

the design circle



the
DESIGN
MUSEUM

autumn / winter
programme 2026-27



welcome

Dear friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Design Museum's autumn/winter 2026-27 season and to share a new programme of exhibitions and events created exclusively for the Design Circle. Through these experiences, we hope to bring you closer to the museum's exhibitions, collection and research, while celebrating the community of supporters whose generosity makes our work possible.

This season is anchored by two major exhibitions that demonstrate the breadth and impact of contemporary design. In October, we open the first retrospective in Europe dedicated to Es Devlin, one of the most influential artists and designers working today. Developed in close collaboration with Devlin, the exhibition celebrates her 30-year practice across sculpture, stage design, music, language and light, offering new insight into the creative process behind some of the most ambitious and immersive works of our time.

In November, we present *The New Black Aesthetic*, guest curated by Charlene Prempeh. Bringing together contemporary Black designers working across fashion, furniture, architecture and installation, the exhibition explores the ways in which identity, culture and community continue to shape design practice and innovation.

Beyond the galleries, this season's Design Circle programme offers opportunities to engage directly with designers, curators, collectors and cultural leaders. Alongside visits to private collections, curator-led tours and design fairs, we are delighted to continue strengthening relationships with fellow cultural institutions through reciprocal visits to V&A East, National Theatre and the London Transport Museum Depot.

This year also marks ten years since the Design Museum reopened in Kensington. Over the past decade, the museum has welcomed millions of visitors and presented exhibitions that have explored design's role in shaping the world around us. As we look ahead, initiatives including Future Observatory, our national research programme for the green transition, and the New Collection Gallery, opening in 2029, will continue to place design at the heart of conversations about the future.

Thank you for your continued support. Your generosity enables us to deliver ambitious exhibitions, expand our research and engage new audiences with the power of design. We look forward to welcoming you to the museum over the coming months.

Tim Marlow OBE
Director and Chief Executive

autumn winter exhibition programme

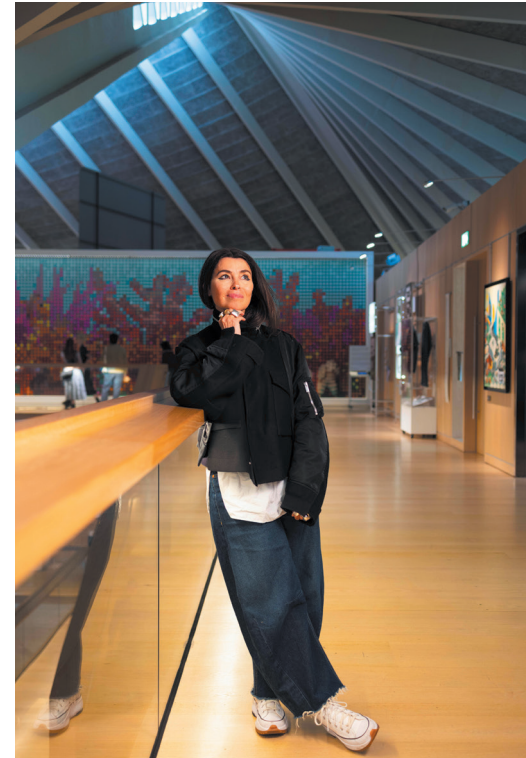
NIGO: From Japan with Love

Closes 4 October 2026

Discover the vision and legacy of Japanese designer and creative director NIGO - from street style to music and beyond, in the first-ever museum retrospective outside of Japan to chart his life and career.

Journey from the back streets of Harajuku, Tokyo, to the global stage, tracing a career that has shaped streetwear, fashion, music and contemporary culture.

From founding A Bathing Ape in the 1990s to his current role as Artistic Director of KENZO, the exhibition explores the ideas, collaborations and cultural references behind some of the most influential brands and designs of recent decades.



Es Devlin: Other Worlds 2 October 2026 – 4 April 2027

Enter the imaginative world of British artist and designer Es Devlin in the first retrospective in Europe celebrating her 30-year creative practice across sculpture, stage design, music, language and light.

