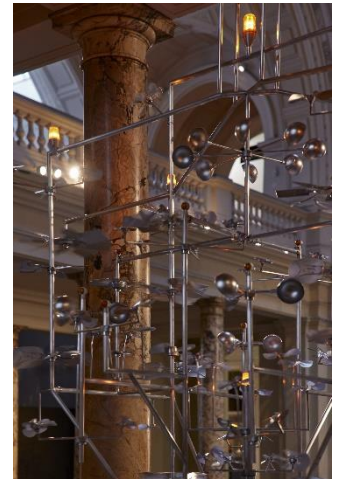
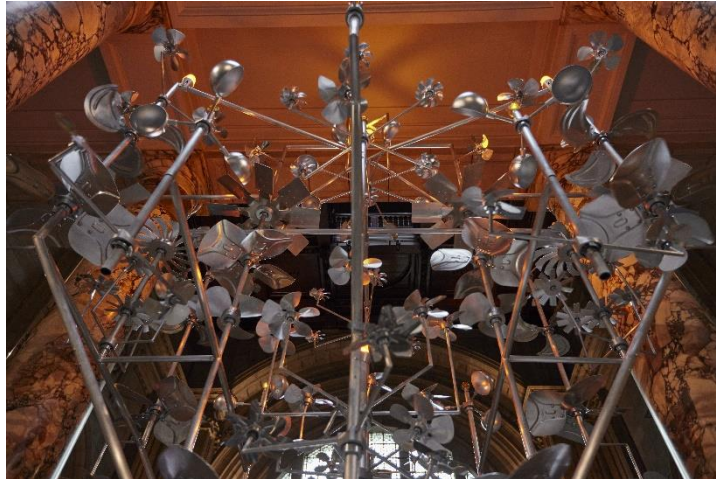


Press Release
27 November 2022

V&A unveils 2023 Christmas Tree installation inspired by festive skies, designed by Isabel + Helen



Today the V&A unveils an enchanting and unique Christmas tree installation designed by creative duo Isabel Gibson and Helen Chesner (Isabel + Helen). Titled *Power Plant*, this year's commission reflects the V&A's historic championing of innovative and dynamic design, with an installation that marries the industrial and the festive.

Standing at over 4 metres in V&A South Kensington's grand Cromwell Road Entrance, this captivating reimagining of the traditional Christmas tree celebrates the festive season through light and movement. Inspired by the night sky and the orbital paths of planets, satellites, and stars, the installation presents an intricate system of rotating wind-powered turbines that collectively power numerous lights that sit within the structure.

The installation consists of fans, propellers, and lights of different shapes and sizes, supported by an industrial skeleton. Through the delicate interplay of these components, a balanced formation is created, transferring wind energy into light through a chain reaction of movement. The harmonious interaction of wind, movement, and light creates an ever-changing and hypnotic installation that sparks joy and optimism.

Meneesha Kellay, V&A Senior Curator, Contemporary said: *"We are thrilled to commission Isabel + Helen for this year's V&A Christmas tree installation inspired by the dark winter sky. Through this monumental yet delicate installation, Isabel + Helen have turned functional, everyday objects such as oven and computer fans into an improbable spectacle to delight and intrigue this festive season."*

Isabel + Helen said: *"Growing up we both had a carousel Christmas decoration which was the centrepiece of the festive table. As you lit 4 candles at the base of the carousel, heat would rise up and power the propeller above, causing it to rotate and in turn angels would spin around the flames,*

glinting in the candlelight. A simple mechanism but completely mesmerising. We wanted to capture this hypnotic transfer of energy through our V&A installation."

Isabel + Helen's practice centres on a love of analogue design processes and understated kinetics. Since 2015, they have gained widespread recognition for their experimental, engineered installations and animated sculptures, which hover at the intersection of art and design. Through their imaginative and explorative use of movement, materials, and mechanisms, the duo creates new ways to tell visual stories, simplifying often complex ideas and ambitions and translating them into something more readable and relatable. Isabel + Helen have created works for Dior, Hermès, Moncler, Bottega Veneta, and many others, and in 2021 held their first solo exhibition, *In Orbit*, at the Saatchi Gallery.

[@isabelandhelen](#)

[Isabel + Helen](#)

- ENDS -

For further PRESS information about the V&A Christmas Tree installation, please contact the V&A Press Office on press.office@vam.ac.uk / +44 (0)207 942 2502 (not for publication). A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from <https://vam.app.box.com/v/pressimages>.

Notes to Editors

- Every year to celebrate the festive period, the V&A commissions a designer to create a Christmas tree for V&A South Kensington's Grand Entrance. These unique installations range from lavishly decorated real trees to hand-crafted twists on the tradition. Previous designers include Alexander McQueen, Es Devlin, and Jasper Conran.
- The Christmas Tree installation will be on display in V&A South Kensington's Cromwell Road Entrance from 27 November 2023 – 7 January 2024
- The V&A Christmas tree installation is commissioned by the V&A Contemporary Programmes team, who are responsible for curating live events such as V&A Friday Lates. The Contemporary Programmes support emerging creatives through commissioning installation and performances showcasing rising art and design talent from around the world.
- Isabel + Helen's *Power Suits*, a collection of wearable generators that transfer wind energy into light through the movement of the body, were showcased at V&A South Kensington's Friday Late in September 2023. *Power Plant* is a continuation of this exploration of movement and energy transfer.

Social Media

X: @V_and_A

Instagram: @vamuseum

Facebook: @victoriaandalbertmuseum

Tiktok: @vamuseum