

Splash! A Century of Swimming & Style



Large print guide

the
DESIGN
MUSEUM

Splash! A Century of Swimming & Style

Design has shaped our relationship with water over the last 100 years. From the 1920s, swimsuits were marketed for swimming, rather than bathing, and physical fitness became fashionable. Beach holidays were a marker of a modern lifestyle, and from that time onwards swimming both impacted and was impacted by trends in fashion and architecture.

Splash! explores this evolution thematically through three spaces in which we swim: Pool, Lido, and Nature. Through these environments we will consider innovation in materials and making, leisure and travel, and sport and performance. We will navigate the politics of swimming, from bodily autonomy to polluted rivers and seas. We will dip our toe into folklore and mythology, and ideas around health and wellbeing.

This exhibition will investigate the last century of swimming and style and its social, cultural and environmental impact.

It's time to dive in...

→ **Continue along wall**

Selling the modern beach holiday, late 1920s

Commercial artist Tom Purvis's work for the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER) in the 1920s and 1930s brought the iconography of modern design to the beach holiday. He also worked on the visual identity of Blackpool Pleasure Beach. The graphic simplicity and bold use of flat colour served to 'brand' the seaside as a modern, vibrant and fashionable space.

Tom Purvis for London and North Eastern Railway
Colour lithograph
Design Museum Collection

→ Continue along wall

Designing *Splash!*

The design of this exhibition has been inspired by swimming environments in many ways. Exhibition designers ScottWhitbyStudio have created a central plinth in each of the three sections of Pool, Lido and Nature. These are scale models of swimming spaces: in Pool, the London Aquatics Centre, in Lido, the Jubilee Pool in Penzance, and in Nature, the coastline of the English Channel.

The plinths are made from Storm Board recycled waste plastic, which is produced in Hull and can be recycled into other boards at the end of this exhibition. The paper used for labels throughout is the biodegradable Alga Carta, selected by the exhibition's graphic designer Mark El-khatib. This is created from polluting algae in the Venice Lagoon and other marine environments.

Lucy Morton at the Paris Olympics, 1924

The 1920s saw many pioneering women break records in the water. At the Paris 1924 Olympics, Lucy Morton won the 200 metre breaststroke. She became the first British woman to win gold for solo swimming. She went on to become a swimming coach, training future champions. She also performed at the Blackpool Tower Circus.

1. Olympic gold medal awarded to Lucy Morton, 1924

André Rivaud

Gilt silver

Courtesy of Showtown: Museum of fun and entertainment

2. Photographic portrait of Lucy Morton, Olympic winner in Paris, 1924

John Capstack

Photographic paper

Courtesy of Showtown: Museum of fun and entertainment

3. Framed photograph of Lucy Morton swimming in the Paris Olympics, 1924

Photographic paper, wood

Courtesy of Showtown: Museum of fun and entertainment

4. Olympic swimming team photos, featuring Lucy Morton, around 1924

Photographic paper, paper, cardboard

Courtesy of Showtown: Museum of fun and entertainment

Pool

The swimming pool has had multiple uses over the last century. It has been a place for sanitation, recreation and sport. Municipal swimming has existed alongside private backyard pools and the spectacular engineering feats of Olympic stadiums. Privatisation in the 1980s and austerity in the 2010s saw the closure of many public pools and leisure centres, negatively impacting communities. Pools can be political. They may be democratic public places or contested in terms of access. Sometimes they signify heightened privilege.

Architecture and engineering are fundamental to swimming, and the technical abilities of swimsuits are essential to how we perform in the water. Innovations in materials aid swimwear design for performance and fashion, from knitting machines to the search for more sustainable solutions today.

Swimmer, 1982

David Hockney's pool paintings are celebrated for capturing 1960s California life, when the private backyard pool symbolised affluence and sun-drenched leisure. This poster was created for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. The design on the bottom of the pool mimics the pattern he painted onto the floor of his own backyard pool.

David Hockney
Offset lithograph
Design Museum Collection

→ **Opposite wall, hanging on curtain**

Sanitation to Sporting Spectacle

The first public pools in Britain were for sanitation rather than sport. Following the 1846 Baths and Washhouses Act, local authorities built bathing spaces to promote cleanliness among deprived urban populations in the wake of cholera epidemics. This created a wave of grand civic architecture. Many were modernised in the 1930s, and a number of the surviving pools now have Listed Building status.

The modern Olympic Games began in 1894 and the building of monumental stadiums and pools is now symbolic of the host nation's spectacular sporting prowess. Today, these spaces also hold events such as fashion shows and photo shoots, utilising the magnificent architecture as a backdrop.

Marshall Street Baths, London

Built on the site of one of London's oldest bath houses is Marshall Street Baths. It was first opened in 1852 as a bathing facility and public laundry. Rebuilt in 1931, during the Second World War it was used as a training ground for servicemen. Today, the public pool is considered an important example of English Art Deco architecture. It was recently refurbished by Finch Forman architects and retains its marble lined pool and barrel-vaulted roof.

1. **Modern public baths and washhouses, 1930s**

Architects A.W.S. & K.M.B. Cross

Courtesy of City of Westminster Archives

2. ***Servicemen at Marshall Street Baths, early 1940s***

Photographic paper

Courtesy of City of Westminster Archives

3. Susan Fang Spring/Summer 2023 at Marshall Street swimming pool, 2022

Photograph by Haydon Perrior

Courtesy of Susan Fang and Haydon Perrior

Marshall Street, 2018

Photograph by Soo Burnell

Courtesy of Soo Burnell

London Aquatics Centre

Zaha Hadid's London Aquatics Centre was an architectural landmark of the 2012 Olympics. The undulating roof was inspired by the fluid geometry of water in motion. During the Olympic Games, the stadium had temporary wings positioned to the side of the roof to allow for additional seating capacity. This model depicts the building in its final legacy form as a pool for the local community, the wings replaced with curving glass facades.

4. Scale model of the London Aquatics Centre (Silver), 2014

Zaha Hadid Architects

SLS fibreglass, silver paint

Courtesy of Zaha Hadid Foundation

5. London Aquatics Centre, cross section (Olympic mode), 2009

Zaha Hadid Architects

© Zaha Hadid Foundation

**6. London Aquatics Centre, second floor plan
(Olympic mode), 2009**

Zaha Hadid Architects

© Zaha Hadid Foundation

**7. London Aquatics Centre, cross section (legacy
mode), 2009**

Zaha Hadid Architects, 2009

© Zaha Hadid Foundation

**8. London Aquatics Centre, first floor plan
(legacy mode), 2009**

Zaha Hadid Architects

© Zaha Hadid Foundation

**9. *Rejina Pyo Spring/Summer 2022 at London
Aquatics Centre, 2021***

Photograph by Antonio Salgado

Antonio Salgado - Capturise.com

First swimming lessons at the London Aquatics Centre, 2014

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

2 minutes

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park/Anna Tsekouras

**→ Continue anticlockwise
around central plinth**

Team GB Olympic swimsuit, London, 2012

Stella McCartney and adidas' swimsuit design for Team GB athletes merged high performance with contemporary fashion. This diving swimsuit features bonded seams to improve hydrodynamics, and enhanced compression to support a diver's muscles. Essential to the design of Olympic uniforms is representation of the national flag. Here we can see how the Union Jack was deconstructed and abstracted for a modern look.

10. Team GB swimsuit, 2012

Stella McCartney and adidas

Recycled polyamide, elastane

Courtesy of Stella McCartney, in partnership
with adidas

11. Team GB Stella McCartney reference book, 2011

Stella McCartney

Paper

Courtesy of Stella McCartney

Movement, 2020

Photograph by Mária Švarbová

Courtesy of Mária Švarbová

Swimmers' Stories

→ Continue along wall

Ellie Robinson

This is Ellie Robinson's training suit from her first ever training camp at the age of 13. She subsequently became a Paralympic champion at Rio 2016, her first Games. She won gold and bronze for 50 metres butterfly and 100 metres freestyle respectively, and her gold win set a new Paralympics record. She is now a children's author, and has turned her competitive swimming experience into the Gold Medal Mysteries, a sporting adventure series.

Training swimsuit, 2014

Speedo

Polyester

Shared by Ellie Robinson MBE – Paralympic, European and Commonwealth Games Champion – Para Swimming (Freestyle and Butterfly)

Tom Daley

Diver Tom Daley has won numerous gold, silver and bronze medals since his first Olympics at the age of 14 and is a vocal advocate for LGBTQ+ rights for athletes. He wore these trunks where he won gold at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, having started knitting the previous year to relieve stress. Since then he has knitted swim trunks, medal pouches and sweaters. He has also created knit kits through his Made with Love by Tom Daley platform.

Olympic trunks, around 2020

adidas

Polyester, cotton

Courtesy of Tom Daley & MWL

Knitted jumper, 2023

Made With Love by Tom Daley

Wool

Courtesy of Tom Daley & MWL

→ **Continue along wall**

Yusra Mardini

Champion swimmer Yusra Mardini fled the Syrian civil war with her sister Sarah in 2015. When their overcrowded dinghy started to sink in the Aegean Sea, the sisters swam with it, pulling everyone on board to safety. Yusra competed with the first Refugee Olympic Team in Rio 2016, and again in Tokyo 2020. The sisters' story was chronicled in the biopic *The Swimmers* (2022).

Swim cap, 2018

Under Armour

Silicone

Gift of Butterfly by Yusra Mardini – Charity Association

→ **Continue along wall**

Alice Dearing

Olympic swimmer Alice Dearing was the first Black woman to swim for Team GB and is a co-founder of the Black Swimming Association. She wore this swimsuit at the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. In 2022 she collaborated with SOUL CAP who create swim caps to use with braids, locs or afro hair. The caps were banned from the Olympics in 2021, with the claim that they don't follow 'the natural form of the head'. The decision was reversed the following year.

Team GB Tokyo Olympics swimsuit, 2020

adidas

Elastane

Courtesy of Alice Dearing

AD x SOUL CAP, 2022

Alice Dearing and SOUL CAP

Latex

Courtesy of Alice Dearing

→ **Move to small central plinth**

Politics of the Pool

The pool is a political space, as has been witnessed throughout the last century. Between the First and Second World Wars the cult of physical fitness that made swimming fashionable also became aligned with fascist ideals of strength and discipline. In Germany, the Nazi regime banned Jewish citizens from public swimming spaces in the 1930s.

Across America, both official and unofficial segregation policies excluded Black swimmers and other swimmers of colour from pools designated as white spaces. This exclusion was often policed through violence. Pools and beaches duly became sites of protest.

The legacy of these policies impacts who learns to swim today. Activists and campaigners such as The Subversive Sirens and the Black Swimming Association highlight these historic barriers.

Gay Games and International Group of LGBTQIA+ Aquatics

The first Gay Games was held in San Francisco in 1982. The Subversive Sirens made their debut at the 2018 Gay Games in Paris, winning gold for artistic swimming. The following year they again won gold at the International Group of LGBTQIA+ Aquatics Championships in New York. Their routine honoured transgender activist Sylvia Rivera and the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, a key moment of activism and protest for LGBTQ+ civil rights. Their swimsuit design includes Black and Indigenous people and people of colour, as well as transgender elements from the Progress Pride flag.

Gay Games gold medal, Artistic Swimming, 2018

Federation of Gay Games

Metal, ribbon

Courtesy of The Subversive Sirens

BIPOC Trans Flag swimsuit, 2019

The Subversive Sirens and Robin Bobet

Glitter glue, Lycra

Courtesy of The Subversive Sirens

The Subversive Sirens Documentary, 2019

Minnesota-based The Subversive Sirens have reclaimed synchronised swimming in the name of Black liberation, equity in aquatic arts, radical body acceptance and queer visibility. Formed in 2014 by Signe Harriday and Suzy Messerole, the seven-strong team now compete around the world. They spread the joy of synchronised swimming as a liberation practice connected to the feeling of freedom that comes from being in water.

Xiaolu Wang

3 minutes 30 seconds

Courtesy of Xiaolu Wang and The Subversive Sirens

Materials and Making

Advances in textile technology are essential to the story of swimwear. By the 1920s new knit techniques were used to create finer stretch fabrics from wool. Later in the century, chemical companies DuPont in the USA and Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) in the UK led the way in the development of fossil fuel-derived synthetic yarns.

