



News Release

All of This Belongs to You

1 April – 19 July 2015

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This spring, with the UK engaged in the democratic process of an election, the V&A presents *All of This Belongs to You*, a free exhibition about the museum as a public space and the role of public institutions in contemporary life. Distributed across both the physical and online spaces of the Museum, *All of This Belongs to You* will comprise four site-specific installations, three displays, two online commissions and a series of events including a special late opening on election night (7 May).

Each of these projects will test the capacity of the V&A as a public entity and what it means to be responsible for a national public collection, opening the museum up as a stage for debate and discussion as much as a space for the appreciation of objects. More than 40 new acquisitions have been made for this project, and loaned objects on display will include the hard drives that held documents leaked to the Guardian newspaper by Edward Snowden, and which were subsequently ordered to be destroyed by the UK government.

Martin Roth, director of the V&A said: *“The V&A’s collection belongs to all of us, and the Museum is a space owned by the public. But what can art, design and architecture really say about the idea of civic identity, about privacy and about our lives as citizens? With an election approaching, people are deciding their collective futures and their individual roles in society. All of This Belongs to You is about using art, design and architecture to open up the truly public space of our Museum as a platform for debate.”*

At the core of the exhibition are four installations created by invited architects, designers and artists:

- New York-based artist and architectural preservationist **Jorge Otero-Pailos**’s installation ‘The Ethics of Dust: Trajan’s Column’ will interact with the largest object in the Museum. Using conservation latex, Otero-Pailos will ‘clean’ the hollow inside of the cast of Trajan’s Column, removing dust and dirt accumulated over decades in this usually unseen space. The resulting giant latex ‘cast of a cast’ will be exhibited adjacent to the original, revealing the passage of time, and highlighting the Museum’s duty of care to the public collection.

- London-based practice **muf architecture / art**'s project titled 'More than one (fragile) thing at a time' will take place within the Medieval and Renaissance galleries. This area of the Museum was designed as an archetypal public space, with daylight, sculptures of standing figures, and a fountain. muf's installation tests this description by hosting a series of activities, all provoked by the existing contents of the gallery and the afterlife of the places those objects came from. Informed by these tests, a series of furniture pieces will create particular relationships between viewers and the historical objects on permanent display.
- Artist and ecologist **Natalie Jeremijenko**, also based in New York, will create three related pieces under the title 'Re-Public of Air', each considering the Museum within the wider ecology of the city. A 'Phenological Clock' in the grand entrance will depict 12 months in the life-cycle of the flowering plants and pollinating insects that surround the V&A, 'Ag Bags' on the low walls at the front of the museum will introduce plant life to the stone architecture, and a 'Moth Cinema' will create a habitat for insects, celebrating their critical role in our daily lives.
- Artist and writer **James Bridle**'s installation 'Five Eyes' (<http://vam.ac.uk/hyper-stacks>) takes its name from the alliance of major global intelligence powers. Using an algorithm of the sort employed by these agencies, objects have been automatically selected from an analysis of the Museum collection's 1.4 million digital records. The resulting displays incorporate the Museum's archive files to create networks of objects that reveal the history and present state of surveillance and state power.

There will also be three specially curated displays that show new acquisitions alongside existing objects from the museum's collection:

- **Ways to be Secret** will examine the contradiction between our concern for online privacy, and our obsession with sharing via social media. At the heart of this display will be the hard drives which held documents leaked to the Guardian newspaper by Edward Snowden, which were subsequently ordered to be destroyed by the UK government. These will be shown alongside objects including the CryptoPhone 500, a secure, military-grade mobile phone, an Onion Pi router which enables users to browse the web anonymously and a selfie stick with a remote shutter release.
- **Ways to be Public** will present contemporary architecture and urbanism projects that rethink the role of contemporary public space today. It illustrates how architects are using new tools, tactics and ideas to forge publics in a variety of ways, from a flag binding together individual nations of the EU, to a garden designed to teach school children mathematics.

- **Civic Objects** will highlight 25 objects and spaces around the V&A that relate to the themes of the exhibition. From a security bollard used in the 2012 Olympics, to an example of the first street light, these objects illustrate the close relationship between design and public life.

In addition to the work and displays in the Museum's physical spaces, the exhibition will include two online-only commissions, each engaging with the digital realm as an emerging public space. Dutch graphic design studio **Bitcaves** will present 'Liquid Citizenship' (<http://vam.ac.uk/liquidcitizenship>), a web app that collates examples from around the world of how citizenship can be purchased or revoked, and US-based artist **Kyle Macdonald's** project 'Exhausting a Crowd' (<http://vam.ac.uk/exhaustingacrowd>) will invite visitors to annotate the actions and activities of people in a video of a major public space in London, producing a dense description and record of what occurs.

Finally, *All of This Belongs to You* will include a weekly programme of events, focussing in on themes raised by the exhibition: security, surveillance, public space, and public institutions. On May 7, the V&A will host an Election Night Special, a free public event with speakers exploring the intersection of design and politics. The full event programme will be available online.

For further press information please contact Benjamin Ward on benjamin@benjward.com / +44 (0) 7837 134 193

A selection of high resolution press images are available on <http://pressimages.vam.ac.uk>

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The exhibition is co-curated by Corinna Gardner, V&A Curator of Contemporary Product Design; Rory Hyde, Curator of Contemporary Architecture and Urbanism and Kieran Long, Senior Curator of Contemporary Architecture, Design and Digital.
- This FREE exhibition takes place across the V&A's many galleries and external spaces.
- The V&A is open daily from 10.00 to 17.45 and until 22.00 on Fridays
- To mark the opening of the exhibition a public party will be held on Tuesday 31 March from 20.00 until 22:00. Admission will be free.