



# Appointment of Director of Collections

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Saxton Bampfylde



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# Welcome from Tristram Hunt, Director

Thank you for your interest in the V&A: I am delighted to share details of our Director of Collections position; a tremendously exciting and significant role for the museum.

The V&A stands at a remarkable moment in its history, as it expands into a truly multi-site organisation and affirms its place as one of the top 15 most visited museums and galleries in the world.

The Director of Collections will have the opportunity to oversee some of the very finest holdings of art, design and performance, and shape acquisitions and programming from sites in Dundee to Stoke-on-Trent to South Kensington and Stratford.

Above all, the position entails a leadership role in transforming public engagement with the V&A Collections as we open V&A East: Storehouse in 2025 – a step-change in democratic access to archives, objects, and reserve holdings.

Leading our largest division with c320 staff, supporting a team of over 100 curators and 47 conservators, this is a fabulous opportunity for an entrepreneurial, scholarly, collaborative, and public-spirited professional interested in building the museum of the future.

Reporting directly to me, as a member of an ambitious and pro-active Executive Board the new Director of Collections will be an essential member of the team, acting collaboratively with peers, to drive the wider V&A organisational strategy.

We are interested to hear from a diverse range of candidates. If you can see yourself in the above description, please do contact our search partners, details below, for a confidential conversation and we look forward to receiving your application.



**THOMAS J PRICE**

Tasman Road, Figure 2  
2008

This work belongs to a series of nude male figures Price named after streets in London. Street names often celebrate powerful white men of the past, the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman. By contrast, this figure speaks not of dominance but instead carries a sense of vulnerability in his muddy, penitent and tacit. Yet through his stoic expression and honesty, this 'ordinary man' quietly asserts his presence in the gallery space.

London  
Buenos Aires  
On loan from the artist, courtesy of Tassart & Wells



## About the V&A

The V&A is a family of museums dedicated to the power of creativity—its power to entertain and move, to enrich our lives, open our minds and change the world. The V&A celebrates and shares that power through a programme of exhibitions, events, educational and digital experiences, a collection of 2.8 million objects, and through its support for new works and commitment to conservation, research and sustainable design. Together, its work tells a 5,000-year-old story of creativity, helping to advance cultural knowledge everywhere, and inspiring the makers, creators and innovators of today and tomorrow. The V&A is always working to broaden its audiences so that everyone can be part of the V&A – because the V&A and the power of creativity belongs to us all.

For more than 170 years, the V&A's mission has been to promote art and design for all, building a peerless collection to showcase human creativity, and to inspire the designers and makers of today and tomorrow.

[Explore the V&A here.](#)

# DIVA



The V&A was part of the Government's Department of Education and Science and operated under the auspices of an Advisory Council until 1 April 1984, when it acquired Trustee status with the passing of the National Heritage Act 1983 (The Act).

In this context, the Board of Trustees carries out its general functions, specified in The Act as follows:

So far as practicable and subject to the provisions of The Act, the Board shall:

- care for, preserve and add to the objects in their collections
- secure that the objects are exhibited to the public
- secure that the objects are available to persons seeking to inspect them in connection with study or research
- generally promote the public's enjoyment and understanding of art, craft and design both by means of the Board's collections and by such other means as they consider appropriate

The V&A comprises the original site at South Kensington; Young V&A in Bethnal Green (formerly the V&A Museum of Childhood) the archive/study collections site at Blythe House, Kensington Olympia; V&A Dundee; and the V&A Wedgwood Collection in Barlaston. The museum also has a collections store in Dean Hill Park, Wiltshire. The V&A is developing V&A East, one of the most significant new museum projects in the UK, made up of two new sites, currently under construction: V&A East Storehouse at Here

East and V&A East Museum (both opening 2025) in Stratford, part of East Bank.

The V&A's mission is to champion design and creativity in all its forms, for everyone, and its vision is to take that mission to new audiences of all ages and backgrounds, online and in person, redefining the role of the V&A as a 21st-century museum.