Speedo's Aqualab has been at the helm of innovation in the 21st century, inspired by sharkskin and spaceships. Navigating sustainability in design is complex as the industry remains reliant on synthetic fabrics for performance. The latest developments focus on more sustainable production to minimise the impact on the climate and environment.

1. Wool swimwear, 1920s

Wool was commonly used for bathing suits such as this one by the 1920s. Jaeger was established in 1884 by Lewis Tomalin. He based it on the ideas of Dr Gustav Jäger who advocated for the health-giving qualities of wearing animal fibres such as wool next to the skin. At the time there was a flourishing movement to promote 'hygienic' clothing. Jaeger became known for its woollen undergarments, which by the 1920s translated well into woollen swimwear.

Jaeger

Wool

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Jantzen: knitting innovators

In 1921, Carl Jantzen was granted a patent for a swimsuit made using a circular knitting machine he had developed. This produced lightweight elastic ribbed fabric similar to a sweater cuff. He was co-founder of the Portland Knitting Company in Oregon, later renamed Jantzen. They initially manufactured sweaters and hosiery, but had been asked to create a garment for a rowing club. From the 1930s, Jantzen Y-back styles were designed for sport and named the Speedaire and Raceaire.

2. *Jantzen Knitting Mills machine department, Portland factory, Oregon, around 1920–30s*

The Jantzen Knitting Mills Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

3. *Jantzen swimsuit, around 1936–38*

Jantzen

Wool

Courtesy of Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

Jantzen catalogues, 1930s

Jantzen promoted the physicality of swimming, and from the early 1920s used the tagline 'the Suit that Changed Bathing to Swimming', complete with a logo they called 'Red Diving Girl'. From the outset they positioned the brand as fashionable as well as practical, with early advertising in Vogue and Life magazines. Their campaigns and catalogues were infused with cinematic glamour, evident in an example here featuring Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. alongside stars of British International Pictures.

4. Jantzen catalogue, 1932

Jantzen

Paper

Courtesy of Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

5. Jantzen catalogue, 1937

Jantzen

Paper

Courtesy of Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

→ **Continue left**

6. Duke Paoa Kahanamoku at the Paris Olympics, 1924

Duke Kahanamoku from Hawaii was a champion swimmer who featured in Hollywood films and popularised surfing on a global scale. He was photographed in Jantzen at the 1920 Antwerp Olympics, where he became the first swimmer to win gold in the 100 metre freestyle twice in a row. Savvy to the power of celebrity sporting endorsement, his name was used in Jantzen adverts from the following year.

© 1924/International Olympic Committee (IOC)

7. Lastex stretch swimsuit, around 1940s–50s

Lastex is yarn with a rubber core, allowing for multiway stretch. It was patented by Percy Adamson in 1930 and he sold it to the US Rubber Company. Lastex revolutionised swimwear, allowing more form-fitting designs which aided both function and fashion. The Telescopic Water Suit, initially designed by Martin White in 1937, used fabric gathered with Lastex thread. The idea was to create a one-size-fits-all swimsuit due to the enhanced stretch.

Martin White

Lastex, plastic, polyamide rubber, nylon

Courtesy of Museum of Design in Plastics (MoDiP),
Arts University Bournemouth

8. Nylon advertisement, 1940s

Nylon was commercially available from 1939, after US chemical company DuPont invested heavily in polymer research by Dr Wallace Carothers. From the late 1950s these new stretch synthetic yarns, including polyester and elastane (known as Lycra), dominated swimwear. A type of plastic, these textiles derived from oil and were often marketed to women for their easy-care properties.

DuPont

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

9. *Nylon Fair, 1956*

This fashion show celebrates the new possibilities offered by synthetic fabrics. It was part of the first National Nylon Trade Fair and features swimwear by Teddy Tinling and Rigby & Peller. Tinling, known for his tennis dresses, often experimented with these new fabrics. The commentary demonstrates the extent to which women's bodies were objectified at the time.

British Pathé

1 minute 40 seconds

Courtesy of British Pathé

The Judy Grinham Swimsuit

Judy Grinham won gold in the 100 metres backstroke at the Melbourne 1956 Olympics. She went on to become the first woman to hold Olympic, European and Commonwealth titles. Nottingham-based manufacturer William Dixon partnered with Grinham to create this swimsuit complete with Olympic torch logo. It is made from 'Bri-Nylon', a form of nylon introduced in Britain in 1958. The suit also contains Helanca, a Swiss textured synthetic yarn.

10. Helanca tanksuit advertisement, 1958

Jantzen, photograph by Clifford Coffin
Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

11. Judy Grinham Swimsuit, 1960s

William Dixon & Co. with Judy Grinham
Helanca Bri-Nylon

Courtesy of Southend Museums

12. *World Sports* magazine, September 1956

Vol. 22 No. 9

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

13. Technical doping: *LZR Racer*, 2008

This *LZR Racer* was created by Speedo with NASA scientists in advance of the Beijing 2008 Olympics, with a design for Team USA by Comme des Garçons. It was made from ultrasonically welded low-friction fabric to repel water, with compression panels for streamlining. At Beijing 94% of gold winners wore a *LZR Racer*. Later deemed 'technical doping', it was banned by the international swimming governing body from 2010.

Speedo

Elastane-nylon, polyurethane

Design Museum Collection

Regenerated nylon

Mass produced swimwear today prominently features non-recyclable blends of nylon and elastane. ECONYL yarn, produced by manufacturers Aquafil, is a regenerated nylon fibre offering an alternative approach. The materials displayed here indicate how ECONYL yarn is made. Discarded nylon waste is chemically processed to turn it back into virgin nylon. This is then heated, extruded and spun into filament yarn, ready to be knitted into fabric used to create garments with less environmental impact.

14. Waste fishing nets, carpet pile and plastic components

Nylon

Courtesy of Aquafil SpA

15. ECONYL polymer sticks, 2024

Aquafil

ECONYL polymer

Courtesy of Aquafil SpA

16. ECONYL yarn bobbin, 2024

Aquafil

ECONYL, card

Courtesy of Aquafil SpA

17. ECONYL knitted fabric, 2024

Aquafil and Carvico SpA

ECONYL, elastane

Courtesy of Usual Objections

Usual Objections micro factory

Manufacturing swimwear is more complicated than it may appear. This deconstruction shows the number of pieces used by London-based micro factory Usual Objections to construct their training swimsuit. Unlike fast fashion brands, Usual Objections invest in the longevity of their garments. They use specialised machinery and offer free repairs, while valuing their skilled sewists and paying fair wages. In an industry where ethical businesses can struggle, Usual Objections have brought a community together around swimming.

18. Deconstructed swimsuit, 2022

Usual Objections

ECONYL, recycled polyester, elastane

Courtesy of Usual Objections

19. Training swimsuit, 2022

Usual Objections

ECONYL, recycled polyester, elastane

Courtesy of Usual Objections

20. *The Process of Making a Swimsuit by Usual Objections, 2025*

Mark El-khatib studio

Courtesy of Usual Objections

21. *Usual Objections studio, 2023*

Photograph by Amber Butchart

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

Body fabric:

Vita fabric knitted by Carvico in Italy, made from ECONYL yarn

Lining fabric:

Sydney Eco knitted by Carvico in Italy, made from 51% recycled polyester, 49% polybutylene terephthalate

Elastic:

Plymouth, made in France

Threads:

Gütermann, made in Germany via William Gee

Lido

Fitness became aspirational in the 1920s, with swimming a marker of a fashionable lifestyle. Across the UK, councils built open air pools, or lidos, across towns and coastlines, as the allure of the outdoors overtook indoor bathing around the globe. The name 'lido' was borrowed from the Lido in Venice, Italy, a beach destination for the wealthy. The new municipal spaces encouraged health and recreation, democratising leisure and providing modern architecture to suit modern lives.

At the same time, beach resorts flourished from Biarritz to Blackpool, and Billy Butlin's new holiday camps brought glamour to the masses throughout the UK. People required new wardrobes for these new lifestyles. Today, we are in the middle of a lido revival, as many of these spaces are restored through community support.

Jubilee Pool poster, around 1935–50

Lithographic print on paper

Courtesy Penlee of House Gallery & Museum,
Penzance

→ Continue left to the next wall

Lido Revival

At least 180 outdoor pools were built in Britain between 1930 and 1939. But the postwar era saw a decline. A 1960 government report recommended that future pools should be indoors, leading to the rise of multi-sport leisure centres. The popularity of overseas package holidays saw lidos fall from favour, and economic policies of the 1980s hampered council spending.

Many lidos were granted listed status in the 1990s thanks to local campaigners. Today, grassroots community action is at the forefront of the lido revival. This includes ongoing projects from Otley in Yorkshire to Grange in Cumbria, Tarlair in Aberdeenshire as well as Brynaman in Wales.

Jubilee Pool, Penzance

The golden age of British lido building saw the Jubilee Pool open in 1935. It was designed in a triangular shape to cope with wild Cornish seas. Falling into disrepair again in the 2010s, funding for refurbishment was driven by local community group Friends of Jubilee Pool. The pool reopened in 2021 and is the largest seawater lido remaining in the UK. Regenerated by architects ScottWhitbyStudio, it now includes the UK's first geothermal powered seawater pool, heated all year round.

1. Sketch of proposed Jubilee Pool, around 1930

Frank Latham

Courtesy Penlee House Gallery & Museum,
Penzance

2. Jubilee Pool axonometric drawing, 2020

ScottWhitbyStudio

Courtesy of ScottWhitbyStudio

→ Continue left

3. Drone image of Jubilee Pool, Penzance, 2021

Photograph by EyeOnHigh

Courtesy of EyeOnHigh

4. Jubilee Pool model, 2024

ScottWhitbyStudio

Plaster, resin, polylactic acid

Courtesy of ScottWhitbyStudio

Jubilee Pool Stories - History, 2021

Film by Barbara Santi, Lou Brett and Jane Bailey

4 minutes 30 seconds

Courtesy of Penlee House Gallery and Museum, The Morrab Library, Maggie Charnley, Wendy Hosking and the Pascoe Family, Rita Packford, Mary McArthur, Liz Nicholls. Thanks to Jubilee Pool Penzance

ScottWhitbyStudio: Jubilee Pool, 2021

Film by Jim Stephenson and Sofia Smith

7 minutes

Courtesy of Jim Stephenson

Hong Kong's In The Swim, 1964

British Pathé

1 minute

Courtesy of British Pathé

Hong Kong city swimming

A number of outdoor pools emerged across the densely populated city of Hong Kong during the 1950s–70s. During Britain's colonial rule of the territory, swim culture became a part of fashionable lifestyles. Pools were a destination for exercising, socialising and cooling off in the summer heat, all while parading the latest trends. This advertisement promotes 'Athlet' swimwear made by Hong Kong garment manufacturers, and features an endorsement by Hong Kong champion female swimmer Yeung Sau-king.

5. ***Athlet* swimsuit advertisement, 1941**

Kelly Brothers Manufacturing Factory

Courtesy The University of Hong Kong, Special Collections, ASC

6. ***Kowloon Tsai Park swimming pool, 1969***

Hong Kong Public Libraries. Government Service Records

7. *Kwun Tong swimming pool, 1970s*

Hong Kong Public Libraries. Government Service Records

Kennedy Town Swimming Pool, Hong Kong

Amid parkland, railway lines and high-rise buildings, Kennedy Town Swimming Pool is situated in a residential district of Hong Kong. The outdoor public pool originally opened in 1974 but was demolished to accommodate an expansion of the transit line. It reopened in 2011, designed by architects Farrells. The swimming complex today features a sweeping shell-like roof that shields swimmers from the sun, and the angled building provides uninterrupted views of Victoria Harbour.

8. Kennedy Town Swimming Pool plans, 2009

Farrells

Courtesy of Farrells

9. Kennedy Town Swimming Pool sketch, 2016

Farrells

Courtesy of Farrells

10. *Kennedy Town Swimming Pool, 2017*

Photograph by Marcel Lam

Courtesy of Farrells and Marcel Lam

11. *Dane, East London Swimmers, 2010*

Photographs by Madeleine Waller

Courtesy of the Artist, Madeleine Waller

→ Continue left to the next wall

The Rise of Mass Tourism

From the late 19th century, artists set up home along the stretch of southern French coastline called the Côte d'Azur. Attracting a mix of royalty and entertainment stars, by the 1920s the French Riviera was an aspirational holiday destination. It was labelled 'indispensable' by American Vogue, who described it as a place where future fashions were set.

