

# the design circle



the  
DESIGN  
MUSEUM

spring / summer  
programme 2025



# welcome

Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the new season at the Design Museum, one filled with flair, ingenuity and innovation reinforcing the power of design to transform the way we see the world.

The Autumn saw us delve into the remarkable world of Tim Burton, breaking attendance records and bringing thousands of new visitors and members to the museum – who in addition to indulging their love of the Burtonesque, have had the opportunity to discover our Grazie Enzo display, and Future Observatory's exploration of *Tomorrow's Wardrobe*.

Our PLATFORM display with Bethan Laura Wood offers a colourful window into one designer's creative process and is an important opportunity for us to showcase the developing career of one of the earliest alumni of our Design Researchers in Residence programme.

*Splash!* celebrates 100 years of swimming and style. From the lido to the ocean this exhibition, co-created by guest curator and fashion historian Amber Butchart, explores our relationship with the water through over 200 objects.

*More than Human*, our groundbreaking Summer show in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council, offers a new perspective on design, one that will be crucial to enabling the planet to thrive.

At the heart of all great design is a spirit of collaboration –between designers and industries, between tradition and innovation. The Design Circle programme this Spring embodies this, launching in March with an exclusive visit to David Chipperfield's new London studio and culminating with a wonderful day trip to the country home of the Bloomsbury Group at Charleston.

I would like to extend my thanks to the designers, curators, and partners who have contributed to this exciting programme, as well as to you, our patrons, whose passion and curiosity helps keep this museum building momentum. We are so grateful for your support which ensures that we can continue to champion the power of design.

**Tim Marlow OBE**  
Director and Chief Executive



# spring summer exhibition programme

## Splash! A Century of Swimming and Style

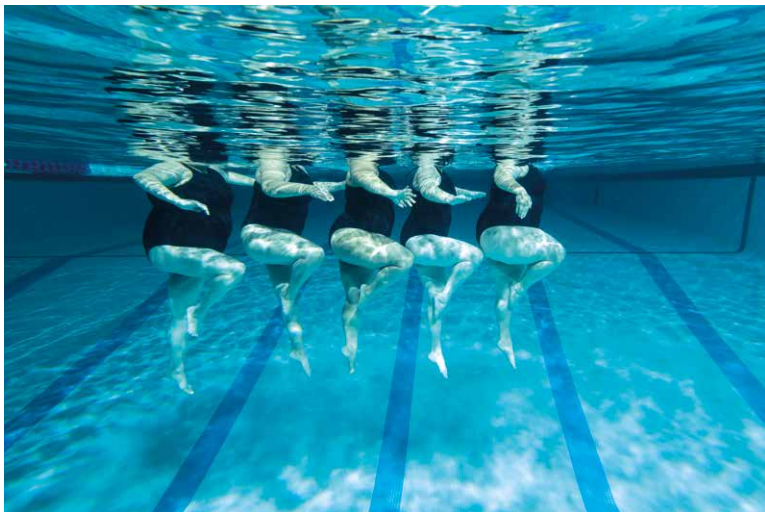
28 March – 17 August 2025

Explore our century-long love affair with swimming and the influence of design on everything from swimwear to art deco architecture. The exhibition will be split into three sections reflecting where we swim: the pool, the lido and nature. Beginning in the 1920s, when beach holidays exploded in popularity and swimwear began to be marketed for swimming rather than the Victorian's preference for bathing.

The show will explore swimming's role in modern life right up to the present day, featuring over 200 objects including Pamela Anderson's sensational Baywatch swimsuit, the first Olympic gold medal won by a British woman and a detailed architectural model of the Zaha Hadid designed London 2021 Aquatics Centre.

**"I grew up at the seaside and live at the coast now, and so exploring these spaces of swimming and leisure from the perspective of design over the last century has been a dream. We have an ongoing fascination with taking the waters. Architecture and swimwear are crucial to how we experience water, whether it's a municipal pool or an outdoor pond. It's time to dive in!"**

Amber Butchart, Guest Curator



## More than Human

11 July – 5 October 2025

This Summer, we are excited to present a major exhibition bringing together art, science and radical thinking to ask how design can help our planet thrive by shifting its focus beyond human needs. Bringing together a new generation of international designers whose practices embrace the idea that human activities can only flourish alongside other species and systems, this will be the first ever major exhibition on a growing movement of 'more-than-human' design. Created in collaboration with Future Observatory, led by Justin McGuirk, the museum's national research programme for the green transition.

