

Global Africa Acquisition Group



Zanele Muholi *Bakhambile Skhosana, Natalspruit*
from the series *Faces and Phases*, 2010

V&A

The V&A

As a world-leading family of museums of art, design and performance, the V&A mission is to enrich people's lives by promoting research, knowledge and enjoyment of creative practice. Alongside its spectacular permanent displays, the Museum delivers outstanding exhibitions and innovative educational programmes for a wide international audience which includes families, adults, young people, schools, colleges, universities, creative industry professionals and community groups.

The V&A was founded after the Great Exhibition of 1851 with a vision to inspire and educate the designers and makers of the future. Its unique collections span the cultures of Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. Ranging from ancient times to the present day, these collections include sculpture, metalwork, ceramics, furniture, glass, jewellery, paintings, prints, photographs, digital works, fashion and textiles.

Today, the V&A is a family of museums comprising V&A South Kensington, Young V&A, V&A East Storehouse and V&A East Museum (opening spring 2026), V&A Dundee and V&A Wedgwood Collection in Stoke-on-Trent.



Emefa Cole. *Ring, 2012.* Purchased through the generosity of William & Judith, Douglas and James Bollinger



V&A East Storehouse © Hufton+Crow; **V&A South Kensington**

Join Us in Building an Extraordinary Collection

The V&A's Global Africa collection brings together works by artists, designers, makers, and performers of Global African descent, alongside works that represent Global Africans. The term Global Africa refers to Africa and its global diasporas across the United Kingdom, Europe, the African Continent and the Americas. The presence and cultural impact of Global Africa is all around us today, just as it was when the V&A was founded in the 1850s. Yet, within our collection, as well as many others across Europe, the creative expressions of Global Africa, in its myriad and varied forms, have often been largely excluded, or misrepresented.

The V&A currently holds over 4,000 objects related to Global Africa. These holdings of historic and contemporary works cover a range of mediums and forms, geographies and creative practices. Artists, designers and makers of Caribbean heritage – from Ronald Moody to Althea McNish, and Tam Joseph to Hew Locke – are represented within a rich array of photography, prints, fashion, textiles, furniture, drawings, and paintings that comprise the collection. Since 2021, the V&A has made over 100 new acquisitions from 22 of the 54 African nations including contemporary fashions and textiles. For the first time in the Museum's history, works by designers from Rwanda and Eswatini have recently been acquired. Ceramics and glassware from northern Africa, along with prints and photographs from southern African artists such as Zanele Muholi and Ernest Cole are now part of the collection. This combined with the work of African American artists such as Khaleb Brooks and Carrie Mae Weems, alongside those of Afro Cuban artist Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, demonstrates our global focus and ambition.

The V&A has a critical role to play in the development of equitable museum practices and the establishment of a representative national collection. While our collection is growing and diversifying, objects from Global Africa still make up just 0.4% of the V&A's overall collection. Our priority is to expand this percentage, with a focus on acquiring contemporary works of different media, which span the breadth of the V&A's holdings. This will enable us to present new layered stories about the numerous and varied cultural expressions emerging from Global Africa to current and future audiences. Drawing from a rich and representative Global Africa collection will also allow us to show the way in which histories, cultures and aesthetics across the world are inextricably linked.



Carrie Mae Weems, *Looking High and Low*, wallpaper, 1993. Given by the artist; **Chris Day**, *Emmett Till*, 2020; **Aubrey Williams**, *Sacrifice*, gouache on paper, 1987. Given by Mrs Eve Williams, widow of the artist



Kehinde Wiley, *Portrait of Melissa Thompson*, 2020. Purchased with support from Art Fund and a legacy donation from Dr Philip da Costa

The Global Africa Acquisition Group

As the creative sector becomes increasingly competitive, the V&A relies on philanthropic support to fund important acquisitions. This support allows the V&A to enhance its collection for future generations.

You can help the V&A purchase new, contemporary works for the collection by joining the Global Africa Acquisition Group. Each supporter donates at least £12,500 annually, all of which goes towards building a vital purchase fund for acquiring key modern and contemporary works from Africa and the diaspora. Donors are closely involved with the acquisition process, meeting with the curatorial team every year to discuss which works the V&A will buy in accordance with its collecting strategy. Throughout the year, they are also invited to join curators at various opportunities, across the V&A's sites and beyond, to see the impact and importance of their support.

The Global Africa Acquisition Group is fundamental to ensuring that Global African creative excellence is represented and supported at the V&A, that the institution is actively contributing to dialogues about racism, social justice and decolonisation, and using our collection as a catalyst for discussions about the entangled relationship between Global Africa and Britain. By joining the group, you will enable the V&A to carry out these priorities, while also supporting contemporary artists, designers and makers, extending public access, and building one of the most significant Global Africa collections in the world.



Alberta Whittle, *Celestial Meditations II*, 2017. Gift of Sara Elizabeth and Charlotte Victoria Freeman Mughal



Africa Fashion exhibition at V&A South Kensington, 2023

The Global Africa Collection at the V&A

Support Acquisitions for Exhibitions, Displays, and Publications

Acquisitions purchased with the support of the Global Africa Acquisition Group will be regularly shared with the public and displayed across the V&A sites, both within our suite of galleries housing the permanent collection and in our popular temporary exhibitions.