The following decade, the Holidays with Pay Act (1938) ensured paid time off was guaranteed to millions more people in Britain. The age of mass tourism was beginning, evident in the expansion of holiday camps. Later in the century, affordable airfares took even more holidaymakers to the Mediterranean coast.

The first UK performance of Le Train Bleu at the London Coliseum Theatre, 1924

This Ballets Russes production satirised the Riviera 'season' and its links to fashionable society. It was named after the first-class train that took holidaymakers from Calais and Paris to the coast and was penned by Jean Cocteau with sets by cubist sculptor Henri Laurens. Artwork by Pablo Picasso and costumes, including fashionable swimsuits, by Coco Chanel also featured.

Photograph by Sasha

Heritage Image Partnership Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

Sunbeam 'Walkies'

For 50 years Sunbeam Photo Limited had a team of photographers who would travel the Thanet coastline taking casual 'Walkie' pictures of visitors on the promenade or beach. The photos could be purchased from a kiosk the following day as a souvenir. They now provide us with a lively archive of holiday fun and fashions along this stretch of coast.

1. ***Our Holiday at Margate* photographic wallet, early 1960s**

Sunbeam Photo Ltd

Card, photographic paper

Collection of Rob Flowers

2. ***Our Holiday at Margate* 'Walkie' photograph, 1962**

Sunbeam Photo Ltd

Card, photographic paper

Collection of Rob Flowers

→ **Continue right**

3. Sunbeam Photo Ltd postcard print, late 1940s

Card

Collection of Rob Flowers

**4. Lowestoft, Yarmouth, The Broads travel guide,
around 1950**

Ward, Lock And Co. Limited

Card, paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

5. Butlin's leaflet, 1960s

Billy Butlin was from a fairground family and in the 1930s he built his first holiday camp in Skegness. Aimed at middle-income visitors, it combined modern tubular steel furniture with the mock-Tudor styling familiar in the suburbs. Post-war, Butlin's colourful camps became emblematic of democratised leisure, and having both indoor and outdoor pools became a selling point. By the early 1960s Butlin's saw a million visitors a year.

Butlin's Ltd

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

John Hinde Butlin's postcards

John Hinde was an early pioneer of colour photography who, after a brief stint running a circus, formed a postcard company in 1956. Butlin's approached him to create a new look using his trademark saturated colour. Hinde was a technical innovator who employed photographers to work in the house style. The extensive lighting rig and idiosyncrasies of composing the images with campers meant that each photo could take hours to capture.

6. *Greetings from Butlin's postcard, 1960s*

John Hinde Studios

Card

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

7. *Butlin's Filey – The Indoor Heated Pool postcard, 1960s*

Edmund Nägele for John Hinde Studios

Card

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

**8. *Butlinland Ayr – Chalets and Gardens*
postcard, 1960s**

David Noble for John Hinde Studios

Card

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

Day Trip to Skegness, 1975

Photograph by Vanley Burke

Courtesy of Vanley Burke

The package holiday

In the 1970s, advances in aviation design ensured air travel became more affordable. Mass tourism was booming, and over a third of British holidaymakers visited the shores of Spain by 1972. Trevor Clark relocated to Mallorca and became the first British photographer to document this expansion of the leisure industry. Tourism saw the island economy shift from agrarian to service in a generation. Clark photographed brochures for expanding tour operators.

9. *Hotel Trinidad, 1970s*

Photograph by Trevor Clark
Courtesy of Trevor Clark

10. *Hotel El Cid Sol travel guide, 1980s*

Photograph by Trevor Clark
Paper
Courtesy of Jake Clark

Holiday wardrobes

Companies such as Marks & Spencer capitalised on the colourful glamour of newly accessible Mediterranean holidays. They employed similar sun-soaked imagery to travel brochures to market their summer styles as the ultimate wardrobe for overseas holidays. These supplements were included in the staff magazine, and were used for promotion. They are shot on location on the Greek island of Rhodes and the Canary Islands.

11. ***Hot News - St Michael news supplement,***

1972

Marks & Spencer

Paper

Courtesy of The M&S Archive

12. ***St Michael in Fashion - St Michael news supplement, 1973***

Marks & Spencer

Paper

Courtesy of The M&S Archive

Golden Mile Amusements at Night, Blackpool, 2018

Blackpool has been a major resort since the 19th century. At that time workers from Lancashire textile towns would visit as part of Wakes Week traditions that allowed for unpaid summer leave. By the 1930s the town council invested more in leisure provisions than any other in the country. Visitor numbers rose to seven million per year. Rob Ball has photographed over 100 resorts, documenting seaside vernacular design.

Photograph by Rob Ball
Courtesy of the artist

13. Arcade Carpets, 2023

Arcades were popular by the 1930s, expanding further after the 1960 Gaming Act liberalised gambling. In the 1960s, arcade design was revolutionised by Tom Lane on Blackpool's Golden Mile, who added plush carpets with ostentatious designs. Other arcade owners followed suit. Documented by photographer Rob Ball over a decade, the carpets shown here in the form of a sample book are mostly individual designs by arcade owners.

Rob Ball

Cardboard, canvas, plastic

Courtesy of the artist

→ Continue left to the next wall

From Sun Worship to Sun Protection

Suntanning has a complicated history. For centuries in Europe, suntanned skin was equated with low status outdoor agricultural work, leading to class prejudice. Pseudo-scientific theories about race, connected to skin colour, were used to justify enslavement and colonisation. This also fed into the persistence of Eurocentric beauty standards.

Industrialisation saw workers move from fields to factories, and in the 1920s 'sun-kissed' skin became associated instead with health, wealth and leisure. Strap-free tanning was a status symbol connected with expensive overseas holidays, an idea that persisted throughout the 20th century. With global cases of melanoma on the rise today, public health messaging is focused on the dangers of ultraviolet radiation from sun exposure.

The Riviera tan

American couples Sara and Gerald Murphy, and Cole and Linda Porter, lived on the French Riviera in the early 1920s, welcoming their influential circle of artistic friends. Gerald and Sara were praised for their style, with Sara visiting the beach in pearls to complement her tan. Through the fluid sexuality of Gerald and Cole we can see the influence of queer style on wider Riviera fashion trends. A suntan became a fashion accessory, soon featured in magazines.

Sara Murphy wearing pearls at Cap d'Antibes beach, 1923

Sara and Gerald Murphy Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Cole Porter with Gerald's skull cap and Sara's pearls, 1923

The Cole Porter Collection, The Yale Collection of the Literature of the American Musical, Irving's Gilmore Library, Yale University
Courtesy of The M&S Archive

Portia actinotherapy goggles and box, 1932

By the early 20th century, ultraviolet rays from sunlight were used as a therapy for diseases such as tuberculosis and rickets. Actinotherapy used artificial lamps while heliotherapy used natural sunlight. This impacted the architecture of clinics, and sanatorium buildings began to include sun balconies. It cemented ideas at the time about the links between sun exposure and health. In the 1960s and 1970s the emphasis shifted onto the dangers of ultraviolet light and the Sun Protection Factor system was developed.

Solport Brothers

Cellulose acetate, elastic, card, plastics

Courtesy Museum of Design in Plastics (MoDiP),

Arts University Bournemouth

Jantzen *Sunaire* designs

Jantzen were quick to tailor their designs to the new trend of sunbathing. In the early 1930s they created designs with models such as the *Sunaire*, *Tanaire* and *Shouldaire*, for strap-free tanning. This catalogue from 1934 shows that products for men and children were also advertised for their suntanning properties. The Y-back allowed for 'maximum exposure', while 'trunks are especially useful for sunbathing or games on the beach'.

***Sunaire* swimsuit, 1930s**

Jantzen

Wool

Courtesy Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

***Jantzen* catalogue, 1934**

Jantzen

Paper

Courtesy Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

→ **Continue right**

Advertising beauty ideals

As swimwear became smaller for swimming or sunbathing, the body beneath became subject to the beauty standards of the day. In 1929, American Vogue noted stockings need not be worn with tanned legs, but 'she who decides to discard stockings must also decide to keep her legs absolutely free from hair at all times'. From hair removal to body shape, the tyranny of beauty ideals persists, despite pushback from body positivity movements.

ZIP advertisement, 1925

Jordeau

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

Neet advertisement, 1985

Neet

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

The *Facekini*

In 2004, former accountant Zhang Shifan created what became known as the *Facekini* in the coastal city of Qingdao in China's eastern Shandong Province. The design hit headlines in 2012, becoming a global trend. The *Facekini* protects from sun damage and contact with jellyfish or insects. But it also prevents facial suntanning in a region where darker skin is associated with lower social status due to its links with outdoor agricultural labour.

Women wearing facekini at the beach in Qingdao, China, 2016

ZUMA Press, Inc. / Alamy Stock Photo

***Facekini*, 2014**

Photograph by Alexandra Utzmann

Art Direction and Style by Mélanie Huynh, for CR Fashion Book

FLIGHT Suit, 2023

The *FLIGHT Suit* is a sun-conscious swimsuit offering Ultraviolet Protection Factor 50+ from Indigenous-owned brand KAMARA. Manufactured in Australia, it was founded by sisters Naomi Collings and Kirsty Parnell after Naomi was diagnosed with melanoma. They release one collection a year, inspired by a desire to raise awareness around sun protection, and by their Gugu Badhun and Gudjala heritage.

KAMARA

Elastane, polyester

Design Museum Collection

**→ Continue to central plinth,
side closest to the room entrance**

Designed to Shock

Swimwear's close relationship with the body means it reflects changing attitudes to modesty, morality and public display. From the 18th century, bathing machines were used to protect sea dippers from prying eyes. But throughout the 20th century, a number of boundary-pushing designs challenged previous ideas of decency while also courting controversy.

For the last century, what we wear while swimming has been used as an excuse to police bodies. This has ranged from arresting women for wearing too little in 1910s and 20s America, to fining women for wearing too much with the 'burkini ban' in France from 2016.

Bathing machines

- 1. *Boulogne-sur-Mer – La Plage à l’heure des Bains. (The beach at bathing time) postcard, 1900s***
Établissements Photographiques de Neurdein
Frères, Paris
Card
Courtesy of Amber Butchart
- 2. *The Beach, Bognor postcard, 1900s***
The ‘National’ Series
Card
Courtesy of Amber Butchart
- 3. *West Parade, Bognor postcard, 1900s***
E. Lawrence Wood, The Royal Library, Bognor
Card
Courtesy of Amber Butchart

The first bikinis

The two-piece was first called a 'bikini' in July 1946, when French designer Louis Réard debuted his navel-exposing design at the Molitor pool in Paris. It was named after Bikini Atoll, site of American nuclear test explosions. Earlier that year, Jacques Heim debuted his two-piece, the Atome. Both names played on the diminutive size of the designs, and the related explosive shock in a postwar atomic age.

Michele Bernardini at Molitor swimming pool modelling the first bikini holding the box packaging, 1946

Album/Alamy Stock Photo

Newspaper print bikini, 1951

Louis Réard

Cotton

Courtesy of BikiniARTmuseum (Germany)

→ Continue along plinth

Atomic tourism

The 'bikini' and slightly earlier two-piece Atome were launched less than a year after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War. Despite the devastating results of these attacks and subsequent testing, atomic enthusiasm entered design and pop culture. From 1951, mushroom clouds from the Nevada Test Site were visible in Las Vegas. They became a tourist attraction celebrated by casinos offering 'atomic cocktails' and 'Miss Atomic Bomb' pageants.

Showgirl Linda Lawson at the Sands Hotel pool, early 1950s

University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Special Collections and Archives.

Guests at the Last Frontier pool watched as a mushroom cloud rose from the Simon Test, 1953

Photograph by Don English

Don English/Las Vegas News Bureau. Courtesy of LVCVA Archive

Scandal Suit, around 1965

The Scandal line was introduced by the brand Cole of California in 1964. It used panels of nylon mesh to allow daring exposure of the body beneath while boned cups provided support and shaping. Designer Margit Fellegi, a former dancer, told *Life* magazine the innovative mesh allowed her to, 'slice the body up any way I want to... I can redesign the human body!'

Margit Fellegi for Cole of California

Nylon, cotton, rubber

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

***Monokini*, around 1964**

The *Monokini* was initially designed as a statement about liberating women from hyper-sexualisation to appear in *Look* magazine in 1964. Shortly afterwards, *Women's Wear Daily* featured a photograph of model Peggy Moffitt wearing the controversial ensemble, and designer Rudi Gernreich put the 'topless swimsuit' into production with Harmon Knitwear. Gernreich's designs became emblematic of the sexual revolution of the 1960s, and shocked conservative commentators.

