

## Major Wes Anderson retrospective unveiled at the Design Museum



Matt Alexander/PA Media Assignments

### **Wes Anderson: The Archives**

21 November 2025 – 26 July 2026

the Design Museum

[PRESS IMAGES AVAILABLE HERE](#)

The Design Museum in London has unveiled its major new Wes Anderson exhibition, a landmark retrospective of the work of one of the world's most loved filmmakers.

Anderson has officially inaugurated the exhibition — titled ***Wes Anderson: The Archives*** — ahead of Friday's public opening. He visited the museum and posed for photographs with the exhibition's curators. Over 700 items are on show, and it marks the first time his archives have gone on display in the UK.

The Design Museum also reveals today that the exhibition will bring Anderson's career right up to date, with objects on display from his most recent feature film: 2025's *The Phoenician Scheme*.

Over two-dozen beautifully made items from the film are on show.

These include a pipe from Dunhill and a bejewelled dagger made by contemporary artist and sculptor Harumi Klossowska de Rola.

**Exhibition curators Lucia Savi and Johanna Agerman Ross**

said, “The inclusion of these objects from *The Phoenician Scheme* is a fitting conclusion of this expansive exhibition. Wes Anderson has collected objects throughout his career — the archives that form the backbone of this show are a testament to this instinct. In his latest film, collecting plays a central role as the main character, Anatole 'Zsa-zsa' Korda, is himself a passionate collector of art, books, residences and businesses. So, we are thrilled that we can bring this latest chapter in Wes Anderson’s story to visitors.”

The museum also reveals that three additional short films will be screened in full. As well as the previously announced 14-minute *Bottle Rocket* short, visitors can enjoy *Hotel Chevalier* (2007), a prologue to *The Darjeeling Limited*, and *Castello Cavalcanti* (2013), made in collaboration with Prada. Most recently, he directed *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar and Three More* (2023), a series of shorts adapted from Roald Dahl stories. One of the shorts in the series — *The Swan* — will be shown.

Seen together, the shorts screened in the exhibition chart Anderson's evolving use of the format — and it is the first time in Britain they have been projected together.

**About the exhibition**

Across ***Wes Anderson: The Archives***, items range from original storyboards, polaroids, sketches, and famed costumes worn by much-loved characters, to stop-motion puppets, miniature models, paintings, props and even Anderson’s handwritten notebooks.

The Design Museum has been granted unprecedented access to Wes Anderson’s extensive archives, which the filmmaker has

painstakingly built up over three decades. This will be the very first time the majority of these objects have been publicly displayed in Britain.

Through these unique objects, the exhibition charts the evolution of Anderson's films from his first short and feature films in the 1990s, up to his most recent productions. The show will follow a broadly chronological survey of his career, with each section dedicated to one of his films. It will begin with 1996's *Bottle Rocket* — Anderson's first feature film — right up to his Oscar-winning short film *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar* (2023) from the anthology collection *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar and Three More*, and 2025's *The Phoenician Scheme*.

***Wes Anderson: The Archives*** is the first major museum exhibition devoted to Wes Anderson's extensive and distinctive cinematic output. It is a collaboration between la Cinémathèque française in Paris and the Design Museum in London — and with Wes Anderson himself.

The show premiered at la Cinémathèque française in March and is expanded and re-imagined here at the Design Museum. Over 300 objects have been added, and there is a new emphasis on the complex process of Anderson's world-building design work and the contributions of his trusted collaborators.

### **Object highlights**

Visitors will be able to get up-close to immediately recognisable items that have appeared on screen across all of Anderson's films.

A major highlight is the monumental candy-pink model of the Grand Budapest Hotel — that was used to capture the building's façade for the 2014 film — and which is one of the largest and most recognisable items in the exhibition. Spanning over 3-metres in

width, the model is one of over 700 objects on display which will collectively illustrate Anderson's meticulous craft of filmmaking.

Other highlights include the vending machines from *Asteroid City* (2023), the FENDI fur coat worn by Gwyneth Paltrow as Margot Tenenbaum in *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2001), and the original stop motion puppets used to depict the fantastical sea creatures in *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (2004).

Also on display is *Boy with Apple*, the 'priceless Renaissance portrait' that is unexpectedly inherited by Ralph Fiennes' character Gustave H in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014). In reality, the painting is contemporary work by British artist Michael Taylor and was commissioned by Wes Anderson specially for the film. The painting is shown alongside Fiennes' Gustave H concierge costume, as well as the coat, dress and accessories worn by Tilda Swinton's character Madame D, the wealthy aristocrat who is the original owner of the painting in the film.

