

# Brooklyn Museum

## Press Release

October 2017

### ***David Bowie is* Coming to the Brooklyn Museum**

March 2 to July 15, 2018

The Brooklyn Museum is proud to announce that it will be the final stop on the world tour of the critically acclaimed exhibition *David Bowie is*, organized by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The exhibition is the first retrospective of the extraordinary five-decade career of David Bowie—one of the most pioneering and influential performers of modern times. Curated by Victoria Broackes and Geoffrey Marsh from the Department of Theatre and Performance at the V&A, *David Bowie is* explores the creative process of an artist whose sustained reinventions, innovative collaborations, and bold characterizations revolutionized the way we see music, inspired people to shape their own identities while also challenging social traditions. On view from March 2 to July 15, 2018, *David Bowie is* will include never-before-seen objects and work exclusive to the Brooklyn Museum presentation.

As the official audio partner of the exhibition, Sennheiser will be delivering a captivating audio experience through its AMBEO® 3D audio technology. Also, as in prior *David Bowie is* exhibitions around the world, the company's technologies will be used for all audio elements throughout the exhibition—including its wireless systems, headphones and Neumann loudspeakers. The advanced sound technology, alongside theatrical scene-setting, animation and video, provide an immersive journey through the artistic influences that Bowie cited as formative. With



Photograph from the album cover shoot for *Aladdin Sane*, 1973. Photograph by Brian Duffy. Photo Duffy © Duffy Archive & The David Bowie Archive

unprecedented access to his personal archive, *David Bowie is* features more than 300 objects collected from his teenage years through his death in 2016—including handwritten lyrics, original costumes, photography, set designs, album artwork, and rare performance material.

The Brooklyn presentation is organized by Matthew Yokobosky, Director of Exhibition Design, Brooklyn Museum. The exhibition is made possible with the lead sponsorship of Spotify.

"Since *David Bowie is* left the V&A, London in August 2013, nearly 1.8 million visitors have flocked to see the exhibition as it has travelled around the world, a testament to Bowie's depth, breadth and worldwide reach and the public's interest in the processes of creation behind such a uniquely influential performer. Bowie himself left England in 1974 to eventually settle in America, so we could not be more delighted that the final leg of the tour brings the show back to New York, where Bowie made his home," Victoria Broackes, Curator, V&A.

"With mainstream appeal and yet an avant-garde heart, David Bowie was one of the most original artists of our times. He challenged the status quo and continually took us on new musical explorations with his forward-thinking and groundbreaking presentations. David Bowie continues to be the apex for many artists in wide-ranging disciplines," said Matthew Yokobosky, Director of Exhibition Design, Brooklyn Museum

The exhibition explores the broad range of Bowie's collaborations with artists and designers in the fields of fashion, sound, graphics, theater, art, and film. On display are more than 60 stage costumes including *Ziggy Stardust* bodysuits (1972) designed by Freddie Burretti, Kansai Yamamoto's flamboyant creations for the *Aladdin Sane* tour (1973), and the Union Jack coat designed by Bowie and Alexander McQueen for the *EARTH LINE* album cover (1997). Also on show is photography by Brian Duffy, Terry O'Neill, and Masayoshi Sukita; album sleeve artwork by Guy Peellaert and Edward Bell; cover proofs by Barnbrook for the album *The Next Day* (2013); visual excerpts from films and live performances including *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976) and *Saturday Night Live* (1979); music videos such as *Boys Keep Swinging* (1979) and *Let's Dance* (1983); and set designs created for the *Diamond Dogs* tour (1974).

Alongside these are more personal items such as never-before-shown storyboards, handwritten set lists and lyrics as well as some of Bowie's own sketches, musical scores, and diary entries, revealing the evolution of his creative ideas.

"Music is a cultural force for good and I can think of few better examples than David Bowie as someone who has

genuinely made the world a better and more interesting place through his unique talents in music, art and fashion," said Troy Carter, Global Head of Creator Services at Spotify. "We are honored to partner with the Brooklyn Museum on this exhibition to celebrate the life of this great man."

### ***David Bowie is* a Timed Ticketed Exhibition**

*David Bowie is* will be a timed ticketed exhibition. Lightning Bolt tickets, which give attendees priority access to the exhibition, are available now through the run of the exhibition and cost \$35. Exclusive packages start at \$85. To purchase, visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org) or <https://www.showclix.com/event/david-bowie-is>.

