

Press information

The Vitra Schaudepot

The Vitra Schaudepot was designed for the Vitra Design Museum by star architects Herzog & de Meuron. One of the world's largest permanent exhibitions of modern furniture design, the Vitra Schaudepot presents key objects from the museum's extensive collection and provides an invaluable research source.

The Vitra Design Museum comprises three exhibition venues: the main building, designed by Frank Gehry, for large temporary exhibitions, the adjacent Vitra Design Museum Gallery for smaller, experimental projects, and the Vitra Schaudepot for the museum's growing furniture collection. Displays in the Vitra Schaudepot showcase a changing selection of more than four hundred key pieces of modern furniture design from the 1800s to today, including early bentwood furniture, iconic modernist pieces by Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, and Gerrit Rietveld, as well as contemporary 3D-printed furniture and lesser-known or anonymous objects, prototypes, and experimental models.

The Vitra Design Museum collection includes nearly twenty thousand objects, with some seven thousand pieces of furniture, more than one thousand lamps, the Eames Office Collection, and several archives and estates of architects and designers like Verner Panton, Alexander Girard, or Luis Barragán. In 2022, the Barragán Gallery featuring selected projects from the Mexican architect's oeuvre opened in the Vitra Schaudepot. Presentations are staged in collaboration with the Barragan Foundation. Barragán's professional estate is housed in the adjacent archive room.

The museum was founded by Rolf Fehlbaum, an avid collector of furniture who in 1989 transferred his collection to the Vitra Design Museum. