Virtual and Actual:
library, archive and museum collaboration
at the V&A

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Outline

- The Victoria and Albert Museum
  - The Word & Image Department
    - National Art Library
    - Archives
    - Prints, Drawings, Paintings and Photographs Collections
- Current documentation practice
- Current projects
- LAM project participation
- LAM project outcomes
The V&A

- The UK’s national museum of art and design
- 2.7 million objects
- 4 main sites:
  - V&A at South Kensington
  - Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green
  - Blythe House, Olympia
  - V&A website
- Curatorial departments:
  - Asia
  - Furniture, Textiles & Fashion
  - Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics & Glass
  - Theatre
  - Word & Image
V&A Collections 1

Search the Collections
Search for over 20,000 works and over 25,000 images from the V&A's collections, including ceramics, fashion, furniture, glass, metalwork, paintings, photographs, prints, sculpture, and textiles.

More on Search the Collections

Architecture
Includes architectural drawings, photographs, whole rooms and parts of buildings.

More on Architecture

Asia
Objects from East Asia, South and South-East Asia, and the Middle East.

More on Asia

British Galleries
The most comprehensive collection of British design and art from 1500 to 1900.

More on British Galleries

Ceramics
From ancient Egyptian artefacts to contemporary studio pottery and ceramics.

Childhood
Dolls' houses, dolls, toys, games, fashion and more from the 16th century to the contemporary.

More on Childhood

Contemporary
Exhibitions, events and displays of the best of today's art, design and visual culture.

Fashion & Jewellery
Fashionable dress, jewellery and accessories from the 17th century to the present day.

More on Fashion, Jewellery &
V&A Collections 2

- **Furniture**: Over 14,000 pieces from Britain, Europe and America, from the Middle Ages to the present day.
  - More on Furniture

- **Glass**: Explore the 4000-year history of glass, from the Middle East, Europe and the Western world.
  - More on Glass

- **History, Periods & Styles**: The V&A's collections cross a multitude of periods and design styles.
  - More on History, Periods & Styles

- **Metalwork**: Silver, ironwork, arms, armour, enamels, brasswork, pewter and medieval metalwork.
  - More on Metalwork

- **Paintings & Drawings**: Watercolours, pastels, portrait miniatures, oil paintings, illustrations, posters, cartoons.
  - More on Paintings & Drawings

- **Photography**: The Photography collection began in 1852 and now holds over 500,000 images.
  - More on Photography

- **Prints & Books**: Everything from comics and children's literature to the art, craft and design of the book.
  - More on Prints & Books

- **Sculpture**: Explore the world's most comprehensive holding of post-classical European sculpture.
  - More on Sculpture
The Word & Image Department

- National Art Library
- Prints, Drawings, Paintings and Photographs Collections
- Archive of Art & Design
- V&A Archive
- 2 million+ objects
- 3 study rooms
National Art Library
Artists’ books in the National Art Library
20th Century Gallery, in the Library
Prints, Drawings, Paintings and Photographs
Word & Image Departmental Structure

- **Access**
  - Onsite
  - Online

- **Central Services**
  - Library cataloguing
  - Museum documentation
  - Digitisation
  - Exhibition loans, conservation, photography, storage etc

- **Collections**
  - Prints
  - Designs
  - Paintings
  - Photographs
  - The Book
V&A Documentation Systems

Table of contents

Introduction and summary description

Context

Scope and content

Provenance

Access

Related material

Detailed catalogue

Corporate records
- For pop sale by tender, 1981
- Annual Reports and Accounts, 1961-1986

Marketing and public relations records
- Advertising records, 1955-1999
- Advertising records: Biscuits, 1955
- Birthday celebrations, 1993-1994
- Catalogues, 1944-1996

Habitat Ltd, furniture and household goods manufacturer and retailer, marketing records, [1980?] - 2000

Introduction and summary

Creator:
Reference:
Extent:

Context

In 1957 Terence Conran founded the Habitat furniture company as a place to sell affordable furniture to a younger generation. The Habitat name was first used in 1959 by the Home Furnishing concern and the company continued to expand. In 1992 it was acquired by Marks & Spencer.

Scope and content


Attribution

Role
artist
printers (good publication)

Name
Herr, Rolf
David Adamson

Publication
Ceramic Editions

Date
2001
(01/01/2001 - 31/12/2001)

Place
Washington

Type assigned by artist
Uncertainty

Attribution

Role
printed

Place
Washington

Type assigned by artist
Uncertainty

V&A Documentation Systems
V&A Digital Asset Management System
Search the Collections (lightbox view)
Search the Collections
http://www.vam.ac.uk

- Available through the V&A’s website
- Provides image and descriptions for ca. 50,000 objects and 70,000 images
- A small subset of the information held in the Collections Information System
- Images can be downloaded and used for publication
- Some terms and conditions
The William Morris question
Core Systems Integration Project aims

- To provide better access across and between the Museum’s various information systems
- To make the records available to those that need them
- To reduce the need for one-off programming
- To exploit established and/or emerging standards
- To complement rather than replace the separate systems
Beyond the Silos of the LAMS
Why participate?

