



## News Release

### **V&A marks record year of expansion as highlights from the 2020 exhibition programme are announced**

Wednesday 10 July 2019: Today, the V&A Chairman Nicholas Coleridge and Director Tristram Hunt announced highlights from the 2018-19 Annual Review, alongside the V&A's ambitious 2020 public programme, which includes major exhibitions on Alice in Wonderland, the cultural history of Iran and fashion icon – the kimono.

2018-19 proved an impressive year of transformation and expansion as the vision for the V&A's growing family of sites continued to be realised. V&A Dundee opened to critical acclaim, achieving its first-year visitor target in six months and receiving a nomination for the prestigious Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019.

The V&A's new future in east London came off the drawing board, as significant milestones were achieved for V&A East opening in 2023, and the V&A Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green, relaunching as the "world's most joyful museum" for children and young people in 2022.

Comprising two new sites in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, V&A East will include a new museum featuring a partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, and a ground-breaking collection and research centre that will revolutionise access to the V&A's collections. V&A East broke ground on 2 July 2019 and progress continues apace at V&A Museum of Childhood with co-design consultations continuing with the local community.

A year of critically-acclaimed exhibitions, including the sell-out *Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up*, and *Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams*, alongside experimental *Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt* helped to sustain visitor figures of 4.3 million across V&A sites in London, just shy of the record-breaking figures in 2017-18. Two of the V&A's most significant FuturePlan initiatives in recent years also drew crowds: the eight-year restoration of the V&A's iconic Cast Courts and the opening of the new V&A Photography Centre, which doubled display space dedicated to the medium.

**Dr Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A, said:** *'2018-19 has been a transformational year – one that lays the groundwork for a period of significant growth over the next four years, alongside an increasing focus on art and design education. Pioneering a revolutionary approach to collections management alongside an ambitious programme of exhibitions and events for all ages, our vision for the V&A family of sites will build on the rich history of east London and reinvent how the world's leading collection of art, design and performance will be enjoyed for years to come.'*

### Further 2018-19 highlights:

- HRH The Duchess of Cambridge became the V&A's Royal Patron, opening the V&A Photography Centre and V&A Dundee
- 1.1 million people visited V&A touring exhibitions across 15 cities worldwide – the highest figure for three years
- 4,293,188 people visited V&A South Kensington, Blythe House and the V&A Museum of Childhood. Over 680,000 have visited V&A Dundee since it opened last September
- 3,070 V&A objects went on loan to 231 venues across the country – more venues than any other national museum
- Expansion of national education initiatives: after a successful pilot year in Coventry and Blackburn, DesignLab Nation expanded to Stoke on Trent, Sheffield and Sunderland, followed in May 2019 by the launch of the V&A's new national schools' initiative, *V&A Innovate*. In November 2019, the V&A will also host a conference dedicated to 'Learning through Play'
- Highlight acquisitions included 63 photographs from the Linda McCartney Archive, Salvador Dali's *Mae West Lips sofa* (1937-38) and a joint acquisition with National Galleries of Scotland of Antonio Zucchi's *Portrait of John Adam with the Capital of the Britannic Order* (1763). The V&A also made its born-digital photography acquisition, *171 Clouds from the V&A Online Collection, 1630-1885*, by Penelope Umbrico
- A public call-out for lost garments designed by Mary Quant received over 1,000 submissions: 50 objects of which were exhibited as part of her current retrospective, and 35 acquired for the V&A's fashion collections

The V&A's commitment to expanding its national reach was reaffirmed as plans were unveiled for two significant partnerships with museums based outside London. Following the successful Art Fund campaign in 2014 to save the 80,000-strong Wedgwood Collection for the nation, the V&A announced plans today to appoint a Chief Curator at World of Wedgwood, responsible for shaping the direction of the Wedgwood Museum and increasing access to this world-class collection for research and education.

A multi-year curatorial partnership with the Blackpool Museum Project came to fruition as Blackpool Council were awarded £4 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Blackpool's first museum will open in 2021 and the V&A will be the largest lender, loaning highlight objects from its Theatre & Performance collections revealing Blackpool's impact on British entertainment and popular culture.

Forthcoming programme highlights were also announced today. The 2020 exhibitions include:

- An immersive exploration of the global phenomenon of *Alice in Wonderland*
- The UK's first major exhibition in 90 years exploring 5,000 years of art, design and culture in Iran
- A celebration of the kimono as a dynamic and constantly evolving icon of fashion
- The V&A's popular *Mary Quant* retrospective will tour to V&A Dundee in Spring 2020, followed by *Night Fever*, a show on nightclub design from the Vitra Design Museum

To mark the 500th anniversary of Raphael's death, the V&A will embark on a refurbishment of The Raphael Court in 2020, part of the V&A's FuturePlan programme. The Court is home to the Raphael Cartoons, seven full-scale designs for tapestry painted by Raphael (1483 – 1520) and considered one of the greatest treasures of the Renaissance, loaned from the Royal Collection

by Her Majesty The Queen. The Cartoons were first loaned by Queen Victoria in 1865, in memory of Prince Albert. A research project will take place in August 2019 to produce HD imagery of the Cartoons, revealing in-depth stories about these iconic objects within the renovated space in late 2020.

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#### **V&A South Kensington 2020 Exhibition Programme**

- *Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk* (29 February – 21 June 2020)
- *Bags!* (25 April 2020 – 3 January 2021)
- *Renaissance Watercolours: from Dürer to Van Dyck* (16 May – 20 September 2020)
- *Alice in Wonderland* (27 June 2020 – 10 January 2021)
- *Epic Iran* (17 October 2020 – 4 April 2021)

#### **V&A Dundee 2020 Exhibition Programme**

- *Mary Quant* (4 April – 6 September 2020)
- *Night Fever: Designing Club Culture* (31 October 2020 – 14 February 2021)

#### **V&A Museum of Childhood transformation**

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.

#### **V&A East**

Concept designs for two venues were revealed in November 2018 including a new museum in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park housing a world-first partnership with the **Smithsonian Institution**, designed by **O'Donnell + Tuomey**, the UK's first open-access collections centre, masterminded by architects **Diller Scofidio + Renfro**.

The next four years will see the museum's largest collections move since World War II, as over 250,000 objects, 1,000 archive collections and 350,000 library books move to east London.

#### **V&A FuturePlan**

In the last 15 years, 85% of the V&A's galleries and public spaces have been transformed through the FuturePlan capital development programme. The refurbishment of The Raphael Court follows the opening of the V&A Photography Centre and Cast Courts in 2018.

#### **V&A Innovate**

In March 2019, V&A announced details of a new flagship education initiative, *V&A Innovate*, designed to support the teaching of D&T curriculum throughout schools in England. Encompassing a National Schools Challenge and new KS3 teaching hub available, it is designed to unlock the creative potential of the next generation of designers, makers and creatives – returning to the V&A's founding mission of 'a schoolroom for everyone'.

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