



## News Release

### YouTube enters V&A collection

YouTube is entering the V&A's collection with a landmark acquisition - a reconstruction of an early YouTube watch page, featuring the first video ever uploaded to the site: Jawed Karim's *Me at the zoo*. This addition brings a vital piece of internet history into broader dialogue with the museum's contemporary design holdings and advances how the V&A collects digital.

The acquisition will be on display in the *Design 1900-Now* gallery at V&A South Kensington from 18 February, which explores how design reflects and shapes the way we live, work, travel and communicate. Visitors will be able to see a recording of the YouTube page playing 'Me at the zoo' as they would have done 20 years ago. This process of reconstruction will also be explored in a mini display at V&A East Storehouse.

The video shows then 25-year-old YouTube co-founder Jawed Karim at San Diego Zoo talking about elephants. The 19-second clip has been viewed nearly 380 million times and received over 18 million likes since first posted to the platform on 23 April 2005. Filmed on a low-resolution digital camera, this first ever upload is widely considered a foundational moment in the rise of user-generated content, enabling new modes of public self-expression and changes to how media is created and consumed.

Over the past 18 months, the V&A's curators and digital conservation team have worked with YouTube's User Experience team and interaction design studio oio to rebuild the design and experience of the platform from 8 December 2006 – the oldest timestamp documented online via The Internet Archive, a non-profit that stewards the history of the internet.

The reconstructed watch page marks an early example of User Interface design conventions, such as badges, rating buttons, sharing and recommendation features - features which continue to shape the internet today.

The YouTube acquisition builds upon the V&A's longstanding commitment to collecting and preserving digital design. Previous digital acquisitions include WeChat, Flappy Bird, EUKI, and the design for the mosquito emoji. More detail about the digital conservation process behind the YouTube acquisition can be found [here](#).

**Corinna Gardner, Senior Curator of Design and Digital, V&A, said:** *"This snapshot of YouTube during the early days of web 2.0 marks an important moment in history of the internet and digital design. The acquisition opens new storytelling opportunities for us to showcase and explore the ways in which the internet has shaped our world, from the birth of mainstream video sharing platforms through to today's hyper visual world and"*

*the media and creator economy that go with it. In addition, the ability to work with YouTube to bring the early watch page into the collection, has enabled us to forge new ground in how we collect and preserve complex digital objects for the future.”*

**Neal Mohan, YouTube CEO, said:** “*It’s wonderful to see “Me at the Zoo” join the Victoria & Albert Museum’s collection. What started as a simple 19-second moment of self-expression became a new way for people to share their stories with the world. By reconstructing an early watch page, we aren’t just showing a video; we are inviting the public to step back in time to the beginning of a global, cultural phenomenon. It is a proud moment to see this piece of digital history housed in the V&A where we hope it will inspire generations to come.”*

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#### **About the V&A**

The V&A is a family of museums dedicated to the power of creativity. Our mission is to champion design and creativity in all its forms, advance cultural knowledge, and inspire makers, creators and innovators everywhere. We share a 5,000-year-old story of creativity through exhibitions, events, educational programmes, digital experiences, conservation, research, and an ever-evolving national collection of over 2.8m objects spanning every creative discipline. **V&A South Kensington** is a world of extraordinary global creativity, set in one of London’s most iconic buildings, with a collection spanning 5,000 years, and unmissable exhibitions and experiences for all. **V&A East Storehouse** has been created to provide unprecedented access to the V&A collections and archives. A unique new museum experience invites visitors behind the scenes to wander amongst half a million creative works, spanning every era, discipline, and corner of the globe. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)

#### **About YouTube**

Launched in May 2005, YouTube’s mission is to give everyone a voice and show them the world. We believe that everyone deserves to have a voice, and that the world is a better place when we listen, share and build community through our stories. YouTube is a Google company.

#### **About oio**

Oio is a creative company founded by designers Matteo Loglio and Simone Rebaudengo. A real enough office for real enough products, oio helps small startups, large companies, and everything in between make sense of emerging technologies. On a mission to turn complexity into future products and tools you’ve never seen before, they push for an impact that outweighs their footprint. A remote company with a community distributed around the world, oio’s collaborations include IKEA, Google, Spotify, YouTube, Samsung, the Serpentine Galleries, UAL, and now the V&A Museum, among others. Find out more at [ocio.studio](http://ocio.studio).