

News Release


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Ground-breaking V&A East Storehouse opens to the public on Saturday 31 May

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- For the first time, visitors can step inside **V&A East Storehouse** – the V&A’s unique museum experience and busy working store designed by architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro
- Visitors can now get closer to their national collections than ever before through the V&A’s radical new **Order and Object** experience – now live
- Over **1,000 objects ordered so far** – with the most-ordered object a 1954 **Balenciaga** evening dress
- The largest **Pablo Picasso** work in the world – the rarely displayed **Ballets Russes *Le Train Bleu* stage cloth** – is now display for the first time in over a decade alongside a series of monumental objects from architect **Frank Lloyd Wright’s 1930s Kaufmann Office** to the **15th century Spanish Torrijos Ceiling**

On Saturday 31 May 2025, the V&A’s new working store and visitor attraction, **V&A East Storehouse**, opens its doors to the public for the first time following 10 years of planning and extensive audience consultation, with input from V&A East’s Youth Collective. Designed by world-renowned architects **Diller, Scofidio + Renfro**, it opens as part of East Bank, the new cultural quarter in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park supported by the Mayor of London.

A ground-breaking new museum experience spanning four levels, and at 16,000m² – bigger than 30+ basketball courts – V&A East Storehouse takes over a large section of the former London 2012 Olympics Media and Broadcast Centre (now Here East). It is a new purpose-built home for over 250,000 objects, 350,000 books and 1,000 Archives.

A world-first in size, scale and ambition, and new source of inspiration for all, V&A East Storehouse immerses visitors in over **half a million works** spanning every creative discipline from **fashion to theatre, streetwear to sculpture, design icons to pop pioneers**. A busy and dynamic **working museum store** with an **extensive self-guided experience**, visitors can now get up-close to their national collections on a scale and in ways not possible before.

Tim Reeve, Deputy Director and COO, V&A, who developed the concept for V&A East Storehouse, said: “V&A East Storehouse is a completely new cultural experience and backstage pass to the V&A, transforming how people can access their national collections on a scale unimaginable until now. From conservation and how we care for our collections and cultural heritage around the world, to the artistry of our Museum Technicians and new research – there’s so much to discover. I hope our

visitors enjoy finding their creative inspiration and immersing themselves in the full theatre and wonder of the V&A as a dynamic working museum."

Order an Object

Through the V&A's radical new **Order an Object** service, anyone can now book to access any object at V&A East Storehouse, for free, seven-days-a-week. From **Mid-Century furniture** to **ancient Egyptian shoes** and **Roman frescoes**, an **early 14th century Simone Martini painting**, **Leigh Bowery costumes**, **Althea McNish fabrics**, **vintage band t-shirts** and **performance posters**, and **avant-garde fashion and couture** from **Balenciaga**, **Schiaparelli**, **Comme des Garçons**, **Issey Miyake** and **Vivienne Westwood**, there's something for everyone to explore.

Since going live on 13 May, over **250 appointments** have been booked to see over **1,000 objects** from **14th century and contemporary ceramics** to a **17th century carpet from Iran**, **1930s wedding dresses** and **Julia Margaret Cameron photographs**. So far, the most popular item ordered is a **1954 pink silk taffeta evening dress by Cristóbal Balenciaga**.

***Elizabeth Diller, Founding Partner, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, the firm that designed the architecture for V&A East Storehouse, said:** "To celebrate the heterogeneity of the V&A's collection of collections—spanning a broad variety of mediums, scales, and historical periods—visitors will experience a sense of being immersed in a vast Cabinet of Curiosities. The Collections Hall invites visitors to explore pre-curated works surrounding them, not according to conventional curatorial logics or standard storage taxonomies, but guided instead by their own curiosities. It has been a joy to work with the V&A's curators and conservators in creating this new kind of institution: neither warehouse nor museum, but rather a hybrid shared by staff and the public with expanded opportunities for access and exchange."*

***Museums Minister, Sir Chris Bryant said:** "It's great to see the V&A innovating in this way – V&A East Storehouse makes it possible for everyone to delve into a massive treasure trove of art, design and performance history in ways never seen before."*

***The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said:** "V&A East Storehouse is a brand-new, groundbreaking museum experience in East Bank, London's new educational and cultural district, that will revolutionise access to the world's leading collection of art, design and performance. I'm proud to be supporting this landmark project, which will allow Londoners and visitors to go behind the scenes for the first time ever and explore some incredible treasures, from Roman artefacts and modern-day music archives to the largest Picasso work in the world, all for free. It's the next building to open at East Bank and marks a hugely significant moment in our work to create the most ambitious cultural development in decades, helping us to ensure London stays the creative capital of the world."*

The Weston Collections Hall

From the moment they emerge into the central Weston Collections Hall, visitors will be captivated by stunning vistas across all levels, surrounded by a cross-section of the V&A's collections. Spanning **ancient Buddhist sculpture** to **PJ Harvey's guitar**, paintings by **Angelica Kauffman's circle**, **costumes worn by Vivien Leigh**, works by **Sir Frank Bowling** and **Hew Locke**, items from the **Glastonbury Music Festival**, **Suffragette scarves**, **vintage football shirts**, **Thomas Heatherwick's model for the London 2012 Olympic Cauldron** and **road signs designed by Margaret Calvert**, visitors can take their own path through over 100 mini curated displays hacked into the ends and sides of the storage racking.