Developed in close collaboration with the artist, this immersive exhibition explores Devlin's genre-defying practice through artworks, installations and film, alongside the largest solo presentation of her archive to date. Highlights include a recreation of Devlin's London studio, filled with her books, objects and maquettes, and the '30-Year Desk', a display specially designed for the gallery space, revealing the creative process behind projects spanning theatre, public art, Olympic ceremonies, the Super Bowl halftime show and collaborations with some of the world's most celebrated musicians.

The Nue Black Aesthetic 6 November 2026 – 8 August 2027

This landmark show celebrates the work of contemporary Black designers whose work shape the current design industry. Spanning furniture, architecture, fashion and installation, the exhibition will unpack the multifaceted practices of designers who draw directly from identity and culture, build community and those who are redefining design systems far beyond the Black community.

This exhibition is guest-curated by the founder of A Vibe Called Tech and author of Now You See Me: An Introduction to 100 Years of Black Design, Charlene Prempeh, in collaboration with the Design Museum.



design circle events



september

Walking Tour

Design Museum Garden and Kensington High Street

Thursday 10 September
10.30 – 12.30

Join us for a special exploration of the Design Museum's Dame Sylvia Crowe Garden and the wider landscape of Kensington. Developed through the museum's Growing Together initiative, the garden has been transformed into a thriving urban habitat that supports biodiversity, wellbeing and social connection. A real-world expression of many of the themes explored through Future Observatory's programme, the garden demonstrates how design can foster more reciprocal relationships between people and the natural world.

Guided by members of the team behind the project, we will explore the evolution of the garden and its role within the museum's environmental work before venturing beyond the museum on a short walking tour along Kensington High Street.

Through parks, botanical spaces and examples of local architecture, we will discover how history, biodiversity and community-led initiatives are shaping one of London's most vibrant neighbourhoods, revealing Kensington as an interconnected ecosystem where nature, culture and design coexist.

Special Curator Introduction

The Music is Black: A British Story at V&A East

Friday 25 September
11:00 – 12:30

Experience the new V&A East's inaugural exhibition, *The Music is Black: A British Story* with a special welcome from the exhibition's lead curator Jacqueline Springer - Curator, Africa and Diaspora at the V&A, before immersing yourself in one of the year's most ambitious exhibitions. Through a unique headphone-led experience, discover how 125 years of Black British music - from jazz, lovers rock, reggae, jungle, UK garage and grime - has transformed not only sound, but also informed wider movements in design, style and visual culture, while reflecting the social and political histories that have shaped modern Britain.

Following the exhibition, you are warmly invited to explore *Why We Make*, V&A East's inspiring free permanent galleries. Designed by O'Donnell + Tuomey and created by JA Projects in collaboration with the V&A East Youth Collective, the building itself embodies a spirit of collaboration and community. Across more than 500 objects spanning centuries and cultures, discover fascinating dialogues between historic works and contemporary acquisitions from east London, including pieces by Althea McNish - whose work will also feature in the Design Museum's forthcoming exhibition *The New Black Aesthetic*.



Design Circle First Look

Es Devlin: Other Worlds

Tuesday 29 September

18:00 – 19:00

As a member of the Design Circle, enjoy a first look at our major exhibition, *Es Devlin: Other Worlds*. Enter the imaginative realm of the acclaimed British artist and designer in the first retrospective in Europe celebrating her 30-year creative practice across sculpture, stage design, music, language and light.

Developed in close collaboration with Es Devlin, the exhibition explores her genre-defying practice through artworks, installations and film, alongside the largest solo presentation of her archive to date. Experience a recreation of Devlin's London studio and discover the creative process behind projects spanning theatre, public art and live performance.

Join us prior to the opening reception for the chance to see the exhibition before anyone else. Exhibition Curators, Johanna Agerman Ross and Danielle Thom, will lead a guided tour and share insights into the making of this landmark retrospective.

