

News Release
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Limited-Edition Ed Sheeran Heinz Tomato Ketchup Bottle acquired by V&A

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Today, the V&A announces that it has acquired a bottle of 'Ed Sheeran x Heinz Tomato Ketchup, the Tattoo Edition', a limited-edition ketchup bottle inspired by musician Ed Sheeran's tattoo of the condiment's label. Donated by Heinz, the bottle is now on display in our iconic Theatre & Performance gallery that looks to explore the role of music and performance on the contemporary world.

Celebrating their 150th birthday in 2019, Heinz produced 150 of the limited-edition glass bottles, personally signed by Sheeran, complete with his tattoo of the condiment's label, tattoo sleeve, and a bespoke amplifier case. Three bottles were auctioned, but most of the 150 bottles were given away or sold to raise money for charity.

Internationally-renowned musician Ed Sheeran is Heinz Tomato Ketchup's self-confessed 'biggest fan'. Earlier in 2019 following a social media post by the musician, Ed collaborated with the much-loved sauce to produce his own 'Heinz Tomato Edchup', which was available to buy in shops, and he wrote and starred in a TV advert to celebrate the condiment.

This specially designed bottle is a rare opportunity to document the growing impact of social media on art, design and performance, and the spread of tattooing into mainstream design in the UK. Across the V&A's varied collections, acquisitions – including Beyoncé's Papillon Ring by Glenn Spiro, and a Madness newspaper suit – highlight the role of contemporary musicians and celebrity culture, and how it impacts our daily lives, from fashion to music, and now all the way to condiments.

Ramona Riedzewski, Head of Collections Management at the V&A, said, *"The iconic glass Heinz Ketchup bottle is a familiar sight across the world. This limited-edition design, based on Ed Sheeran's tattoos brings together many layers of art, design and performance enabling us to explore the modern-day world of celebrity culture, product endorsement and design, performers*

and the role of social media. It is a wonderful object to question the role of museums and what we collect, and is a powerful example of an open dialogue created through social media.”

The V&A is home to the UK’s national collection of theatre and performing arts related materials, from theatre and ballet to opera, musicals and rock and pop. Founded in 1924, the collection includes set models, designs, stage props, costumes, original posters, paintings and photographs, representing live performance in Britain over the last 350 years. The ketchup bottle joins a number of food-related souvenirs in the collection that are connected to well-known individuals – including a cruet set featuring famous Clown Joseph Grimaldi, a Charlie Chaplin toby jug, and a lunchbox featuring lyrics from the Royal Shakespeare Company’s *Matilda the Musical*.

The acquisition also celebrates the closing weeks of the V&A’s major exhibition *FOOD: Bigger than the Plate* – running until 20 October 2019 – which explores how innovative individuals, communities and organisations are radically re-inventing how we grow, distribute and experience food.

-ENDS-

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