



V&A's David Bowie is exhibition receives its millionth visitor

#DavidBowieis

Since opening at the V&A in London in 2013, the *David Bowie is* exhibition has toured to five international cities and has now been seen by over 1 million visitors worldwide, making it on track to become the V&A's most visited exhibition in its history once its international tour is completed.

To mark the millionth visitor, a *David Bowie is* collectors special edition catalogue signed by David Bowie, a pair of Sennheiser special edition Momentum headphones, a V&A Shop goody bag and tickets for three concerts at the Philharmonie de Paris were presented today to Sébastien Dormieu a teacher from Niort, France by Victoria Broackes, co-curator of the exhibition and Norbert Hilbich, Head of System Design, Sennheiser, at its current venue, The Philharmonie de Paris.

In the book, Bowie wrote a personal message '*David Bowie is...amazed at how you worked out where to stand in line to make you 1,000,000th. Well done!!*'. Sébastien said; "*I was coming to rediscover Bowie's universe having been listening to Ziggy Stardust, Diamond Dogs last night. I was not expecting such a good and surprising encounter with Bowie! It is an unforgettable day.*"

David Bowie is originated at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London in 2013, where it was seen by 312,000 visitors. The exhibition has since toured to Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (146,500 visitors); Museum of Image and Sound, Sao Paulo (80,000 visitors); Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin (151,000 visitors); and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (193,000 visitors) where it set a new attendance record for the museum. Chicago declared an official David Bowie Day on 23 September 2014 to mark the success of the exhibition. It is currently in its final weeks at the Philharmonie de Paris (closing 31 May), where extended opening hours will be in operation for the last ten days. The exhibition will then travel to the Australian Centre for the Moving Image in Melbourne, Australia (16 July – 1 November 2015) and on to the Groninger Museum in Groningen, The Netherlands (15 December 2015 – 15 March 2016).

In order to ensure the best audio experience for visitors, the V&A has worked in partnership with audio specialist Sennheiser which, alongside two immersive audio installations, provided audio guides which intuitively transmit the music and soundtrack when visitors

approach the exhibits and screens. This equipment is integral to the experience and has toured with the exhibition.

The *David Bowie is* accompanying catalogue has sold over 125,000 copies and has been translated into five languages. A newly curated, second special edition, the *David Bowie is Personal Portfolio, Black Edition*, will be available from the V&A Shop later this year. In April the feature film of the exhibition, *David Bowie is Happening Now*, was awarded a Silver Medal at the New York Film Festival. The film has been screened in the UK and across America and will be shown in cinemas in France and Switzerland on 1st June 2015 and later, Australia and the Benelux to coincide with the exhibition tour.

Martin Roth, V&A Director, said: “*David Bowie is really pushed the boundaries of what an exhibition experience could be, so we are thrilled so many visitors have been able to enjoy the exhibition internationally.*”

Paul Whiting, President Strategic Collaborations at Sennheiser, commented: “*Sennheiser congratulates the Victoria and Albert Museum on the extraordinary global success of ‘David Bowie is’. Today, in Paris, we are celebrating the one millionth visitor, and I am very proud that Sennheiser’s immersive audio technology is part of this truly exceptional exhibition.*”

The V&A started touring exhibitions internationally in 1992 and now has one of the largest touring programmes of any museum in the world. Previous popular V&A touring shows have included *Vivienne Westwood* (2004) which toured 11 venues across 10 countries and was seen by a total of 844,949 visitors; *Surreal Things: Surrealism and Design* (2007) was shown at four venues in four different countries and seen by 881,994 visitors; and *Art Deco* (2003) which toured eight venues in five countries with a total of 1,358,761 visitors, which is the current record. In 2014/15, 17 V&A exhibitions travelled to 36 venues in 10 countries worldwide, where they were seen by over 1.2 million people.

2014/15 was also a record year for the number of visitors to the V&A, with the total number to all sites being in excess of 3.7 million for the first time. The current *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* exhibition, which will not tour to any other venues, is also breaking records; nearly 84,000 advance tickets were sold before it opened on 14 March and the accompanying book has already been re-printed three times, selling 26,830 copies to date. The V&A is operating extended opening hours to accommodate demand and ensure tickets are available to those who want to see the exhibition.

For further PRESS information about the exhibition, please contact Lily Booth in the V&A press office on 020 7942 2508 or email l.booth@vam.ac.uk (not for publication).

A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from
<http://pressimages.vam.ac.uk>

Sound experience by



About Sennheiser

The Sennheiser Group, with its headquarters in Wedemark near Hanover, Germany, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of microphones, headphones and wireless transmission systems. The family-owned company, which was established in 1945, employs more than 2,500 people worldwide, and has manufacturing plants in Germany, Ireland and the USA. Sennheiser is represented by subsidiaries and partners worldwide. Also part of the Sennheiser Group are Georg Neumann GmbH, Berlin (studio microphones and monitor loudspeakers), and the joint venture Sennheiser Communications A/S (headsets for PCs, offices and call centres).