



## PRESS RELEASE

# The V&A unveils plans for two new sites and the future of its collection in London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

UNDER STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL 11:00 ON THURSDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2018

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The V&A has unveiled plans that will revolutionise how its world-leading collection of art, design and performance is accessed, explored and experienced. The **V&A East** project will create two interconnected sites in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – a brand-new museum at Stratford Waterfront, and a new collection and research centre at Here East. They will open in 2023 as part of East Bank, the £1.1bn powerhouse of culture, education, innovation and growth taking shape in the park as part of the Olympic legacy. V&A East will also host a unique and unprecedented partnership between the V&A and the **Smithsonian Institution** – the largest museum and research complex in the world.

V&A East will provide a 360-degree view of the V&A, and illuminate the breadth of its work in ways that have not been realised before. Situated within the vibrant creative hub of east London and surrounded by four of the city's fastest-growing and most diverse boroughs, V&A East will be firmly rooted in its local neighbourhood and global in outlook.

At **Here East**, the new collection and research centre will reinvent the idea of a museum store. Visitors will be invited on behind-the-scenes journeys that uncover and demonstrate how and why objects are collected, how they are cared for, conserved, researched and displayed, and how they help make sense of our past, present and future.

The centre will be a purpose-built home for 250,000 objects and an additional 917 archives spanning the breadth of the V&A's collection from fashion, textiles, furniture, theatre and performance, to painting, sculpture, ceramics, glass, design, architecture, and digital.

With a design led by New York-based practice **Diller Scofidio + Renfro** (supported by **Austin-Smith:Lord**), the collection and research centre will bring treasures out of storage and into public view for the first time in generations. A central public collection hall will turn the store inside out, with a rich array of objects on rotating display for visitors to explore – from some of the V&A's smallest curiosities to the largest and most significant rooms and building fragments in the collection.

Highlights announced today include Frank Lloyd Wright's 1930s office for Edgar J. Kaufmann – a unique and complete 20th-century plywood interior – and a 15th-century marquetry ceiling from the now-destroyed Altamira Palace near Toledo, Spain, which will be resurrected within the centre as a real architectural element above a new public space for displays and events.

Further spaces within the centre will host pop-up displays, workshops, performances and screenings alongside live encounters with the museum's work – from conservation and research to exhibition preparation. This new model builds on the continued success of The Clothworkers' Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion, which will be relocated to the new centre from Blythe House in west London, where a significant proportion of the V&A's collection is currently stored.

A dedicated viewing gallery will be created to showcase a changing display of rarely-seen large rolled objects from the V&A's extraordinary collection of theatre stage cloths, carpets, textiles, tapestries and paintings, including a 15-metre-wide theatrical backcloth designed by Natalia Goncharova for the 1926 Ballets Russes London production of Stravinsky's *Firebird*.

Ten minutes' walk away at **Stratford Waterfront**, a five-storey museum designed by Dublin-based architects **O'Donnell + Tuomey** will provide a panoramic view of the designed world, and offer contemporary and cross-cultural perspectives. Two galleries will showcase the full range of the V&A's collections and a programme of major exhibitions will sit alongside new commissions, installations and interdisciplinary collaborations and projects. Three outdoor terraces will give spectacular views across the Park.

A pioneering partnership with the **Smithsonian Institution** will deliver an innovative exhibition programme and a jointly-curated gallery at the Waterfront, bridging art, design, science and the humanities, and deploying the collections of two world-renowned cultural institutions to reflect issues and themes that resonate with contemporary society. The museum's inaugural exhibition in 2023 will be a world-first co-production by the V&A and the Smithsonian, after which the latter will present one in four exhibitions at the museum.