Rudi Gernreich

Jersey, tricot

Courtesy of Fashion Museum Hasselt

Subverting the Gaze

In England and Wales, 'homosexual activity' in private was only decriminalised in 1967. But gay men's swimwear impacted wider design at this time through the work of Bill Green. Known as Vince, he began as a photographer for physique magazines. He developed a posing pouch which doubled as swimwear, and was encouraged to sell the garment through mail-order. Sales were so successful that he opened a shop, regarded as the first men's boutique in London, selling items inspired by European styles. Through the objects on display here, we can see the importance of physique magazines in showcasing and selling these more revealing men's designs.

→ **Continue right along wall**

Swimwear in physique magazines

Physique magazines were marketed as men's fitness publications. They doubled as soft-core pornography at a time when homosexuality was a crime in America and the UK. The examples here show the relationship between posing pouches and fashionable swimwear, and how the mail-order system catered for new ways of shopping for unconventional swim styles. A tight fit, muscular body and the importance of beach culture are emphasised in the advertising.

1. ***The Young Physique* magazine, October 1960**

No.10

Paper

LGBTQ+ Archives, Bishopsgate Institute

2. ***The Young Physique* magazine, August 1961**

No.15

Paper

LGBTQ+ Archives, Bishopsgate Institute

**3. *The Young Physique* magazine, August 1962
No.3**

Paper

LGBTQ+ Archives, Bishopsgate Institute

4. *Physique Artistry* magazine, 1962

Issue 29

Paper

LGBTQ+ Archives, Bishopsgate Institute

Vince Green catalogues and swimwear

The aesthetic of Vince catalogues drew on Green's work as a physique photographer. Swim styles were often named after beach destinations known for attracting a gay male clientele, and the catalogues featured polari: slang used by the gay community. Green's designs invited the gaze, and the wider influence of Vince on men's fashion shows how ideas around concealing or revealing the body have impacted menswear too.

5. Men's beach shorts, 1960s

Vince Green

Synthetic fibre

The Textiles & Dress Collection at Falmouth University

6. Hawaiian print towelling trunks, 1968

Vince Green

Cotton

Courtesy Westminster Menswear Archive, University of Westminster

7. Striped swim shorts, 1968

Vince Green

Cotton

Courtesy Westminster Menswear Archive,
University of Westminster

8. *Vince Green Man's Shop* catalogue, 1962

Vince Green

Paper

LGBTQ+ Archives, Bishopsgate Institute

9. *Vince Green Man's Shop* catalogue, 1964

Vince Green

Paper

LGBTQ+ Archives, Bishopsgate Institute

→ **Continue right to the next wall**

Swim Style

The last century has seen many changes to the style of swimwear, reflecting technical developments and evolving attitudes and fashions. French shorelines initially set trends but the postwar era saw West Coast American brands dominate the market with their promise of sun, surf and proximity to Hollywood glamour.

As swimming became central to aspirational ideas around leisure, associated clothing flourished across the fashion spectrum from the high street to the proliferation of designer labels by the 1990s. Today we see more diversity in design, including luxury options for fuller coverage and spectacular styles from couture catwalks and Rio Carnival.

The changing silhouette

Through these two designs we can see how fashionable silhouettes influenced swim styles, from the looser fit of the 1920s to the belted waist of the 1930s. Meridian swimwear used an American patented 'interlock' knitted fabric which was billed as 'the perfect fabric for sensitive skins', combined with geometric motifs popular throughout the decade. The 1930s model features anchors, highlighting the trend for nautical pursuits such as fashionable ocean liner travel.

1. Meridian swimsuit, 1920s

Meridian

Cotton jersey

Courtesy of Southend Museums

2. Women's one piece with belt, 1930s

Wool, cotton, plastic

Courtesy of Southend Museums

→ Continue right

Rental swimwear, 1920s

Before the mid 20th century, renting a swimsuit was not unusual for visitors to pools or beaches without the means or need to buy their own. Rental services were offered by both private companies and local municipalities such as Margate Corporation, which pre-dates the council. The loose cut ensured it could fit a variety of swimmers, while fashionable swimwear became tighter throughout the decade.

St Blaize

Wool

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Bathing shoes

In the 1920s rubber started to replace ribbon and canvas as the material of choice for bathing shoes due to its durability and waterproof properties. The trend for swimming ensured rubber companies had a new fashionable outlet for their products, besides more common rubber boots and tyres. Both styles here draw on mythology. The Philips shoes pay tribute to the winged sandals of the Greek messenger god Hermes, while Hood Rubber Company named their product Mermaid Bathing Slippers.

Pair of women's black rubber silver wing bathing shoes, 1920–29

Philips

Rubber

Courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery

Mermaid Bathing Slippers box, 1920–29

Hood Rubber Company

Cardboard

Courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery

From swimsuits to trunks

These two Bukta pieces show how men's swimwear became more revealing throughout the first half of the 20th century. The striped swimsuit typifies styles of the decade that mimic the appearance of a vest and belted shorts. The double lacing on the trunks allows for a fit tight enough for swimming even when the fabric has no stretch. Bukta evolved from shirt manufacturer E.R. Buck & Sons.

3. ***Bukta Sea-Ora striped wool swimsuit, 1933***

Bukta

Wool jersey

Courtesy Westminster Menswear Archive,
University of Westminster

4. ***Men's purple trunks, 1945***

Bukta Dragon

Cotton

Courtesy of Southend Museums

5. California glamour, 1950s

From the mid-1940s to mid-1960s Rose Marie Reid garments such as this design were synonymous with glamorous Californian lifestyles. Originally from Canada, Reid relocated to Los Angeles and was popular with Hollywood stars. She provided swimwear for *Gidget* (1959), a precursor to 1960s beach party films. She predominantly designed structured one-piece swimsuits. As an active member of The Church of Latter-day Saints, Reid believed the skimpy bikini to be immodest.

Rose Marie Reid

Stretch synthetic, cotton

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Fashionable florals, late 1940s

This one-piece design features a cut-out section that mimics a two-piece style. It is made with Horrockses Fabric, a cotton manufacturer who launched a range of colourfully printed sundresses in 1946. Martin White's 'telescopic' method of gathering fabric with stretch Lastex yarn could create a form-fitting shape from non-stretch textiles, perfect for turning this fashionable fabric into swimwear.

Martin White and Horrockses Fabric

Cotton

Courtesy Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

Sea creature motifs for wartime rationing, 1942–52

This two-piece features the CC41 label, identifying it as a Utility garment. The Utility Apparel Order was enacted in 1942 as part of wartime clothing rationing efforts to standardise production, which lasted until 1952. During the war, many pools were requisitioned for military use, lidos were closed and beaches were barricaded with barbed wire in case of enemy attack. Swimwear would have symbolised past freedoms and hope for a brighter future.

Wool

Courtesy of Southend Museums

***Women modelling beach ball swimsuits in Cuba,
1956***

Photograph by Gordon Parks

Gordon Parks/The LIFE Picture Collection/

Shutterstock

Reef print, 1950s

This bright print depicts an underwater scene reminiscent of Australian coastlines. Scamp swimsuits were manufactured in Sydney. The company was founded by British parachutist Ben Turner, who was employed to set up an Australian industry in 1938. He supplied Australian forces during the Second World War and began designing swimsuits in 1945. He initially claimed he used parachute silk no longer needed for the war effort, but this could have been a marketing tactic.

Scamp Australia

Stretch satin, stretch jersey

Courtesy of Southend Museums

American West Coast meets Harrods, 1950s

One of the most coveted swimwear brands of the mid 20th century was Cole of California. The one-piece here features the Harrods label, indicating it may have been exclusively sold at the department store. The company also collaborated with Christian Dior in the 1950s. The high-waist two-piece is evidence of the reluctance to embrace the diminutive size of the bikini, which was acceptable on European shorelines before it was widespread in America.

Swimsuit, 1950s

Cole of California and Harrods

Stretch sateen, cotton, nylon

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Two-piece swimsuit, around 1957

Cole of California

Glazed cotton

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Space Age style, 1960s

Made in Great Britain, this brightly coloured design by Blue Lake has a gold loop holding the top and bottom together. This was a motif employed across the fashion spectrum at the time, influenced by Space Age styles. It could have been inspired by a design by Bill Blass for Roxanne swimwear which was featured in *Vogue* in 1968, worn by model Veruschka.

Blue Lake Swimwear

Bri-Nylon

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Maternity swimwear, 1960s

This swimsuit from Modern Mother Fashion Maternities would have been unusual in the 1960s when much maternity clothing was still made at home. Maternity swimwear is essential for pregnant people to continue to inhabit public swimming spaces, something which has historically been discouraged. It has not been readily available until the last few decades, and was often designed to conceal pregnancy rather than acknowledge or celebrate it.

Modern Mother Fashion Maternities

Cotton

The Textiles & Dress Collection at Falmouth
University

***Model posing in a swimming costume from
London, Accra, around 1972***

Photograph by James Barnor

Courtesy of Galerie Clémentine de la Féronnière

6. Mass-produced swim trunks, 1966–77

The colours and cut of these Swordfish swim shorts exemplify the trends of the late 1960s–70s. Low-rise with low-cut legs, they typify mass-produced men's swim trunks in striped orange and brown, colours which found favour at this time. They were originally owned by Mavis Plume, who ran a swimwear hiring and photography studio called Studio Margaret in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, with her husband Derrick.

Swordfish

Polyamide

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Affordable and trendsetting, 1970s

Marks & Spencer started in 1884 as a market stall set up by Jewish immigrant Michael Marks. In 1946 they opened a laboratory to develop easy-care synthetic fabrics and by the early 1970s these made up over half of their textile sales. In 1969 alone, the company sold over 100,000 towelling bikinis. As mass-produced fashions, these would have been affordable to many people. New screen-printing methods allowed for designs such as denim-effect swimming trunks.

7. Bikini, 1970s

St Michael by Marks & Spencer

Cotton, nylon

Courtesy of Southend Museums

8. Men's denim-look swimming trunks, 1977

Marks & Spencer

Polyester

Courtesy of The M&S Archive

Patterned swimwear by Speedo, 1970s

These designs show that Speedo create swim styles for leisure as well as performance-enhancing garments for elite competitions. The women's one-piece in a graphic print shows the internal structuring of previous decades had fallen from favour. Animal-print trunks illustrate the flamboyant men's styles available at this time. Speedo has its origins in the MacRae Knitting Mills in Sydney, Australia, founded by Scottish immigrant Alexander MacRae in 1914. They began producing swimwear in the 1920s.

9. Swimsuit, 1970s

Speedo

Nylon

Courtesy of Southend Museums

10. Men's leopard print trunks, 1970s

Speedo

Bri-Nylon

Courtesy of Southend Museums

Trendsetting 'crinkle' swimwear, 1980s

Hunza was founded in 1984 and exemplified the decade's style with high cut swimwear and bodycon dresses in innovative 'crinkle' fabric. Hunza pieces were worn by Whitney Houston in the 1987 video for *I Wanna Dance With Somebody*, and by Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman* (1990). The brand was relaunched in 2015 by Georgiana Huddart, who changed the brand name to Hunza G.

Hunza

Elastane, nylon

Courtesy of Hunza G

Willi and Toukie Smith, 1978

Photograph by Anthony Barboza

Courtesy of Anthony Barboza

Designer swimwear, 1990s–2010s

These pieces by Versace and Hermès, made in Italy and France respectively, indicate that by the 1990s swimwear was dominated by fashion brands rather than swim specialists. The Hermès design takes inspiration from a winged scarab pendant from Tutankhamun's tomb. Typifying the flamboyant designs of Versace, the silver thong comes with covering micro shorts for modesty.

11. Halter neck swimsuit, 1990s

Hermès

Lycra

Courtesy of Jenna Rossi-Camus

12. Men's swimming thong, around 2000s–10s

Versace

Polyamide, rubber

The Textiles & Dress Collection at Falmouth

University

13. Men's swimming trunks, around 2000s–10s

Versace

Polyamide, rubber

The Textiles & Dress Collection at Falmouth
University

Swimming in print

Bathing suits have appeared in style magazines since the 19th century, positioning them as part of a fashionable lifestyle. These publications show evolving designs through the decades. These range from high-waist two-pieces and sandals in the 1930s and 1940s, to strapless animal print in the 1980s and the growing interest in vintage clothing in the 2000s.

