

Media release
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Modern take on milk carton campaigns highlights the humanity of missing loved ones

Missing Persons Advocacy Network (MPAN) has partnered with some of Melbourne's best cafés for this year's National Missing Persons Week (5-11 August) to raise awareness of the 38,000 Australians who go missing each year.

Twenty Melbourne cafés will serve takeaway coffee in artist-designed biodegradable cups that highlight the character and individuality of six long-term missing people.

MPAN CEO Loren O'Keeffe said the *Unmissable* coffee cup campaign aims to reinvent the well-known stark, grainy milk carton photos of missing people that can often distance viewers.

"The coffee cups are the result of families collaborating with artists and writers to create specific, heartfelt portraits of missing loved ones. These vibrant artworks go beyond the vital stats to humanise missing loved ones and give the public an opportunity to engage," Ms O'Keeffe said.

Families of the featured people hope the campaign will reinvigorate their search, which often dies down after the initial spike of media coverage.

Cafés taking part in the awareness campaign are also supporting MPAN, either by collecting donations from customers or donating a percentage of the proceeds from coffee sales to the charity.

Emily White, manager of Richmond's Pillar of Salt café, says their business is taking part in the *Unmissable* coffee cup campaign to help MPAN reframe this topic as a community issue by bringing it into the mainstream.

"MPAN is a tiny charity that provides much needed practical support to the families and friends, many of whom are searching for their loved ones while dealing with the worst kind of grief, ambiguous loss. It's a unique type of trauma, and something I have personal experience with."

"We want to help raise the profile of this issue, and what better way to reach Melburnians than through coffee and art for a good cause?" she said.

Research shows at least 12 people are directly impacted when someone goes missing – emotionally, psychologically, and financially – almost half a million Australians every year.

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Contacts and further information

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High resolution images available for download via:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/72zo38ayyrdm7r4/AADGG7qDi8ND64KR-PEjWFIYa?dl=0>

Full list of participating cafés: <http://mpan.com.au/too-short-stories/>