To achieve this, the V&A aims to:

- Rebuild visitor numbers, and broaden how it connects with diverse local and global audiences through integrated digital and physical experiences;
- Transform access to its collection as a public asset, and broaden its creative relevance and social impact;
- Inspire creative confidence in all its audiences, and champion the skills needed to drive the future of the creative economy;
- Become a more effective, sustainable and inclusive organisation;
- Build financial resilience to underpin our strategic objectives.

Further information:

[View the latest V&A Strategic Plan 2021-2024](#)

[View the latest V&A Annual Review 2022-23](#)



# FuturePlan

The V&A, the world's leading museum of art, design, and performance, is at one of the most exciting times in its history. Housing 2.8m objects that span 5000 years of human ingenuity, alongside a world-leading exhibition and research programme, the V&A's ambitious strategy will see it expand to multiple sites in London over the next three years, alongside V&A Dundee in Scotland and the V&A Wedgwood Collection in Stoke-on-Trent. Opening in 2025, V&A East Storehouse will offer a new immersive experience, taking visitors behind the scenes and providing unprecedented public access to V&A collections.

FuturePlan is an ambitious programme of development which is transforming the V&A. The best contemporary designers are creating exciting new galleries and visitor facilities, while revealing and restoring the beauty of the original building. In the past 20 years, over 85% of V&A South Kensington's public spaces have been transformed, improving access and allowing the collections to be more elegantly and intelligently displayed. By introducing bold new architectural interventions, FuturePlan aims to delight and to inspire visitors, and to continue the V&A's tradition of championing new talent.

[Read more about FuturePlan here.](#)



# The Collections

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art and design, and the custodian of an extraordinary and extensive collection spanning decorative and applied arts. Working with, and for our visitors, we are changing how our extensive Collections are cared for, seen, understood, and enjoyed.

The V&A's Collections Division comprises six curatorial, research, and conservation, collections care & access teams. The curatorial departments are arranged as Decorative Art and Sculpture; Performance, Furniture, Textiles & Fashion; Art, Architecture, Photography and Design; and Asia. The sixth is the V&A Research Institute, National Art Library and Archives, which were brought together in 2021.

The first national museum to establish a dedicated Research Department, the V&A has also been sector-leading over the last 40 years in the development of museum-delivered postgraduate education, by establishing in 1982, with the Royal College of Art, the world's first MA and PhD programme in the History of Design. Its main library is the National Art Library (NAL), one of the world's foremost art libraries, open to everyone. The Collections Care and Access division manage, preserve, and provide access to the V&A's collection in both physical and digital format.

The V&A is currently undergoing a significant transformation, moving towards the creation of a family of V&A sites, including V&A Wedgwood Collection, Young V&A, V&A Dundee and two new sites in East London: V&A East Museum and V&A East Storehouse, a new, state-of-the-art collections and research centre due to open in 2025.



# The role

The Director of Collections is responsible for implementing a new, multisite collections strategy for the V&A, transforming access to its collections as a public asset and broadening its creative relevance and social impact. The successful applicant will take the lead in foregrounding and interrogating the V&A collection in the context of contemporary debate and contribute to shaping curatorial standards across the sector. The role also demands delivering excellence in higher education collaborations, research and reach to the widest possible audience. Leadership of the Collections Division at this critical time is pivotal to the success of the V&A. This role combines creativity, scholarship, and ambition, leading hugely talented expert teams, to deliver the organisational strategy, redefining the role of the V&A as a 21st century museum. Curatorial and conservation expertise are at the very centre of the museum's work, whilst commercial opportunities, especially our global touring programme, are seen as mutually reinforcing.

Reporting to the Director of the V&A, this is an influential role, both across the UK and worldwide and will involve leading all aspects of curatorial and conservation activity across the museum, setting the standard for the sector through exhibitions, galleries, and the FuturePlan programme.



