



The V&A Exhibition Road Quarter Opens

A new way in

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The V&A Exhibition Road Quarter opens to the public on the evening of Friday 30 June 2017, creating a beautiful and unique new civic space for London, and a world-class gallery space for the V&A's internationally acclaimed exhibition programme. The project is designed by Stirling Prize-winning architect Amanda Levete and her practice, AL_A.

The launch of the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter marks the beginning of a new era for the Museum, as it prepares to expand its UK and international presence. The project is the Museum's largest architectural intervention in over 100 years and offers a 21st Century interpretation of the V&A's founding principles - to make works of art and design available to all; to educate; and to inspire designers and manufacturers today and in the future.

The V&A Exhibition Road Quarter took six years to realise and transforms the V&A's former boilerhouse yard on London's great cultural artery, Exhibition Road. This new entrance connects the Museum with its neighbours, reinforcing the Albertopolis vision of intellectual ambition and innovation and creates a sequence of major new spaces:

- The Sainsbury Gallery: a flexible, 1,100sq m column-free exhibition gallery that provides the V&A with a purpose-built space for its world-leading programme of temporary exhibitions
- The Sackler Courtyard: the world's first porcelain public courtyard, paved in 11,000 handmade tiles that were inspired by the rich tradition of ceramics at the V&A
- The Blavatnik Hall: a new entrance into the V&A from Exhibition Road, which transforms how visitors experience and discover the Museum and its collections
- The Aston Webb Screen: visitors will now enter the V&A from the street through the 11 openings of newly created colonnade formed from the 1909 Aston Webb Screen.

REVEAL, a free, week-long public festival (30 June-7 July) celebrates the opening of the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter, and offers a unique opportunity for the public to explore the

Museum's newly designed spaces before exhibition programming begins in the autumn. Art, performance, fashion and family activities will bring the architecture and collections to life, reflecting on the V&A's unique combination of heritage, modernity and technology.

Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A said:

“This is a landmark moment in our history. The V&A Exhibition Road Quarter is both the Museum's largest architectural intervention in over one hundred years and the start of a new chapter of expansion, returning to our original mission at the same time as opening up the V&A for the future. With its mix of ingenuity and imagination, the V&A has always been a meeting point for historicism and modernity. The V&A Exhibition Road Quarter bridges the two by offering fresh insights into our historic building with pioneering new architecture, creating London's leading exhibition space.”

The Sackler Courtyard is the world's first all-porcelain public courtyard, and comprises over 11,000 handmade porcelain tiles, inspired by the rich tradition of ceramics at the V&A. This new public space for London also houses a café with furniture designed for the space by AL_A and manufactured by Moroso. The Sackler Courtyard reveals architecturally significant façades and details that have never previously been seen by the public. These include sgraffito decoration on the side of the Henry Cole Wing – a decorative Renaissance technique using multiple layers of coloured plaster created by the first art students at the Museum, in the late 19th century. The stonework of the Aston Webb Screen retains the damage that World War II inflicted on the Museum, which is reflected in 11 sets of new metal gates, designed by AL_A. The gates have been manufactured with a pattern of perforations tracing the imprint of the shrapnel damage on the stonework as well as the Royal Crest in the central gate.

The Blavatnik Hall is a new space that will transform how visitors experience and discover the Museum and collections. Connecting the newly displayed Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Galleries of Buddhist Art and the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Sculpture Galleries, The Blavatnik Hall gives views through to The John Madejski Garden, leads to a new shop, and connects to the historic Ceramic Staircase as well as the Sackler Centre for arts education, which reopens featuring the new John Lyon's Charity Community Gallery.

The versatile, 1,100m sq column-free Sainsbury Gallery is one of the largest temporary exhibition galleries in the UK. This flexible exhibition space sits above a floor dedicated to art handling, conservation and preparation space. The new spaces reach as far as 18 metres below ground, directly beneath the Western Range of the V&A's Grade I listed buildings: a daring engineering and construction challenge that is made visible to the public by steel

columns and a beam painted in vivid international orange that are literally holding the weight of history and the Museum's priceless collections above.

Amanda Levete said:

"The V&A Exhibition Road Quarter is a reflection of the pioneering identity of the V&A and continues its mission of innovation into the twenty-first century. The Quarter reimagines the museum as an urban project, creating an exceptional place for London that will redefine the V&A's relationship with the street and the public."

Celebrating its 165th anniversary this summer, the V&A is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance. The completion of this major project marks an exciting moment of evolution for the V&A, a year after winning the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2016, and looking ahead to the opening of the V&A Gallery, Shekou as part of Design Society, in China this autumn and the V&A Museum of Design, Dundee next year.

The V&A Exhibition Road Quarter is the largest construction project undertaken by the V&A since its main buildings in South Kensington were completed in 1909. 22,500 cubic metres of earth were removed from the site and clay from the deepest excavations was carbon-dated to 50 million years old. At the height of construction, up to 60 truckloads of earth were removed from site per day, 99% of which was recycled. The new spaces have created more than 6,000sq m out of 2,200sq m of underused space.

