entering office in December last year, Victoria's 52nd Attorney-General has wasted little time coming to grips with the legacy left behind by the previous government, moving to (among other things) reverse Labor amendments to equal opportunity law, restoring the right of sporting clubs to run single-sex competitions and the power of school communities to set appearance and behaviour standards.

Clark, 54, has also spearheaded the Baillieu government's "tough on crime" agenda, which has including the abolition of suspended sentences and removed a sunset clause from much-discussed laws allowing on-the-spot fines for offensive behaviour and swearing (which were actually originally introduced for a three-year trial by the last government).

"The highlight of 2011 has been sentencing reform," says Clark, citing yet another crime bill, aspects of which have also been

controversial: the "community correction order", which will give magistrates and judges the option of imposing conditions such as curfews and a "no-go zone" on offenders.

Reform has always been on his agenda: as a law student at the University of Melbourne, he uncovered misspending of compulsorily collected student fees and successfully sued members of the student council and the Australian Union of Students and the university in the Victorian Supreme Court.

All of which makes Clark sound like a bit of a crime crusader, yet he has been described as "shy" and "unfailingly polite".

He's also been described, by shadow attorney-general Martin Pakula, as "ultra-conservative" but after 23 years in parliament (he first won the electorate of Balwyn in 1988, at the age of 31), the tag doesn't faze him.

"Labels are for others to decide," he says.



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**006**



**Ali Hogg**



*marriage equality campaigner*

**Forbidden ball and chain:** In August this year, Ali Hogg, the 31-year-old convenor of grassroots gay marriage group Equal Love, helped organise a mass "wedding" outside the marriage registry office on Spring Street. About 50 couples symbolically tied the knot in front of thousands of onlookers.

**Driving force:** "Some of the things that keep me going are the responses that I get from young people," says Hogg. "When they're involved in the demonstrations, they say that they've never felt so included and accepted in all of their lives."

**Paradoxical profession:** A graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts, Hogg works as a photographer. "Over the past few months I've been doing weddings," she says, laughing. "It's very ironic."

**007**



**Sally Goldner**



*transgender rights campaigner*

**The big moment:** On September 14 this year, Foreign Affairs Minister Kevin Rudd and Attorney-General Robert McClelland announced guidelines allowing transgender Australians to carry passports issued in their preferred sex, provided they have a letter from their GP. "The effects have just been enormous," says Sally Goldner, co-founder of TransGender Victoria, which spent years lobbying the government for the change. Previously, the sex on a person's passport had to match their birth certificate (except in special circumstances), creating difficulties overseas. "One person ended up in a detention centre for no other reason than that the appearance of their gender identity did not match their passport," says Goldner.

**Time for a holiday:** Born with a male body, Goldner's previous passport listed her sex as male. She made the transition to living as female in 1998 but didn't change her passport to reflect the change. Now 46, she's thinking about heading overseas herself – perhaps to Canada, a country she visited (as a man) in 1994. "I'd be able to travel on a female passport, which would be a lot simpler and a lot more enjoyable," she says.

**008**



**Carl Katter**



*same-sex marriage campaigner*

**Controversial quotes:** "If the right person comes along and I want to spend the rest of my life with them, I would definitely like to marry them." So said Carl Katter during an interview with George Negus on Network Ten in August this year. If you're wondering what's the controversy, here's the context: Carl Katter is the openly gay half-brother of staunchly conservative federal MP Bob Katter, who had just one week before told a rally in Canberra that same-sex marriage deserved to be ridiculed. Oh, and just in case you're not aware of the extreme difference of opinion between the two brothers, here's a quote from the cowboy-hatted MP himself, uttered in 1994: "If the poof population of north Queensland is any more than 0.001 per cent, then I'll walk to Bourke backwards."

**Protest pin-up boy:** After Carl Katter's "coming out" on television (he actually first came out at 18), he's fronted a GetUp! campaign, spoken at protests and joined the committee of lobby group Australian Marriage Equality. "I'm definitely in it for the long haul," he says, adding that the next step "might be politics". Get ready for Katter v Katter round two.

**009**



**Timothy Moore**



*designer and editor*

**Global citizen:** Wearing white leather cowboy boots from an Amsterdam flea market and a T-shirt promoting the Rotterdam International Architecture Biennale, editor Timothy Moore exudes a certain intellectual worldliness. The 33-year-old has just returned from a stint as managing editor of Amsterdam-based Volume magazine to take the helm of Architecture Australia, an industry periodical first published in 1904. What are his plans for the publication? "To change the way people talk about architecture in Australia, and to have more people talking about it," he says in a hybrid US-Euro-Aussie accent.

**Ugliest Melbourne building:** What does the globetrotter think of Melbourne's architecture? "It's very parochial," he says, describing the aesthetics as "loud". And our ugliest building? "The McMansions in the suburbs."