14. *Marie Claire* magazine, June 1939

No.121

Swimwear by Laure Belin, Kestos, Vahine, Reinelastex, Janine and Jantzen

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

15. *Claudine* magazine, July 1947

No. 104

Photograph by Robert Doisneau, swimwear by Marcel Rochas

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

16. *Vogue Paris* magazine, May 1984

No. 646

Photograph by Guy Bourdin, swimwear by Notz Pleasure Wear, Anne-Marie Beretta and Christian Dior

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

17. *L'Uomo Vogue* magazine, April 2006

Photographs by David Armstrong, swimwear by Dries Van Noten, Prada and vintage swimsuit from *What Comes Around Goes Around*

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

18. *Ebony* magazine, July 1971

First published in 1945, *Ebony* chronicled Black American life against the backdrop of segregation, covering culture, politics and the Civil Rights movement. At this time access to pools and beaches was restricted across the country for swimmers of colour. Publisher John H. Johnson talked of the importance of providing positive images of the Black experience. Here, model Harriet Marshal wears a Catalina 'Sunspot' design.

Photograph by Christa, swimwear by Catalina Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

19. ***WET: The Magazine of Gourmet Bathing***, **April 1977**

Artist and architecture graduate Leonard Koren published *WET* in California from 1976 to 1981. It evolved from Koren's 'bath art', which included bath events, unusual bathing environments and paper works about bathing. *WET* proved influential in the development of postmodern graphic design. Koren's later books include *Undesigning the Bath* (1998), an exploration of bathing cultures across the world.

Issue 6

Wet Enterprises, Inc.

Photograph by Brian Leatart, swimwear by Thomas Ingalls

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

20. *Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue* magazine, 2019

Launched in 1964, the swimsuit issue of *Sports Illustrated* became associated with the objectification of women's bodies. Somali-American model Halima Aden challenged this when she became their first model to wear a burkini and hijab, just three years after many municipalities in France had banned full coverage swimwear in public spaces. Aden grew up in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya after her parents fled civil war in Somalia. She returned to Kenya for this photoshoot.

Photograph by Yu Tsai, swimwear by Speerise and Yves Saint Laurent

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

The evolution of Speedo briefs

Australian designer and artist Peter Travis was central to the development of the Speedo brief. Speedo engaged him from 1956–62 to revamp their menswear. Travis was openly gay at a time when it was illegal and designed innovative styles that celebrated the male form. His swimwear also optimised cut and size for ease of swimming. Arrests were reported on Bondi beach when the diminutive styles were first worn in the early 1960s.

21. Men's swimming briefs, 1980s–90s

Speedo

Elastane, polyester, polyamide

The Textiles & Dress Collection at Falmouth University

Speedo briefs today

Speedo has become synonymous with small swimming briefs sometimes referred to as 'budgie smugglers', as seen here. They reached their current minimal size in the early 1970s under head designer Gloria Smythe, worn by Olympians such as Mark Spitz at the Munich Games in 1972. The theme park Alton Towers banned 'speedos' in 2009, claiming the skimpy coverage was not family friendly. Similar bans elsewhere have been criticised for targeting the LGBTQ+ community.

22. Men's swimming briefs, 1990s–2010s

Speedo

Elastane, polyester, polyamide

The Textiles & Dress Collection at Falmouth
University

High street swimwear, 2011

This two-piece was designed in London and made in China. The collection drew on a number of references, including Egyptian hieroglyphics and the artwork of Keith Haring, to create graphic motifs that complement the cut-out design. Topshop Unique was founded in 2001 as the fashion-forward range of high street retailer Topshop. The designs were mass-produced but style-conscious.

Topshop Unique

Lycra, polyamide

Courtesy of Jenna Rossi-Camus

Resort style meets cult streetwear, 2019

Vilebrequin was founded in St Tropez in the south of France in the 1970s. This collaboration saw them work with the late Virgil Abloh's brand Off-White in a collection that only released five styles, including the swim shorts displayed here. The result is a hybrid of European coastal resort style with American streetwear that shows how Abloh's designs impacted luxury fashion around the globe.

Off-White x Vilebrequin

Cotton, elastane, polyamide, polyester

Design Museum Collection

Ocean Life boardshorts and boxer briefs, 2020

BANTU celebrates Africa's vibrant surf culture and these boardshorts are designed and made throughout the continent. They use digital renditions of vintage wax prints, originally brought from Indonesia by colonial Dutch traders and later aligned with local stories and identities. The branded briefs were created for surfers who wear briefs under boardshorts in place of mesh liner, a practice that can be seen from Morocco to Senegal and Ghana. The company was founded by Yodit Eklund in 2010.

BANTU

Microfibre, cotton, elastic

Design Museum Collection. Gift of BANTU

Swim caps with style

The design of swim caps spans both fashion and function. From the 1920s, protecting hairstyles became as important as keeping water out of the ears and creating a more hydrodynamic experience. The examples here show swim caps' use as a playful accessory, from a promotional video featuring a Punch and Judy puppet show in the 1950s, to Miu Miu designs worn for a 2016 catwalk show.

23. Swim Caps, 1957

British Pathé

3 minutes

Courtesy of British Pathé

24. Child's red rubber swimming cap, 1970s

Rubber

Courtesy of Southend Museums

25. Floral swim caps, 2016

Miu Miu

Vinyl, jersey, plexiglass

Courtesy of Miu Miu

26. Poolside: Part Two, 2022

Photograph by Michael Oliver Love, swim cap
by VIVIERS

Courtesy of Michael Oliver Love, Boss Models

→ Continue right to the next wall

Luxury modest swimwear, 2024

This mid-length swim dress with tights provides full coverage in a relaxed fit. Lanuuk was founded in 2018 by Katleya Nielsen and Ayesha Mahomed to create modest luxury swimwear without compromising on style. The pair met in London, but Katleya has since returned to her hometown of Manila in the Philippines, where she oversees production at a small family-run factory.

Lanuuk

Elastane, nylon, polyester

Courtesy of Lanuuk

Couture swimsuit, 2023

Avant-garde Dutch duo Viktor&Rolf have been creating conceptual fashion since 1993, after meeting at ArtEZ Academy of Art & Design in Arnhem, the Netherlands. They celebrated 30 years of Viktor&Rolf with the 'Embodiment' haute couture collection that took swimwear as its starting point. This is unusual for couture collections, but allowed experimentation with signature design motifs such as playing with proportion, surrealist elements, and exaggerated sculptural silhouettes.

Viktor&Rolf

Scuba Crepe

Courtesy of Viktor&Rolf Autumn/Winter 2023 Haute Couture 'Embodiment' Collection

Beach jumpsuit from Carnival to club, 2023

Fernando Cozendey is based in São Paulo, Brazil. His designs, such as this gender-neutral beach jumpsuit, use Lycra to create extravagant garments for the beach, pool, Carnival or club. Brazil is a powerhouse of swimwear and fabric manufacturing, and Cozendey trained in textile technology and costume design. His creations have been worn at the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro and the opening ceremony for the Rio Olympics in 2016.

Fernando Cozendey

Elastane, polyamide

Design Museum Collection

Evolution of swim goggles

The design of swim goggles has evolved over the last century to reflect cultural influences and technological advances. This 1940 advertisement features instructions to make wooden goggles inspired by those used by Indigenous Hawaiian divers. Goggles designed by Swans in the 1950s resemble eyewear for pilots. Today, designers use augmented reality to improve performance. *Smart Swim 2 Goggles* by FORM track shareable data, from stroke technique to heart rate.

27. South-sea diving goggles advertisement, 1940

Popular Science Magazine Archive

Courtesy of Popular Science Magazine Archive

28. Swans Goggles, 1950s

Swans

Cotton, glass, leather, plastic

Courtesy of Swans UK

29. *Smart Swim 2 Goggles, 2024*

Adam Capelin and Steve Johns for FORM
Electronics, optical grade polycarbonate,
polyurethane blend, silicone
Courtesy FORM

30. *Smart Swim Goggles hardware prototypes, 2017*

Adam Capelin and Steve Johns for FORM
Electronics, optical grade polycarbonate,
polyurethane blend
Courtesy FORM

Swimming on Screen

Swimming has been captured on film since the earliest days of Hollywood, from the silent movies of Annette Kellerman to the TV sensation *Baywatch*. The swimming to screen trajectory became a recognised route to stardom, catapulting athletes such as Esther Williams and Johnny Weissmuller to fame. Olympic competitors such as Gertrude Ederle and Judy Grinham also had small cinematic roles.

Companies such as Jantzen, Catalina and Cole of California understood star power could make sales, enlisting Hollywood actors in their early advertising. The ongoing popularity of swimming on screen continues to set trends in swimwear design.

***The Great Gatsby* original film still, 1974**

Photograph by Marie Cosindas

Chromogenic print

BFI National Archive

James Bond and Orlebar Brown

Founded in 2005, Orlebar Brown's ethos is to create tailored swim shorts influenced more by Savile Row than sportswear. Their 007 range has included this towelling all-in-one, inspired by *Goldfinger* (1964). The links between Bond and Orlebar Brown also saw Daniel Craig wear their swim shorts in *Skyfall* (2012). Terry cloth, or towelling, has been used for beach clothes from at least the 1930s.

Janni Goldfinger - Riviera, 2019

Orlebar Brown

Cotton

Courtesy of Orlebar Brown

Orlebar Brown 007 lookbook, 2020

Orlebar Brown

Recycled paper

Courtesy of Orlebar Brown

→ **Continue right**

Pamela Anderson's red *Baywatch* swimsuit, 1990s

This flaming red swimsuit was worn by Pamela Anderson as the character C.J. Parker in the TV show *Baywatch*, seen by an estimated 1.1 billion weekly viewers at its peak in the 1990s. Based on real swimwear worn by lifeguards in southern California, prototypes were created by sportswear brand TYR with adaptations for each actor's specific proportions. In recent years, Anderson has been reclaiming her image on her own terms. This included designing her own swimwear range with Frankies Bikinis in 2023.

Jag

Lycra

Courtesy of BikiniARTmuseum (Germany)

I think it's great that Frankie and I collaborated at this point in my life when I really want practical swimwear... we came up with this really great sexy but practical line, which is very much about a woman and not just about taking pictures on the beach.

— Pamela Anderson

Swimming stars

Annette Kellerman and Esther Williams

Australian Annette Kellerman was a champion swimmer who performed an act swimming with fish at the Melbourne Aquarium. She was soon touring the world and starred as a celluloid mermaid in a number of silent films. She designed her own range of one-piece swimwear, initially seen as controversial for its form-fitting qualities. She was played on screen by the later swimming star Esther Williams in *Million Dollar Mermaid* (1952) choreographed by Busby Berkeley.

**1. Actress Annette Kellerman on the back cover
Motion Picture News, 1920**

Historic Collection/Alamy Stock Photo

2. *Million Dollar Mermaid* original film still, 1952

Gelatine silver print

BFI National Archive

3. *Dr. No* original film still, 1962

The bikini worn by Ursula Andress as Honey Ryder in the first James Bond film *Dr. No* (1962) is one of cinema's best-known swimming styles. It cemented the look of the 'Bond girl'. It was created by Jamaican actor and fashion designer Tessa Welborn (née Prendergast), in collaboration with Andress.

Photograph by Bert Cann

Gelatine silver print

BFI National Archive

Cinematic swimming

Esther Williams was a competitive swimmer before joining a live show called Billy Rose's Aquacade where she was spotted by Hollywood scouts. She made a number of synchronised swimming 'aquamusicals'. Gertrude Ederle was the first woman to swim the Channel in 1926, and had also competed in the 1924 Olympics. She made a guest appearance in the silent *Swim Girl, Swim* (1927).

4. *Swim Girl Swim* original film still, 1927

Gelatine silver print

BFI National Archive

5. *Picturegoer* magazine, January 1953

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

***The Glass Onion* and Andrea Iyamah, 2019**

Nigerian designer Andrea Iyamah launched her first swim collection in 2013. The *Mulan Bikini* features her design motif the Eden Ruffle, which takes inspiration from the leaves that Eve used to dress herself in the Garden of Eden. It was worn by Kate Hudson's character Birdie Jay in the film *The Glass Onion* (2022).

