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A new institution

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A new institution

London's Design Museum reopens in a brand new location this November. The HK\$900 million project provides three times the exhibition space in celebration of contemporary design and architecture

The Design Museum has an esteemed history. Celebrated British designer Sir Terence Conran and design critic Stephen Bayley previously established the Boilerhouse exhibition space in the basement of the Victoria and Albert. It was Britain's first permanent design exhibition and, due to its success and to outgrowing the space, the Design Museum was created. Over the past 27 years, the museum has attracted more than five million visitors and showcased everything from industrial designer Sir Jonathan Ive's creations (even before his Apple days) to the late British-Iraqi architect Dame Zaha Hadid's first solo show in the UK. It finally closed its doors on 30 June in preparation for the new space.

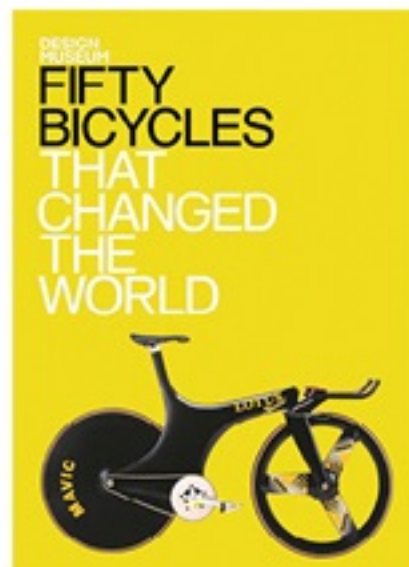
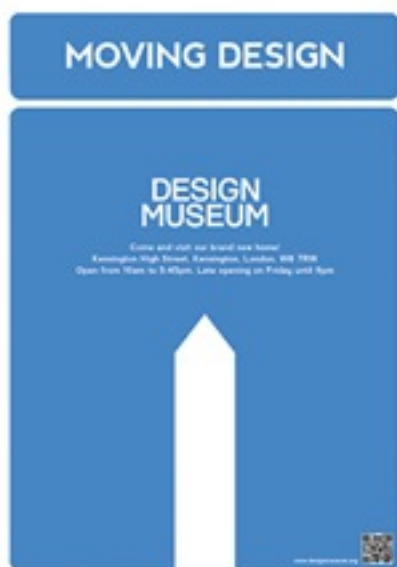
The project for the new museum started back in 2008 with a search for a new location. The architects for the job were announced in 2010 as John Pawson. The British firm, known for its minimalist designs, has been responsible for works such as the Cathay Pacific lounges at Hong Kong's airport, the Sackler Crossing in the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew in London and the Calvin Klein Collection's flagship store in New York. The plans show an extremely open space with a large central opening that extends the height of the building while the concrete roof remains exposed. Designers at development company Willmott Dixon are fitting the interior, using Vitra furniture in all of the public spaces.

The Commonwealth Institute building that will house the new museum was built for purpose back in the 1960s. Once known as the Imperial Institute, it allowed visitors a taste of the countries of the Commonwealth and, according to the new head of collection and research at the Design Museum, Tom Wilson, it featured real sights and smells, from palm trees and bougainvillea flowers in its 'Caribbean court' and Douglas firs

in its 'Canadian court' to the scent of cloves in its 'Zanzibar court'. The building itself has a tent-like design with a hyperbolic paraboloid roof that was created to reflect an 'optimistic future' for the Commonwealth.

The Design Museum has big plans for its new venue. The two temporary exhibition spaces and one permanent display hope to attract more than 500,000 visitors every year, which is double the footfall of the old museum. "Moving the Design Museum to Kensington," says founder and trustee Sir Terence Conran, "is the most important moment of my long career in design so far. It will allow all our dreams and ambitions for the museum to come true, to create a world class space with the size and scope for the serious promotion and celebration of design and architecture in this country."

For more information visit designmuseum.org.



London, England is home to some of the world's best museums and one of them is undoubtedly the Design Museum, which originally opened in 1989 near the famous Tower Bridge. Lovers of all things design-related have flocked to this institution for 27 years now but, from 24 November, they will be heading to a new spot as the museum is upping sticks and reopening at the former Commonwealth Institute building in Kensington, West London.

The new location sees the HK\$900 million museum offering 10,000sqm of exhibition space as well as a 192-seat auditorium and an array of shops, restaurants and cafés. It means that three times the space is being created at Design Museum's new home. Plus, its placement, in the capital city's cultural quarter, within close proximity to the Victoria & Albert, Natural History and Science museums, makes it easily accessible for design fans and cultural tourists alike.