The museum at Stratford Waterfront will sit alongside UAL's London College of Fashion, a new, mid-scale venue for Sadler's Wells, and new BBC studios for performance, rehearsal and broadcast – its founding partners in the East Bank project as part of the legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The partners are already active in east London with programmes of events, collaborations and activities developed together with local organisations and involving thousands of people from across the Olympic boroughs. Building relationships and networks across the many and varied local communities of east London is helping shape the collective East Bank project and ensure it is firmly rooted in its new neighbourhood by 2023.

**The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said:**

*“As London's centre of gravity extends east, our plans for East Bank make sure that high-quality culture and education are right at the heart of the development and of our Olympic legacy.*

*"I'm truly delighted that the V&A - and its partnership with the Smithsonian Institution – is one of the world-renowned organisations working alongside us to drive forward growth and inspire more young Londoners to take up creative careers.*

*"By bringing large parts of its vast programme to two new sites at East Bank, the V&A will open up access to the world's greatest collection of art, design and performance."*

The V&A East project opens the latest chapter for the V&A in east London that began with the opening of the Bethnal Green Museum in 1872 – now the much-loved V&A Museum of Childhood which is itself undergoing a major transformation project in the coming years.

V&A East's two venues will be open to all, from families, schoolchildren, students, artists and designers, to tourists, visiting academics, cultural enthusiasts and curious passers-by. People across the neighbouring boroughs are already helping to shape the project, and the V&A will continue to forge new partnerships as the project develops.

**Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Jeremy Wright said:**

*"As one of our world-class museums, the V&A showcases Britain's cultural history around the globe. These ambitious plans will bring the museum and its vast collection to new audiences and help continue the economic regeneration that East London has undergone since 2012.*

*"We are also providing government funding to help move the museum's world class treasures in storage at Blythe House into some of these new, modern facilities that will help further boost the V&A's public displays."*

**V&A Deputy Director and COO Tim Reeve said:**

*"V&A East is timely and ambitious. It will – for the first time – illuminate the entire lifecycle of museum practice in a transformational experience for visitors. From the moment of an object's acquisition, through its conservation, the research, enquiry and debate that follow, to its display as part of the story of an exhibition, this 360-degree view is unprecedented and will revolutionise how people experience, and are inspired by, our collection.*

*"Whether in Stratford, South Kensington, Scotland or Shenzhen, we are continuing to open up the vast collection that the V&A holds on the nation's behalf. We hope that V&A East becomes a place that sparks the imagination and provides creative opportunity for generations to come."*

ENDS

**For further PRESS information about the V&A East project please contact Phoebe Moore on [p.moore@vam.ac.uk](mailto:p.moore@vam.ac.uk) / +44 (0)7789 900897 or Benjamin Ward on [benjamin@benjward.com](mailto:benjamin@benjward.com) / +44 (0)7837 134 193 (not for publication). A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from [pressimages.vam.ac.uk](http://pressimages.vam.ac.uk)**

## Notes to Editors

- **The Victoria and Albert Museum, London (V&A)** is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity, spanning 5000 years of human creativity. It was established in 1852 to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, its purpose is to champion creative industry, inspire the next generation, and spark everyone's imagination.
- **The V&A collection and research centre** has been made possible by the Government's £50m support to the V&A to move its collection out of Blythe House in West London and into new, modern facilities. Funding has also been made available to the British Museum and Science Museum to move their collections out of Blythe House by 2023, after which the building will be sold.
- The creation of **The Clothworkers' Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion** at Blythe House was made possible thanks to the generosity of The Clothworkers' Foundation; the Pauline Johnstone Bequest; the Penelope Crutchfield Bequest; the Diana Jefferson Bequest; Mr Jorge Yarur Bascuñán; the Patricia Baines Trust and many other supporters.
- **East Bank** is a new £1.1 billion powerhouse of culture, education, innovation and growth being built on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford, east London.

The scheme, which is receiving £385m from the Mayor of London and £151m from the Government, will provide skills and jobs for local people, bring more than 10,000 students to the site, and attract thousands of visitors from London and beyond. East Bank will help to cement the capital's reputation as a world leader in culture, education and innovation creating 2,500 jobs, £1.5 billion of economic benefit and 600 new homes.