Andrea Iyamah

Nylon, spandex

Design Museum Collection

***An Evening in Paris* poster, around 1967**

Directed by Shakti Samanta, *An Evening in Paris* (*Paris Ki Ek Shyam*, 1967) is notable for a musical scene featuring star Sharmila Tagore on jet skis wearing a swimsuit. Costume design was by Vasant Chayan. Until the 2000s, it was unusual to see swimwear worn in Indian films due to taboos around the display of the female body.

Lithograph

Design Museum Collection

Contemporary Innovators

Swimwear design can seem exclusive, catering only to particular bodies. This is evident in the pervasive yet damaging notion of being 'beach body ready'. In 2016, London mayor Sadiq Khan banned adverts across the Transport for London network that promoted a negative body image after an advert featuring this phrase provoked a backlash.

Who swimwear is designed *by* and *for* helps to determine which bodies are welcomed in public spaces. Here, we celebrate contemporary designers whose work enhances bodily autonomy and agency, and challenges previous ideas around access to pools and beaches.

Beefcake Swimwear

Inspired by the design of 1920s swimsuits, Beefcake create gender-neutral swimwear for any body.

Launched through a crowdfunding campaign in 2017, Beefcake garments are manufactured in small batches in Portland, Oregon, by people earning a living wage. They make sizes ranging from XS to 5XL, and are an LGBTQ+ -owned company.

The Dreamboat, 2017

Recycled polyester, Xtra Life Lycra

Design Museum Collection. Gift of Beefcake
Swimwear

Beefcake Swimwear's blue Dreamboat at Sauvie Island, 2017

Photograph by Renee Lopez

Courtesy of Beefcake Swimwear

Ohana Family Wear Limited

In 2018 Neema Nkatha Kinoti founded Ohana Family Wear Limited to challenge the narrative that 'Africans don't swim'. Based in Kenya, the company honours swimming in the region from Indian Ocean coastal communities to vast inland lakes, and connections to water through fishing, trade, or recreation. Ohana designs take a pan-African approach. The *Zara Bikini* is inspired by Kente cloth, a Ghanaian textile created from strips of handwoven fabric.

Zara Bikini, 2018

Elastane, polyamide

Design Museum Collection

Girls Chronically Rock

At the age of 24, Girls Chronically Rock founder Keisha Greaves was diagnosed with limb-girdle muscular dystrophy, a condition that can make certain movements difficult. Having studied fashion design and merchandising, she now creates adaptive swimsuits. This swimsuit features fasteners at the shoulder allowing for greater ease when removing the swimsuit or using the bathroom.

Multicolor Adaptive Splash Swimsuit, around 2022

Polyester

Design Museum Collection

Blob Swimsuit

Hannah Whelan designed the *Blob Swimsuit* as a piece of 'artivism' to open up conversations around menstruation, period stigma and swimming. She met Linda Souto Maior of Usual Objections, who manufactured the suit, at London Fields Lido. Hannah and Sophie Havers launched the *Blob Swimsuit* as part of their Blobcast Podcast project on International Women's Day 2020. The suit is worn by feminist, model and surfer Sophie Hellyer.

Blob Swimsuit, 2020

The Blobcast X Usual Objections
Elastane, recycled polyester
The Blobcast Podcast

Blob Swimsuit Campaign Launch image, 2020

Photograph by Sophie Havers
The Blobcast Podcast

Chromat

Becca McCharen-Tran founded Chromat in 2010 to create gender-inclusive bodywear. It is manufactured in safe, ethical, fair-wage factories in New York City and Sofia, Bulgaria. This collection was a collaboration with artist Tourmaline, who noted, 'Never before has there been a swimwear collection designed for trans, non-binary and intersex bodies that places equal value on both comfort and aesthetics, pleasure and play.'

Cruz Suit, 2021

Chromat x Tourmaline

Lycra

Design Museum Collection

Chromat Babes, 2022

Photograph by Anastasia Garcia

Licensed courtesy of the artist

Joshua Allen in Chromat x Tourmaline Spring/ Summer 2022 at Jacob Riis Beach, 2021

Photograph by Hatnim Lee

Courtesy of Hatnim Lee

Isa Boulder

This distinctive ruched long sleeve swimsuit is made in Indonesia by Bali-based label Isa Boulder. The brand was founded by Cecelia Basari and Yuli Suri from Jakarta and Java respectively. They work with local artisans in Bali's garment district, capitalising on the wealth of swimwear manufacturing knowledge found in Indonesia.

Sculpture Long Sleeve Bodysuit, 2021

Elastane, nylon

Design Museum Collection

Eno

Florence Moon co-founded Eno after she had inflammatory breast cancer and was unable to find suitable and stylish post-treatment swimwear. The brand specialises in creating unilateral mastectomy swimwear and bras for single-breasted people. Made in the UK by a small London-based manufacturer, they prioritise fabrics with recycled content and use home-compostable packaging.

Picture Me Better Bikini, 2022

Elastane, polyamide, recycled polyester, recycled plastic bottles, water-based ink

Design Museum Collection

Rebirth Garments

Centring non-binary, trans, disabled and queer wearers of all sizes and ages, Rebirth Garments create gender non-conforming wearables. They exist to challenge mainstream beauty standards by upholding the notion of Radical Visibility - highlighting physical elements that society typically shuns - by using exuberant colours and innovative designs. This custom swimsuit includes an internal gaff, a compression lining in the bottom half to suit a trans woman, transfemme or nonbinary person.

Leotard swimsuit with back circle cut out, 2016

Spandex, powernet

Design Museum Collection

Sky and Nina in leotard swimsuits with back circle cut outs, 2019

Photograph by Colectivo Multipolar

Courtesy of Sky Cubacub. Modeled by Sky

Cubacub and Nina Litoff

Liandra Swim

Inspired by Aboriginal Australian cultures and the natural world, Liandra Swim was founded by Liandra Gaykamangu, a Yolngu woman from East Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia. The reef print here is from the Fruits of the Sea collection. Working towards sustainability, Liandra Swim use fabric made of REPREVE fibre from recycled plastics, along with compostable packaging of cassava root starch.

Cathy One Piece, 2022

REPREVE nylon, recycled elastane

Design Museum Collection. Gift of Liandra Swim

Waterside Style

From the earliest days of coastal resorts, seeing and being seen was part of the agenda. The pier and promenade became the forerunner to the catwalk as the season's finest looks were regularly paraded. As holidays became more accessible, what we wear by the water began impacting wider social and fashion trends. Waterside wardrobes have also driven fashions in fabrics and accessories, from sunglasses to terry cloth towelling and the now-ubiquitous pool slide.

Beach pyjamas

Clothing codes were more relaxed at the coast than in towns, so beach pyjamas flourished when women's trousers were still frowned upon. Venice's resort the Lido was advertised as 'the beach of sunshine and pyjamas', and the French Riviera town of Juan-les-Pins became known as Pyjamaland. They were celebrated by fashion magazines, seen here in the spread featuring Worth and the advertisement for Jane Regny. Their transgressive qualities were also picked up as seen in French satirical magazine *Le Sourire*.

Beach pyjamas, 1930s

PAM/Artistic Lingerie Neglige/110 New Bond Street W

Silk

Courtesy Worthing Museum and Art Gallery

**1. *Les Déshabillés Suggestifs Du “Sourire” -
Phanche III (The Suggestive Undressings of
the “Smile” magazine - Plate III), 1931***

Le Sourire

Illustration by Léon Bonnotte

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

2. *Jane Regny advertisement, 1931*

Vogue Paris

Illustration by Ernst Dryden

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

3. *Worth beach pyjamas fashion spread, 1937*

Photograph by Georges Saad

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

4. Drawstring beach towel, 1920s

This beach towel fastens with a drawstring to create a changing cape. It elegantly solved the conundrum of how to protect one's modesty when not in the water. An early model was created by Lanvin for American Vogue in 1919, described as a 'beach peignoir'. The accompanying article describes handing the cape to one's maid while you take the plunge.

Cotton towelling

Courtesy of Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums
(Aberdeen City Council)

Catalina beachwear

This towelling-lined shirt may have been part of a cabana set of coordinating shirt and swim shorts, a popular style for men's beachwear. Designed in California but manufactured under licence in New Zealand, this garment shows the global dominance of West Coast American swimwear brands at the time. The advert capitalises on the popularity of surfing to appeal to male consumers. Catalina began as Bentz Knitting Mills in Los Angeles, later becoming Catalina in 1928.

Towelling lined short sleeved shirt, 1960s

Catalina Canterbury

Cotton, metal

Courtesy of Westminster Menswear Archive,
University of Westminster

***Catalina The Spirit of the Sea* advertisement, 1967**

Playboy magazine

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

Burberrys beachwear, 1980s

This striped towelling jacket and duffle bag shows the importance of beach-friendly leisurewear to established brands by the 1980s. Towelling or terry cloth had become a fashionable fabric, with the New York Times reporting in 1979, 'terry cloth is out of the bathroom and stepping into the office, the boardroom and the dinner party.' Burberrys (now Burberry) was established in the mid 19th century, creating fabrics and outerwear to protect from the weather.

Striped towelling zipped jacket, 1980s

Burberrys

Cotton, polyamide

Courtesy Westminster Menswear Archive, University of Westminster

Towelling beach duffle bag, 1980s

Burberrys

Cotton, nylon

Courtesy of Westminster Menswear Archive, University of Westminster

Lisa King sarongs and swimwear

Sarongs originated in Southeast Asia, where they have been worn as an adaptable everyday garment for centuries. They have been appropriated by western culture since Hollywood actor Dorothy Lamour was nicknamed 'sarong girl' in the 1930s. In this collection, designer Lisa King honours her Indonesian heritage and Thai upbringing. Inspired by her late mother's archive of batik textiles and assortment of shells, King's drawings are rendered in wax batik by artisans in Bangkok.

Klein Stone Spectrum swimsuit, 2016

Lisa King

Polyamide

Courtesy of Lisa King

Kinta Batik Sarongs in brown and in pink, 2021

Lisa King

Rayon

Courtesy of Lisa King

dryrobe: beachwear on the street

Growing up surfing on the Cornish coast, Gideon Bright was frustrated by the difficulty of changing clothes on the beach in cold weather. As a teenager, his mother made him a cape lined with towelling. This later became the prototype for the dryrobe, first sold in 2010. During the pandemic the dryrobe developed an unlikely and contentious following, signifying a particular lifestyle that focused on newly fashionable outdoor pursuits. It was chronicled in style press from *The Guardian* to *Grazia*.

dryrobe Advance Change Robe, 2017

dryrobe

Recycled nylon, recycled polyester

Gift courtesy of dryrobe

Saturday magazine, February 2022

No.19

The Guardian

Photograph by Serena Brown

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

Fashion-forward sunglasses

Sunglasses became an essential accessory in the 1930s. Early developments came from the military and aviation industries, offering protection and reduced glare, allowing the wearer to bask comfortably in the sun's rays. They were adopted by Hollywood and came to symbolise all that was chic, smart and modern, representing the idea of stardom itself. Examples here take us from the 1960s to the present and illustrate how designers have blended fun with fashion.

4. *Fashion sunglasses, 1960s*

JE-DOL

Acrylic

Design Museum Collection. Gift of David & Anne Ryan, Minneapolis

5. *Asymétrique sunglasses, 1983*

Alain Mikli

Plastic

Design Museum Collection. Gift of David & Anne Ryan, Minneapolis

6. Shutter shades, 1980s

Plastic

Design Museum Collection. Gift of David & Anne Ryan, Minneapolis

7. PEGGY, 2016

Adele Mildred for HOOD London

Cellulose acetate, Zeiss lens

Courtesy of Adele Mildred

Sun hats

A hat can make a statement just as much as it can shade from the sun, evident in the examples on display here. The boater hat evolved from sailors' summer uniforms and became a favourite leisure style for men. The beach hat makes an unusual deviation from conventional wide-brim sunhats, fitting with the slimmer silhouettes of the 1960s. Contemporary milliner Adele Mildred's PELE design draws on styles with integrated sunglasses that were first popular in the 1960s.

