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## California - Designing freedom Exhibition arrives at the Design Museum Helsinki

10.11.2017–4.3.2018  
Design Museum

Californian design has impacted many aspects of our lives. From skateboards to iPhones and start-up garages. The touring exhibition from the Design Museum London *California - Designing Freedom* reveals how this culture of design and technology has made us all, in certain ways, Californians.

California's drive to create tools of personal liberation is explored through a diverse landscape ranging from LSD blotting paper and political posters to portable technology. Rare exhibits include hand-drawn sketches of the Apple Macintosh's icons, concept artwork for Blade Runner, and on display for the first time in Finland the first Macintosh computer.

"Designed in California" is the new "Made in Italy". While California's mid-century modernism is well documented, the touring exhibition from the Design Museum of London is the first exhibition to examine the state's current global reach. Picking up the story in the 1960s, the touring exhibition charts the journey from counterculture to Silicon Valley's tech culture.

The central idea of the California exhibition is that California has always pioneered tools of personal liberation, from LSD to surfboards and iPhones. This ambitious survey brings together political posters, personal computers but also looks beyond hardware to explore how user interface designers in the Bay Area are shaping some of our most common daily experiences and expanding what we think of as design.

*California - Designing Freedom* is composed of over 200 objects, curated in five thematic sections. Collectively, these works assert that design in California is distinguished by an emphasis on individual freedom. The exhibition's five themes explore different facets of this freedom.

### **GO WHERE YOU WANT: Tools of movement and escape**

So many of the innovations associated with California, from LA's freeways to Google Maps, revolve around freedom of movement. This section of the exhibition focuses on mobility, from navigation to portability and exploration.

**Tip:** Exhibits include the first consumer GPS device and a replica of the Captain America chopper from Easy Rider.

### **SEE WHAT YOU WANT: Tools of perception and fantasy**

California is best known as the land of make-believe, the home of Disney, Hollywood and videogaming. This section explores how California has pioneered new ways of looking at the world, from acid trips to virtual reality.

**Tip:** Exhibits include Syd Mead's artwork for Blade Runner, LSD blotting paper and early videogame graphics.

### **SAY WHAT YOU WANT: Tools of self-expression and rebellion**

California has its own history of enabling freedom of expression, from new graphic languages to social media. This section explores the state's culture of communication through posters, magazines and online platforms.

**Tip:** Exhibits include Emory Douglas's Black Panther posters, David Carson's design for Ray Gun magazine and Twitter's interface design.

### **MAKE WHAT YOU WANT: Tools of production and self-reliance**

Perhaps no place has done more to democratize access to industrial technology than California. This section features tools that have made 'making' easier and more accessible, from the Whole Earth Catalog, the counterculture's bible of self-sufficiency, to the Apple Macintosh and the open-source tools of the 'maker' culture.

**Tip:** Exhibits include an original Apple 1 computer and a home kit for genetic engineering.

### **JOIN WHO YOU WANT: Tools of collaboration and community**

Since the founding of California, the freedom to create your own community has been considered essential to success and survival. From hippy communes to Facebook, this section examines tools that enable communities both on the ground and online.

**Tip:** Exhibits include a geodesic dome, Sussman Prejza's designs for the 1984 LA Olympics and documentation of the early Burning Man festivals.

*California - Designing freedom, the touring exhibition from the Design Museum, London*

*Curators Justin McGuirk ja Brendan McGetrick*

*Exhibition in collaboration with Bond Creative Helsinki and Avotakka*

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#### **Press photos:**

<http://bit.ly/2ffIVQU>

#### **Bulletins and press releases:**

<http://www.designmuseum.fi/fi/media/#tiedotteet>

*Design Museum is a national specialist museum in the field of Finnish design. The museum researches, collects, acquires and documents design, and displays it in Finland and in international touring exhibitions.*

**Street address:**

Korkeavuorenkatu 23, 00130 Helsinki

[www.designmuseum.fi](http://www.designmuseum.fi)

**Opening hours:**

Winter season, 1 September–31 May Tuesdays 11 a.m.–8 p.m. Wed.–Sun. 11 a.m.–6 p.m. Mondays closed.

**Entrance:** Adults €10, pensioners €8, students €5, visitors under 16 years of age free of charge.

Free entrance with the Museum Card (initial cost €54)

Joint ticket to the Museum of Finnish Architecture and Design Museum €12.