

## For Immediate Release

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Luxurious landscapes right at our back door.  
Mike Leonard, Award Winning Photographer launches  
*Victoria Collection* – a showpiece of Victoria

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A book launch coupled with a photographic exhibition, and just days away from the opening of the Commonwealth Games, Melbourne based photographer Mike Leonard could not have picked a better time to launch his latest book, *Victoria Collection*.

“*Victoria Collection* makes you aware not only of the breadth and beauty of our state but how constantly things change.” says Leonard. Building a career as a well known landscape photographer (teaching was his first profession), *Victoria Collection* was created over a fifteen year period (1990-2005). This project gave Leonard the opportunity to compile a collection of ninety images that captures what Victoria is about.

“My inspiration comes from travelling to new places as well as revisiting places I know at a different time of year. The people you meet are so interesting. One of my favourite images in the book is of a father and son standing at dusk in a field of oat stooks near Daylesford. The colours of the oats and the skyline are enchanting and the presence of the two men is strong”.

There is St Kilda pier before the kiosk was destroyed by fire in 2003, Melbourne’s original espresso bar, Pellegrinis, a city institution since 1954 and Federation Square at night, a recent addition to the Victorian landscape. Leonard also takes you across landscapes from Wilsons Promontory to the High Country, from the Murray River at Echuca to the salt lakes in the Mallee.

A wry sense of humour, and a gentle approach to his subjects Leonard’s photographs take on a quality that reflect the passion and understanding he has for the state he has grown up in.

Lab X, fast becoming known as a fantastic space for photographic displays, will host the launch of *Victoria Collection*. Lab X is based in St Kilda, close to another Melbourne icon represented in the book, Luna Park. The launch of *Victoria Collection* will be another great opportunity for Leonard to mix with corporates, local Melbourne identities and friends from the photography fraternity and for everyone present to admire their home state! Sponsored by Lab X, Kodak, Splitting Image, Parks Victoria and VicUrban the launch of *Victoria Collection* is an important career highlight for Leonard as it brings together print and art, giving his audience access to Victoria how he sees it through his lens.

The launch of *Victoria Collection*, the book and Photographic Exhibition is March 3 2006. The Exhibition is open to the general public (admission is free) from March 5 to April 2 2006, at Lab X Gallery, 40 Pakington Street, St Kilda. Opening hours are 7.30 am to 9.30 pm Monday to Friday, Sunday 1pm to 7pm. Books and limited edition prints are available at Lab X or direct from [www.lenscape.com.au](http://www.lenscape.com.au)

*Distributed by Dennis Jones and Associates to all good bookstores or available directly from [www.lenscape.com.au](http://www.lenscape.com.au) **Victoria Collection** RRP \$59.95 (GST inclusive) by Melbourne photographer Mike Leonard is a showpiece. Beautifully bound in dark blue cloth with quality paper, perfect for that interstate or overseas guest, for corporate foyers or to enjoy on the coffee table at home the book really is magnificent to look at. Limited prints of the photographs in the book are available to buy at the Exhibition or direct from [www.lenscape.com.au](http://www.lenscape.com.au).*

#### ***About Mike Leonard***

***Victoria Collection** is Mike Leonard's third book. Leonard received the Western Australia Premier's Award for his first book, **The Kimberley: A Journey Through Northwest Australia**, and his second, entitled **The Making of Colonial Stadium Melbourne Docklands**, documents the construction of Telstra Dome, as the stadium is now branded. Mike Leonard's photography has appeared in numerous magazines (including *Geo* and *Australian Geographic*), calendars, diaries and books. His prints are included in government and corporate collections, as well as in collections held by the Australian Commercial and Magazine Photographer's (ACMP) and the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers (AIPP).*