8. **Straw boater hat, 1933**

Card, cotton, grosgrain ribbon, ink, leather, silk, straw, textile mesh

Museum no. 19/176/33. Courtesy of the Culture Trust Luton

9. **Beach hat, 1950s–60s**

Cotton, plant fibres

Museum no. 2011/46. Courtesy of the Culture Trust Luton

10. **PELE, 2019**

Adele Mildred for HOOD London

Wheat straw, acetate

Courtesy of Adele Mildred

11. *Classic Panama Fedora, 2024*

Pachacuti was founded in 1992 by Carry Somers. This hat was handwoven in Ecuador by Alexandra, one of the company's master weavers. In 2009 Pachacuti became the first company in the world to have its entire supply chain fair trade certified as they work directly with artisans. Carry Somers went on to co-found Fashion Revolution, which campaigns for transparency in the fashion industry.

Pachacuti

Carludovica Palmata straw, cotton, viscose

Courtesy of Pachacuti

Jacques Fath and Pierre Balmain beach fashions, 1946

Illustration by Jacques Demachy

Paper

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

Beach shoes

The joy of a seaside holiday is captured in this Dolcis advert from 1939. Both the Dunlop Liftees and L'Éclair beach shoes are stamped with the Utility mark, meaning they were made as part of the government programme to standardise production during and after the war. The shoes shown here indicate that visiting re-opened beaches was a popular postwar activity.

12. Dolcis advertisement, 1939

Dolcis

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

13. Dunlop Liftees, 1945–50

Dunlop

Canvas, rubber

Courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery

**14. Pair of girl's white canvas beach shoes,
1955–59**

Gomma

Brass, canvas, leather, rubber

Courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art
Gallery

**15. Pair of women's blue and white woven plastic
beach shoes, 1950–52**

L'Éclair

Crepe rubber, plastic

Courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art
Gallery

Jelly shoes and espadrilles

Plastic beach sandals were originally the product of postwar leather shortages in France. Dyed in bright colours, they became fashionable in the 1980s, nicknamed *méduse* (jellyfish). These examples are by Allibert, who began making shoe soles in 1930. Espadrilles have a distinct sole originally braided from esparto grass that gave the shoe its name. Worn for centuries in Catalonia and the Spanish and French Basque regions around the Pyrenees, they were appearing in fashion magazines by the 1920s.

16. Pair of plastic beach sandals, 1955–60

Allibert

Plastic

Courtesy of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery

17. Espadrilles, 2007

La Manual Alpargatera

Cotton, jute, rubber

Courtesy of Amber Butchart

→ **Continue left**

Pool slides

Adilette slides were first created in 1972 to prevent athletes from slipping in the shower and have become a footwear classic. They became a subcultural staple worn with tube socks, as seen on Aaliyah in a campaign for Tommy Hilfiger in 1996. In the 2010s they became a fashion favourite, with luxury brands creating their own versions. Belgian designer Mats Rombaut's Lettuce Slides are a playful variation on the trend.

18. **Adilette single shoe, around 1978**

adidas

Rubber

Courtesy of the adidas archive

19. **Lettuce Slides single shoe, 2018**

ROMBAUT

Rubber, ethylene-vinyl acetate

Design Museum Collection. Gift of Rombaut

20. *Plateau Slide (Mesa)* single shoe, 2023

Gucci and adidas

Canvas, rubber, synthetic leather

Courtesy of the adidas archive

Nature

Swimming in seas, lakes and rivers has seen a huge resurgence in recent years. Thalassotherapy – healing through sea water – first became fashionable in the 18th century, advocated by doctors due to the health-giving qualities of ‘taking the water’. More recently the ‘Nature Cure’, an idea that time spent in nature can heal us, has grown in popularity. Swimming in nature is now fashionable again.

Natural bodies of water make up some of our favourite spots to take a dip, from shorelines to glacial mountain pools. Ancient bathing places may have associations with folklore and mythology, sites of storytelling as well as swimming. Today, environmental measures to prevent pollution are essential for maintaining these ecosystems, and numerous protest groups have evolved to protect them.

Ken Wood and Highgate Ponds poster, 1926

Paper

On loan from London Transport Museum

Designing Nature

Nature meets design at many of the world's most beloved swimming spots. These range from the geothermal pools of Iceland to north London reservoirs and the Aboriginal Australian bathing spots chronicled here.

Design innovations may come from ancient Indigenous knowledge or may use the latest technology and engineering to allow us to experience the joy of swimming in natural environments in safety. Wild waters can be tamed by sympathetic human intervention, creating sea pools that wash in and out with the tide, or floating bathhouses on urban rivers.

Mclver's Ladies Baths, Sydney

Photographed here is Mclver's Ladies Baths, one of many ocean pools in New South Wales, Australia. It is believed this site of sacred significance was used for centuries by Aboriginal women of the Eora group, as a place for bathing and birthing, until taken over by colonial settlers in the 1830s. Researcher Nicole Larkin surveys the coastal pools of New South Wales, providing a cultural and environmental framework for sensitively adapting them. Explore Larkin's project *The Wild Edge* here.

1. ***Mclver's Ladies Baths, 2019***

Photograph by Vincent Rommelaere

Courtesy of Vincent Rommelaere

The Wild Edge: A Survey of Ocean Pools in New South Wales, 2017

Nicole Larkin

Courtesy of author, photographer and architect

Nicole Larkin

Kenwood Ladies' Pond, London

The Hampstead ponds were dug as reservoirs in the 17th and 18th centuries, then filled by damming tributaries of the River Fleet. Swimming became a tradition, and Kenwood Ladies' Pond officially opened as a women-only pond in 1926. In 2024, the Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association voted to keep the pond trans-inclusive, rejecting a policy that would limit access to those assigned female at birth. Open all year, regular swimmers often credit it as essential for their emotional wellbeing.

2. *The Silver Medal Race, 1929*

Photographic paper

Kenwood Ladies Pond Archive, Bishopsgate
Institute

3. *Breaking the Ice, 1929*

Photographic paper

Kenwood Ladies Pond Archive, Bishopsgate
Institute

4. *Snowballs. Kenwood Ladies Pond, 2010*

Photograph by Ruth Corney

Courtesy of Ruth Corney

The Marinex Swimming Rig: Accessible Open Water Swimming, 2020

Designer Dag Michelsen focuses on access to open water in his work. Launched through his company Marinex, these swimming rigs are created for municipalities to make outdoor swimming spaces more accessible for public use. Since 2018, 20 floating docks have been installed in popular sea pools and fjords around Norway, allowing swimmers with disabilities to safely enter and enjoy the water.

Marinex

1 minute

Courtesy of Marinex

+ POOL, New York City

Floating bathhouses lined the Hudson River in New York City from 1870 to 1942. Since their closure, funding for public swimming pools in the city has declined, as the privatisation of pools has grown. + POOL aims to reclaim the city's waterways by installing a water-filtering floating swimming pool on the East River. A pilot + POOL launches this year with the hope of encouraging cross-generational swimming in the city's rivers.

5. *Floating Bath Hudson River at 96th Street, 1938*

NYC Parks' Archived Collection

6. + POOL rendering in the East River, 2024

Family New York, PlayLab and Luxington

Courtesy of Friends of + POOL

7. + POOL diagrams, 2024

PlayLab

Courtesy of Friends of + POOL

→ **Behind on curved wall**

Folklore and Myth

Merfolk, sea people, water spirits and nymphs exist in centuries-old tales around the globe. These include *One Thousand and One Nights* through to Southeast Asian versions of the *Ramayana*. Folkloric characters span the Ningyo of Japan, the Rusalka of Slavic mythology, the Jengu of Cameroon and Mami Wata across Africa and the diaspora.

In more recent years, Mermaidcore has become a fashion trend, spurred on by the watery extravaganza of *The Little Mermaid* remake and the Netflix series *MerPeople*, both released in 2023. Through a beguiling mix of fantasy and folklore, Mermaiding – the practice of living or performing as a merperson – has become a subcultural phenomenon.

Mermaids on screen

The 1948 film *Miranda*, starring Glynis Johns as an enchanting mermaid, highlights the seductive qualities of these mythic sea creatures. It follows a Harley Street doctor who discovers a mermaid in a cove in Cornwall. Screenwriter Peter Blackmore drew on Cornish legend the Mermaid of Zennor. This folktale is remembered today through an elaborately carved mermaid bench in St Senara's Church, Zennor, thought to date to the 15th century. The tail in the film was created by Dunlop.

***Miranda* original film stills, 1948**

Photographs by Bert Cann

Gelatine silver prints

BFI National Archive

***W The Art Issue* magazine, December 2013**

Photograph by Tim Walker, designs by Marc Jacobs,
Armor and Dior with set design by Simon Costin

Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

***The Face* magazine, February 2023**

Halle Bailey's portrayal of Ariel in the 2023 live-action remake of *The Little Mermaid* was a catalyst for the Mermaidcore trend. Bailey undertook dive training, and swam in a tank so the production team could analyse how her locs move in the water. She told *The Face*, 'As a Black woman, hair is spiritual, especially locs... I feel like that's what mermaid hair would be anyway.'

Vol. 4 No.14

Photograph by Brianna Capozzi, designs by Diesel Paper

Courtesy of the Design Museum

Mermaiding

Choosing to perform or swim as a mermaid, whether professionally or as a hobby, has grown in recent years. Mermaid academies can now be found from Bournemouth to Boracay Island in the Philippines. A realistic tail is essential for merfolk and can be a big investment due to the skill and artistry involved. Special effects designer and sculptor Silvo Đorđević, also known as Siki Red, sculpts tails in clay before casting and rendering the final tail in silicone.

Phoenix mermaid tail, 2022

Siki Red Fins

Silicone

Courtesy of Silvo Đorđević

Phoenix mermaid tail image, 2022

Photograph by Steven Chen

Courtesy of Silvo Đorđević

Captain Nemo and the Underwater City

Since at least 360 BCE when Greek philosopher Plato wrote about Atlantis, there has been interest in mythic underwater worlds. British film *Captain Nemo and the Underwater City* (1969) was inspired by Jules Verne's 1870 science fiction novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas*. It was also influenced by diver Jacques Cousteau's experiments in undersea living, chronicled in the 1964 documentary *World Without Sun*. The costumes and set design blend 19th-century historicism with 1960s futuristic aesthetics.

Captain Nemo and the Floating City original costume design sketches, 1961

Olga Lehmann

Ink and gouache on paper

BFI National Archive: gift of the Olga Lehmann Estate

Wetlook dress, 2024

Greek designer Dimitra Petsa explores the relationship between women and water in her work. This is embodied in her signature *Wetlook* dresses, which use couture techniques to create the illusion of rippling water and wet fabric. This collection explored the divinity of the goddess Venus who was born from the sea, as well as female archetypes from ancient Greek mythology.

DI PETSА

Polyamide, EA FOIL

Courtesy of DI PETSА

Drown In My Magic

Artist and filmmaker David Uzochukwu draws on African and European fantasy, fairy-tale and myth traditions in his work. These images are from his ongoing series *Drown In My Magic*, which shows Black merpeople thriving in bodies of water. Through his work, Uzochukwu addresses the complicated relationship some people have with water. For refugees fleeing oppression and war, open water is an existential danger not a refuge. Oceans can also represent legacies of ancestral trauma associated with forced migration and enslavement. Uzochukwu here reclaims stories of the sea through mythology.

1. ***Uprising*, 2019**

Photograph by David Uzochukwu

Courtesy of David Uzochukwu and Galerie Gomis

2. ***Buoyant*, 2019**

Photograph by David Uzochukwu

Courtesy of David Uzochukwu and Galerie Gomis

WATA, 2021

Multidisciplinary artists Ronan McKenzie and Joy Yamusangie created this film inspired by the water deity Mami Wata, who is found in mythology across West and Central Africa and the diaspora. Through the characters of Mami Wata and The Musician, it explores the colour blue and chronicles the movement of people and music from Africa to London.

Ronan McKenzie and Joy Yamusangie

14 minutes

A Film Written and Directed by Joy Yamusangie and Ronan McKenzie

Swimmers' Stories

→ Continue right along wall

Summaya Mughal's first swimsuit, 2022

BBC broadcaster Summaya Mughal was host of the award-winning *Brown Gal Can't Swim* podcast. This is the swimsuit she wore when she learned to swim as part of the series. Through the episodes, she explored why swimming was not a priority when she was growing up, and what can be done to encourage more South Asian women to take the plunge.



