

News Release

V&A completes its biggest collection move in history to new east London site V&A East Storehouse

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- **Over 250,000 objects, 350,000 library books** and nearly **1,000 archives** from the V&A's collections transported into new home at V&A East Storehouse
- The move includes garments from some of the world's most influential designers, from **Issey Miyake** to **Elsa Schiaparelli**, to the **Glastonbury Festival Archive**, revealing how the festival has developed over the past 50 years, and furniture by influential designers **Charles and Ray Eames** and **Kaare Klint**, creators of mid-century classics
- Final objects to move included the largest in a series of **127 19th century paintings** documenting the oldest surviving examples of painting in India located in the **cave complex at Ajanta**, plus three **life-sized fibre-glass panda sculptures**, an icon of one of the most popular streetwear brands in China, *Hi Panda*, by artist **Jiji**
- **V&A East Storehouse** opens at Here East in **2025**, as part of **East Bank**, the new cultural quarter in **Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park**
- **V&A East** is dedicated to creative opportunity and its power to bring change. Two free cultural destinations – **V&A East Storehouse and Museum** – will open up the V&A collection for all, celebrate making in all its forms and create new possibilities for everyone

Over five years in the making, the move of V&A collections from Blythe House to V&A East Storehouse, a 16,000m² purpose-built home and first of its kind in the UK to provide open public access to collections through self-guided tours and changing displays, is now complete. The move, which is the V&A's largest since World War II, has seen over **250,000 objects, 350,000 library books** and **1,000 archives** audited, condition checked, carefully packed, documented, electronically tracked, and safely transported to their new home in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford, which opens in 2025.

Objects and archives moved as part of this landmark project span the breath of V&A's collections, encompassing every creative discipline from around the globe, from **haute couture, historic and contemporary fashion, streetwear, furniture, textiles, tapestries and musical instruments**, to **theatre costumes, scripts, gig posters, helmets and armour, ceramics, stained glass, cameras, paintings, prints, tiles, photography, drawings, books, comics and more**.

The move led by Head of Collections Move Programme, Philippa Mackenzie, and overseen by Kate Parsons, Director of Collections Care and Access, marks a monumental step in V&A East Storehouse's journey to bring the public and V&A's expansive national collections closer together. From a striped mohair jumper designed by **Vivienne Westwood** and **Malcolm McLaren** in punk's heyday in 1976, to the denim hotpants and waistcoat worn by **PJ Harvey** when photographed by **Mary McCartney**, and everyday collecting moments, including **posters, band tees, shoes and mugs**, V&A East Storehouse will spotlight both seminal and personal collecting stories, and open itself up as a sourcebook of inspiration for everyone.

Final objects moving into the space included the **largest works in a series of 127 paintings** made between 1872 – 1885, documenting cave paintings **at Ajanta**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Maharashtra, India. The paintings capture the oldest surviving examples of painting in India, dating from the 1st century BC to about AD 480, which depict stories from the lives of the Buddha (the Jatakas) across 30 caves. The paintings' move to V&A East Storehouse's vast stores ensure more people can access these incredible works which was previously restricted due to their large size. Three **life-sized fibre-glass panda sculptures**, an icon of one of the most popular streetwear brands in China, *Hi Panda*, by artist Jiji, inspired by the rebellious and playful spirit of China's post-1980s generation, were also amongst the last objects to move.

Tim Reeve, Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of the V&A, says: *“The completion of this monumental move, which has been years in the planning, marshalling expertise from across the V&A, represents a huge milestone in our mission to radically transform access and remove barriers between the public and their national collections. V&A East Storehouse offers a unique opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves in the magical behind-the-scenes world of a working museum store, through a self-guided public network intertwined with the world's greatest collection of art design and performance. We are particularly excited to be bringing the collections and archives to communities across the four Olympic boroughs, in a part of London with a rich creative heritage and great contemporary creative potential, for a new audience to discover a radically different type of museum experience when Storehouse opens in 2025.”*

V&A East Storehouse is one of two new V&A East sites opening in Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Offering a unique museum experience, V&A East Storehouse will invite visitors behind the scenes to wander amongst half a million creative works, spanning every era, discipline, and corner of the globe, with unprecedented access. The 16,000 sqm purpose-built space is designed by leading New York architects **Diller Scofidio + Renfro** with support from UK based architects **Austin-Smith:Lord**.



Bringing together a host of changing displays, some literally 'hacked' into the sides and ends of collection stores, performance spaces and creative studios, research and reading rooms, plus an ever-changing programme of events and workshops, V&A East Storehouse will explore why objects are collected, how they are cared for, conserved and displayed and will reveal the latest research emerging from the collections. It will also experiment with new flexible forms of object display and co-production projects highlighting a multitude of different narratives and perspectives.

