

design museum

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Design Museum's Renewed Collections Exhibition Showcases Utopias

Utopia Now – The Story of Finnish Design

Design Museum's new collections exhibition opens up the history of Finnish design through live stories with the use of contemporary technologies and digital platform. It tells of the important role of design in the evolution of the Finnish welfare state.

The exhibition speaks of 'utopia' as a practically oriented way creating something. The history of Finnish design is approached via various themes and the exhibition is in six different spaces: the Process Room, the Virtual Room, the Timeline Corridor, the Icon Room, the Changing Room and the Warehouse.

The Process Room presents the everyday side of design, what happens before an object or service becomes a product. Processes change and this room displays seven different examples of the design process. Each one of them was a utopia in its own day, such as the Nokia mobile phones or the Rovio games on show.

The Virtual Room contains a three-dimensional display of the Finnish pavilion at the Paris World's Fair of 1900, an international breakthrough for Finnish design, art and architecture. The digitised material produced by the Media Lab of Aalto University brings the pavilion and its exhibits to life for visitors using VR goggles. The Virtual Room also offers a 180-degree video project of Marimekko printed fabrics.

The Timeline Corridor employs wall projections to give an overview of the history of Finnish design and its important developments in relation to society. The corridor is illustration with a large body of visual material from the museum's collections with accompanying texts.

The Icon Room displays utopias that led to classic products, with particular focus on women. Among the featured designers are Gunnel Nyman and Vuokko Nurmesniemi, and the designer couples Aino and Alvar Aalto, and Tapio Wirkkala and Rut Bryk. The work of designer Harri Koskinen is on show as a changing icon.

The Changing Room is a venue for three different exhibitions a year. The first one will be Every Straight Line Will Be Curved by Its Own Weight in which a team of artists and researchers consisting of Giovanna Esposito Yussif, Fahrettin Ersin Alaca, Elina Juopperi and David Muoz, ask what happened behind the scenes at the Milan Triennales and how the designer myth was created. Discussions and interviews in the room will also challenge audiences to take part in the research process.

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The Warehouse contains a large number of items of different periods from the museum's collections. They add to the picture of the themes that transect the whole exhibition: hope, welfare, democracy, globalisation, equality, history, the future, and fundamental changes in Finnish society. The exhibits include the Lapp Ring, representing the heritage of Sámi design, which was included in the museum's collection in 1881. The Warehouse extends into continuously update digital archives available to everyone at: <https://collection.designmuseum.fi>.

The opening for the public will be held from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on 4 February. For more details of the programme on the opening day, see [www.designmuseum.fi > tapahtumat](http://www.designmuseum.fi/tapahtumat).

Design Museum has collaborated in the design of the exhibition experience and architecture and the digital applications with a team from the Helsinki and London studios of the Bond Creative Agency.

Curator Katarina Siltavuori together with a team of experts is responsible for curating the exhibition at Design Museum.

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