



PRESS RELEASE

Issue Date: Friday 12 August 2022

JA Projects, A Practice for Everyday Life and Larry Achiampong join forces to win V&A East Museum's *Why We Make* galleries design competition – opening in 2025



Today, V&A East announces that a collaborative team comprising **JA Projects led by Jayden Ali, graphic design studio A Practice for Everyday Life, and artist Larry Achiampong** have won the competition to design V&A East Museum's *Why We Make* galleries. Located across two floors, the galleries will explore global creativity and making through a contemporary lens. Bringing together over 500 objects from the V&A's collections spanning 5,000 years of art, design, and performance, the galleries will celebrate the joy and transformative potential of art, design and making. V&A East Museum will open in 2025, as part of East Bank, the Mayor of London's new cultural quarter in Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The team impressed the selection panel with their coherent, dynamic, and captivating concept designs that showed their thoughtful approach to sustainable materials and local production and a deep understanding of east London. At the heart of their proposal is a commitment to increasing representation and creating tangible opportunities for young people through the design process, supporting our ambition to create a museum for 16- to 24-year-olds representative of the four Olympic boroughs (Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest).

The selection panel also applauded the team's ability to balance bold and immersive visitor experiences alongside quieter opportunities for contemplation. The proposals took an audience-first approach, bolstered by the inclusion of artist Larry Achiampong as an integral part of the team. Achiampong, whose work seeks to foreground marginalised identities and perspectives, will guide their approach, ensuring that multiple voices are heard and amplified throughout the design process – a core part of the original brief.

Claire McKeown, V&A East Project Director, says: *"JA Projects, A Practice for Everyday Life and Larry Achiampong's response to our Why We Make galleries design brief was fantastic. Their passion for east London and to create inclusive spaces, take an audience-first approach, and embed sustainability within every step of their design process shone through. We're thrilled to have a team that includes an exciting emerging architecture practice, established 2D design talent and a thought-provoking artist. We can't wait for them to challenge us with new approaches to museum display and ensure we're putting the needs of our audiences first to create spaces where everyone feels welcome at V&A East Museum."*

Jayden Ali, Founding Director, JA Projects, said: *“We wanted to be part of a bold and ambitious project that seeks to dismantle historic barriers and foster new communities, and to contribute to V&A East’s mission to amplify the voices of the artists, designers and makers that have been overlooked by history. At the heart of our proposal for V&A East Museum’s Why We Make galleries is a vision of the museum as ‘a museum between cultures’ – a framing that honours the V&A’s heritage of presenting crafted narratives from across the globe, and also encapsulates the diversity of the four boroughs surrounding the Olympic Park. East London means home for every member of our team. Larry Achiampong and I grew up together in Bethnal Green and the A Practice for Everyday Life studio is located there. We’re honoured to contribute to east London, the place of our grandparents, parents, children and friends.”*

JA Projects, A Practice for Everyday Life and Larry Achiampong’s winning design scheme was selected from a strong shortlist of collaborative teams that included **Citizens Design Bureau with Hayatsu Architects, Neba Sere and Rose Nordin; Freehaus x IDK + Bergini; OMMX with HATO; and Studio C102 + Mobile Studio Architects + Manijeh Verghese with Sthuthi Ramesh.**

Active and continued consultation is key to the development of V&A East, as is creating opportunities for young people within the creative industries. Two members from the V&A East Youth Collective – a rolling annual paid opportunity for young east Londoners to help shape V&A East – sat on the design-making panel to appoint the winning team. The V&A East Youth Collective will work with the design team to review ideas and provide continued consultation and collaboration at key stages throughout the project, giving them the opportunity to gain valuable insight into the design sector and creative process.

About V&A East Museum’s Why We Make Galleries

V&A East Museum’s *Why We Make* galleries avoid traditional art historical chronologies and stylistic groupings to tell stories across time and geography and expand the traditional canons by championing global, diverse and previously marginalised narratives. Tuned to the major issues of our time, the galleries also explore how creative practitioners past and present give purpose to their work to change the world for the better and include inspirational and innovative objects, from born-digital works to those tackling the climate crisis, artworks about health and wellbeing and design projects addressing inequality and social injustice.

The gallery experience is sub-divided into 10 complementary thematic sections, each presented as a series of constellation-like displays that juxtapose diverse practitioners and objects around shared themes and agendas. Sections will include **‘Our Place in the World’**, **‘Building Creative Communities’** and **‘Rethinking Systems’**. **‘Our Place in the World’**, explores powerful stories of shaping and communicating personal identity. Focusing on topical agendas around representation, identity politics, and planetary consciousness, this section explores different forms of visual representation and how these empower creators and communities. Objects on display range from **Kehinde Wiley’s** oil on canvas, *Portrait of Melissa Thompson*, 2020, to Sofonisba Anguissola’s *Self-portrait miniature*, around 1550 to 1620, **Maud Sulter’s** ‘Urania (Portrait of Lubaina Himid)’ from the series *Zabat*, 1989, **Molly Goddard’s** *Daria* dress, 2019, and a **Daoist robe** dating from the 1800s, among others.

