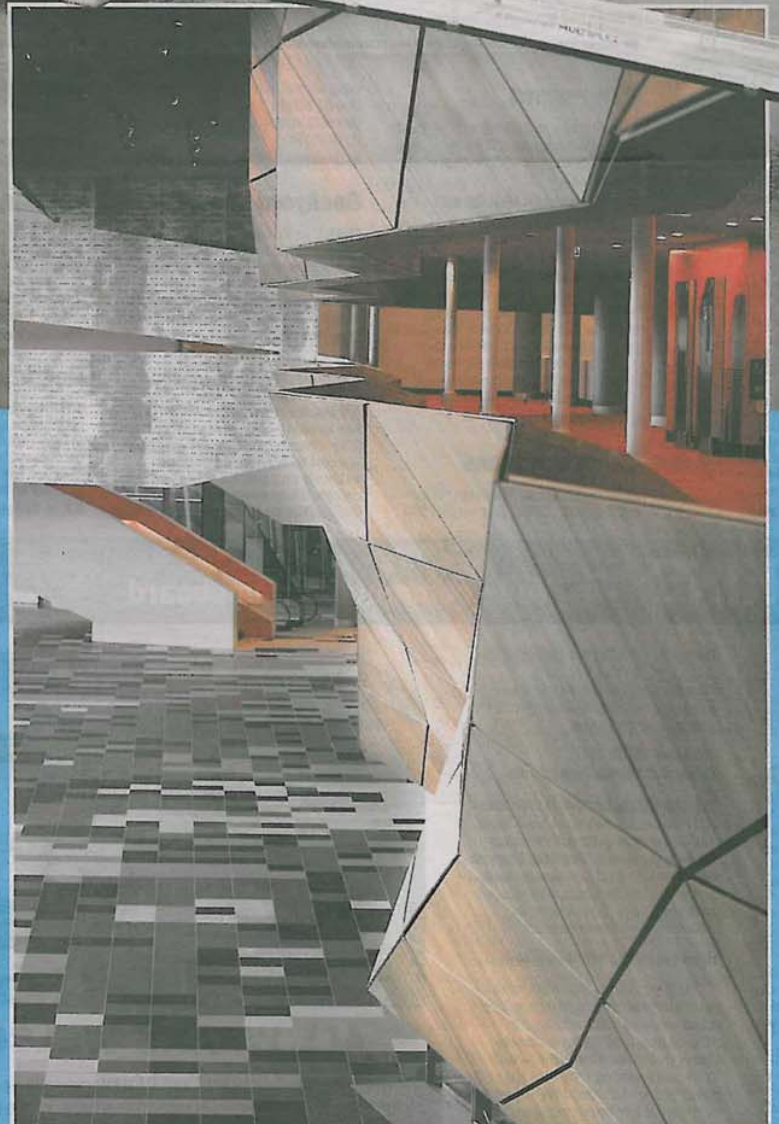
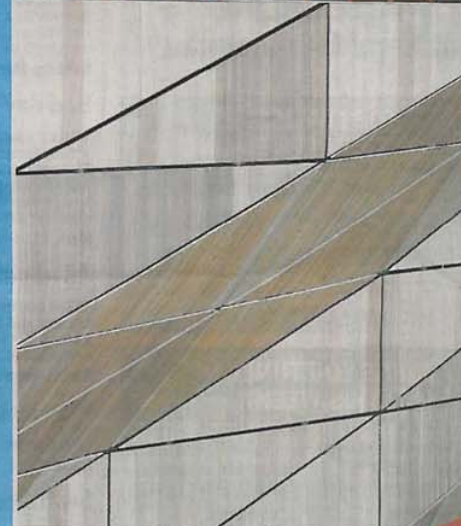


MELBOURNE'S NEW MONOLITH

Sunday Herald Sun



PETER ROLFE
State politics reporter

THESSE pictures show Melbourne's newest world-class attraction in all its glory. The Melbourne Convention Centre, being built by the Yarra between Southbank and Docklands, looms as a spectacular new showpiece.

From the 5000 seat Plenary Hall with its 16.8m high movable walls to an 18m high glass facade with city and river views, the development will wow Victorians, interstate and international visitors when it opens in July next year.

The convention centre will have Melbourne's biggest industrial kitchen, capable of producing thousands of meals a day. And its snazzy architecture, combining wood, steel, tile, glass and modern art installations, makes it poles apart from anything of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

Unlike most convention centres, Melbourne's will

be bright, bold and full of windows to show off the Victorian capital rather than bunker guests inside drab rooms.

Some of its 32 meeting rooms will host corporate functions with thousands in attendance, while more intimate conventions will be held in suites with a 261cm TV, electric blinds and built-in audio visual equipment.

There are already 45 international business events booked at the venue, expected to bring almost 100,000 visitors to Melbourne and inject about \$575 million into the state's economy.

The development which will form the missing link between the city and Docklands.

A 20-storey Hilton Hotel on top of the development, is expected to open in April.

A revamped maritime museum, shopping centre and riverside cafes and restaurants will also be unveiled this year.