Objects, Collections and Archives moved into V&A East Storehouse include:

- Archives of creative luminaries including **PJ Harvey, Eduardo Paolozzi** [including **The Crazy Kat Arkive of Twentieth Century Popular Culture** - around 20,000 toys, puzzles, comic books and ephemera], **Talawa Theatre Company, Biba** and **Glastonbury Festival**
- Large objects including the only complete **Frank Lloyd Wright** interior outside of the US – his 1930s office for American businessman, Edgar J. Kaufmann, an exquisite **15th century carved and gilded wooden ceiling from the now lost Torrijos Palace** near Toledo in Spain, and a **full-scale 'Frankfurt Kitchen' designed by the Austrian architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky**, originally installed in flats in Frankfurt during the 1920s, and rarely on public display
- Nearly **65,000 objects** across V&A's Asia Collection, from an **Egyptian tapestry** dating back to **4th-5th century** and **Persian Resht** embroidered hanging textiles, to **20th century Japanese kimonos**, and **19th century stringed instruments** from across India
- **3,500 shoes** from a pair of **19th century Egyptian bath clogs** to **Nike Magista Obra football boots** and **1950s Christian Dior evening shoes**, to everyday design classics such as **Dr. Martens**
- **6,271 drawers** containing clothing, textiles and accessories, and **5,476 pieces** of hanging dress, ranging from trailblazing designers **Vivienne Westwood, Bruce Oldfield, JW Anderson, Issey Miyake** and **Elsa Schiaparelli**, anarchic 1990s London label **Jimmy Jumble** and streetwear giants **Stüssy**, to **1700s Spitalfields silk dresses** and textile samples
- **1,500 chairs**, from a velvet chair commissioned by **Sir Robert Walpole**, England's first prime minister, to champions of modern design **Charles and Ray Eames, Robin Day, Kaare Klint** and **Vico Magistretti**
- Objects from across **V&A's Theatre & Performance Archives** including: 1920s costumes designed by artist **Henri Matisse** for **Ballets Russes'** production of *Le Chant du rossignol*; set design and costume sketches by artist and film-maker **Derek Jarman** for the opera *Don Giovanni* at Sadler's Wells, 1968; an ornate headdress worn by actress **Vivien Leigh** in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The



Old Vic, 1937; **The Beatles shift dresses** made for the premiere of *A Hard Day's Night*, 1964

- Pull out racks holding photography, posters, prints, textiles, from **1,600** paintings spanning **2,000** years, including fragments of Roman fresco, to posters by **David Hockney** and **Jamie Reid**
- **80,000** children's books as part of **The Renier Collection** including a 1585 edition of Aesop's Fables complete with woodcuts, published in Paris
- **2,540** large 20th century printed textiles stored on 1.5m wide rollers, featuring furnishing fabrics with designs by **Lucienne Day**, **Terence Conran**, **Althea McNish** and **Salvador Dali**

Development of new storage solutions:

A move of this scale has created opportunities to develop new and innovative approaches to object storage, which prioritise protection and long-term conservation alongside enhanced viewing and handling capabilities.

Examples range from bespoke shoes trays, designed in a way that is versatile to hold a range of footwear, from **ancient Egyptian shoes** to **1950s Christian Dior heels**, allowing each shoe to be moved, viewed fully and handled without touching the shoes themselves. For V&A's collection of **over 1250 pieces of Japanese netsuke**, custom-cut sheets of foam were created, with each netsuke nested in tissue paper, which immobilised and protected the objects for safe transportation, storage and future viewing.

Notes to Editors

ABOUT V&A EAST

V&A East is dedicated to creative opportunity and its power to bring change. V&A East Storehouse and Museum are two free cultural destinations created in partnership with young people and inspired by east London's creative heritage. Working directly with the voices that are shaping global contemporary culture, V&A East will bring the V&A collection and archive to life in new ways, celebrating making in all its forms and opening up new possibilities and discoveries for everyone.

MORE FROM V&A EAST

V&A East's new live programme strand, *back2back*, a creative space to experiment, with new formats for V&A East's future programming explored and tested, launches this September, with its first event *InBetween: A Latinx Takeover*.



On Saturday 28 September, V&A East takes over East Bank neighbour UCL East's campus for a free night celebrating Latinx creative talent flourishing in East London. Taking over 7 levels of UCL East Marshgate, *InBetween: A Latinx Takeover* invites visitors to explore ideas of place, communal care, resistance and the in-between space the Latinx diaspora is often forced to inhabit.

Free ticket sign-up and full programme details available via vam.ac.uk/whatson

back2back is made possible through support from the Terra Foundation for American Art.

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.
- Opening from Autumn 2023, East Bank is a unique collaboration between cultural institutions, world-leading universities, and the people of the Olympic boroughs.
- East Bank is made up of V&A East Museum and Storehouse, Sadler's Wells East, London College of Fashion, UAL, UCL East and the new BBC Music Studios.
- A powerhouse for innovation, creativity and learning in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, East Bank is rooted in the communities of east London and reflects the creative spirit and legacy of the London 2012 Games.