A very rare treat for Wes Anderson fans is the screening of Anderson's *Bottle Rocket* short film that went on to be remade as his first feature. Created in 1993 and starring long-time collaborator Owen Wilson, visitors can watch the whole 14-minute cut in the exhibition gallery.

A number of Anderson's spiral-bound notebooks in which the director records ideas are also shown. They feature a rare opportunity to uncover his creative process, from the earliest inspirations for his films and characters, to ideas for scripts and sketches of scenes in his characteristic handwriting.

Dozens of costumes are on display, exploring Anderson's careful collaboration with actors to craft characters through the ensembles they wear. Highlights include the Oscar-winning costumes from *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (for which Milena Canonero received the

Academy Award for Costume Design in 2014) and much-loved characters including Moses Rosenthaler's costume (worn by Benicio del Toro) in *The French Dispatch* (2021), Max Fischer's Rushmore Academy uniform from *Rushmore*, and the full ensembles of the Zissou crew from *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*. Costumes worn by Waris Ahluwalia, Ralph Fiennes, Seu Jorge, Scarlett Johansson, Gwyneth Paltrow, Bill Murray, Jason Schwartzman, Ben Stiller, Tilda Swinton, Owen Wilson and Jeffrey Wright will all be on show.

The sections devoted to the stop motion films *Fantastic Mr Fox* (2009) and *Isle of Dogs* (2018) delve into Wes Anderson's highly crafted miniature worlds. Visitors will discover a large selection of original puppets in various scales, including Mr Fox (voiced by George Clooney) wearing his signature corduroy suit and show dog Nutmeg (voiced by Scarlett Johansson) alongside the meticulously built miniature sets.

A major thread woven through the show is the story of the collaborative approach that makes Anderson's work possible. On display will be works by many of these key long-standing creative partners, including Eric Chase Anderson, Javi Aznarez, Milena Canonero, Roman Coppola, Alexandre Desplat, Erica Dorn, Mark Friedberg, Andy Gent, Juman Malouf, Roger Do Minh, Sylvia Plachy, Carl Sprague, Adam Stockhausen, Simon Weisse and Laura Wilson.

As well as finished props and sets, the exhibition features work-in-progress material and maquettes, and it will look at the variety of traditional and hand-made film-making techniques that the director continues to celebrate through his work, especially connected to puppets and stop motion animation.

### **Wes Anderson's archives**

Anderson has kept items from his films for nearly thirty years, and he has amassed thousands of varied objects. This exhibition is the first time the archives have been displayed, with the vast majority of items having been in storage ever since they were first used on their respective film sets.

Almost uniquely as a filmmaker, Anderson builds his filmic worlds by ensuring that what is seen on screen is conceived and crafted as a 'real' object. Although visible only for few seconds, these are much more than mere props and Anderson himself is closely involved in the commission and creation of each one.

Anderson's meticulous collecting of these items began when he realised that everything that had been made for *Bottle Rocket* was owned and then sold off by the film's production company. So, from his second feature film — *Rushmore* — he personally took care of every item after shooting concluded, ensuring he was the guardian of all items crafted for each movie.

**Lucia Savi, Head of Curatorial and Interpretation at the Design Museum and co-curator of *Wes Anderson: The Archives***, said: "Each Wes Anderson picture plunges the viewer into a world with its own codes, motifs, references, and with sumptuous and instantly recognisable sets and costumes. Every single object in a Wes Anderson film is very personal to him — they are not simply props, they are fully formed pieces of art and design that make his inventive worlds come to life."

**Johanna Agerman Ross, Conran Foundation Chief Curator at the Design Museum and co-curator of *Wes Anderson: The Archives***, said: "It is an absolute gift that even as a young filmmaker Wes Anderson had the vision and foresight to save all his props and beautifully crafted objects for his own archive. We are thrilled to be the first to fully dive into the archive's full riches."

**Tim Marlow, Director and CEO of the Design Museum,** said:

“Wes Anderson has created some of the most visually distinctive and emotionally resonant films of the last two decades — from the melancholic charm of *The Royal Tenenbaums* to the youthful adventurism of *Moonrise Kingdom*. He’s an utterly compelling creator of cinematic worlds, whose singular vision and attention to detail are underpinned by an acute understanding of design and craftsmanship, which is why the Design Museum is the perfect location for this landmark retrospective.”

The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive new catalogue, published by the Design Museum and produced in collaboration with Wes Anderson. It features essays by leading design and film writers, unique photography, and interviews with some of Anderson’s collaborators, such as actors Owen Wilson, Scarlett Johansson, Jason Schwartzman and Tilda Swinton; composer Alexandre Desplat, musician Seu Jorge and music supervisor Randall Poster. It is available to purchase now.