An opportunity to:

- engage with colleagues in other organisations
- engage with colleagues in other parts of the V&A
- develop collaborative projects
- achieve buy-in from V&A senior management
Attendees

- Word & Image
  - Library
  - Archives
  - Prints, drawings and paintings

- Other Collections Departments

- Online Museum (V&A website)

- Collections Documentation

- Learning and Interpretation
Collaborative projects chosen

- Large-scale digitisation
  - The Ground Floor Project

- Innovation on the Web
  - V&A website developments
The Ground Floor Project
Objects in this gallery are off display being photographed
Word & Image Department’s “Factory” Project

- Had just started, in December 2007
- Systematic digitisation and documentation of prints, drawings, paintings and photographs
- Builds upon earlier documentation projects
- Using medium-format cameras with digital back
- Images stored in Digital Asset Management System
- 22,000 images created so far
- Also keying-in texts of V&A publications & catalogues
- 40,000 catalogue records created in 2008/9
The Factory Project
LAM outcomes

- Enhancements to “Search the collections”
- Extensive discussions about new V&A website
- Greater focus on cataloguing
- Collections digitisation working party established
- New digitisation projects under way
- Existing projects expanded
- Greater involvement in strategic decision-making
Due to be expanded to include museum catalogue records that do not have images

Will also have data derived from inventory records if no catalogue record exists

New proposals for cross-searching library, archive and museum data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Artist / designer / photographer</th>
<th>Museum Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Great Bed of Ware" /></td>
<td>Great Bed of Ware</td>
<td>Bed</td>
<td>1590-1600</td>
<td>Vredeman de Vries, Hans, born 1527 - died 1604 (school of designers)</td>
<td>W47.1 to 28-1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="The Decon Chairs" /></td>
<td>The Decon Chairs</td>
<td>Armchair</td>
<td>1803-1813</td>
<td>The Decon Chairs Armchair 1803-1813</td>
<td>W6.1, 2-1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Corner cupboard" /></td>
<td>Corner cupboard</td>
<td>Bed</td>
<td>1590-1600</td>
<td>Vredeman de Vries, Hans, born 1527 - died 1604 (school of designers)</td>
<td>W47.1 to 28-1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="The Decon Chairs" /></td>
<td>The Decon Chairs</td>
<td>Armchair</td>
<td>1803-1813</td>
<td>The Decon Chairs Armchair 1803-1813</td>
<td>W6.1, 2-1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Corner cupboard" /></td>
<td>Corner cupboard</td>
<td>Bed</td>
<td>1590-1600</td>
<td>Vredeman de Vries, Hans, born 1527 - died 1604 (school of designers)</td>
<td>W47.1 to 28-1931</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Search for over 30,000 works and over 50,000 images from the V&A’s collections, including ceramics, fashion, furniture, glass, metalwork, paintings, photographs, prints, sculpture, and textiles.

You searched for: Sculpture > Large > Marble
Dish

Description
The shape, decoration and colouring of this copper dish closely copy Japanese cloisonné-style porcelain of the period 1706-1830. The cloisonné decoration consists of 'slidet' (cloisonné) panels of silver wire filled with coloured enamel on a pure white enamel ground. The rims and foot-rings are of plain polished copper. The decoration of geometric patterns with key fret and stylized waves together with scrolling 'karakusa' (Chinese grass) foliage are all motifs found on Nambishima ware. This type of work is typical of the cloisonné enamels being produced in and around Nagoya in 1880-1900.

In 1871 the Nagoya Cloisonné Company (Nagoya Shippo Kaisha) was established at the village of Toshima, just outside Nagoya. So many cloisonné manufactuing companies sprang up in and around Toshima that the area became known as Shippo-mura ('cloisonné village') or Shippo-chi ('cloisonné town'). It rapidly became Japan's main centre of cloisonné production. At their peak the cloisonné manufacturers of Toshima were producing 70% of all Japanese cloisonné enamels.

Diameter: 21.6cm
Artist
Unknown
Materials & Techniques
Copper body, cloisonné enamel decoration
Credit
Bequested by Henry Louis Florence
The Collaboration Catalysts

- Collaboration Vision
- Stones for Mandate
- Stepping Incentives
- Collaboration Change Agents
- Stones for Mooring
- Stepping Resources
- Collaboration Flexibility
- Stones for External Catalysts
- Stepping Trust
Conclusions

- Participation was highly beneficial to the Department, and to the Museum
- Outside facilitators helped open up areas for discussion
- Some initiatives were already under way, but were given additional impetus
- Others were conceived during the discussions, and are in progress or are being evaluated
- The project provides the basis for future collaborations within and outside the Museum