



PRESS RELEASE

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V&A Exhibition Road Quarter to open 30 June with week-long festival, celebrating the Museum's new architecture, heritage and history

REVEAL Festival

30 June – 7 July 2017 | Admission Free

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Today, the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) announces REVEAL, a free, week-long public festival running from 30 June to 7 July 2017. Art and design commissions, performances, fashion, family activities and collaborations with neighbouring Albertopolis institutions will celebrate the opening of the V&A's Exhibition Road Quarter designed by the Stirling Prize-winning British architect Amanda Levete and her practice AL_A.

Opening on 30 June 2017 as the Museum celebrates its 165th anniversary, the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter is the Museum's largest architectural intervention in the last 100 years. This innovative and ambitious project will create beautiful new public areas and gallery spaces for London, transforming the experience of the V&A for visitors, and revealing historic facades of the V&A's existing Grade I buildings for the first time.

To celebrate these new spaces, the V&A will stage a festival themed around the word REVEAL, inviting the public to explore the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter's unique combination of heritage, modernity and technology with a series of events that bring the architecture and collections to life.

Visitors will be able to enter the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter through the arches of the renovated 1909 Aston Webb screen, opening up the Museum to its neighbours on Exhibition Road. The new spaces include:

The Sainsbury Gallery is a versatile, 1,100m sq column-free exhibition space purpose-built for the V&A's world-leading programme of temporary exhibitions.

The Sackler Courtyard is the world's first all-porcelain public courtyard, inspired by the rich tradition of ceramics at the V&A.

The Blavatnik Hall is a new entrance into the V&A that will transform how visitors experience and discover the Museum and collections.

The festival will open with a special music and digitally-themed Friday Late on 30 June, hosted in collaboration with Boiler Room, which will bring audiences to the V&A and beam the Museum out to the world. It culminates on Friday 7 July with Fashion in Motion, four special catwalk shows in the new Sainsbury Gallery featuring Molly Goddard, British Emerging Talent winner at the 2016 Fashion Awards.

Throughout the week, featured artists and site-specific commissions will include an immersive light experience by Simon Heijdens; a special performance by Julie Cunningham & Company responding to Yoko Ono's 'Dance Pieces'; an ambitious new hybrid opera by Anat Ben-David with art direction and costume by Boudicca, staged in collaboration with the Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston University; musical performances with the Royal College of Music and Albert's Band from the Royal Albert Hall, and many other exciting activities, performances and resources for the whole family.

In the spirit of Albertopolis, the Victorian vision for a city of arts and sciences in South Kensington, the V&A is also collaborating on a range of events and activities supporting the REVEAL theme throughout the Museum with partners from across Exhibition Road, including: Discover South Kensington, Imperial College London, Natural History Museum, Royal Albert Hall, Royal College of Music, and the Science Museum.

Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A, says:

"The completion of the V&A's Exhibition Road Quarter is a hugely exciting moment for the V&A. Our largest architectural intervention for 100 years revives the pioneering spirit of Albertopolis, reconnecting us to Exhibition Road and our world-class cultural partners. I am delighted to announce 30 June as the public opening of London's latest cultural landmark. That week we also launch our exciting REVEAL festival, which will celebrate this stunning fusion of history and modernity, art and performance, tradition and innovation - as only the V&A can."

Early highlights from the REVEAL festival announced today include:

- **Friday Late** – as the first and original Friday Late programme in London, this special music and digitally-themed event will be held in partnership with Boiler Room, the global online music platform. The V&A will bring an electric mix of international musicians, DJs and artists to the V&A, both in person and virtually through live online streaming. There will be interactive experiences, playful interventions, workshops and performances. (30 June)
- **Simon Heijdens** – in the first commission for The Sainsbury Gallery, artist Simon Heijdens will create an immersive experience of augmented natural light that reveals the unusual architectural details of the Gallery. The work filters natural sunlight from the Gallery's

Oculus skylight into a kaleidoscope of light and shadow. Choreographed by varying wind patterns taken from outside, Heijdens' piece creates a performance of ambient light that brings a natural, continuously evolving character to the built environment.

