

Children's Art Day: The Design Museum

Visiting the first museum in the world devoted exclusively to 20th and 21st century design can be an eye-opening experience.

For Children's Art Day, July 3 2003, Children's Express journalists from London and Sheffield spent the day shadowing key members of the art world...

For those like me who can't tell We didn't realize that 'design' could cover such a broad range of subjects, including everyday objects around us all the time. Alvar Aalto from Yugo Nakamura, visiting the Design Museum is a daunting prospect. However, whoever claimed that ignorance is bliss had obviously not appreciated the benefit of exploring new disciplines.

Situated in an aesthetic environment, the Design Museum is proud of its status of having been the first museum in the world to be dedicated to 20th and 21st century design. The initial focus was industrial design, before the museum expanded to encompass modern fashion, architecture and creative technology (great for kids). This includes, as I was delighted to discover, exhibitions such as the current 'Games, Games, Games!' depicting the history of the video game, with the option of playing old favourites. I think the appropriate term is 'interactive learning!' We didn't realize that 'design' could cover such a broad range of subjects, including everyday objects around us all the time.

We were kindly invited to a tour of the museum by its director, Alice Rawsthorn. One of the most striking creations that we were shown is the outdoor 'Design Tank' whose current installation is titled 'Living in a Tank' and is a visionary way of portraying the compact nature of modern homes and living accessories. A free glimpse of the museum, the Tank is a way of inviting those who otherwise wouldn't have the inclination or opportunity to visit. We also went to the launch of an exhibition by Dutch designer Hella Jongueris. One of the most striking pieces was a giant dress that looked like a jellyfish - it was pink with diamante and hung from the high ceiling of the museum.

Alice's job in the art and design world is that bit more important because of the unique place the Design Museum occupies. She has more responsibility and pressure to make a name for design, and looking behind the scenes and we could see that the job is not as glamorous as it might appear at first.

Young people are not encouraged enough to respond to design as the Design Museum defines it - on the level of how the normal world contains many beautiful and functional objects. We liked the fact that the exhibitions are generally temporary, meaning more variety if one was to visit more than once a year.

Still, from a child's perspective, perhaps the most enticing part of the Design Museum is the fun of hands-on interaction. Be it with the videogames, testing each chair at the 'Century of Chairs' exhibit, or participating in one of the many workshops organised for tots to teens, there are plenty of opportunities for youth involvement, something we feel should be celebrated on Children's Arts Day.

About the team

This story was produced by Haifa Rashed, 17 and Jimmy Tam, 18. It was published in Starworks, the annual [Artworks](#) magazine.

0 comments

- [Add a comment to this page](#)

Related Links

More from Headliners

[The British and Commonwealth Museum a year on](#) Young visitors to one of Britain's newest exhibitions learn some uncomfortable but overdue lessons about their country's past.

[A child's-eye view of T-Rex](#)

[Art as refuge](#)

[The Kids report](#)

[Discovering Discover](#)

Built on [Cubik](#)

©2012 Headliners

Registered Charity Number 1043300. Supported by the [Department for Children, Schools and Families](#)