East Bank will be spread across three sites – UCL East (UCL's new campus), Stratford Waterfront (BBC, the V&A including a partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, Sadler's Wells and UAL's London College of Fashion) and Here East (the V&A's new collection and research centre, and an existing space for UCL).

East Bank will build on the area's existing creative credentials, and East Bank partners have been building relationships and delivering projects with the thriving arts, fashion and community organisations based in the area, including the artistic community in Hackney Wick, East London Dance, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Studio Wayne McGregor and many more.

- Since its founding in 1846, the **Smithsonian Institution** has grown into the world's largest museum, education and research complex. It is composed of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoo, and nine research facilities. The Smithsonian is open 364 days a year (except for Christmas Day). There were more than 30 million visits to the museums and National Zoo in 2017. The total number of objects, works of art and

specimens at the Smithsonian is estimated at nearly 155 million. With museums in Washington, D.C. and New York City, as well as research programs and outposts in over 100 countries, the Smithsonian is shaping the future by preserving heritage, discovering new knowledge, engaging and inspiring people, and sharing resources with the world.

- **Diller Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R)** is an interdisciplinary design studio based in New York. The studio has been distinguished with the first MacArthur Foundation fellowship awarded in the field of architecture and TIME's "100 Most Influential People" list. The studio is responsible for two of the largest recent architecture and planning initiatives in New York City: the High Line and the transformation of Lincoln Center's half-century-old performing arts campus.

The studio is currently engaged in two significant cultural projects, scheduled to open in 2019: The Shed, a cultural space that physically transforms to support artists' most ambitious ideas; and the renovation and expansion of The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). In addition to designing the collection and research centre for the V&A, DS+R's current projects in London include the London Centre for Music, a permanent home for the London Symphony Orchestra and a network of parks and riverside spaces spanning 5km in Greenwich Peninsula.

- **Austin-Smith:Lord** is a leading multi-disciplinary design practice, with decades of experience and an impressive track record in successfully delivering high quality projects throughout the UK. The practice has a longstanding passion for arts and culture which is reflected in a distinguished list of completed projects. This portfolio includes internationally renowned museums, galleries and cultural archives providing some of the practice's most rewarding experiences and signature projects.

Operating as a 'creative collective' from studios in London, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow and Liverpool, Austin-Smith:Lord delivers the highest degree of creative thought in architecture, landscape, conservation and urban design. There is an art to being practical. Current and recent art and culture projects include Shakespeare North near Liverpool, the Great Pagoda at Kew Gardens, G-Live Civic Concert Hall in Guildford, the People's History Museum and John Rylands Library and Archive in Manchester, Liverpool Central Library and Archive, the Bluecoat and FACT in Liverpool, Shrewsbury Museum, Leeds Museum and Discovery Centre and Birmingham Royal Ballet.

- **O'Donnell + Tuomey** is a studio-based practice, with offices in Dublin, Cork and London. Committed to the craft and culture of architecture, they have been involved with urban design, cultural, social and educational projects at home and abroad. The practice has an international reputation for its engagement with complex urban situations and sensitive landscapes. They have completed schools and university buildings, theatres and cinemas, community centres and social housing, art galleries and libraries in Ireland, the UK and on the European mainland. Winners of more than 120 awards, recent buildings include the Glucksman Gallery Cork, Timberyards Housing Dublin, Irish Language Centre Derry, Sean O'Casey Community Centre Dublin, Lyric Theatre Belfast, Photographers' Gallery London, LSE Student Centre and the Central European University Budapest. They have exhibited six times at the Venice Architecture Biennale,

with installations which advance their research into the useful beauty and poetic purpose of architecture, exploring areas of overlap with other art forms.