V&A East Museum’s galleries will also have a Film Room, a dedicated, immersive space for a changing programme of screenings of film works resonating with the *Why We Make* gallery themes, as well as a series of co-curated displays, and an annual, changing programme that

invites contemporary practitioners to select V&A collection objects for display and to showcase their own creative practice. Alongside object displays, the *Why We Make* galleries will be dynamic, animated and welcoming social spaces, and host a constantly changing in-gallery programme including pop-up events, performances and resident practitioners, aiming to spark conversation, respond to topical events and encourage repeat visits.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

For further PRESS information about V&A East, please contact Laura Mitchell on l.mitchell@vam.ac.uk / 020 3949 4509 (not for publication). A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from pressimages.vam.ac.uk.

About V&A East Museum

The V&A East Museum building is designed by award winning architects O'Donnell & Tuomey and will open in 2025 at the heart of the Mayor of London's East Bank development in Stratford, alongside UAL's London College of Fashion, Sadler's Wells, the BBC and UCL. V&A East Museum will champion global creativity and the big issues facing society today. It will feature free collection galleries alongside ticketed temporary exhibitions and contemporary programming that aims to inspire the next generation of creatives. Two retail spaces, a café, creative studio, and top-floor project space will sit alongside object displays woven throughout the museum's public circulation spaces.

About V&A East

One of the UK's most significant new museum projects V&A East celebrates global creativity and builds on the V&A's long-standing heritage in east London and founding mission to make the arts accessible to all. Currently under construction in Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, V&A East encompasses two new sites – V&A East Storehouse opening at Here East in 2024, and V&A East Museum opening on Stratford Waterfront in 2025. Underpinned by values of equity, empathy, openness and sustainability, V&A East is committed to creating opportunities for young people and fostering the next generation of creatives. Across its two sites, V&A East will celebrate making, highlight under-represented movements and voices, advance cultural conversations, and support the creation of new work, with its collections and buildings acting as a catalyst and studio space to platform new ideas. V&A East is part of East Bank, the Mayor of London's £1.1 billion Olympic legacy project, which will create a new arts, innovation and education hub in Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.
vam.ac.uk/east

About JA Projects

Founded by architect Jayden Ali, JA Projects is a multidisciplinary practice working at the intersection of architecture, urban strategy, art and performance. Aiming to enrich public spaces and inspire the communities that use them, the practice's recent and ongoing projects include a series of interventions on London's Low Line, a walking route connecting Bankside's historic railway architecture; leading a team transforming key areas of Camberwell Station Road on behalf of Southwark Council; and working on the £8 billion Thamesmead Waterfront development. Alongside its work on the urban landscape, the studio pursues its interest in the performative and cultural life of cities through the design and curation of experiences and exhibitions.

ja-projects.com

About A Practice for Everyday Life

A Practice for Everyday Life is a graphic design studio based in London. Our work includes art direction, identities, publications, exhibitions, type design, signage, packaging, and digital. We have built a reputation as an internationally renowned and sought-after collaborator through our work with like-minded companies, galleries, institutions and individuals, and we work with a conceptual rigour that ensures each design is meaningful and original.

The APFEL Type Foundry publishes a growing library of typefaces developed through visual, textual and experiential research. The Foundry also offers a bespoke type design service, through which the studio accepts commissions for typeface design, logotype design and custom cuts of APFEL typefaces for context-specific use. The APFEL Shop offers products, publications and prints available through our store.
appracticeforeverydaylife.com

About Larry Achiampong

Larry Achiampong (b. 1984, London) has exhibited, performed and presented projects within the UK and internationally. Achiampong is a recipient of the Stanley Picker Fellowship (2020), the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Award for Artists (2019) and he is a Jarman Award nominated artist (2018 & 2021). Recent projects include commissions with The Line, London; De la Warr Pavilion; the Liverpool Biennial 2021 and Art on the Underground, Roundel designs for TfL Westminster, London (2019). Recent solo exhibitions include *Relic Traveller: Where You and I Come From, We Know That We Are Not Here Forever*, Phi Foundation for Contemporary Art, Montreal (2021); *Beyond the Substrata*, curated by Norman Rosenthal, Copperfield Gallery at Frieze Focus, 12 Piccadilly Arcade, London (2020); *When the Sky Falls*, John Hansard Gallery, Southampton (2020); *Pan African Flag For The Relic Travellers Alliance & Relic Traveller*, Phase 1, 019, Ghent (2019); *Dividednation*, Primary, Nottingham (2019). Achiampong currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts). He completed a BA in Mixed Media Fine Art at University of Westminster in 2005 and an MA in Sculpture at The Slade School of Fine Art in 2008.
larryachiampong.co.uk

Image credit: *Early concept design for Our Place In The World section of V&A East Museum's Why We Make Galleries* © JA Projects. Image courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London