Member tickets will be available on November 8, 2017 before standard tickets go on sale to the public. Brooklyn Museum Members receive free ticket(s) based on membership level. Benefits include priority access to the exhibition; free general admission for one year; and discounts on Museum programs, dining, and shopping. To learn more about Membership, visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org/join](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/join); contact 718.501.6326; or email [membership@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:membership@brooklynmuseum.org).

Standard tickets go on sale Wednesday, November 15, 2017. Standard tickets will cost \$20 for Adults, \$12 for Seniors and Students ages 13 and up, \$6 for Children ages 4–12 on weekdays; and \$25 for Adults, \$16 for Seniors and Students ages 13 and up, \$10 for Children ages 4–12 on weekends.

Groups of 10 or more can make advance reservations now by calling 718.501.6222 or email [grouptours@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:grouptours@brooklynmuseum.org). Corporate members receive a 40% discount off standard tickets when purchasing in person.

All tickets include general Museum admission, visit: [www.brooklynmuseum.org/DavidBowieis](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/DavidBowieis) for additional information.

### **About *David Bowie is***

*David Bowie is* offers insight into Bowie's early years and his first steps towards musical success. Tracing the creative aspirations of the young David Robert Jones (born 1947 in Brixton, London), it shows how he was inspired by innovations in art, theatre, music,

technology, and youth culture in Britain in the aftermath of World War II. Pursuing a professional career in music and acting, he officially adopted the stage name “David Bowie” in 1965 and went through a series of self-styled changes from Mod to mime artist and folk singer to R&B musician in anticipation of the shifting nature of his later career. On display are early photographs, LPs from his musical heroes such as Little Richard, and Bowie's sketches for stage sets and costumes created for his bands The Kon-rads and The King Bees in the 1960s. This opening section concludes with a focus on Bowie's first major hit *Space Oddity* (1969) and the introduction of the fictional character *Major Tom*, who would be revisited by Bowie in both *Ashes to Ashes* (1980) and *Hallo Spaceboy* (1995). Inspired by Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, the single was released to coincide with the first moon landing and was Bowie's breakthrough moment, granting him critical and commercial success as an established solo artist.

The exhibition moves on to examine David Bowie's creative processes from song writing, recording, and producing to designing costumes, stage sets, and album artwork. As he worked within both established art forms and new artistic movements, this section reveals the scope of his inspirations and cultural references from Surrealism, Brechtian theater, and avant-garde mime to West End musicals, German Expressionism, and Japanese *Kabuki* performance.

On view are some of Bowie's own musical instruments, footage, and photography of recording sessions for *Outside* (1995) and *Hours...* (1999) as well as handwritten lyrics and word collages inspired by William Burroughs' “cut up” method of writing that have never previously been publicly displayed. *David Bowie* is chronicles his innovative approach to creating albums and touring shows around fictionalized stage personas and narratives. 1972 marked the birth of his most famous creation: *Ziggy Stardust*, a human manifestation of an alien being. Ziggy's daringly androgynous and otherworldly appearance has had a powerful and continuous influence on pop culture, signaling a challenge to social traditions and inspiring people to shape their own identities. On display is the original multi-colored suit worn for the pivotal performance of *Starman* on *Top of the Pops* in July 1972, as well as outfits designed for stage characters *Aladdin Sane* and *The Thin White Duke*. Costumes from *The 1980 Floor Show*

(1973), album cover sleeves for *The Man Who Sold the World* (1970) and *Hunky Dory* (1971), alongside press cuttings and fan material, highlight Bowie's fluid stylistic transformations and his impact on social mobility and gay liberation.

There is also an area dedicated to the monochrome theatricality of Bowie's Berlin period and the creation of the stylish *Thin White Duke* persona identified with the *Station to Station* album and *Stage* tour (1976). It also investigates the series of experimental and pioneering records he produced between 1977 and 1979 while living in Germany, known as the *Berlin Trilogy*.

Several immersive audio-visual spaces present dramatic projections of some of Bowie's most ambitious music videos including *DJ* (1979) and *The Hearts Filthy Lesson* (1995), as well as recently uncovered footage of Bowie performing *Jean Genie* on *Top of the Pops* in 1973 and D.A. Pennebaker's film *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars: The Motion Picture* (1973).

A separate screening room shows excerpts and props from Bowie's feature films such as *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976), *Labyrinth* (1986) and *Basquiat* (1996).