Opening Reception

Es Devlin: Other Worlds

Tuesday 29 September

19:00 – 21:30

Join us for the official opening reception, hosted by museum Director and Chief Executive, Tim Marlow, to celebrate the opening of *Es Devlin: Other Worlds*.





october

Private Collection Visit

Elena Segal

Friday 2 October

18:00 – 19:30

Fellows and Benefactors

We are delighted that Elena Segal will kindly host Fellows and Benefactors of the Design Circle for an intimate visit of her remarkable home. Specially designed in collaboration with Rodić Davidson Architects to house her internationally renowned collection of vintage couture dresses, guests will have the rare opportunity to view extraordinary pieces by designers including Alexander McQueen, Charles James, Roberto Capucci, Givenchy and Dior.

Elena will be joined by the architects behind the project, together with the collection's conservator. Guests will gain a unique insight into the vision for the house, the artistry and craftsmanship of the collection, as well as the specialist conservation and display techniques that bring these extraordinary works to life.

Talk

Conran Lecture 2026

Thursday 8 October

Created in honour of our founder Sir Terence Conran, the annual Conran Lecture celebrates design in all its forms and the impact it has on the world today.

This year, we look forward to welcoming a leading voice from the world of design for a conversation with Tim Marlow, Director and Chief Executive of the Design Museum.

Invitations will be shared in September. In the meantime, please save the date.

Day Trip

Stoke-on-Trent: British Ceramics, Craft and Contemporary Design

Friday 9 October

Join us for a special visit to the 1882 Ltd. studio and V&A Wedgwood Collection in Stoke-on-Trent.

1882 Ltd. was established in 2011 by Emily Johnson and her father, Christopher, the fourth and fifth generations of the famous Johnson Brothers pottery family, based in Stoke-on-Trent. The brand is renowned for its innovative collaborations with leading artists and designers, including Barnaby Barford and Bruce McLean, Max Lamb, Faye Toogood and John Pawson. During our visit, we will explore the studio and factory spaces and learn more about the craftsmanship and production processes behind their work.

Lunch will be at Lunar on site, and we will also visit the V&A Wedgwood Collection nearby. The collection is a museum and archive dedicated to British ceramic design and production, offering insight into the evolution of ceramic design, craftsmanship and innovation from the 18th century to the present day. The museum comprises over 165,000 works and charts the Wedgwood story through changing fashions from Rococo to neo-Classical pottery, alongside examples of Wedgwood's pioneering collaborations with artists and designers from John Flaxman to Eduardo Paolozzi.

We look forward to sharing further details and cost in due course. In the meantime, please register your interest with the team.





Private Tour PAD London

Thursday 15 October
14:30 – 15:30

Set in the vibrant heart of Mayfair, PAD London is the only fair in the UK dedicated to historical and contemporary design. Bringing together renowned international galleries from across Europe, North America and Asia, the fair presents an outstanding selection of the most coveted and iconic works available on the market today.

Join us for an exclusive guided tour of PAD with arts and design writer, Caroline Roux, and gain insight into selected highlights of this year's fair.

We also have a number of passes available for self-guided access to PAD London. Please contact the team if you would like to receive one.

VIP Breakfast and Private View

Es Devlin: Other Worlds

Friday 16 October
08:30 – 10:00

Design Circle members, Trustees and Frieze VIPs are invited to discover the extraordinary world of Es Devlin at an early-morning private view of *Es Devlin: Other Worlds*. Join us for a light breakfast at the Design Museum before exploring the first UK exhibition dedicated to the internationally renowned artist and designer.

Curators will be in attendance to provide their curatorial insight to this remarkable exhibition, spanning kinetic stage sculptures and monumental art installations.



november

Design Circle First Look

The Nue Black Aesthetic

Wednesday 4 November

18:15 – 19:00

As a member of the Design Circle, enjoy a special preview of our major exhibition, *The Nue Black Aesthetic*. This landmark show celebrates contemporary Black designers who are reshaping British design across furniture, fashion, architecture and installation.

