



News Release

Dr Tristram Hunt announced as new Director of the V&A

10.00, Friday 13 January, 2017

The V&A Trustees have today appointed Dr Tristram Hunt as the new Director of the V&A.

Tristram has served as Labour MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central since 2010, and was previously the Shadow Secretary of State and Shadow Minister for Education.

A historian, politician, writer and broadcaster, Tristram is an expert on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a particular focus on Victorian urban history. He is the author of several books, including *The English Civil War: At First Hand*, and most recently *Ten Cities That Made An Empire*. A regular history broadcaster on BBC and Channel 4, Tristram has made more than a dozen series on subjects including Elgar and Empire, Isaac Newton and the English Civil War.

Tristram lectures on modern British history at Queen Mary University of London. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, a founder of the Stoke-on-Trent Literary Festival and a Patron of the British Ceramics Biennial, and was previously a Trustee of both the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and a Curator of the Mayor of London's History Festival.

Tristram's support of the ceramics industry, together with the Art Fund, played an important role in saving the Wedgwood Collection in 2014. The collection was gifted to the V&A and is on long-term loan to the Wedgwood Museum in Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent.

He brings widespread expertise across education, industry and politics to the V&A, and a keen awareness of the important role of major public institutions in the UK, having been at the forefront of political, cultural and public life for the last decade.

Dr Tristram Hunt's appointment has been confirmed by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and he will join the Museum in the coming months.

Announcing the appointment, V&A Chairman Nicholas Coleridge said: "On behalf of the Trustees, I am delighted to announce the appointment of Dr Tristram Hunt as Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

He has a highly compelling mixture of experience across public life, the arts, history, education and academia, and knows our collections well from his writing and broadcasting. In addition, he is an informed and articulate leader and communicator on numerous facets of culture, both historic and contemporary, and I greatly look forward to working with him at the V&A.”

Dr Tristram Hunt said: “I am delighted and honoured to have been appointed Director of the V&A. I have loved the V&A since I was a boy, and today it is a global leader in its unrivalled collections, special exhibitions, academic research and visitor experience.

It is a moment of transformation and renewal for the V&A, with the upcoming opening of the new Exhibition Road entrance, and new sites and galleries in Dundee, China and Stratford. I am particularly pleased that, through the V&A ownership of the Wedgwood Collection, my passion for education in Stoke-on-Trent can continue.

The combination of the power of the collections and expertise of an inspirational team is what makes the V&A the world’s greatest Museum of art, design and performance. I am honoured to take on this exciting opportunity.”

- ENDS -

Dr Tristram Hunt’s Biography

Dr Tristram Hunt is Labour MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central. Previously, he was a Member of the Select Committee on Political and Constitutional Reform and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Energy Intensive Industries. In 2013, he was appointed Shadow Education Minister and then Shadow Education Secretary, focusing on developing Labour’s policy on teachers’ professional development, vocational education and early years education.

He has a First Class degree in history from the University of Cambridge (1995), before serving as an Exchange Fellow at the University of Chicago (1996). Tristram also has a PhD from the University of Cambridge on ‘Civil Thought in Britain 1820-1860’.

He has lectured on British and international culture at the Centre for European Studies, University of California, Berkeley; the Centre for European Studies at Harvard; Princeton University and the National University of Singapore.

After working on the 1997 General Election campaign, he became a Special Adviser to Science Minister Lord Sainsbury (1997-2000), Associate Fellow at the Centre for History and Economics, King's College, Cambridge and Senior Fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research.

Between 2001-2010, Tristram combined his post as Senior Lecturer in British History at Queen Mary, University of London with work as a history broadcaster, presenting over fifteen radio and television programmes for the BBC and Channel 4 on subjects including Elgar and Empire, Isaac Newton and the English Civil War.

In addition to making regular contributions to *The Guardian* and *The Observer*, he is also the author of *The English Civil War: At First Hand* (2002), *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City* (2004), and the award-winning biography, *The Frock-coated Communist: The Revolutionary Life of Friedrich Engels* (2009), and *Ten Cities That Made an Empire* (2014). During this period, Tristram also served as a Trustee of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the Centre for Cities think-tank.

Since entering Parliament, Tristram Hunt has focused on educational excellence; the regeneration needs of Stoke-on-Trent; the ceramics industry and energy intensive sector. He is a Trustee of the History of Parliament Trust and fellow of the Royal Historical Society. From October 2013 until September 2015, Tristram served as Labour's Shadow Education Secretary focusing on developing Labour's policy on teachers' professional development, vocational education and early years education.


About the Victoria and Albert Museum, London


The V&A is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity. It was established to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, the V&A's collections, which span over 5,000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium and from many parts of the world, continue to intrigue, inspire and inform. www.vam.ac.uk


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