

V&A Academy

UNBOXING THE DAVID BOWIE ARCHIVE

V&A

Introduction



This Study Day will explore in detail the David Bowie Archive Cataloguing Project, a project to plan, process, catalogue and make accessible the David Bowie Archive.

Through lectures, tours, Q&As and object sessions with archivists and curators, the day will include in-depth insight into the archive, including the complexities of processing this landmark acquisition and highlights and discoveries made along the way.

Archivist Sabrina Offord and Curator Harriet Reed, who led the cataloguing project, will introduce the day and give an overview of the archive itself, providing fascinating glimpses into different areas of the collection, from Bowie's unrealised projects to alternate costumes for Ziggy Stardust. David Bowie Research Fellow, Dr Claire Watt, will share her recent discoveries from the archive, including a deep dive into Bowie's performance and writing practices.

Attendees will view items up-close in the Study Centre including archival material and objects, giving unique insight into how Bowie himself organised and used his archive. They will also receive a tour of the David Bowie Centre, including a display of highlights from the archive.

Information

Monday 12 October 2026

10:30 – 16:00

This study day will be held on site at V&A East Storehouse.

Lunch is not included.

All lecture resource sheets and presentation slides will be made available after the study day.

This study day will not be recorded.

Suitable for ages 18 and over.

Monday 12 October 2026

Unboxing the David Bowie Archive

V&A East Storehouse

Harriet Reed and Sabrina Offord

10:30 Introduction to the David Bowie Archive

Sabrina Offord, Harriet Reed

11.45 In-conversation

Willie Williams, Lighting Designer

Willie Williams has created some of the most iconic shows in the history of concert touring, his work being recognised as both technically & conceptually ground-breaking. He worked with David Bowie as lighting designer for the Sound + Vision tour (1990) and both the Tin Machine tours (1989 & 1991).

12.45 Lunch

(not provided)

14:00 Group A: Tour of David Bowie Centre

Sabrina Offord

Group B: Archive object session

Harriet Reed

14.45 Group A: Archive object session

Harriet Reed

Group B: Tour of David Bowie Centre

Sabrina Offord

15:30 Discoveries from the David Bowie Archive

Claire Watt- Bowie Research Fellow