Including works by Mac Collins, Samuel Ross, Bianca Saunders and Giles Tettey Nartey, this thought-provoking show will invite visitors to consider how the Black experience today is central to a designer's practice and to rethink assumptions about what Black design looks like, as well as who gets to shape design culture.

Join us before the opening reception for a special first look at the exhibition and enjoy a private tour of the show with Guest Curator, Charlene Prempeh and Project Curator, Tiya Dahyabhai.

Opening Reception

The Nue Black Aesthetic

Wednesday 4 November

19:00 – 21.30

Join us for the official opening reception, hosted by museum Director and Chief Executive, Tim Marlow, to celebrate the opening of *The Nue Black Aesthetic*.



Curators Tour

Es Devlin and drinks at Templeton Garden

Monday 9 November
17:30 – 18:30

Join us at the Design Museum for a special tour of *Es Devlin: Other Worlds*, led by one of the curators. Enjoy an in-depth exploration of the show and hear first-hand how the exhibition was developed whilst discovering the evolution of Es Devlin's practice, through rare maquettes, sketches, annotated texts and large-scale installations. Following the tour, we will continue the conversation over drinks at our partner hotel, Templeton Garden, just a short walk from the museum.

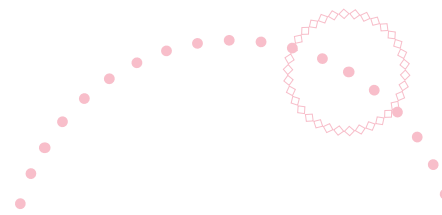


Drinks Reception

10th Anniversary Celebration

Friday 20 November
18:30 – 20:30

A moment to kick-start our 10-year anniversary celebrations, ahead of the public festival weekend. We will celebrate in our new cafe space at the museum, alongside a special retail moment with festive cheer. One-off discounts and other offers will be available on the evening, including a free gift with purchase for donors and supporters.



january

Private Tour

National Theatre and Archive

Tuesday 26 January
10:00 – 11:30

Join us for a special behind-the-scenes visit to the iconic National Theatre and Archive, offering a unique insight into the creative and technical processes that bring world-class productions to life. This bespoke tour will explore the art of stage and set design, from initial concept and model-making through to construction, staging and performance.

Complementing our exhibition *Es Devlin: Other Worlds*, this visit will also highlight Es Devlin's long-standing relationship with the National Theatre and her contribution to some of its most celebrated productions. Along the way, discover the extraordinary craftsmanship, innovation and collaboration that underpin contemporary theatre-making design, while gaining access to areas rarely seen by the public.





february

Curator's Tour

London Transport Museum Depot

Friday 5 February

10:00 – 11:30

Join us for a special guided tour through one of the world's most significant collections of urban transport and discover the stories behind London's transport network. Usually closed to the public, the London Transport Museum Depot in Acton houses over 320,000 items, including vehicles, signs, models, original engineering drawings and the Museum's celebrated poster collection.

The Depot offers a rare opportunity to explore the vast archive that supports the Museum's exhibitions. From iconic Underground carriages and buses to graphic design, maps, engineering drawings and much more, these objects together form one of the most comprehensive and important records of urban transport anywhere in the world.

The tour will be led by Head Curator Matt Brosnan, who will share insights into the collection and its role in documenting London's social and design history.



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 London

13 – 18 October 2026

Frieze London

14 – 18 October 2026

1-54

15 – 18 October 2026

Paris Photo

12 – 15 November 2026

Collect Art Fair

24 – 28 February 2027

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. Today, 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.

If you would like to find out more about leaving a legacy to the Design Museum, please contact patrons@designmuseum.org.

a message from the Director of Future Observatory



It's amazing to think that it's been nearly five years since we launched Future Observatory. What began as a small pilot project with our partners, UKRI's Arts and Humanities Research Council, became a six-year £40 million national research programme that puts design research squarely at the heart of the green transition.

