



VICTORIA AND ALBERT EXHIBITIONS

Postmodernism: Style and Subversion 1970-1990

24 September 2011 - 8 January 2012

Exploring across all genres of art, what Postmodernism means and where it comes from. Of all movements in art and design history, postmodernism is perhaps the most controversial. This era defies definition, but it is a perfect subject for an exhibition. Postmodernism was an unstable mix of the theatrical and theoretical. It was visually thrilling, a multifaceted style that ranged from the colourful to the ruinous, the ludicrous to the luxurious.

Heroes and Heroines

Tom Cribb and Tom Molyneux, moulded lead-glazed earthenware, painted in enamels, Staffordshire, about 1815, purchased through the Julie and Robert Breckman Staffordshire fund.

3 October 2011 - 25 April 2012
Sackler Centre
Free admission

Have you ever wondered what it takes to be a hero? Found in the religious and secular realms, mythological and folk tales, history and everyday life, from swashbucklers and freedom fighters to athletes and pop stars, heroes and heroines have been celebrated then and now as inspirational figures. Taking objects from across the Museum's collections, this display presents some extraordinary characters that offer models of courage, achievement and generosity. Loaded with meaning, the selected objects also touch upon national identity and propaganda, appropriation and subversion, gender and prejudice.

Venetian Visions: the art of Canaletto, Tiepolo, Carlevarijis and their contemporaries 1700 – 1800

Giambattista Tiepolo (1696-1770), Apollo and Marsyas, about 1725.

7 October 2011 – 1 April 2012
Paintings, Room 88a & The Julie and Robert Breckman Prints and Drawings Gallery, Room 90
Admission free

The eighteenth century was possibly the last great period of Venetian art. It witnessed a wealth in artistic production from paintings, drawings and prints to porcelain, lace and glass. This display will draw from the V&A collections of prints, drawings, textiles, ceramics and glass to showcase Venetian arts during this age of stylistic splendor.

Ai Weiwei: Dropping the Urn (Ceramic Works, 5000 BC – AD 2010)

Coca-Cola vase, Ai Weiwei, 1997, Neolithic vase (5000-3000 BC) and paint. André Stockamp & Christopher Tsai collection

15 October 2011 – 18 March 2012
Room 146
Free admission

This display presents work by Beijing based artist Ai Weiwei, one of the most prominent artists working in China today. Featuring a selection of ceramic works, photographs and video this is a rare opportunity to view some of the most iconic works in the field of Chinese contemporary art. Through his work Ai addresses issues pertinent to contemporary China; notably the loss of historic material culture due to rapid modernization and the effects of the global economy on traditional modes of production. His work also engages with broader themes, including perceptions of value, mass production and globalization. 'Ai Weiwei: Dropping the Urn' has been organized by Arcadia University Art Gallery and supported by The Pew Centre for Arts and Heritage through the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative. This exhibition has been supported by the Friends of the V&A and Travel with the V&A: China. We are grateful to the Secretary of State, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council for the generous provision of UK Government Indemnity for this exhibition.

Porcelain City: Jingdezhen

Moulds and vases at the sides of a railway, Jingdezhen. Photography by Roger Law

4 November 2011 – 25 March 2012
China, Room 44
Free admission

Porcelain City: Jingdezhen is a display of contemporary works in porcelain by four artists from the UK, Japan and China: Roger Law, Felicity Aylieff, Ah Xian and Takeshi Yasuda. All their works have been made in collaboration with the network of small porcelain factories which make up the vibrant porcelain city of Jingdezhen in China: a site of huge historical significance in the production of porcelain. Its importance is illustrated through the important collections of Chinese porcelain held by the Museum.

Albertopolis: the Development of South Kensington and the Exhibition Road Cultural Quarter

West elevation of the Science Schools and proposed extension, by Sir Henry Cole, 1868.

26 November 2011 - 29 April 2012
Architecture Gallery, 128A
Free admission

Drawing on previously unseen objects from the V&A and RIBA collection, this display will chart the development of South Kensington and the Exhibition Road Cultural Quarter from 1851 up to the present day. It will examine how the site became the architectural embodiment of Prince Albert's ambitious cultural aspirations.

Queen Elizabeth II by Cecil Beaton: A Diamond Jubilee Celebration

Cecil Beaton, Queen Elizabeth II in Coronation Robes, 1953 © V&A Images

8 February – 22 April 2012
The Porter Gallery
Room 48
Admission charge will apply

To celebrate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the V&A is holding an exhibition of portraits of Her Majesty by photographer Cecil Beaton (1904-1980). Presenting highlights of the V&A's archive of Beaton's royal photography, the exhibition will depict the Queen in her roles as princess, monarch and mother and include a number of photographs never before seen as well as Beaton's diaries and letters.

Celebrated photographer, designer and avid diarist, Beaton's royal portraits were among the most widely published photographs of the 20th century. The exhibition explores Beaton's long relationship with Queen Elizabeth II, who was a teenage princess when she first sat for Beaton in 1942. Over the next three decades, Beaton photographed The Queen on many significant occasions including her Coronation Day and the exhibition coincides with the anniversary of her accession to the throne.

The exhibition will feature nearly 100 portraits, from wartime photographs of Princess Elizabeth with her family, to tender images of The Queen with her own young children and official portraits that convey the magnitude of her role as Britain's monarch. It will show elegant and highly-staged photographs alongside informal moments of the royal family at home, interspersed with film and radio footage from the time. Extracts from Beaton's diaries and letters will reveal an insight into the working practice of a royal sitting, from the intense planning beforehand to conversations with The Queen and the pressures of achieving the perfect portrait. A selection of Beaton's original contact prints from which the Palace chose the images released to the media, will be on display for the first time with volumes of press cuttings.

The exhibition will also demonstrate how Beaton controlled the use of his photographs, revealing the press embargo, cropping instructions and notes on the sitting scribed on the reverse of his extensively published image of the Queen and newborn Prince Andrew from March 1960. The exhibition is arranged in five sections documenting important sittings and charting the shift in Beaton's photographic style, from his early Rococo-inspired portraits to a starker approach in the 1960s. One section will showcase portraits of Beaton himself by his contemporaries including Curtis Moffat, Irving Penn and David Bailey.

British Design 1948-2012

'Antelope' chair, Ernest Race, 1950.

March – August 2012
Exhibition Courts
Admission charge will apply

To coincide with the 2012 Olympics, this exhibition will showcase 60 years of British creative talent. It will document the transformation of design in Britain since the post-war 'Austerity Games' of 1948. Drawing on the V&A's unrivalled collections, the exhibition will include product design, fashion and textiles, furniture, ceramics and glass, theatre design, graphics, photography, architecture, fine art and sculpture, and will examine concepts of tradition and modernity, subversion and innovation.