

Julie Bishop red shoes step into MoAD's collection of powerful democratic symbols

Fashion can make a powerful political statement, and this year one of the loudest was made by a pair of red satin block pumps. The now iconic shoes were originally worn at the Hon Julie Bishop MP's August press conference announcing her resignation from federal Cabinet, and were today donated by Ms Bishop to MoAD (Museum of Australian Democracy).

Having served as Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party since 2007 and Foreign Affairs Minister since 2013, Ms Bishop faced intense speculation about her political future after the August leadership spill that led to Australia's seventh prime minister in 10 years.

Visiting MoAD today, Ms Bishop explained how her red shoes have captured the public's interest. "I wore red shoes to my press conference in August when I announced my resignation as Foreign Minister, without appreciating the impact it would have," she said.

"Since that time, many people have told me the colour red should be a symbol of solidarity and empowerment among Australian women. The red shoe emoji has taken on a life of its own!

"I give my red shoes to the Museum of Australian Democracy as a tribute to the aspirations of all women," Ms Bishop said.

Thanking Ms Bishop for the donation, MoAD's Director Daryl Karp said the shoes can encourage visitors to consider how even simple clothing choices can be political statements.

"These shoes are more than simply stylish footwear. They demonstrate how personal fashion choices are so often consciously, and unconsciously, political and powerful," Ms Karp said.

"At a time when, regrettably, negative commentary about female politicians often centres on their physical appearance, many watching Ms Bishop's press conference were struck by how this bold colour represented her confidence and command of her political destiny.

"I am delighted these shoes that are a symbol of a time in our political history, are now in MoAD's permanent collection, and encourage visitors to view them at our pop-up display in King's Hall," Ms Karp said.

Ms Bishop's red shoes will be on public display over the summer holidays.

About MoAD

The Museum of Australian Democracy celebrates Australia's proud history as a democratic nation and actively promotes the participation of its citizens in determining its future.

MoAD is a museum not just of objects but of ideas. In our iconic heritage building, we tell the story of Australia's journey to becoming one of the world's most vibrant and multicultural democratic nations.

MoAD is a place where stories, conversations and narratives from myriad perspectives can be heard and discussed.

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