

The Design Museum announces 2023 programme

6 September 2022
the Design Museum

Skateboards, saris and the very first design exhibition by Ai Weiwei are among the highlights of the 2023 exhibition programme at the Design Museum.



Globally renowned artist Ai Weiwei will present his work as a commentary on design and what it reveals about our changing values, in a major new show from April.

The radical reinvention of India's traditional sari will be mapped in a landmark exhibition on the garment from May.

A major exploration of the evolution of the skateboard and its impact on the design world has "NBD" (Never Been Done) ...until September.

Also announced today is the extension of the museum's hugely popular exhibition on ASMR, which can now be experienced by visitors until April 2023.

Tim Marlow, Director and Chief Executive, Design Museum said:

"With saris, skateboards and a spellbinding show by Ai Weiwei, 2023 is going to be one of the most ground-breaking of years in recent memory at the Design Museum. As the world's leading museum of contemporary design, we are uniquely placed to explore these compelling global stories which highlight the sometimes playful but invariably decisive role of design in so many aspects of our lives.

We're delighted that Ai Weiwei will present his first major design-focussed exhibition here at the Design Museum. He is clearly one of the most important artists in the world, but his practice also profoundly embraces design and architecture and the cultural and political impact of his work will resonate in very different ways throughout this collaborative landmark exhibition."

Major Exhibitions

Ai Weiwei: Making Sense

7 April – 30 July 2023

Ai Weiwei is one of the most significant and recognised artists working today. Known around the world for his powerful art and activism, Ai does not differentiate between disciplines: his practice glides across art, architecture, design, film, collecting and curating. This major new exhibition, developed in collaboration with Ai Weiwei, will be the first to present his work as a commentary on design and what it reveals about our changing values. Through his engagement with material culture, Ai explores the tension between past and present, hand and machine, precious and worthless, construction and destruction.

The exhibition draws on Ai's fascination with historical Chinese artefacts, placing their traditional craftsmanship in dialogue with the more recent history of demolition and urban development in China. The result is a meditation on value – on histories and skills that have been ignored or erased. The exhibition will see some of Ai's most important works displayed alongside collections of objects that have never been seen, and new commissions made for the exhibition. Not only is this Ai's personal commentary on design, it is also a major opportunity for visitors to see his work through a new lens.

[Tickets are on sale from today.](#) Ai Weiwei and Design Museum Director Tim Marlow will be in conversation on 20 September 2022. [Book tickets here.](#)

The Offbeat Sari

19 May – 17 September 2023

The sari in urban India manifests as a site for design innovation, an expression of identity, and a crafted object carrying layers of cultural meanings. Curated by the Design Museum's Priya Khanchandani, this

exhibition will unravel its numerous forms, demonstrating the sari to be a metaphor for the layered and complex definitions of India today. It will bring together on loan dozens of the finest saris of our time from designers, wearers and craftspeople in India.

Worn as an everyday garment by some and considered by others to be formal or uncomfortable, the sari has multiple definitions. Conventionally an unstitched textile wrapped around the body, which can be draped in a variety of ways, its unfixed form has enabled it to morph and absorb changing cultural influences.

In recent years, the sari has been reinvented. Designers are experimenting with hybrid forms such as sari gowns and dresses, pre-stitched saris and innovative materials such as steel. Young people in cities who used to associate the sari with 'dressing up' can now be found wearing saris and sneakers on their commutes to work. Individuals can be found wearing the sari as an expression of resistance to social norms and activists are embodying it as an object of protest.

Tickets available soon.

Skateboard

20 October 2023 – 25 Feb 2024

This exhibition will map the design evolution of the skateboard from the 1950s to today. It will showcase innovative skateboards and components, alongside skate photography and video, complete with original soundtracks. It will track how skateboarders have taken over sidewalks, swimming pools and skate parks designing new boards to suit their performance, style and surroundings.

Curated and designed by the industrial designer and skater Jonathan Olivares, this will be the first exhibition to explore the evolution of skateboard design in such detail. It will chart the way skateboarding has adapted to different urban environments, with each decade producing new techniques. It will also present the city through a different pair of eyes, with urban spaces and street furniture such as benches, handrails and fire hydrants each offering their own unique obstacles and challenges. The gallery will reflect this culture, with areas where visitors can hang out and watch clips of skaters using the streetscape in the pursuit of style and "NBD" (Never Been Done) tricks.

Tickets available soon.

Free Displays

Ralph Saltzman Prize

2 February – 3 April 2023

Returning to the Design Museum for its second year, The Ralph Saltzman Prize celebrates emerging product designers, in recognition of Ralph Saltzman's design legacy.

Created by Lisa Saltzman on behalf of the Saltzman Family Foundation, The Ralph Saltzman Prize reflects the Design Museum's overarching commitment to champion new talent and nurture the development of a vibrant design sector. Each year, a panel of design luminaries will handpick a number of the brightest emerging designers currently making waves in the field of product design. The winner, selected for their innovative approach to contemporary themes, receives a £5,000 honorarium and has their work displayed in the Design Museum's atrium space from February to early April.

Furniture designer Mac Collins was selected as the inaugural prize winner in 2022. The Ralph Saltzman Prize is supported by the Saltzman Family Foundation.

