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V&A appoints new Director of Creativity and Skills to lead transformation of the V&A Museum of Childhood

Today, the V&A announces the appointment of Gina Koutsika as the V&A Museum of Childhood's new Director of Creativity and Skills. This newly created position underscores the V&A's commitment to delivering an ambitious reinvention of the museum, with a refocused vision and purpose to champion art and design education and build creative confidence among future generations.

Joining the V&A in May 2019, Koutsika will work closely with local primary school children to realise their mandate for the museum to become the world's most 'joyful' museum. Since 2015, this advisory group of local primary school children have collaborated with the V&A Museum of Childhood on exhibitions, initiatives including Kids Takeover Day – in which children take over operations for the day – and the most recently on the redevelopment of the museum.

Koutsika will be responsible for overall delivery of this ambitious project, working closely with project architects and the curatorial team on the transformation of the gallery spaces including devising immersive exhibitions and displays created with and for children, a significant expansion of the museum's visitor offer including a new café, community library and learning studios, and a refresh of the museum's external landscaping.

Having previously led teams at Kew Gardens, the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum, Tate and Imperial War Museums across Exhibitions, Interpretation, Education, Visitor Experience and Communications, Koutsika brings to the V&A an incredible depth and breadth of sector knowledge. Gina has served on a number of advisory boards and committees and is currently Appointed Governor in the Gateway Academy in Westminster, a Fellow of the Museums Association, a Life Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts and a Museums Association mentor.

Helen Charman, Director of Learning and National Programmes, said: *“Gina joins us at a transformative moment for the V&A Museum of Childhood, and brings a wealth of experience leading teams across major national museums and capital projects. Her background in museum learning, audiences and interpretation is a strong fit for the museum's new remit as it looks to the future as a powerhouse of creativity and design for children, young people and families. We are delighted to be welcoming her to the V&A.”*

Gina Koutsika, said: *“I am thrilled to be joining the V&A Museum of Childhood, and look forward to working with the teams, and our partners and audiences at such an exciting time of transformation. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and look forward to bringing my experience in organisational change and passion for innovative programming to the role of Creative & Skills Director.”*

The V&A Museum of Childhood redevelopment is the V&A’s flagship project for children and their families. It is the latest in a series of major new education initiatives. In April 2017, the V&A announced DesignLab Nation, a national educational initiative to support the Design and Technology GCSE. DesignLab Nation is now in its third year and works with hundreds of young people in five regions across England.

Part of the V&A’s growing family of sites, and one of East London’s most iconic cultural buildings, the V&A Museum of Childhood has been rooted in its local community since its foundation as the Bethnal Green Museum of Science and Arts in 1872.

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For further PRESS information please contact Catherine Poust in the V&A Press Office on 0207 942 2683 or email c.poust@vam.ac.uk

About the V&A Museum of Childhood

The V&A Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green is part of the V&A family of sites and the UK’s National Museum of Childhood. It is the largest institution of its kind in the world and holds in trust the nation’s childhood collections, with a unique story to tell as East London’s first museum. In October 2018, the museum announced plans for a transformative redevelopment project that will enable the much-loved institution to become a world-leading museum of design and creativity for children, families and young people.