The final section celebrates David Bowie as a pioneering performer both on stage and in film, concentrating on key performances throughout his career. This gallery traces the evolution of the lavishly produced *Diamond Dogs* tour (1974), the design of which was inspired by Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis* (1927) and George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). The tour combined exuberant choreography by Toni Basil and a colossal set design, taking the combination of rock music and theater to new heights. On display are previously unseen storyboards and tour footage for the proposed musical that Bowie would eventually transform into the *Diamond Dogs* album and touring show.

*David Bowie* is also includes a display of striking performance and fashion photographs taken by photographers including Helmut Newton, Herb Ritts, Mick Rock, and John Rowlands.

### David Bowie Archive

Costumes, materials, and objects courtesy of the David Bowie Archive, with thanks to Archivist Sandra Hirshkowitz.

### **Exhibition Publication**

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated book edited by curators Victoria Broackes and Geoffrey Marsh. It is the first publication to draw in full from the David Bowie Archive and will be updated for the Brooklyn presentation. It features contributions from leading academics and experts in musicology and cultural history.

### **Exhibition Merchandise**

The Brooklyn Museum Shop is offering a product range to complement the exhibition featuring limited edition of prints, books, fashion accessories, and t-shirts.

### **About the Brooklyn Museum**

Founded in 1823 as the Brooklyn Apprentices' Library Association, the Brooklyn Museum contains one of the nation's most comprehensive and wide-ranging collections enhanced by a distinguished record of exhibitions, scholarship, and service to the public. The Museum's vast holdings span 5,000 years of human creativity from cultures in every corner of the globe. Collection highlights include the ancient Egyptian holdings, renowned for objects of the highest world-class quality, and the arts of the Americas collection, which is unrivaled in its diverse range from pre-Columbian relics, Spanish colonial painting, and Native American art and artifacts, to 19th- and early 20th-century American painting, sculpture, and decorative objects. The Museum is also home to the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, which is dedicated to the study and exhibition of feminist art and is the only curatorial center of its kind. The Brooklyn Museum is both a leading cultural institution and a community museum dedicated to serving a wide-ranging audience. Located in the heart of Brooklyn, the Museum welcomes and celebrates the diversity of its home borough and city. Few, if any, museums in the country attract an audience as varied with respect to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, educational background, and age as the audience of the Brooklyn Museum. [www.BrooklynMuseum.org](http://www.BrooklynMuseum.org)

### **About the V&A**

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art and design with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity. It was established to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and

manufacturers. Today, the V&A's collections, which span over 5,000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium and from many parts of the world, continue to intrigue, inspire and inform. [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)

### **About Sennheiser**

Sennheiser is shaping the future of audio—a vision built on more than 70 years of innovation culture, which is deeply rooted within the company. Founded in 1945, Sennheiser remains family-owned and is today one of the world's leading manufacturers of headphones, microphones and wireless transmission systems. With 20 sales subsidiaries and long-established trading partners, the company is active in more than 50 countries and operates its own production facilities in Germany, Ireland and the USA. Sennheiser has around 2,800 employees around the world that share a passion for audio. Since 2013, Sennheiser has been managed by Daniel Sennheiser and Dr. Andreas Sennheiser, the third generation of the family to run the company. In 2016, the Sennheiser Group had sales totaling 658.4 million. [www.sennheiser.com](http://www.sennheiser.com)

### **About Spotify**

Spotify transformed music listening forever when it launched in Sweden in 2008. Our mission today remains the same: to help more people listen to more great songs by delivering the ultimate music experience to fans and artists across the globe. Everything we do is driven by our love for music.

Discover, manage and share over 30m songs for free, or upgrade to Spotify Premium to access exclusive features including offline mode, improved sound quality, Spotify Connect and ad-free listening. Today, Spotify is the world's most popular music streaming service with a community of over 140m users, including over 60m subscribers, across 61 markets. We are the largest driver of revenue to the music business today.

*David Bowie* is organized by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

3D sound experience provided by Sennheiser.

Lead sponsorship for this exhibition is provided by Spotify.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Admission:**

Contribution: \$16; students with valid I.D. and seniors \$10. Ages 19 and under FREE. Also FREE first Saturday of the month (except September), 5–11 pm. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling 718.501.6234.

Programs are subject to change without notice. For more information, visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org).

### **Directions:**

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/ Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3.  
Bus: B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

### **Museum Hours:**

Wednesday and Friday, 11 am to 6 pm; Thursday, 11 am to 10 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm; first Saturday of each month (except September), 11 am to 11 pm. Closed Monday, Tuesday, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.