**"We often feel despair in the face of the climate crisis, but our imagination – understanding the needs of our planet – is our greatest tool. We can tell stories that have been lost, we can make things to house, feed and amuse other species, and most of all we can learn from each other. I hope visitors to the exhibition will take heart from the examples we have drawn together, and leave with the feeling expressed so perfectly by Indigenous botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer, that 'all flourishing is mutual.'"**

Rebecca Lewin, Senior Curator



# design circle events

## march

**Studio Visit**  
**David Chipperfield Architects**  
Thursday 20 March  
18.00 – 19.30

David Chipperfield Architects was founded in London in 1985. The office started out with retail and private residential projects in London as well as several buildings in Japan. The practice now works across various sectors, including cultural, civic, residential, and educational projects, all grounded in a concern for social and environmental sustainability. With offices in London, Berlin, Milan, Shanghai and Santiago de Compostela, David Chipperfield Architects remains deeply embedded in its local contexts while working on projects of global significance.

The London office has 100 staff and has recently moved to a new space in Fitzrovia. A mix of working and social spaces are arranged over five floors, fostering critical thinking and a creative atmosphere.

Join Tim Marlow for an exclusive tour of the studio with the Chipperfield team and gain insight into the working processes of this globally renowned architectural practice.





**Design Circle First Look**  
**Splash! A Century of**  
**Swimming of Style**  
 Wednesday 26 March  
 18.15 – 19.00

As a member of the Design Circle, enjoy a first look at our major exhibition celebrating our enduring love of the water. The show explores the culture of swimming through the lens of design – ranging from sports performance to fashion and architecture. Join us before the opening reception for an exclusive preview and the opportunity to see the show before anyone else. Guest Curator, Amber Butchart, along with Assistant Curator Tiya Dahyabhai, will provide an introduction as well as being on-hand to offer key insights.

**Opening Reception**  
**Splash! A Century of**  
**Swimming and Style**  
 Wednesday 26 March  
 19.00 – 22.00

Join us for the official opening reception, to celebrate the opening of *Splash! A Century of Swimming and Style*.