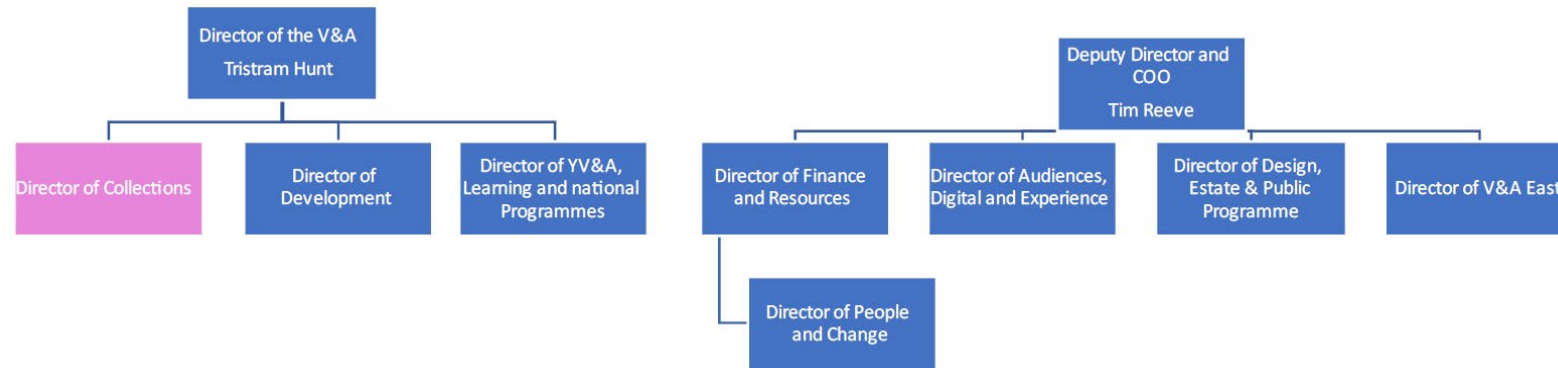
PRITJ110209-hires (7) Thomas J Price Lay It Down (On The Edge Of Beauty) 2018, Bronze, automotive spray paint  
61 x 35 x 40 cm / 24 x 13 3/4 x 15 3/4 in  
Photo: Ken Adlard

## Key Responsibilities

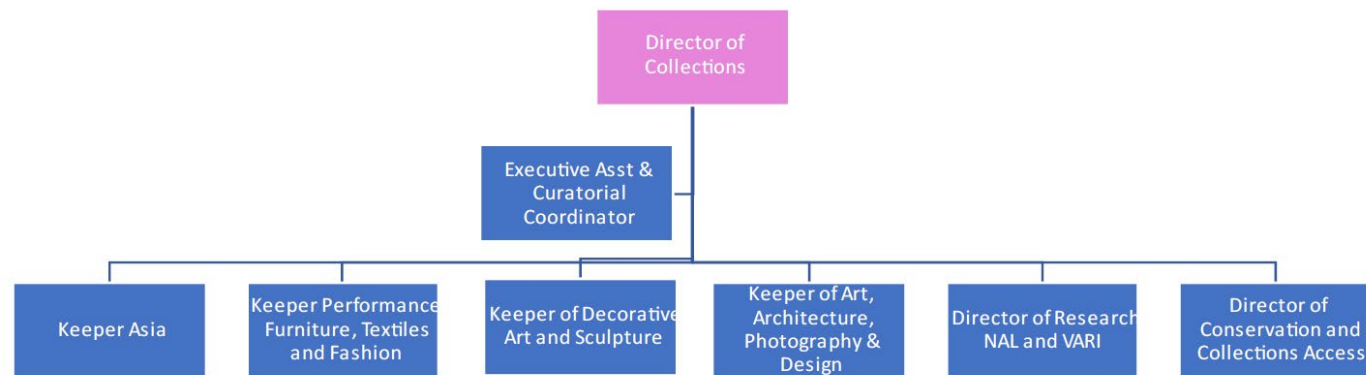
- **Team Leadership:** Provide inspiration and clear leadership to the Collections Division, ensuring the full depth and breadth of the V&A's collections expertise is utilised;
- **The Collection:** responsible for leading the access, care, collections management and utilization of the V&A's collections – supporting the public programme and broadening its impact;
- **Public Programme:** make a major contribution to the content of the Exhibitions schedule and FuturePlan. Progress gallery, display and research projects which broaden the programme from an Euro-centric predominance;
- **Expertise:** Provide advice to the Director, Trustees, Executive Board, and external contacts, on all aspects of the collection;
- **Access:** support the revolutionizing of access to our collection at V&A East, to broaden its audience and creative relevance, creating lasting social impact;
- **Curatorial:** lead curatorial expertise in the museum to encourage a creative and inspiring use of the collection, further new curatorial practice, which leads the profession, to ensure our collection, publications and programming connect with the changing public expectations of a 21st century museum;
- **Relationship Management:** Develop and nurture relationships with other international, national, and regional museums and institutions, championing the V&A's reputation for creativity and scholarship; and
- **Executive Board (EB):** a pivotal member of the EB team, acting collaboratively, to drive the organisational strategy