Our headline shows and displays often feature objects from the Global Africa collection, including most recently *Tropical Modernism: Architecture and Independence* (2024), *Between Two Worlds: Vanley Burke and Francis Williams* (2023), *Fashioning Masculinities: the Art of Menswear* (2022), *Africa Fashion* (2022-2023), and the upcoming *The Music is Black: A British Story* (2026). New acquisitions will also be spotlighted in future publications and past, critically acclaimed examples include *Africa Fashion* which received an 'honourable mention' for the 2023 R. L. Shep Memorial Book Award. New commissions, including those launching at V&A East in 2026, will strategically engage with artists from the Global Africa collection such as Thomas J Price, Carrie Mae Weems and Rene Matić. Our diverse public programme and varied research activities draw heavily from the V&A's Global Africa collection and contemporary acquisitions will further enhance engagement and progress research projects.

The support of the Global Africa Acquisition Group is crucial to the V&A's mission, enabling a lively programme of rotating contemporary displays, championing design and creativity in all its forms, advancing cultural knowledge, and inspiring makers, creators and innovators everywhere.



Thomas J Price at the V&A, display at V&A South Kensington, 2024

Support Acquisitions for Object-Based Learning

The V&A champions object-based learning, activating the collection, including acquisitions purchased with donors' support, to tell the story of creativity across Global Africa to visitors of all ages. Workshops, study days and courses led by makers and curators utilise the collection so curious minds can gain hands-on experience and learn new skills.

Researchers and the wider public can request to view artworks and objects from the collection in the Prints and Drawings Study Room at V&A South Kensington. Since 2010, this free service has received over 45,000 visitors, making the collection widely accessible for future and current audiences to explore, enjoy, and be inspired by. Accessibility to the collection has been further enhanced by the opening of V&A East Storehouse in May 2025. This unique museum experience provides unprecedented levels of access and engagement with the V&A's collection, particularly through the 'Order an Object' service which invites visitors to select objects which are not on public display and view them up close. Together, these are extraordinary resources for the exploration, research, and enjoyment of works acquired through the Global Africa Acquisition Groups support.



Prints and Drawings Study Room, V&A South Kensington



Order an Object at V&A East Storehouse, Althea McNish Furnishing fabrics.
Image by Bet Bettencourt for V&A



“Growing up in North London I personally didn’t have access to museums. I’m so pleased that new objects will be coming into the collection through this initiative. The V&A is such a prestigious institution, and alongside my own works in the collection, I am happy to see new stories living in the V&A and open to the public.”
Furniture Designer, Yinka Ilori

Yinka Ilori, *Captain Hook chair frame*, 2015

Support Contemporary Creatives

For artists, designers and makers, having their work added to the V&A’s collection enhances their reputation and encourages the sale of further work. The engagement with curators, visitors and donors sparks new ideas and fosters creativity. Many creatives value having their work exhibited and accessible to the public and specialists alike, safe in the knowledge that it will be retained for generations to come and inspire future artists, designers and makers.

“Early in my career I was given the opportunity to showcase my work at the V&A and have felt the support of the institution since then. I am very glad they have renewed their commitment to the collection and stewardship of works from Africa and the diaspora.”
Fashion Designer and Hermès Creative Director of Menswear, Grace Wales Bonner



Grace Wales Bonner, *Fashion in Motion Event*, V&A South Kensington



Chris Ofili, *Afro Lunar Lovers*, 2003. Purchased through the Julie and Robert Breckman Print Fund

Get Closer to the V&A's Global Africa Collection

By partnering with the V&A to build the contemporary Global Africa collection you will enjoy a close relationship with the V&A's curatorial team.

The Global Africa Acquisition Group meets with the curators annually to view potential acquisitions and discuss which works are to be acquired for the permanent collection, gaining an in-depth, personal understanding of the V&A's engagement with objects from Africa and the diaspora. In addition, members of the group are invited to many other wonderful opportunities which demonstrate the impact of their generosity, joining curators at exclusive object-handling and behind-the-scenes museum events, artist, designer and maker studio visits, private views and curator tours, and art fairs and festivals both in the UK and abroad.



V&A Friday Late x GUAP, London Is The Place For Me?, panel discussion

Your Support

UK taxpayers

You may increase the value of your support by enabling us to claim Gift Aid on your donation. For every £1 you donate, we can claim 25p from HM Revenue and Customs at no extra cost to you.

Non-UK taxpayers

American taxpayers may wish to give their donation to the V&A Americas Foundation, an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organisation which traditionally supports the work of the V&A. Donations to the V&AAF are deductible for US tax purposes to the extent permitted by law. If you would like to make your donation this way, please contact us for further details.

Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), Charitable Trust or Foundation payments

CAF payments, or payments from your charitable trust or foundation can be accepted for your donation.



Tam Joseph, *Spirit of the Carnival*, 1988



King Owusu x Lazy Oaf
Printed denim jacket and trousers, 2021

Thank You

Thank you for your interest in the V&A's Global Africa Acquisition Group.
To donate and join the group, or for further information, please contact:

Olivia Fry
Philanthropy Manager
V&A South Kensington
Cromwell Road
London
SW7 2RL

o.fry@vam.ac.uk
+44 (0)20 3949 4512





Khaleb Brooks, *What Chu Lookin at Ho?, Before*, 2020. Presented by Art Fund