

## Bethan Laura Wood's “sumptuous” creations to launch Design Museum’s new annual display series



Bethan Laura Wood. Photo: David Sierra

### **PLATFORM: Bethan Laura Wood**

14 February 2025 — January 2026 | the Design Museum

[PRESS IMAGES AVAILABLE HERE](#)

The first solo presentation in a UK museum of the work of British designer and artist Bethan Laura Wood will open at the Design Museum next month.

Over 70 objects will go on show — including some of Wood’s most eye-catching creations alongside brand-new work — in the free display that celebrates her radical and vibrant practice.

Wood’s show will inaugurate a new and important annual display series at the Design Museum — titled PLATFORM — which champions contemporary design practice.

Known for her eclectic creations spanning furniture, lighting, jewellery, and installations, Bethan Laura Wood's work is characterised by a bold use of colour, intricate patterns, and innovative material combinations. Visitors to the display will discover objects ranging from stained teacups to patterned modular furniture.

Since obtaining an MA in Design Products at the Royal College of Art and establishing her eponymous design studio in 2009, Wood has become one of the most exciting new designers of the past decade, and has quickly gained a cult following alongside a celebrated global design reputation. She's been commissioned by and produced named collaborations with a variety of international partners in recent years, including Perrier–Jouët, Hermes and Dior, and she has works in the permanent collections of the Wellcome Collection and the V&A in London, the Dresden State Art Collections in Germany, the Art Institute of Chicago and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in the USA, and the National Gallery of Victoria in Australia.

Her PLATFORM display marks a return to the Design Museum for Wood, who exhibited an installation at the museum as part of a cohort of Designers in Residence in 2009. This programme saw young designers at the very beginning of their careers invited to create site-specific work in the museum's former home in Shad Thames. Wood furnished the museum café with functional furniture made up from a patchwork of laminates.

### ***Desire, Adornment and Hyperreality***

Wood's display at the Design Museum will be split into three sections — *Desire, Adornment and Hyperreality* — which explore some of the significant recurring themes of her work.

*Desire* will focus on Wood's fascination with how we connect with everyday objects. As an avid collector herself, Wood's work delves into how and why we covet certain pieces. By exploring objects that become integral to our daily routines, Wood seeks to design things that people

want to keep, and which give a sense of ceremony every time they are used.

On display in this section will be a porcelain tea set intentionally stained by Wood so that the more the cups are used, the more the pattern reveals itself. These will be seen alongside a colourful and embroidered installation of desserts inspired by paintings in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum. There'll also be striking wall-mounted flower lights created in collaboration with Mexican and Italian artisans.

*Adornment* will explore Wood's use of ornamentation, decoration and pattern. Her practise considers how objects can be both functional and highly ornate, with decoration adding layered meaning.

Visitors will discover in this section Wood's reinterpretation of Tolix's 'Model A' chair, a ubiquitous seat in public spaces. Her eye-catching redesign saw her subvert the original chair's simplicity by combining two apparent opposites — the feminine form and industrial power. It was in part inspired by the robot Maschinenmensch Maria from the film 'Metropolis' (1927) and Queen Elizabeth I.

In the final section, *Hyperreality*, objects on show will demonstrate how Wood plays with our understanding of what is natural versus what is man-made, and how she often creates illusions by layering materials and pattern to force us to question what we are looking at.

On show will be HyperNature, Wood's psychedelic wall scone. With branches made from aluminium and leaves and petals made from PVC, Wood's design blurs the boundaries between the natural and man-made while also elevating PVC from an everyday material into an artisan object. There will also be a full-scale example of one of Wood's Kaleidoscope-o-rama carpets — produced by cc-tapis — a contemporary take on highly decorative rugs that were popular during the Regency period in Britain. Wood's carpets nod to the popular painting method of 'graining', a decorative technique that imitates the look of expensive and rare hardwoods.

Each of these three sections will begin with an item from Wood's own collection. These objects will provide a jumping off point into the section's themes, and will offer a personal insight into her inspirations.

**Bethan Laura Wood** said "It is a great honour to be invited to display a wide range of my studio's work at the Design Museum. This exhibition not only highlights the final pieces but also offers a behind-the-scenes look at my creative process — from early sketches and renderings to detailed scale models. The museum has been a significant supporter of my work ever since I participated in its Design Residency program in 2009 with *Particle*. That experience was a pivotal moment in the development of my design language. It brings me immense joy to return and present this body of work, along with many pieces that followed, in a free-access space where it can be enjoyed by everyone."

**Esme Hawes, curator of PLATFORM: Bethan Laura Wood at the Design Museum**, said "Wood's work invites us to look beyond the surface, and her vibrant and varied work nods to different cultures and time periods, celebrating individuality and maximalism. We cannot wait for visitors to come and experience her designs and their sumptuous explosion of colour, pattern and texture."

### **PLATFORM — a new annual display series**

PLATFORM is a new annual display on the first-floor atrium gallery in the heart of the Design Museum, that is free to visit.

Each year PLATFORM will showcase the work of a designer or studio who are making a significant impact on contemporary design. With few non-commercial spaces in London dedicated to showcasing contemporary design, PLATFORM is offering a unique opportunity for designers to engage with Design Museum audiences and to demonstrate the broad reach of design in society. Visitors will be invited into the conversation about their practice and how and why they design.

The PLATFORM displays will feature the inspirations, processes and

progress associated with developing design projects. This includes various aspects of the creative process, including sketches, model making and prototypes, as well as the completed project.

These displays will build upon the legacy of previous solo displays at the Design Museum since its move to Kensington, including the work of Margaret Calvert (2020-2021), Bethany Williams (2022) and Yinka Ilori (2022-2023).

**Johanna Agerman-Ross, the Conran Chief Curator at the Design Museum,** said: “Every year, the heart of the Design Museum will now showcase the work of a designer or studio that’s making a remarkable impact on contemporary design. It’s hugely exciting that our hundreds of thousands of annual visitors will be able to get a snapshot into the current status of the design discipline and its transformative potential. And we hope that it also inspires a new generation of designers, who might one day get to see their work on display in PLATFORM.”

**[PLATFORM: Bethan Laura Wood](#)** will open at the Design Museum in London on 14 February 2025 and is free to visit.

**-Ends-**

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **PRESS ENQUIRIES:**

Maxwell Blowfield, Senior Media and PR Manager

E: [maxwell.blowfield@designmuseum.org](mailto:maxwell.blowfield@designmuseum.org)

Press Office

E: [pr@designmuseum.org](mailto:pr@designmuseum.org)

#### **About Bethan Laura Wood**

Since founding her multidisciplinary studio in 2009, Bethan Laura Wood has redefined contemporary design with her bold explorations of materials, vibrant colour palettes, and rich artisan collaborations.

Her distinctive work is celebrated for its kaleidoscope of colours, intricate patterns, layered references, and innovative use of materials.

Residencies and location-based projects are integral to her creative process. She frequently works in response to her environment, partnering with local manufacturers and drawing inspiration from the visual and material culture unique to each region.

Driven by a critical approach to sustainability, Bethan challenges the norms of mass consumption while fostering practical innovation. Through her designs, she creates objects that inspire dialogue and connect people with the cultural stories embedded in everyday materials.

**About the Design Museum:**

The Design Museum is a multifaceted museum, an ever-changing space for the public, industry and education to come together and explore new ideas. A registered charity, the museum's innovative exhibitions, partnerships, research and learning programmes evidence how design can enable this planet and its inhabitants to thrive. Our landmark building in Kensington is the centre of our national network and a global hub for the transformative potential of design.



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