# Executive Board



# Collections Division





Thebe Magugu presents first international runway as part of V&A's Fashion in Motion series © Lia Toby Getty Images for the V&A



# Person Specification

The ideal candidate will bring all or most of the following attributes:

## Skills & Experience

- A track record of inspirational leadership and strong management skills to enhance and develop a high performing team of experts;
- Extensive experience and ability to demonstrate leading highly successful gallery refurbishment and exhibition projects;
- Intellectually curious with a strong track record of scholarly achievement alongside creativity in a relevant field;
- Proven experience of strategy development and implementation, including successfully driving change through people;
- Proven success as an ambassador – sophisticated interpersonal skills to communicate and influence effectively at all levels;
- A strong track record of strategic thinking and action, taking decisions, and providing advice at the highest levels, with an ability to think creatively within the arts and culture sector;
- Proven ability to apply sound business and financial management principles across a range of activities with the ability to assess and manage risks appropriately, and;
- Ability to act as a collaborative member of an executive team, contributing more widely than just in area of personal expertise.

## Behaviours

- Respects others' expertise, time, perspectives, and contribution;
- Takes responsibility for delivering on actions, achieving high-standards, and learning from mistakes;
- Open to change, new ideas and suggestions; looks for opportunities for improvement and self-development;
- Works with others outside their own department in a collaborative, understanding, and engaging way, and;
- Actively leads and manages others, taking ownership of corporate decisions and role models positive behaviours.



Suit of Armour, 1859, Courtesy Victoria and Albert Museum, London



# Terms of appointment

The salary range for the role is **£105-110k pa.**

The V&A offers a range of benefits:

## Annual leave

29 days plus 8 days public holidays (pro rata for anyone working less than 36 hours per week)

## Pension benefits

You will be auto enrolled into the museum's Group Personal Pension Scheme and have the opportunity, upon completion of probation, to benefit from an enhanced pension provision, with the V&A contributing 10%.

## Other benefits include:

- Free entry to several museums, galleries, and exhibitions across the UK
- Complimentary tickets to V&A exhibitions for your friends or family
- Subsidised staff canteen
- 25% discount on purchases in V&A shops
- Non-contributory life assurance policy (to value of 4 x annual salary)
- An interest free season ticket or bicycle loan (available upon completion of probation)
- Employee Assistance line for all V&A employees, 24 hours a day 7 days per week.

# How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to the V&A on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code **EAVAO**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter, and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

The closing date for applications is **noon on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023**.

*\* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*

## Equal opportunities at the V&A

At the V&A we strive to ensure that opportunities to work and develop at are open to all. We treat all job applications equally, regardless of age, disability, gender identity or gender expression, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other equality characteristic. We particularly encourage applications from disabled people and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, as these groups are currently under-represented in the cultural sector. At the V&A we have a good gender balance however in certain departments, such as IT, we welcome female applicants and, in our exhibitions, or development teams, we welcome male applicants.

## **GDPR personal data notice**

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.





Saxton Bampfylde

V&A