



## **V&A completes first phase of £120 million transformation with new Medieval and Renaissance Galleries**

The V&A will complete the first phase of its £120 million transformation a year from now when it opens its £30 million new Medieval and Renaissance Galleries in November 2009. The ten new galleries, occupying an entire wing of the museum, will display some of the V&A's most remarkable treasures such as the Becket casket and sculptures by Renaissance masters Giambologna and Donatello. They are the largest project since the opening of the British Galleries in 2001 and will mark nine years of rapid modernisation under the museum's ambitious Future Plan.

Next year will also see the completion of a number of other galleries. In March, new Theatre and Performance Galleries will open. The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Gallery will open in April displaying around 60 pieces of Asian Buddhist Sculpture. The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Galleries, opening in June, will show highlights from the Gilbert Collection.

In September 2009, for the first time in a century, the V&A will redisplay 3000 objects from its ceramics collection, the greatest and largest in the world. The seven new Ceramics Galleries will make the V&A the world's leading resource for international ceramics.

The first phase of Future Plan is costing £120 million. Around 70% of the Museum's gallery space will have been redisplayed between the years 2000 and 2009. The Museum has worked with some of the UK's most innovative architects and designers to present its collections in beautiful and contemporary new displays while renewing and restoring much of the building's original architecture.

Future Plan got underway with the opening of the British Galleries. Since then the number of visitors to the V&A has more than doubled and there have been 18 new

openings including the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Sculpture Galleries (March 2006), The Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art (July 2006) and the William and Judith Bollinger Jewellery Gallery (May 2008).

As part of Future Plan, architect Eva Jiricna remodelled the Grand Entrance giving it a contemporary feel while Kim Wilkie redesigned the John Madjeski Garden, providing a tranquil focal point at the heart of the Museum. Visitor services have been updated, a new shop has opened, and a café in the original Victorian refreshment rooms opened in 2006 with a modern extension. The V&A this year opened the Sackler Centre for arts education providing one of the most advanced museum education facilities in the country.

Mark Jones, Director of the V&A, said: *“2009 will be a remarkable year for the V&A with new galleries opening to house some of our greatest treasures. Under Future Plan, we have completed a tremendous amount of work and transformed the Museum. Anyone who last visited the V&A before 2001 would find it almost unrecognisable today. The new Medieval and Renaissance Galleries will be among the most striking galleries in the V&A, and will mean that 70% of the Museum has been redisplayed. The V&A can now claim to be a world-class 21st-century museum with beautiful contemporary displays in a revitalised historic building.”*

**ENDS**

**For further PRESS information please contact the V&A Press Office on 0207 942 2502/00 or email [press.office@vam.ac.uk](mailto:press.office@vam.ac.uk)**

**There is a selection of images available to download from [www.image.net](http://www.image.net)**

