



## **V&A APPOINTS ARCHITECTS TO DESIGN NEW EUROPEAN GALLERIES**

**Galleries to open in 2014**

The V&A has appointed ZMMA to design its new Europe 1600-1800 Galleries.

Europe 1600-1800 is the largest gallery refurbishment in the second phase of the V&A's FuturePlan to transform the Museum through new galleries and redisplays of its collections. The project will see the complete redisplay and reinterpretation of seven galleries containing some of the most magnificent and ornate works of art and design in the V&A's collections. The reopening of these galleries will complete the restoration of the entire front wing of the Museum.

Situated at basement level, running along the Cromwell Road and Exhibition Road, the galleries are prominently located with access points from both the Grand Entrance and the Tunnel Entrance. The redesign will see the 1970s cladding stripped back to reveal the original Aston Webb architecture, thereby reclaiming over 350 square metres of unused display space and returning the grandeur of scale back to the galleries. The long-hidden windows that run continuously around the outside of the galleries will be reinstated to maximise the amount of natural light flowing into the space and the teak parquet floors will be restored. ZMMA will also introduce sustainable, low energy climatic control within the galleries.

Around 1000 objects will be shown, exploring European art and design between 1600 and 1800 and continuing the story begun in the displays of the V&A's Medieval & Renaissance Galleries. On display will be spectacular examples of textiles and fashion, painting and sculpture, ceramics and glass, furniture and metalwork, prints and books created by Europe's finest artists and craftsmen of the 17th and 18th centuries for the period's most important figures, including Louis XIV, Marie Antoinette, Frederick the Great and Catherine the Great.

Shifts in mood and atmosphere between the galleries will be created through lighting, colour scheme and arrangement of the objects. Each gallery will have individual characteristics that have resonance with the period and style of the collections,

highlighting the transition through the architectural and design styles from the Baroque, to Rococo and Neoclassicism. Some displays will suggest the splendour of court interiors for which the larger and more elaborate pieces were made, others will evoke the more intimate domestic interiors.

Moira Gemmill, V&A's Director of Projects, Design and Estate, said:

*"We chose ZMMA for this project because of their inspired response to our brief. As well as covering all the practical considerations of displaying sensitive and precious objects in appropriate conditions, their concept emphasises the luxuriousness of the collection and theatricality of the period. We are sure they will create beautiful and sumptuous settings for this wonderful collection."*

Adam Zombory-Moldovan of ZMMA said of winning the commission:

*"Like so many visitors, we are seduced by the glamour and the academic pre-eminence of the V&A. We are delighted with the V&A's response to our design vision for the Europe 1600-1800 galleries. We are enormously proud to have been chosen to work with the curators and staff to bring about the transformation of these galleries which will give new life to the public's enjoyment of this astonishingly rich period of European design, art and culture in the V&A's collection."*

Europe 1600-1800 has received a first-round pass from the HLF of £4,757,600, including £401,600 development funding. The galleries are expected to open in 2014.

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About ZMMA**

ZMMA was founded in 1994 by Adam Zombory-Moldovan. Based in London, the practice has developed special expertise in galleries, museums, visual arts and mixed-use arts buildings and exhibition design. It recently completed the acclaimed remodelling and revival of the historic Watts Gallery in Compton, Surrey which was supported by a £4.9m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

ZMMA has a particular focus on arts projects within significant historic buildings as well as designing new buildings for historic sites. The inventive, contemporary transformation of historic spaces with a focus on natural lighting is at the centre of the practice's work. Past projects include galleries for diverse private collections of Constable, Heron and Beuys, retail art galleries for Medieval and Renaissance work, a series of galleries for Tibetan, South-East Asian and Islamic art, spaces for contemporary craft as well as exhibition designs for Medieval stained glass and for other collections. Ongoing projects include a museum and craft centre in Dorset for Walford Mill Crafts, a mixed-use arts centre – converting a historic chapel in Hampshire. The most recent commissions are two public space art installations and a museum for the work of William Heath Robinson.

### **About the V&A's FuturePlan**

Through FuturePlan, the V&A is creating beautiful and contemporary new settings for its outstanding collections while restoring much of the building's original architecture and improving visitors' experience of the Museum. The first 10 year phase of FuturePlan got underway with the British Galleries which opened in 2001 and was completed at the end of 2009 with the opening of the Medieval & Renaissance Galleries. During this phase, the V&A completed 43 projects, transformed 26,500 square metres and reclaimed 3,000 square metres of back of house space for galleries and public areas. To realise this, the V&A worked with over 50 architectural, design and engineering practices and raised £120 million from private donors and funding bodies including substantial grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Museum has also had a three-fold rise in visitors since FuturePlan began. The second phase is now underway.

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