Scan here to listen to the *Brown Gal Can't Swim* podcast

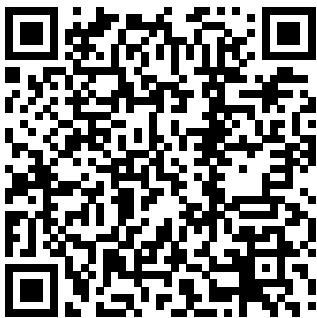
LYRA Modest

Polyamide, elastane

@summaya.mughal - BBC Broadcaster, Olympics Reporter, Founder 'Brown Gal Can't Swim'

Dr Heather Massey's Channel swimwear

One of the key scientific researchers studying the effects of cold water immersion, Dr Heather Massey investigates its potential benefits as well as its risks. Based at the University of Portsmouth, she is also a keen open water swimmer. Here we see the items she wore when she successfully swam the English Channel.



Scan here to access Heather's research

Swimsuit, around 2010

Funkita

Polyester

Courtesy of Heather Massey

Goggles, around 2010

Swim Stop

Silicone

Courtesy of Heather Massey

Swimming cap, 2014

Zoggs

Plastics

Courtesy of Heather Massey

Pioneering Channel swimmers

Gertrude Ederle was the first woman to swim the Channel, breaking the men's record with her swim in 1926. Mercedes Gleitze was the first British woman to complete the challenge the following year. In 2024, 16-year-old Prisha Tapre from Watford became one of the youngest when she successfully swam the 21 miles from Dover to Cap Gris Nez in France.

1. ***Mercedes Gleitze starting from Folkestone to swim the English Channel, 1926***

PA Images / Alamy Stock Photo

2. ***Gertrude Ederle before her English Channel swim, 1926***

Prints and Photographs Division. Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Ayo Akinwolere's record-breaking wetsuit, 2010s

In 2011, broadcaster Ayo Akinwolere was a presenter on the children's show Blue Peter when he learnt to swim as an adult. Within weeks of learning he set two world records wearing this wetsuit by swimming five miles across the Palau Trench, an 8,000-metre-deep abyss in the Pacific Ocean. He has since also qualified as a swim instructor.

I was blessed to use my newfound skills to teach others that looked like me to swim, using what profile I had to find the resources to teach differently and reshape how we bring people to the water. Swimming to me means sharing the knowledge so others too can enjoy the joys of the water without fear.

— Ayo Akinwolere

Speedo

Courtesy of Ayo Akinwolere

→ **Continue right**

Roger Deakin's *Waterlog*

Writer and environmentalist Roger Deakin's swimming odyssey *Waterlog* was published in 1999, becoming a nature-writing classic. It chronicles Deakin swimming around Britain, beginning in the moat at his Suffolk Tudor farmhouse. The book, with its rebellious right to roam spirit, captures the magic of swimming in nature, and has inspired countless writers and swimmers.

A swimming journey would give me access to that part of our world which, like darkness, mist, woods or high mountains, still retains most mystery. It would afford me a different perspective on the rest of land-locked humanity.

— Roger Deakin

3. Roger Deakin's black Speedo swim briefs, 1990s

Speedo

Elastane, nylon, polyester

Courtesy of Roger Deakin Archive, British Archive for Contemporary Writing, University of East

Anglia

4. Roger Deakin with Liz Meadows, Mary Cane and Olga Way after their swim in his famous moat, 1990s

Photographic paper

Kenwood Ladies Pond Archive, Bishopsgate Institute

5. Colour photo of Roger Deakin swimming, 1990s

Photographic paper

Courtesy of Roger Deakin Archive, British Archive for Contemporary Writing, University of East Anglia

6. *Waterlog* 1st draft typescript, 1998

Roger Deakin

Paper

Courtesy of Roger Deakin Archive, British Archive for Contemporary Writing, University of East Anglia

Health, Wellbeing and Healing

The 'Sea Cure', an idea first promoted in the 18th century, is popular again today. The vogue for outdoor swimming expanded during the pandemic when indoor pools were shut. Recent early-stage reports point to potential cold water benefits for mental health, the menopause and possibly even dementia. Architecture that enables proximity to nature can encourage wellbeing, and designs that allow access for all are essential.

Protecting our waterways is now more urgent than ever. The growing interest in open water swimming has shone a spotlight on issues such as plastic and sewage pollution. Activist campaigning against this is flourishing across the country. Using recycled materials for swimwear to reduce environmental impact is crucial.

→ **Continue left along wall**

Recycled plastic waste *Jellyfish* swimsuit, 2023

Batoko is an independent brand based on the northwest coast of England. They use fabric made from Global Recycled Standard-certified recycled plastic waste. Each year they share a proportion of their profits with wildlife and environment charities. These include the National Lobster Hatchery, Cornish Seal Sanctuary, Marine Conservation Society UK, Action For Dolphins and Mental Health Swims.

Batoko

Elastane, polyester

Courtesy of Batoko

The Saltwater Within Us, The Depths of Our Grief, The Leagues of Our Love, 2023

Phoebe Boswell considers water's collective legacy in Afro-diasporic communities as a site of both historical trauma and the potential for rebirth and futurity. She seeks to reclaim it for healing and renewal. On learning 95% of Black adults in the UK do not swim, Boswell rented an underwater studio. She invited sitters to bring their loved ones and help each other feel safe in the water. The title of the work comes from the book *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals* by Alexis Pauline Gumbs.

Phoebe Boswell

Oil on canvas

Courtesy of Phoebe Boswell

Into the Sea swimsuit and hijab, 2021

This swimsuit was developed by Irish surfer and scientist Easkey Britton with Shirin Gerami, Iran's first female triathlete. They worked with students at Falmouth University, Plymouth College of Art and the Finisterre design team. Created for outdoor swimming and surfing, it can be worn alone or over a wetsuit if full coverage is desired for cultural, medical or personal reasons. For every suit or hijab purchased, the Finisterre Foundation donates one to someone who needs it.

Finisterre

Seaqual

Courtesy of Finisterre

Neoprene alternatives for a healthier planet

Neoprene, an insulating fabric derived from petroleum, was once celebrated as the optimal material for wetsuits but its production is unsustainable. Designers and companies today are investing in circular solutions for wetsuits otherwise destined for landfill. These material samples, designed by Finisterre with neoprene recycling developers Circular Flow, demonstrate how old wetsuits can be recycled into new sheet material. Wetsuits currently sold by Finisterre use Yulex, a natural rubber that produces 80% less carbon dioxide than neoprene.

1. **Yulex fabric swatch, 2024**

Yulex

Courtesy of Finisterre

2. **Recycled neoprene swatches, 2024**

Circular Flow

Recycled neoprene

Courtesy of Finisterre and Circular Flow

Bathing machine-style sauna, 2017

According to the British Sauna Society, saunas across the UK have been doubling year-on-year since 2018. One of the first of the new generation, and the only free coastal sauna in the country, is the People Care Planet Care sauna in Margate. Created in 2015 through a crowdfunding campaign, it was designed by Re-Works Studio based on a 19th-century bathing machine.

Photograph by People Care Planet Care
Courtesy of People Care Planet Care

Accessible beach huts on Boscombe seafront

Beach huts line coasts around the UK, providing a private space to change clothes and dry off from the sea. Addressing the lack of accessibility, Bournemouth Borough Council commissioned the country's first purpose-designed huts for visitors with disabilities. ABIR Architects designed 'The Seagull & The Windbreak' with local artist Peter Lewis. The huts feature contrasting surfaces intended to assist those with visual impairments and they accommodate up to four wheelchair users.

3. *The Seagull & the Windbreak* render, 2016

Peter Lewis

Courtesy of Peter Lewis

4. *The Seagull & the Windbreak* exterior and interior images, 2017

Photographs by Richard Rowland

Courtesy of Richard Rowland

**5. *The Seagull & the Windbreak* plan, section
and elevation, 2017**

ABIR Architects

Courtesy of ABIR Architects

***Swimming in Plastic* campaign, Surfers Against Sewage, 2023**

Founded in Cornwall in 1990, Surfers Against Sewage are a campaigning charity to protect waterways. They estimate over 12 million tonnes of plastic are dumped in the ocean every year. This campaign saw the Jubilee Pool in Penzance filled with plastic bottles to launch the 2023 Brand Audit, analysing which brands' packaging appears most frequently during beach cleans. Coca Cola topped the list, followed by McDonald's and PepsiCo.

Photographs by Duncan Scobie
Courtesy of Surfers Against Sewage

Surfers Against Sewage, *Paddle Out* Protest placard, 2024

This placard was made for a protest in Broadstairs, Kent. Sewage pollution is a national crisis, with the UK ranked as one of the worst European countries for water quality. Spills into English waterways in 2023 totalled 3.6 million hours, causing illness for swimmers and damage to marine ecosystems. The lack of investment by water companies coupled with large dividends to shareholders has led to national outrage. Local protest groups exist across the country from Fylde to Windermere and Whitstable.

Sue Hemsley

Painted hardboard, wood

Courtesy of Sue Hemsley

The Haenyeo of Jeju Island

The *Haenyeo* divers of Jeju Island, South Korea, are a community of women who have been free-diving for centuries to harvest seafood. The profession is in danger of dying out among younger generations due to the perilous nature of the work, as women dive all year round with no breathing equipment. In this film, a mother and daughter discuss the healing power of being in the water throughout life's hardships.

The Haenyeo of Jeju Island, 2022

A film directed by Vern Moen, produced by David de Rothschild, co-produced by Vern Moen and Katie McLaurin

11 minutes

Courtesy of Voice for Nature. A Voice for Nature production in association with Long Beach Film Company

Haenyeo Divers of Jeju Island poster, 2022

Martín Vielma and Jessica Leitmanis

Courtesy of Voice for Nature

Sookhee Park and Jin Goryeo, The Haenyeo of Jeju Island, 2022

Martín Vielma

Courtesy of Martín Vielma and Voice for Nature

Swim Dem Crew's *Beyond the Blue*

Swim Dem Crew, founded in 2013 by Peigh Asante, Nathaniel Cole and Emily Deyn, is an inner-city swim club whose projects have taken them across the world. Now qualified swimming teachers, they hold lessons at London Aquatics Centre and have taught over 200 Londoners to swim with a focus on people of colour. Their documentary *Beyond the Blue* chronicles the relationship between Asante and Cole, and the positive impact of swimming and community on mental wellbeing.

Beyond the Blue, 2017

Swim Dem Crew

11 minutes

Courtesy of Swim Dem Crew

Beyond the Blue film still, 2017

Boya Dee and Ruby Seresin for Swim Dem Crew

Courtesy of Swim Dem Crew

Acknowledgements

The Design Museum wishes to express its sincere thanks to the museums, institutions, studios, design practices and individuals who have generously lent objects and shared intellectual property to support this exhibition.

Conceived and Curated by

Amber Butchart

Curatorial Concept Development

Lucia Savi

Assistant Curators

Tiya Dahyabhai

Fiona McKay

Exhibition Project Manager

Charlotte Stevens

Exhibition Coordinator

Verity Pugh

Exhibition Design

ScottWhitbyStudio

Graphic Design

Mark El-khatib studio

Lighting Design

Beam Lighting Design

Interpretation Editor

Susan Dymond

Conservator

Atelier Nine

Exhibition Build

Raskl

Graphics Production

OMNI Colour

Audio-Visual

Sophie Tönsberg

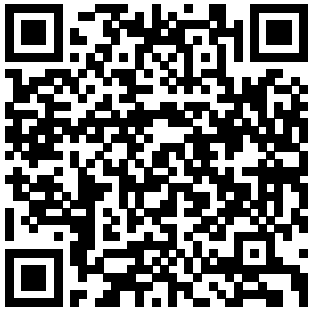
Technical Support

the Design Museum Workshop team

The Museum would also like to acknowledge the many individuals, both within and outside the Museum, who have dedicated their time and expertise, including: Christine Boydell, Irene Calvi, Shaun Cole, Tina Hodgkinson, Simon Inglis, Priya Khanchandani, Robert Macfarlane and Nicky Mayhew.

The Design Museum is committed to reducing the environmental impact of exhibitions and displays. For this project, the team has re-used exhibition mannequins and furniture, reduced the transport distance of objects on view and worked closely with contractors to find the most sustainable materials and production processes possible.

For more information on the Design Museum's approach, and to download a guide to reducing the environmental impact of exhibitions, follow the QR code.



The Design Museum would like to give special thanks to its exhibition partners for their generous support

**ORLEBAR
BROWN**

Associate Sponsor

&

**Bloomberg
Connects**



Paint Partner

**the
DESIGN
MUSEUM**