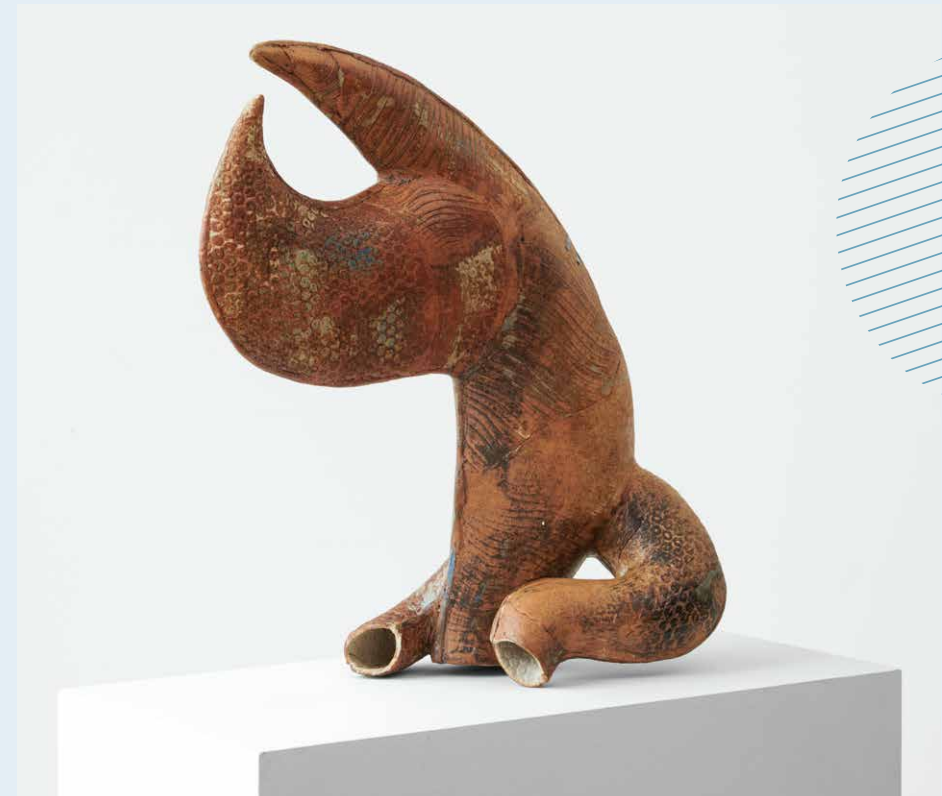
## april

**Private Visit**  
**Jacqueline Poncelet**  
**at Richard Saltoun**  
 Friday 11 April  
 10.30 – 12.00

We are delighted to invite you to Richard Saltoun Gallery in Mayfair for a light brunch and private morning view of Jacqueline Poncelet's first solo presentation.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Poncelet gained recognition for her innovative ceramic designs. She later expanded her practice to include various media, creating vibrant weavings, paintings and public artworks.

Her bold, layered surfaces and rhythmic incisions reflect an enduring dialogue with urban landscapes and industrial processes, redefining the possibilities of materiality. Poncelet is renowned for creating artworks in the public realm, developing commissions for buildings including schools and hospitals.





## may

### Studio Visit

**Martino Gamper**  
Thursday 8 May  
18.00 – 19.30

Martino Gamper is an internationally acclaimed designer, whose work spans exhibition design, interior design, one-off commissions and the design of mass-produced products.

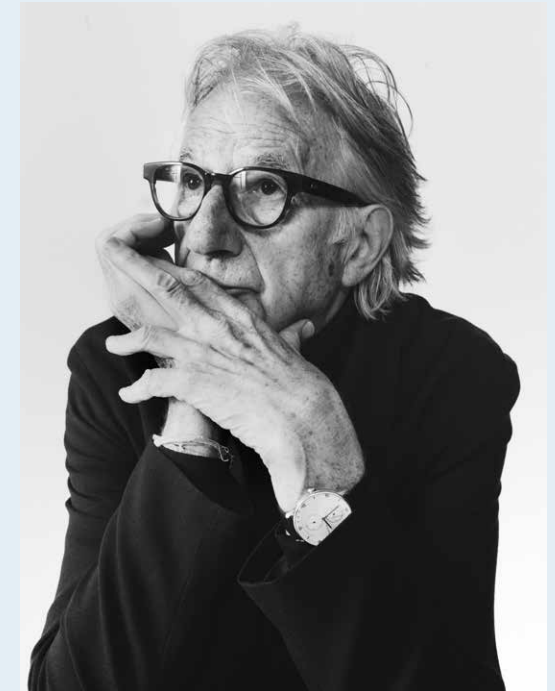
Gamper started out as an apprentice furniture maker in Merano before going on to study under Ron Arad at the Royal College of Art. His project, 100 chairs in 100 days, gained him international recognition for designing 100 different chairs, each with their own unique style, material and form. Gamper opened his design studio in London in 2000, where he continues to live and work. In 2023 Gamper was awarded an OBE for services to Design. Join Johanna Agerman Ross, Design Museum Chief Curator, for an exclusive behind the scenes tour of Martino Gamper's studio in Shoreditch and learn about his practice and ethos.



### Curator's Tour

**Splash! A Century of Swimming and Style**  
Monday 12 May  
17.30 – 18.30

Join us at the museum for a special after-hours viewing of *Splash! A Century of Swimming and Style*, led by Guest Curator, Amber Butchart, and Assistant Curator, Tiya Dahyabhai. This will be an opportunity to enjoy an in-depth tour of the show and gain insights into how the exhibition was developed. By examining the culture of swimming through the lens of design, we will explore evolving ideas about how we have lived from the early 20th century to the present day – touching on materials and making, leisure, travel, performance, wellbeing, and the environment.