- **Anat Ben-David** – over the course of a day in and around The Sainsbury Gallery, the V&A will show the first major public presentation of Kairos by artist and musician Anat Ben-David, an ambitious new theatrical song-cycle commissioned by the Stanley Picker Gallery at Kingston University, incorporating fashion, opera, dance, experimental music and multi-media. Inspired by Sadie Plant's seminal book *Zeroes and Ones* (1997), Kairos brings together performers from the worlds of opera, and electronic and experimental composition, in a futuristic staging by avant-garde fashion studio Boudicca, providing a journey through the new spaces with a series of choreographed sequences.
- **Julie Cunningham & Company responds to Yoko Ono** – Yoko Ono's 'Dance Pieces' from her seminal collection of 'instructional poems' ACORN are the starting point for a new site-specific dance performance by Julie Cunningham & Company. Taking place throughout the Museum and across its grounds, four dancers will create intimate, imaginary situations as they move through spaces inside and outside the museum.
- **Fashion in Motion** – British fashion designer Molly Goddard is the subject of the V&A's Fashion in Motion, which brings catwalk shows by leading international designers to the Museum. Goddard specialises in traditional hand-craft techniques such as hand pleating, smocking and crocheting, and won British Emerging Talent at the 2016 Fashion Awards. As part of REVEAL, the catwalk shows will feature Goddard's previous collections, as well as showcasing new pieces that will be seen for the first time. (7 July, 13.00, 15.00, 17.00 & 20.00)
- **Family events** – throughout the week, families will be invited to explore the Museum with a series of trails, online games, performances and activities. There will be pop-up performances in The Sackler Courtyard, workshops with artists and illustrators looking at the design of the new Exhibition Road Quarter, and interactive theatre performances for all to join.
- **DesignLab** – The V&A's DesignLab series, aims to inspire a new generation of creative practitioners through promoting knowledge and skills across art, design and performance. During REVEAL, secondary schools and teachers will be invited to the Museum to view work in progress with designer Marie O'Connor as part of an in depth project linked to the exhibition Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion (6 July)

- **The Royal College of Music** will be presenting live concerts in the Museum, including a new work by student composer David Evans, titled 'Street Scenes.' **The Royal Albert Hall's** resident Education & Outreach ensemble, Albert's Band, will also be making a special appearance, featuring a selection of music from the Hall's amazing performance history.

Further artists and commissions will be announced in due course.

In advance of opening, the festival begins to REVEAL through artist **Mira Calix's** 'We Portal,' an online curated space for music, conversations and materials. Calix will host a live stream of music, performance art, dance and spoken word, broadcast from behind the scenes of The Sainsbury Gallery, opening up an intimate new vista into the Museum.

To coincide with the opening of the V&A's Exhibition Road Quarter and the REVEAL festival, the V&A will also launch new digital ways into the V&A including a unique self-service ticketing experience and mobile game for families where eight charismatic characters (including Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and Sir Henry Cole's dog Jim) will help children conquer the heroic and hidden corners of the building and uncover the V&A story as they go.

Catherine Ince, of the V&A's REVEAL Festival curatorial team, said: *"I am delighted to unveil the V&A's REVEAL Festival as our moment to mark and celebrate the V&A's Exhibition Road Quarter. The V&A is such a rich source of inspiration, and it has been hugely exciting to see how a wide range of innovative and inspiring artists and practitioners have responded to the new architecture and our collections. We hope that the REVEAL festival will invite the public to explore and experience the V&A's collections, architecture, layers of history and our heritage in new and different ways."*

The V&A is grateful to Discover South Kensington, which brings together the Museum and the other leading cultural and educational organisations in the area to promote innovation and learning, and to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea who led the transformation of Exhibition Road public realm.

V&A Members will have an exclusive first-look view of the Exhibition Road Quarter on Friday 30 June from 10am to 5pm. Following the Members' Preview, the gates will open to welcome the public to the new space and the REVEAL festival starting with Friday Late.

– ENDS –

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Notes to Editors

- AL_A won the international competition in 2011 to design this important development. Wates are the lead contractors delivering the project and Arup are the Structural and Building Services engineers.
- Funding has been raised thanks to the generosity of The Monument Trust, The Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation, The Headley Trust, The Blavatnik Family Foundation, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other generous donors including Peter Williams and Heather Acton and the Friends of the V&A.
- The Exhibition Road Building Project is the crucial scheme in achieving the long term aims of our second phase of FuturePlan, the V&A's programme of restoration and redesign. FuturePlan aims to create beautiful and contemporary new settings for the V&A's outstanding collections while restoring much of the building's original architecture and improving visitors' experience of the Museum.
- Discover South Kensington brings together the V&A and the other leading cultural and educational organisations to promote innovation and learning. South Kensington is the home of science, arts and inspiration. Discovery is at the core of what happens here and there is so much to explore every day. www.discoversouthken.com

About the V&A

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 5000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium and from many parts of the world, continue to intrigue, inspire and inform.

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