The exhibition — ***Wes Anderson: The Archives*** — is produced by the Design Museum, London in collaboration with la Cinémathèque française and in partnership with Wes Anderson and American Empirical Pictures. It is presented in partnership with Exhibition Sponsors Canva and W Hotels, along with Associate Sponsor Montblanc.

It is curated by Johanna Agerman Ross and Lucia Savi, based on an original concept curated by Matthieu Orléan. Developed in collaboration with Octavia Peissel and Ben Adler.

**-Ends-**

**Exhibition Sponsors**

*Canva*

**W HOTELS**

**Associate Sponsor**

 **MONTBLANC**

**Media Partner**

**DAZED**

**Notes to Editors**

**W:** [designmuseum.org/exhibitions/wes-anderson-the-archives](https://designmuseum.org/exhibitions/wes-anderson-the-archives)

**PRESS ENQUIRIES:**

Maxwell Blowfield, Senior Media and PR Manager

E: [maxwell.blowfield@designmuseum.org](mailto:maxwell.blowfield@designmuseum.org)

Press Office

E: [pr@designmuseum.org](mailto:pr@designmuseum.org)

**About Canva**

Launched in 2013, Canva is the world's leading all-in-one platform for visual communication and collaboration. Built to empower everyone to design, Canva serves the creative and design needs of enterprises, small businesses, consumers, and students in more than 190 countries worldwide.

Whether you're a novice taking your first steps in design, or a creative professional seeking powerful tools, Canva ensures users have what they need to transform an idea into something beautiful. Underpinned by the world's most comprehensive library of designer-made content, Canva is

powered by a suite of products and proprietary AI tools which elevate how individuals and teams create, collaborate, and communicate with ease.

### **About W Hotels**

Born from the social electricity of New York City, W Hotels has been at the forefront of lifestyle hospitality for over two decades. With 70 destinations around the world, the detail-driven design, signature Whatever/Whenever service, and buzzing Living Rooms cultivate experiences of social connectivity. Each location brings together the magnetic energy of W Hotels and the essence of local culture, creating spaces for new perspectives and a freedom of self-expression.

W Hotels is currently undergoing a multi-year brand evolution, to meet the needs of today's guest and deliver a new generation of luxury lifestyle experiences. W Hotels is proud to participate in Marriott Bonvoy®, the global travel program from Marriott International. The program offers members an extraordinary portfolio of global brands, exclusive experiences on Marriott Bonvoy Moments and unparalleled benefits including complimentary nights and Elite status recognition. To enroll for free or for more information about the program, visit [MarriottBonvoy.com](https://www.marriott.com/bonvoy).

### **About Montblanc**

Synonymous with excellence in craftsmanship and design, Montblanc has been pushing the boundaries of innovation ever since the Maison first revolutionized the culture of writing in 1906. Ingenuity and imagination continue to be driving forces for the Maison today as it advances its expression of fine craftsmanship across product categories: writing instruments, watches, leather goods, new technologies and accessories. Reflecting upon its ongoing mission to create fine lifetime companions born from bold ideas and expertly crafted through the skills of the Maison's artisans, the iconic Montblanc Emblem has become the ultimate seal of performance, quality and an expression of sophisticated style. To spread the message of Inspire Writing, MONTBLANC HAUS opened its doors in 2022 in Hamburg, welcoming visitors from all over the world to discover and rediscover the power of putting pen to paper. As part of its on-going commitment to elevating and support those who strive to leave their mark, Montblanc continues to assert its encouragement of education programs around the world and initiatives that inspire people to express their full potential.

### **About la Cinémathèque française**

**Exhibitions – Films and lectures – Young people activities – The Méliès Museum**

In 1936, Henri Langlois, a visionary figure, founded la Cinémathèque française to save films from destruction, along with costumes, sets, posters and other cinematic treasures. Today, housed in a resolutely modern building designed by Frank Gehry, la Cinémathèque française preserves,

restores and showcases cinema in a unique way through its numerous activities and one of the world's largest film collections. A true crossroads of cinephilia, it constantly reexamines cinema across all periods, horizons and genres. It enables spectators to make wonderful film discoveries through films and lectures (4 auditoriums), exhibitions (Discover the *Wes Anderson* exhibition from 19 March to 27 July 2025), the Méliès Museum, a film library, a bookshop, a restaurant and activities for young people.

[www.cinematheque.fr](http://www.cinematheque.fr)

#### **About the Design Museum:**

The Design Museum is a multifaceted museum, an ever-changing space for the public, industry and education to come together and explore new ideas. A registered charity, the museum's innovative exhibitions, partnerships, research and learning programmes evidence how design can enable this planet and its inhabitants to thrive. Our landmark building in Kensington is the centre of our national network and a global hub for the transformative potential of design.



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

[designmuseum.org](http://designmuseum.org)

@designmuseum