

DESIGN MUSEUM ADDS M1 MOTORWAY SIGN, AK-47 RIFLE AND SONY WALKMAN TO ITS COLLECTION.



The Design Museum has added 14 classics to its collection. They include a Sony Walkman, a Kalashnikov AK-47 rifle and an example of the motorway signage system, whose standardised typeface, designed by Jock Kinneir and Margaret Calvert in 1960, has not changed to this day.

The road signs, commissioned by the government for Britain's new network of motorways and major roads, were tested in 1958 in an underground car park and in Hyde Park, where they were propped against trees to determine the most effective background colours and reading distances. 'Style never came into it,' Calvert has said of the typeface.

Calvert redesigned many of the picture signs to reflect her personal experiences. She replaced the image of a boy in a school cap leading a little girl on the school children crossing sign, with one of a girl, modelled on a photograph of herself as a child, leading a younger boy. Calvert described the old sign as being 'archaic', almost like an illustration from Enid Blyton.



The Design Museum's acquisition of the 1979 Sony Walkman, a product that sold at a rate of 50 million in ten years, marks its journey into obsolescence. Nevertheless, the term 'walkman' is preserved in the language, listed in the Oxford English Dictionary as a description for any cassette player.

The Kalashnikov AK-47 Rifle was one of the first assault rifles to be manufactured. Developed in the mid 1940s by the Soviet Union for ease of use in arctic conditions, its cheap production and durability have made it one of the most widely used weapons in the world.



The Design Museum is developing its Collection ahead of its relocation to new premises at the former Commonwealth Institute, Kensington in 2014. This new Design Museum with interiors designed by John Pawson will be three times the size of its current home and will create a showcase for its world-class collection, and greatly expand its education and public events programme. The new Design Museum will be a platform for promoting design as a national asset, and supporting the next generation of creative talent.

Ends

Media enquiries

Ashley Woodfield, Press Manager, Design Museum

E: ashley@designmuseum.org

T: 020 7940 8787

Erica Bolton or Claire Thomas, Bolton & Quinn

E: erica@boltonquinn.com; claire.thomas@boltonquinn.com

T: 020 7221 5000

LIST OF NEW ACQUISITIONS:

Arcade Machine

Space Invaders

Tomohiro Nishikado c.1978 Taito, Japan

The invention of the Arcade Machine sparked the digital gaming revolution that now represents a multi-billion dollar industry. While the technology has moved on greatly, with industry giants such as PlayStation and X-Box striving toward ever more realistic gaming experiences, the first arcade games such as Space Invaders (1978) and Pac-Man (1980), maintain an iconic cult status.

Rifle, Kalashnikov AK-47

Mikhail Kalashnikov

, Unknown Manufacturer, 1945-1946 China

One of the most iconic and widely disseminated piece of weaponry used today, the AK-47 was one of the first true assault rifles to be manufactured. Developed in the mid-1940s by the Soviet Union for ease of use in Arctic conditions.

LookSoFlat prototype lamp

Stefan Geisbauer 2010, Ingo Maurer, Germany

The LookSoFlat prototype combines innovative design with economical energy consumption. From the side it has the appearance of an ordinary desktop lamp, but it is, in fact, completely flat. Two LEDs mimic the warmth of light produced by an ordinary lamp, yet LookSoFlat is more streamlined and energy friendly.

3D Mouse Novint Falcon

Novint Technologies, 2006.US

The Novint Falcon is a 3D mouse with force feedback. It allows gamers to feel the texture, shape, and weight of a virtual environment, providing a more immersive gaming experience.

Portable Radio

Regency TR-1

Industrial Development Engineering Associates, 1954 Texas Instrument, US

Following their development in 1954, portable radios became the most popular electronic communication device in history. They facilitated the wider dissemination of popular music, for the first time allowing people to listen to music anywhere.

Type Writer

Valentine

Ettore Sottsass, 1969. Olivetti, Italy

Olivetti's Valentine typewriter made a piece of office equipment fashionable. It's bright red case and portability made it the desirable product of its day.

The Face Magazine

1980-2004

The iconic British music, fashion and culture monthly magazine started in May 1980 by Nick Logan. From 1981 to 1986, Neville Brody was typographer, graphic designer, and art director of the magazine. Writers included Julie Birchill and Tony Parsons and photographers Juergen Teller, and David Sims.

Ipogeo Lamp

Joe Wentworth

Artemide, 2009. Italy

The design of Ipogeo was inspired by the undelivered promise of many task lights which suggest a delicate friction free movement, but in reality have stiff movement or have a disappointing drift after they have been positioned.

Childrens Chair

Tripp Trapp

Peter Opsvik, 1972. Stokke, Norway

The bestselling children's chair in the world, with well over 9 million sold since 1972. As the child grows, the chair can be adjusted, until eventually the foot rest becomes better used as the seat, and the high chair becomes a comfortable adult chair.

Kindle Electronic Book Reader

Kindle 3, 2007. Amazon, US

The devices use an E Ink electronic paper display that shows up to 16 shades of gray, minimizes power use and simulates reading on paper. In the last three months of 2010, Amazon announced that in the United States, their e-book sales had surpassed sales of paperback books for the first time.

Sony Portable Cassette Player

TPS L2 Walkman, 1979. Nobutoshi Kihara

Sony, Japan

Sony revolutionised the way in which music could be enjoyed with the introduction of the first portable music player, the Walkman. With this portable unit, music was able to accompany a person anywhere they went. Gone were the restrictions of a stationary player. The Walkman became part of culture and even part of fashion.

Portable CD Player

D50 MKII Discman

Sony, 1984. Japan

As Sony began to realize the potential of the CD, executives pushed for a means to give the CD player market momentum, moving it from audio enthusiasts to the mainstream. The DC50 was Sony's first portable CD player.

Mini Disc Recorder

MZ1 Sony, 1992. Japan

Recordable MDs can be recorded on repeatedly; Sony claims up to one million times. Due to the dominance of MP3 players, Sony announced that it would no longer ship MiniDisc Walkman products as of September 2011.