In those six years, we have funded more than one hundred design research projects that look to reduce carbon emissions, move to cleaner materials and regenerate landscapes. You may have seen some of those projects displayed in the museum, or featured in Future Observatory Journal – perhaps you've visited our research display on the top floor of the museum, or you saw last year's *More than Human* exhibition.

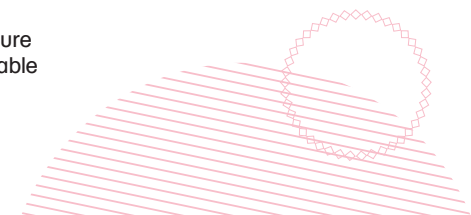
In establishing Future Observatory, the Design Museum has expanded the potential of what a museum can be: not just a place for interpreting the past or the present, but a place that can help shape the future. Most museums that engage with climate issues do so from the position of raising awareness, which is important work. The Design Museum though is in the rare position of being able to move beyond merely raising awareness of climate breakdown, to funding the kinds of research that seek to address it. I call this 'the museum as catalyst'.

For the museum to be a catalyst naturally involves stimulating the public imagination as to the possibilities of the green transition, but as a design museum it is also critical to engage industry. The very premise of Future Observatory was that a design museum has a role to play in supporting a transformative industrial strategy; and there are two recent initiatives that I'd like to flag here. The first is the Stone Demonstrator, which Future Observatory commissioned last year and which demonstrates how structural stone frames can hugely reduce the carbon emissions of a building compared to one that uses a steel or concrete frame. The other initiative is the Prototype Grants that we launched recently, which provide four grants of up to £70,000 each for architecture and design practices to research sustainable supply chains.



Let me close by inviting you to visit 'Mineral', the exhibition of work by this year's Design Researchers in Residence. Here you'll encounter a set of extraordinary objects that explore the dew ponds of our chalk landscapes, lithium mining in Cornwall, the history of copper in Anglesey and the potential of waste silica as a material.

Justin McGuirk
Director of Future Observatory



exclusive discounts for the Design Circle



Lunch offer at Orrery

We are pleased to share that **Orrery by Pierre Minotti** is offering **20% off their lunch menu**, along with a **glass of champagne on arrival**, exclusively for Design Circle members this season. Orrery is a fine dining restaurant in the heart of Marylebone and is just a short walk from Regent's Park, making it an ideal spot for lunch following a visit to Frieze this October. Available from 1st July to 31st October 2026, simply add 'Design Museum Design Circle' in the booking notes in order to redeem the offer.

Miir Templeton Garden offer

Templeton Garden, the Design Museum's partner hotel, offers exclusive benefits for Design Circle members. **Enjoy 20% off food and drink at Templeton Garden**, including relaxed lunches and modern British dining at Pippin's, as well as cocktails at Sprout. Simply quote **DESIGNMUSEUM** when booking and present your Design Circle membership card on the day.

Design Circle members also receive 30% off the Best Available Rate at Templeton Garden. Use code **PKDESIGN** when booking to enjoy a thoughtfully designed stay, just moments from the museum. Offer subject to availability.



Design Circle giving levels

The Design Circle has three levels of support: Benefactor, Fellow and Patron.

Everyone who joins the Design Circle makes a vital contribution to the museum's work, and we are always delighted to welcome new members.

Design Benefactor

£10,000

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

As a Benefactor, develop a close philanthropic relationship with the museum and Director, including all Fellow benefits and the opportunity to support a specific exhibition or programme, with recognition where appropriate.

Design Fellow

£5,000

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

As a Fellow, enjoy a deeper level of access through private collection visits, Director-led international trips, and opportunities to meet leading designers and architects.

Design Patron

£1,000

(£200 benefit, plus £800 voluntary donation)

As a Patron, access a bespoke events programme of curator-led tours, insightful talks and studio visits, offering behind-the-scenes access to the world of design.



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To book your place at a Design Circle event
or to register your interest, please contact us:
patrons@designmuseum.org
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