## june

### Visit

**Sir Paul Smith's Office**  
Wednesday 11 June  
10.00 – 11.30

Join us for an exclusive visit to the headquarters of one of Britain's most celebrated fashion designers and retailers, Sir Paul Smith. A true icon of the fashion world, Sir Paul Smith has built an extraordinary career spanning over five decades. From humble beginnings with his first 3x3 metre shop in Nottingham in 1970, he has grown his brand into a globally recognised name, with stores in over 60 countries.

Today, the Paul Smith brand encompasses 12 product lines, ranging from men's and women's ready-to-wear clothing to accessories, fragrances, and homeware.

Known for his signature use of stripes and bold colours, Smith's designs seamlessly blend classic British style with a contemporary twist, making them instantly recognisable worldwide. His unique and intuitive approach to design was celebrated in the 2013 exhibition at the Design Museum, *Hello, My Name is Paul Smith*, featuring over 1,500 objects from his career and offering rich insights into Sir Paul's design practice.

During our visit, we'll enjoy a personal tour of the headquarters led by the man himself. We'll go behind the scenes, explore various departments, and even get a rare glimpse into his private office – a treasure trove of inspiration filled with art, books, and eclectic objects that fuel his creativity.



**Day Trip**  
**Charleston**  
Monday 23 June

Enjoy a delightful trip to Charleston in Sussex, the modernist home and studio of painters Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant.

Charleston was host to a succession of some of the 20th century's most radical artists, writers and thinkers, known collectively as the Bloomsbury group. Over the years, the house became a retreat and creative hub for many notable artists and writers, including Clive Bell, Roger Fry, E.M Forster, John Maynard Keynes and others. It was here that they gathered to challenge societal norms and explore new ideas. The house has long been a place where art and experimental thinking are woven into the fabric of daily life.

We will enjoy an exclusive tour of the house with the Curatorial team, followed by viewing the two current exhibitions on display. Afterwards, we will sit down for lunch in the company of Nathaniel Hepburn, Director and CEO of Charleston. In the afternoon, we will travel to Lewes to explore Charleston's new art space where we will view a landmark exhibition of Vanessa Bell's work.

Johanna Agerman Ross, Design Museum Chief Curator, will accompany us on this visit. Exact details, timings and cost to follow, do register your interest with the team early.





## july

### Design Circle First Look

#### More than Human

Wednesday 9 July  
18.15 – 19.00

Enjoy an exclusive preview of this radical exhibition, created in collaboration with Future Observatory, the museum's national research programme for the green transition. Discover a growing movement of 'more-than-human' design through discovering a new generation of international designers whose practices embrace the idea that human activities can only flourish alongside other species and systems. This will be an opportunity to hear from exhibition curators Justin McGuirk and Rebecca Lewin and explore the show before anyone else.

### Opening Reception

#### More than Human

Wednesday 9 July  
19.00 – 22.00

Join us for the official opening reception, hosted by museum Director and Chief Executive, Tim Marlow, to celebrate the opening of *More than Human*.



## art & design fairs

Design Circle members have the opportunity to receive tickets and VIP access to a number of the world's most prestigious art and design fairs both nationally and internationally. Please register your interest early by contacting the Design Circle team.

### PAD Paris

2 – 6 April 2025

### Frieze New York

7 – 11 May 2025

### PAD London

14 – 19 October 2025

### Frieze London / Frieze Masters

15 – 19 October 2025



# a message from our Assistant Curator of Public Practice



As I walk around the Dame Sylvia Crowe Garden watching the plants and little creatures enjoying their winter dormancy, I marvel at what we have achieved with the *Growing Together* project since 2021.

*Growing Together* started in partnership with the Design Age Institute, at a time when the garden was abandoned, overgrown and closed to the public, but full of life and potential. Local elderly people in risk of isolation were invited to participate in a series of horticultural workshops, which concluded in a wider invitation to share the stewardship of the garden with the museum, as volunteers.