AL_A was commissioned to design the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter in 2011 following an international competition. Wates are the lead contractors delivering the project and Arup are the Structural and Building Services engineers.

Over £48 million has been raised for the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter 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 donors including Peter Williams and Heather Acton and the Friends of the V&A.

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A selection of press imagery is available to download free of charge from pressimages.vam.ac.uk

– ENDS –

Notes to Editors

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 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

REVEAL FESTIVAL

30 June – 7 July 2017 | Admission Free

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REVEAL, a free, week-long public festival running from 30 June to 7 July 2017 to celebrate the opening of the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter, the largest architectural project undertaken by the Museum in over 100 years. Designed by Stirling Prize-winning British architect Amanda Levete and her practice AL_A, the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter will create major new spaces that will transform the V&A's relationship with the public and its neighboring institutions on Exhibition Road.

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** and a special performance by **Julie Cunningham & Company** responding to Yoko Ono's 'Dance Pieces'. At night, the historic Museum façades surrounding the new Sackler Courtyard will be transformed as part of an evening illumination cycle realised by Greenaway & Greenaway in collaboration with the V&A, the artworks will reference the V&A and its many collections. On Saturday 1 July, Exhibition Road will be pedestrianised for a day of cultural programming.

Opera: Passion, Power and Politics

In collaboration with the Royal Opera House

Sponsored by Societe Generale

The Sainsbury Gallery | 30 September 2017 – 25 February 2018

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The first exhibition to be presented in The Sainsbury Gallery will create a vivid and immersive journey through nearly 400 years of opera, exploring its passion, power and politics. Opera: Passion, Power and Politics, in collaboration with the Royal Opera House, will be the only exhibition ever to explore opera on a grand scale. It will immerse visitors in some key moments of the history of European opera from its roots in Renaissance Italy to its present-day form, by focusing on seven operatic premieres in seven cities. It will reveal how opera brings together multiple art forms to create a multi-sensory work of art, and show how social, political, artistic and economic factors interact with great moments in the history of opera to tell a story of Europe over hundreds of years.

AL_A

AL_A is the award-winning architecture and design studio founded by the RIBA Stirling Prize-winning architect Amanda Levete with Directors Ho-Yin Ng, Alice Dietsch and Maximiliano Arrocet.

Since its formation in 2009, AL_A has refined an intuitive and strategic approach to design. Collaborating with ambitious and visionary clients, we develop designs that are conceptualised as urban projects not just buildings and projects that express the identity of an institution, a city or a nation.

Recently completed projects include the Victoria & Albert Museum Exhibition Road Quarter (2017) in London, the V&A's largest building project in over 100 years; MAAT (2016), a Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology in Lisbon, commissioned by EDP, one of the world's foremost energy companies; Central Embassy (2017), a 1.5 million sq ft luxury shopping mall and hotel in Bangkok on the former grounds of the British Embassy; a 13-hectare media campus and a 37,700m² headquarters building for Sky (2016) in London; and MPavilion 2015 in Melbourne.

Ongoing commissions around the world include the transformation of the flagship Galleries Lafayette department store on Boulevard Haussmann in Paris; a new centre for the cancer care charity Maggie's in Southampton; two new buildings for Wadham College at the University of Oxford; The Courtyard, a series of community mixed-use developments on 39 sites across Moscow; and the Monte St Angelo subway station in Naples.

Arup

Arup is the creative force at the heart of many of the world's most prominent projects in the built environment and across industry. We offer a broad range of professional services that combine to make a real difference to our clients and the communities in which we work. We are truly global. From 92 offices in 40 countries our 13,000 planners, designers, engineers and consultants deliver innovative projects across the world with creativity and passion. Founded in 1946 with an enduring set of values, our unique trust ownership fosters a distinctive culture and an intellectual independence that encourages collaborative working. This is reflected in everything we do, allowing us to develop meaningful ideas, help shape agendas and deliver results that frequently surpass the expectations of our clients. The people at Arup are driven to find a better way and to deliver better solutions for our clients. We shape a better world.

Wates Construction

Wates Construction has a long track record of providing more for less to its clients across both the public and private sectors. Working on projects across a variety of different areas, including education, commercial, heritage, local authority frameworks and mixed-use, Wates Construction specialises in maximising value by finding the most intelligent and creative ways to deliver outstanding buildings.

About the Wates Group

The Wates Group, established 120 years ago, is one of leading privately owned construction, development and property services businesses in the UK. It employs approximately 4,000 people

and generated turnover of £1.53bn in 2016. Wates was named Building Magazine's Major Contractor of the Year in 2016 and was awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise for Sustainable Development for the second time. Wates was the first large contractor ever to be awarded Business in the Community's Community Mark and in 2013 was awarded the inaugural National Business Award for Corporate Citizenship in recognition of its leadership and excellence in community investment. Wates is committed to the long-term future of the built environment and to leaving a positive legacy for the communities in which we work and live.

HLF

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife.

www.hlf.org.uk.

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