



## V&A Wedgwood Collection celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with 60 new acquisitions

Today the V&A Wedgwood Collection announces that it has acquired 60 contemporary Wedgwood creations in celebration of its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Highlight acquisitions will go on show at the V&A Wedgwood Collection in Stoke-on-Trent, as part of a new permanent display opening in Autumn 2025. The display will form part of an ambitious new public events programme for 2025 to mark the anniversary and make the V&A Wedgwood Collection and Archive more accessible than ever.

The 60 brand-new acquisitions - created by Josiah Wedgwood and Sons between 2016-2024 - will join the V&A Wedgwood Collection's holdings, and allow the V&A to continue to tell the story of creativity and design in the city today, in partnership with Fiskars, the custodian of the Wedgwood brand since 2015. Highlight acquisitions include: a set of bone china plates from the series 'Harlem Toile de Jouy' by designer **Sheila Bridges** which harnesses a traditional pastoral motif from the French toile style and applies visuals informed by Bridges' experience as an African American from New York; a bold hand-painted Urn made from reclaimed Jasperware by Glaswegian designer and radical creative **Charles Jeffrey LOVERBOY**; and a ceramic badge that re-imagines Wedgwood's original abolitionist anti-slavery medallion by Amy Sproxton, titled '**I Am a Man and a Brother**'.

A selection of these acquisitions will be on display at the V&A Wedgwood Collection in Autumn 2025 as part of an ambitious programme which will celebrate the anniversary and open new ways into the collection and archive. Temporary displays, learning programmes, collaborations and events will take place on site, as well as the Collection's first ever touring exhibition, *Wedgwood: Artists and Industry*, which opens to the public in Townsville, Australia in April 2025.

The Wedgwood Collection and Archive was saved for the nation following a successful fundraising campaign spearheaded by Art Fund and gifted to the V&A in 2014. The collection celebrates the legacy of British potter and entrepreneur Josiah Wedgwood (1730–1795), who transformed his ceramics company from cottage craft to global industry, changing the face of Staffordshire along the way. It comprises over 175,000 works of art and design, ceramics, manuscripts and photographs and is one of the most important industrial collections in the world. The UNESCO-recognised archive forms a unique record of over 260 years of British ceramic production, evolving tastes, changing fashions and manufacturing innovation and is housed alongside the working Wedgwood factory at World of Wedgwood in Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent, in the heart of the Staffordshire potteries.

Also announced today is the upcoming display *Wedgwood and Darwin* (24 February-June 2025), which will explore the story of Josiah Wedgwood's grandson, Charles Darwin and how the family link inspired Wedgwood ceramics creative output. 35 historic objects from the collection

alongside the acquisitions from Wedgwood's new range inspired by Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle.

This display forms part of the regularly changing display ***Unpacking the V&A Wedgwood Collection***, which showcases treasures re-discovered objects from the collection, uncovered as part of a major cataloguing and digitisation project. Since 2022 Almost 40,000 of the Collection's and Archives' 175,000 items have been photographed, researched, digitised and made available on the V&A website ([vam.ac.uk/collections](https://vam.ac.uk/collections)). The latest discoveries from the project include a cream dinner plate, recovered from a shipwreck off the cost of Norway, thought to have sunk over 100 years ago. Attached to the plate is still the remnants of coral life - now inactive; the world's most elaborate biscuit tin made from Wedgwood jasperware, decorated with applied reliefs and fitted with a silver lid; and a mould for a bulb pot in the shape of a porcupine.

Alongside a new schools programme for Key Stage 2-3, *Josiah Wedgwood: Staffordshire Superstar*, and workshops co-designed with local organisation the British Ceramics Biennial, in 2025 families can discover new trails and drop-in workshops. From June 2025, the Family Space will relaunch with support from Art Fund, bringing an inviting creative space for families to the galleries.

Also continued for 2025 will be the People of Wedgwood Project Space, a community hub which celebrates and displays personal stories, testimonies and the social history of Wedgwood. Supported by Art Fund, the 'People of Wedgwood' project enriches the vast collection of objects, manuscripts and photographs by recording social history and connecting with local stories. Various events will run throughout the year to support the display, including memory-sharing sessions and family genealogy workshops.

**Tristram Hunt, V&A Director:** *"Ten years on from the V&A taking stewardship of the Wedgwood Collection, we are now able to share this incredible story of creativity, innovation and design with new audiences in the UK and around the world. With dynamic new acquisitions, changing displays, and an international touring exhibition in 2025, the Collection continues to explore Josiah Wedgwood's transformative legacy, whilst now also unearthing the remarkable histories of peoples and cultures embedded in the Collection. For Staffordshire school kids, young designers, and international visitors, the Wedgwood story is proving ever more compelling."*

**Catrin Jones, Chief Curator, V&A Wedgwood Collection said:** *"Ceramics has been an important part of Stoke's heritage, but our museum shows that it's part of the area's creative future too. As we mark ten years of the V&A Wedgwood Collection, we are excited to share our plans for the next ten years, recognising the importance of the Wedgwood story for local and global audiences. From new displays and programmes, exciting projects behind-the-scenes, and new activities for schools and families on their visit to World of Wedgwood, we're celebrating this anniversary by inviting you to join us for a creative discovery."*

The Wedgwood Collection was saved for the nation and presented to the V&A in 2014 following a major public appeal lead by Art Fund. The campaign was generously supported by thousands of individuals, companies and trusts, including significant support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Art Fund.

**For further PRESS information about the V&A Wedgwood Collection please contact Shannon Nash on [s.nash@vam.ac.uk](mailto:s.nash@vam.ac.uk).**

**A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from [pressimages.vam.ac.uk](http://pressimages.vam.ac.uk).**

### **About the V&A Wedgwood Collection**

The V&A Wedgwood Collection is a story of 260 years of creativity and industry, of evolving tastes, changing fashions and manufacturing innovations, told through a unique ceramics collection and UNESCO-recognised archives. With an events and education programme, the Collection is a celebration of craft, community and commerce, located at World of Wedgwood in the heart of the Potteries and right beside the working Wedgwood factory.

### **About Art Fund**

Art Fund is the UK's independent charity for art, helping museums and people to share in great art and culture for 120 years. Art Fund raises millions of pounds every year to help the UK's museums, galleries and historic houses. The charity funds art, enabling the UK's museums to buy and share exciting works, connect with their communities, and inspire the next generation. It builds audiences with its National Art Pass opening doors to great culture; and it amplifies the museum sector through the world's largest museum prize, Art Fund Museum of the Year, and creative events that bring the UK's museums together. Art Fund is people-powered by 135,000 members who buy a National Art Pass, and the donors, trusts and foundations who support the charity.

The National Art Pass provides free or discounted entry to over 400 museums, galleries and historic places, 50% off major exhibitions, and Art Quarterly magazine.

[www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org)