With the support of Kusuma Trust and Lightbulb Trust, *Growing Together* became a project exploring the intersections of design, horticulture and wellbeing as catalysts for positive social change, using the garden to nurture community connections in response to the planetary emergency. Stairs were incorporated and a gate was built in the fence, creating step-free access to the space. The soil was nurtured with organic matter and shade-loving perennials were planted. The garden opened to the public.



I joined the museum in early 2023 without knowing that this project existed. Serendipitously, I had just graduated as a Level 2 Horticulturalist and having worked as a creative producer with diverse communities throughout my career, I immediately got excited and rolled up my sleeves, literally. I became the curator of the programme for the volunteers and facilitated the weekly gardening sessions, which slowly transformed the garden into a calming and special green space where all forms of wildlife are nurtured. Even “Biscuit”, our resident fox who digs out the perennials we stubbornly keep planting, is celebrated. Mandy, our Urban Gardener, joined us in 2024 thanks to a partnership with OK BID and became a vital part of the project, co-delivering the gardening sessions and overseeing the garden maintenance. The volunteer learning programme includes regular workshops, group visits to other gardens across London and, importantly, Garden Assemblies.

The Garden Assemblies are seasonal events in which the volunteers share with wider audiences the evolution of the garden and support the delivery of workshops, talks and horticultural activities facilitated by horticulturalists, designers, writers and artists such as Errol Fernandez, Sue Stuart-Smith, Claire Takacs and many more.

*Growing Together* not only has transformed the garden, but it has also massively improved the wellbeing of the volunteers, allowed the museum to build a network of connections and a community of people passionate about horticulture and design, and facilitated collective action committed to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Biodiversity Action Plan 2022 – 2027.

Looking into the future with optimism in the framework of the *More Than Human* exhibition, we are now in the process of articulating the next phase of this project and envisioning an inclusive and inspiring space where audiences can come together to learn about the potential of design to support nature.

Next time you visit the museum, have a walk around the garden and join us in imagining what its future could look like.

**Naomi Zaragoza**  
Assistant Curator of Public Practice



# Design Circle giving levels

We have three levels of support within the Design Circle; Benefactor, Fellow, Patron. Everyone who joins the Design Circle makes a vital contribution to the museum's work, and your ongoing support is hugely appreciated.

We are a growing community of like-minded individuals and we're always delighted to welcome new friends on board. If you know someone who might enjoy being part of the Design Circle, do invite them along to an event as your guest to find out more.

## Design Benefactor

£10,000  
(£800 benefit, plus £9,200 voluntary donation)

Membership as a Benefactor offers you the opportunity to build a close relationship with the museum, with exclusive access to private events and specially organised trips in addition to everything we offer our Fellows. You will also have the chance to have your support for the museum recognised against an exhibition or programme of your choice, where possible.



**Stefanie Woodford**  
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## Design Fellow

£5,000  
(£400 benefit, plus £4,600 voluntary donation)

Membership as a Fellow offers a more exclusive level of access to the museum and its team. Enjoy tours of private collections, access to international trips with the Director and the chance to spend time with some of the most creative designers and architects in the world.

## Design Patron

£1,000  
(£200 benefit, plus £800 voluntary donation)

Membership as a Patron offers behind-the-scenes access to the museum and to events such as curator-led tours, talks and studio visits.

# legacy giving

The Design Museum was founded by Sir Terence Conran in 1989 with the purpose of promoting awareness of design in education, industry, commerce and culture. Nearly 35 years on, we continue to share the transformative potential of design with the broadest possible audience.

By leaving a gift in your Will, you can take your place in the unfolding history of design and help us celebrate a world in which design helps people and the planet to thrive, for generations to come.

Planned giving helps us to continue our work creating inspiring exhibitions, championing design's role in the green transition and nurturing the designers of tomorrow.

If you would like to make a lasting impact, please contact us on **patrons@designmuseum.org** to discuss leaving a gift in your Will.



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To book your place at a Design Circle event or  
to register your interest, please contact us:

[patrons@designmuseum.org](mailto:patrons@designmuseum.org)

the Design Circle