From Robin Hood Gardens to the largest Picasso work in the world



Six large-scale objects anchor the space, on display for the first time in decades. Highlights include the **1930s Kaufmann Office**, the **only complete Frank Lloyd Wright interior outside of the US**, an exquisite **15th century carved and gilded wooden ceiling** from the now lost Torrijos Palace in Spain, and a full-scale 20th century **Frankfurt Kitchen designed by Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky**.

Also on show is a building section from **Robin Hood Gardens**, a former residential estate in east London, the **17th century Agra Colonnade**, an extraordinary example of Mughal architecture from the bathhouse at the fort of Agra, and the **largest Picasso work in the world** – a monumental **Ballets Russes *Le Train Bleu* theatre stage cloth**. At 10 metres high and 11 metres wide, the Picasso-signed stage cloth has been rarely seen since its debut in 1924. It is on display in the new David and Molly Lowell Borthwick Gallery of epic proportions, built to show the V&A's striking collection of large-scale textiles and theatre stage cloths on rotation.

These large objects are brought further to life with a series of co-production projects in collaboration with young east Londoners, communities, and creatives, highlighting multiple new voices and perspectives across the space, including oral histories, new films, publications and artworks in response.

V&A East Storehouse is the first of V&A East's two new cultural destinations to open in east London. The second, V&A East Museum, is scheduled to open in spring 2026, and celebrates making and creativity's power to bring change. Created with young people and rooted in east London's heritage, V&A East Museum spotlights the people, ideas and creativity shaping global culture right now.

-ENDS-

For further PRESS information about V&A East, please contact Laura Mitchell, l.mitchell@vam.ac.uk + Abigail Francis, a.francis@vam.ac.uk / 020 7942 2502 (not for publication).

For the full press pack, please see: <https://vam.box.com/s/t65oztyko2p65xt62qy3t2284uk2krkp>

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

Supporters

V&A East Storehouse opens on 31 May 2025, and is supported by Garfield Weston Foundation, The Foyle Foundation, Frédéric Jousset, David and Molly Lowell Borthwick, the Wolfson Foundation, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, Clore Duffield Foundation and many other generous supporters.

Opening on 13 September 2025, V&A East Storehouse's free to access The David Bowie Centre will be the new home of David Bowie's Archive, made possible thanks to the David Bowie Estate and a generous donation from the Blavatnik Family Foundation and Warner Music Group.

About V&A East Storehouse

- Diller Scofidio + Renfro are lead architects for V&A East Storehouse, with support from local architects, Austin-Smith:Lord. IDK are the designers of The David Bowie Centre. Fieldwork Facility are the wayfinding and interpretation designers. We Not I are the external signage designers.
- V&A East Storehouse is open 10:00-18:00, seven-days-a-week, with late night openings every Thursday and Saturday to 22:00. Late nights include access to the V&A's revolutionary



new Order an Object service, curated self-guided experience and displays, special events, and café, e5 Storehouse.

- Visitors can order any object at V&A East Storehouse at a time that suits them via the V&A's [Order an Object page](#).
- Access to archival collections and National Art Library items stored at V&A East Storehouse can be arranged by appointment through the archive and library enquiry service.
- V&A East Storehouse's first onsite live event, back2back: Archival Bodies, supported by the Terra Foundation for American Art, takes place on 7 June, and new programming strand, A Life in the Work of Others – featuring Turner Prize-winning artist, Jasleen Kaur, launches 26 June.
- Access to the David Bowie Archive will begin once the David Bowie Centre opens from 13 September 2025. More details on bookings to go live in the summer.

About East Bank

- East Bank is the UK's newest cultural quarter at the heart of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The place where everything happens – entertainment, inspiration and discovery – and open to everyone who visits, lives and works in East London.
- East Bank represents the biggest ever cultural investment by the Mayor of London, with support from HM Government and the four Olympic boroughs.
- East Bank is made up of BBC Music Studios; London College of Fashion, UAL; Sadler's Wells East; UCL (University College London); V&A East Museum & Storehouse.
- London College of Fashion, UAL, and UCL East (University College London) opened the doors of their new campuses in Autumn 2023 and Sadler's Wells East opened in February 2025. V&A East Storehouse opens on 31 May 2025, V&A East Museum is scheduled to open in spring 2026, and BBC Music Studios in late 2026/early 2027.
- A powerhouse for innovation, creativity and learning in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, East Bank is rooted in the diverse communities of East London and is a reflection of the creative spirit and the legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

