



PRESS RELEASE

V&A announces new Curatorial Fellowship in Photography supported by The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation

Issue date: 25 April 2019

vam.ac.uk | @V_and_A | #vamPhotography

Today, the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) announces a new Curatorial Fellowship in Photography. Generously supported by The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation, the fellowship will run for the next four years. The Curatorial Fellowship follows the Foundation's ongoing support of the V&A and its significant donation towards the museum's recently-opened Photography Centre, for which gallery 100 was renamed 'The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Gallery' after the businessman and portrait photographer and his wife.

The first fellowship of its kind in photography at the V&A, the scheme will see two fellows join the museum over consecutive two-year periods. The initiative arises from The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation's desire to give early scholars of photography the opportunity to acquire invaluable museum experience and specialist knowledge working alongside the Photography Section's accomplished curatorial team. Fellows will gain expertise in the history of photography and contribute substantially to the museum's knowledge of its world-renowned collection that includes over 800,000 photographs.

A focus for each fellow will be an independent research project based on the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) collection, which was transferred to the V&A in 2017. Exploring areas of strength such as portraiture, colour photography and photographic process, all themes of interest to Bern Schwartz and the Foundation, each fellow will spend three months in the V&A Research Institute (VARI). Using an accompanying travel fund also provided by The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation, the fellows will also travel nationally and internationally to share their expertise and further their study of the photographic medium.

Applications will open via the V&A website on 25 April and close on 27 May with the first fellow commencing in autumn 2019.

Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A, said: "We are enormously grateful to The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation for their generosity in supporting our Photography Centre and mission to make photography available to the widest possible audience. The V&A is dedicated to inspiring the next generation of creative thinkers. This Curatorial Fellowship in Photography will give emerging curators the chance to deepen their own knowledge and expertise while furthering scholarship around the museum's world-class photography collections."

Michael Schwartz, Chairman of The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation, and Anne Varick Lauder, Senior Advisor, said: "We are delighted to continue supporting the V&A's Photography Section

and its talented team of curators. By directly working with them and the objects in their care, the fellows will gain invaluable on-hands experience essential for furthering their careers in photography. Bern Schwartz was passionate about education and the mentoring experience. His career as a portrait photographer was immeasurably advanced by learning directly from the legendary photographer, Philippe Halsman.”

The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation were the first major funder to support the V&A’s new Photography Centre, which was opened by HRH The Duchess of Cambridge in October 2018. The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Gallery, a refurbished 19th-century picture gallery, is currently host to a major display entitled *Collecting Photography: From Daguerreotype to Digital*, which explores photography as a way of ‘collecting the world’. An extension to the Photography Centre is scheduled to open in 2022 and will expand the V&A’s photography offer further with new and exciting ways for visitors to encounter this diverse and dynamic art form.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

- The first phase of the V&A Photography Centre opened to the public on 12 October 2018. Entrance is FREE.
- The inaugural display *Collecting Photography: From Daguerreotype to Digital* is curated by Martin Barnes, Senior Curator of Photographs; Marta Weiss, Senior Curator of Photographs; and Susanna Brown, Curator of Photographs.
- When not on display, photographs from the V&A’s collection can be viewed in the Prints & Drawings Study Room.
- Digitisation of the collection is ongoing and can be accessed online at collections.vam.ac.uk.

About the V&A photography collection

The V&A holds the National Collection of the Art of Photography. The museum has collected photographs since its foundation in 1852 and continues to collect today. The Royal Photographic Society (RPS) collection was transferred to the V&A by the Science Museum Group in 2017 and was acquired with the generous assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund and Art Fund. The consolidation of these world-class collections is the catalyst for the museum’s new Photography Centre, phase one of which opened on 12 October 2018, with phase two scheduled to open in 2022. The V&A’s collection encompasses the work of leading historic and contemporary photographers as well as publications, cameras and related equipment. When not on display, photographs from the collection can be viewed in the Prints & Drawings Study Room.

vam.ac.uk/collections/photographs

About The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation

Named after the businessman and portrait photographer, Bern Schwartz (1914-1978), The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation seeks to advance public knowledge and appreciation of photography as an art form. To further this purpose, the Foundation sponsors educational projects and initiatives in museums, libraries, schools and universities and donates photographs by Bern Schwartz from its archive. The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation previously supported the V&A’s exhibition on the photographic pioneer Julia Margaret Cameron (November 2015 - February 2016), whose work was first exhibited by the museum in the 1860s, and in 2017, donated Bern Schwartz’s colour photograph (1978) of former V&A

director, Roy Strong Gallery 100 in the new Photography Centre is now known as The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Gallery following the Foundation's major support of the project.

bernschwartz.org

[@bernschwartzfamilyfoundation](https://twitter.com/bernschwartzfamilyfoundation)

About V&A FuturePlan

FuturePlan is an ambitious programme of development which is transforming the V&A. The best contemporary designers are creating exciting new galleries and visitor facilities, while revealing and restoring the beauty of the original building. In the past 15 years, over 85% of the museum's public spaces have been transformed, improving access and allowing the collections to be more elegantly and intelligently displayed. By introducing bold new architectural interventions, FuturePlan aims to delight and to inspire visitors, and to continue the museum's tradition of championing new talent.

vam.ac.uk/info/futureplan

For further PRESS information about the V&A's photography collection and Photography Centre, please contact Laura Mitchell in the V&A press office on +44 (0) 20 3949 4509 or email l.mitchell@vam.ac.uk (not for publication).

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