- **Here East** is located at the heart of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London and provides over one million square feet of dedicated and versatile spaces for creative and digital companies. It is designed as a place for start-up entrepreneurial businesses to co-exist and collaborate with global established businesses and support genuine product innovation.

The Here East campus includes shared workspaces and public areas to foster a tight community, with space for discussion and events, a landscaped canalside and artisan cafes, shops and restaurants.

Here East is home to an array of organisations, including Studio Wayne McGregor, UCL/Bartlett School of Architecture and University of Loughborough London, as well as BT Sport, Plexal – a world class innovation centre and Ford's European Smart Mobility Innovation Office. Online luxury fashion retailer MATCHESFASHION.com, UK charity Scope, and video game company Sports Interactive have recently moved to Here East. Here East is being developed by iCITY, a company owned by clients of Delancey, a specialist real estate investment advisory company.



## V&A East: Further Quotes for Publication

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“Our collaboration with the V&A is an important milestone for the Smithsonian. By bringing together the world's largest museum, research, and education complex and the world's largest museum of art, design and performance, we believe we can unite the arts and sciences to tackle some of the most pressing issues of our day. Such a collaboration will create a new type of museum experience for east London and allow us to engage with new audiences in one of the most diverse and dynamic cities in the world.”

**Dr. David Skorton, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution**

“V&A East will be a new model for collection storage and public display. Planned from the inside out, this project will be like stepping into an immersive cabinet of curiosities—a three-dimensional sampling of the eclectic collection of artefacts, programmed with diverse spaces for research, object study, workshops, and back-of-house functions.”

**Elizabeth Diller, Partner, Diller Scofidio + Renfro**

“The new museum is situated at the pivot-point of the East Bank project, a civic space at the crossroads between the public institutions and the residential at the Waterfront. We imagine the building as a freestanding pavilion, closely connected to its surroundings, its faceted form active on all sides, easily accessible from different directions. Inside is a multi-level sequence of gallery spaces, connected by flowing stairs and big elevators, with display galleries and social spaces in between. This vertically-organised museum will open up the diversity of the V&A collection to new audiences – accessible and welcoming, designed from the ground up and from the inside out.”

**Sheila O'Donnell and John Tuomey, Partners, O'Donnell + Tuomey**

“V&A East represents an extraordinary opportunity to open-up the V&A’s collection to all: as a vital sourcebook for infinite creative possibilities, as a place where young people can develop their creative skills and critical thinking, and as a platform to interrogate the ideas of our time through the designed world past and present. To ensure V&A East is rooted in its neighbourhood by the time it opens in 2023, we will continue to build relationships across the Olympic boroughs, and test ideas through conversation and collaborative creative projects. With local people helping shape its vision and programmes, V&A East will be a place for everyone representative of the cultures, communities and creativity of east London and beyond.”

**Catherine Ince, Chief Curator, V&A East**

“Hackney Quest is a long-running youth and community centre serving children, young people and families in the local area. We're excited about the potential for V&A East to reflect and to benefit the local area – it would be fantastic if it can offer a variety of free cultural experiences for local young people, routes into training and employment, and a space that local people can feel a real sense of connection to and ownership over.”

**Luke Billingham, Education Support & Hackney Wick Youth Voice Coordinator, Hackney Quest**

“Since its inception, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park has been a global platform to showcase the very best of the UK. Here East has continued this spirit by curating a community of creative businesses, world-class academics and technology entrepreneurs who are pioneering the future of British business. V&A East will be a perfect partner for the campus, bringing a great British brand to east London and reimagining the way the British public can interact with one of the finest collections in the world.”

**Gavin Poole, CEO, Here East**

“V&A East is one of the most significant developments in London’s cultural landscape. Not only is this a huge opportunity for east London to become the home of world-class collections and research innovation, it is testament to the Olympic Park’s continued ambition to become a vital part of the city’s fabric in terms of arts and culture as well as sport.’

**Paul Goswell, Managing Director, Delancey**