Design Age Institute

1 – 31 March 2023

This summer, in partnership with the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design at the Royal College of Art, the Future of Ageing display explored how design is transforming the way society can support everyone to age with greater agency and joy. It will soon travel to V&A Dundee. In 2023, a second interactive display curated with Design Age Institute will invite the public to explore the different ways innovation and design are helping to reimagine how we live, work and socialise in a world in which increasing numbers of us will be living to 100 or more. The Design Age Institute is supported by Research England.

Design Ventura

28 April – 26 June 2023

Design Ventura is an annual design and enterprise competition for schools, run by the Design Museum in partnership with Deutsche Bank's global youth engagement programme 'Born to Be'. Now entering its thirteenth year, the competition sees schools compete to have their product idea manufactured and sold in the Design Museum Shop. Since 2010 over 110,000 students have participated in the project.

The 2022-23 competition brief has been set by Selasi Setufe MBE, Senior Architect and Innovation Sites Manager, Be First, and co-founder of Black Females in Architecture. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony at the Design Museum, and the two-month display of shortlisted and winning entries will follow. Design Ventura is delivered in partnership with Deutsche Bank.



Design Researchers in Residence: Islands

June - September 2023

Design Researchers in Residence is a prestigious residency supporting thinkers at the start of their careers to develop a new project in response to a theme. A display of their work in the Residency Studio at the Design Museum follows eight months of mentorship and research support from the museum as well as external experts. The 2022/23 cohort (TBA) will examine the theme of Islands. Design Researchers in Residence is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Idlewild Trust.

Also in 2023

WEIRD SENSATION FEELS GOOD: The World of ASMR

NOW EXTENDED until 10 April 2023

The UK's first ever exhibition exploring the online phenomenon known as Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) has now been extended into Spring 2023 due to popular demand. First opening at the Design Museum

in May 2022, the exhibition invites visitors to immerse themselves in the design story of an evolving internet sensation through a series of 40 audio, visual, and tactile works. The exhibition is presented in collaboration with ArkDes, the Swedish Centre for Architecture and Design.

YINKA ILORI: PARABLES FOR HAPPINESS

15 September 2022 until 25 June 2023

The first museum display exploring the work of artist and designer Yinka Ilori runs at the Design Museum until summer 2023. It will celebrate Ilori's mix of cultural influences and will unpack the ingredients of a diasporic visual language. The free display will showcase key elements of Ilori's vibrant aesthetic, which throughout his career have been drawn from a mix of cultures that came together in the north London diaspora community where he grew up. It will highlight some of the most important aspects of Ilori's work – such as his billboard graphics that promote joy – and will place them beside key influences, especially Nigerian textiles.

The Design Museum's International Programme

Sneakers Unboxed: Studio to Street

Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, Taipei

22 December 2022 – 9 April 2023

Sejong Museum of Art, Seoul

May – September 2023 (dates tbc)

Sneakers Unboxed tells the story of one of the most universal design objects, bought and worn by millions of people worldwide every day. Charting the design and cultural journey of sneakers, shoes originally designed for specific athletic activities, this exhibition explores how they have been adopted as a style element by youth cultures, making them in turn pivotal in shaping the current global industry.

The Global Sponsor of *Sneakers Unboxed* is StockX, the global e-commerce marketplace for current culture products.

Sneakers Unboxed was exhibited at the Design Museum in London in 2021 and toured to the Design Museum Den Bosch in the Netherlands in 2022. The exhibition will be on view at the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in

Taipei from December 2022 until April 2023, and then at the Sejong Centre in Seoul from May until September 2023.

Material Tales: The Life of Things

Hong Kong Science Museum, Hong Kong

May – September 2023 (dates tbc)

Material Tales is a uniquely poetic exploration of the world of materials, taking visitors on a journey through the origins, uses, and evolution of matter. Featuring iconic exhibits from the Design Museum Collection, as well as innovative materials in development today, the exhibition will inform and inspire visitors, allowing them to understand the complex processes that go into everyday objects.

The first dedicated touring exhibition from the Design Museum, Material Tales: The Life of Things, opened at the CAFA Art Museum in Beijing, China in 2021. It will tour to the Hong Kong Science Museum from May until September 2023.

Waste Age

Hong Kong Design Institute, Hong Kong

January – April 2023

Waste Age tells the story of the environmental crisis created by our 'take, make, waste' economy. The exhibition presents the current crisis and design's role in the problem. It then explores how design can transform our waste into valuable resources, promote new ways of living with the Earth and not from it, and where there is no such thing as waste. This is an exhibition that not only seeks to imagine alternative futures, but one that empowers the visitor to be part of the solution.

The exhibition was exhibited at the Design Museum London in 2021 and will be on tour at the Hong Kong Design Institute from January until April 2023.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editor

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Design Museum Membership

Design Museum membership unlocks free, unlimited entry to all exhibitions via a priority booking period, granting members a chance to secure their tickets ahead of the general public. Members can also bring a guest and up to three children under the age of 16 to all exhibitions. [Join today here.](#)

About the Design Museum

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray and Dieter Rams.

On 24 November 2016, The Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. John Pawson has converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programme. In 2020, the Design Museum was awarded £2,968,634 by Arts Council England from the Culture Recovery Fund announced by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and nearly £1 million National Lottery funding through the Arts Council's Emergency Response Fund. Since opening in Kensington in 2016, the Design Museum has hosted major exhibitions including Stanley Kubrick: The Exhibition, Moving to Mars, Amy: Beyond the Stage, Sneakers Unboxed: Studio to Street, Electronic: From Kraftwerk to The Chemical Brothers, Charlotte Perriand: The Modern Life and California: Designing Freedom.

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