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| <h1>010</h1>   | <h1>011</h1>   |
| <p><b>Ruslan Kogan</b><br/> <i>entrepreneur</i></p>    | <p><b>David Bell</b><br/> <i>anti-development campaigner</i></p>   |
| <p><b>Upstart start-up:</b> If Gerry Harvey is the reigning king of home entertainment, then Ruslan Kogan is the ambitious prince. The 29-year-old's eponymous company sells cut-price electronics over the internet, challenging the traditional "bricks and mortar" business model. "If current sales and market trends continue, Kogan will be a bigger business than Harvey Norman in three years," he says. Such bold statements are sure to rankle rivals, and last year Harvey lashed out, calling Kogan's products "unbranded shit". What does Kogan think of rival salesmen sledging his wares? "If our competitors get upset at what we're doing, that just means we're doing a good job," he says.</p> <p><b>Apple in his sights:</b> This year the e-retailer started flogging cheap (actual, real) iPads alongside his own-brand TVs, undercutting Apple stores by hundreds of dollars in some cases. How? Kogan says the Apple products come from the company's Hong Kong office "cutting middlemen out of the supply chain", but he's keeping the details hush-hush.</p> | <p><b>Property Goliaths beware:</b> Since spotting an ad for "a major new development west of Torquay" in the local paper in 2008, David Bell, the 55-year-old spokesperson for Speak Up for Spring Creek, has letterboxed thousands of residents and helped organise a rally that attracted about a third of the community, prompting more than 2200 submissions against the plan and forcing the council to reconsider. This year, Bell tussled with Victorian Planning Minister Matthew Guy, who threatened to rezone 240 hectares of farmland west of Torquay for housing ... then also caved in to community opposition.</p> <p><b>Knock-on effect:</b> Guy's retreat didn't go unnoticed. "It gave heart to a huge number of groups around Victoria who were all finding themselves in the same situation," says Bell, who is now advising campaigners in Woodend, Point Lonsdale and Melbourne's "green wedges".</p> <p><b>Moving on up:</b> Bell plans to stand for the Surf Coast Shire at the next council election. "It's all very well to make a lot of noise on the outside, but if you are ever going to effect change you've got to work at that policy level," he says.</p> |

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| <p><b>Jenny Davies</b><br/> <i>researcher and author</i></p>   | <h1>012</h1>   |
| <p><b>Railway rabble-rouser:</b> Don't get Jenny Davies started about Flinders Street Station. The author, 55, started researching the icon in 2007, compiling a 100-year history of the building for her self-published book Beyond the Facade. The tome took top honours at the 2010 Victorian Community History Awards, and Davies has talked to more than 130 groups, calling for a refurbishment. "It's a really incredible waste of a public building," she says.</p> | <p><b>New friend:</b> Davies last year took then opposition leader Ted Baillieu on a tour of the station's shabby interior, half of which she says hasn't had a lick of paint since the '50s or '60s. The excursion paid off in May, when the state government committed to a \$1-million international design competition to "rejuvenate and restore" the landmark. "I'm really thrilled that I've had a part in putting this into the public awareness again."</p> |



For more information on the Flinders Street Design Competition, see [majorprojects.vic.gov.au](http://majorprojects.vic.gov.au)



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**2011 MEMORABLE MOMENTS**

**January 2**  
 Brendan Fevola begins 2011 in customary style, granted "indefinite leave" by the Brisbane Lions after police charge the forward with being a public nuisance following a boozy New Year's Eve on the Gold Coast.

**January 17**  
 Just days after killer floods devastate Queensland, Victoria gets its own big wet. Water levels rise dramatically in rivers throughout the state, flooding more than 40 towns, Horsham and Echuca among them.

**January 30**  
 Novak Djokovic captures his second Australian Open title, thrashing hapless Scot Andy Murray. Kim Clijsters takes out the women's event, beating surprise packet Li Na — declaring she feels she has finally earned the nickname "Aussie Kim".

**February 18**  
 A new chapter begins in Melbourne sport, rugby union team the Melbourne Rebels playing their first game.

**February 19**  
 Another Kim, Kim Duthie, aka the St Kilda schoolgirl, releases video that catches Ricky Nixon with his pants down (but boxer shorts on). It's the beginning of the end for the player manager, who is later stripped of his accreditation for two years.

**February 28**  
 Shaun Tan wins an Oscar for his animation *The Lost Thing*, while Geoffrey Rush and Jackie Weaver miss out.

**March 10**  
 Heroic high-school teacher Paul Simpson, 40, dies trying to rescue his year 10 students from Shelford Girls Grammar from a rip near Bells Beach.

**Sam Salter and Jason Wyatt**

*founders of bikeexchange.com.au*



**BFFs:** Sam Salter, 32, (left) and Jason Wyatt, 33, met in primary school, grew up riding their BMXs together around Williamstown, and now run the cycling equivalent of carsales.com.au. Launched in 2007, their Collingwood business won the prize for innovation at this year's Telstra Victorian Business Awards. With interest piqued by Cadel Evans' triumph, the site currently boasts 3.4 million product searches per month.

**Sam on Jason:** "Jason, for his age, has got a brilliant business background. He's also just an achiever in life — he basically only knows how to win. He's very gung-ho and lifts everyone up around him."

**Jason on Sam:** "Sam's a great people person, a great bloke, with high energy and enthusiasm. You can go away on a business trip with someone you don't like, or you can go away with your best mate. I know who has more fun."



**Hezi and Gabby Leibovich**

*online retail moguls*



**From humble beginnings:** Hezi, 35, (left) and Gabby, 41, have come a long way since their first sales jobs as teenagers: hawking clothes at Wantirna Market. The brothers set up their daily deal sites Catch of the Day and Scoopon before US giant Groupon could enter the Aussie market, and in 2011 sold a chunk of their empire for \$80 million.

**Hezi on Gabby:** "Gabby's been reading retail catalogues in his spare time from as young as he was able to read ... He knows the best price on a USB stick or a Nike shoe ... He's more a showman than myself, but he also says things how they are."

**Gabby on Hezi:** "Hezi is an entrepreneur, a start-up guy — something you cannot learn in a university. I think Hezi is more considered and I'm more about giving things a try ... which causes a lot of arguments. But someone once told me that if you have two partners and both are alike, then one of them is not required."

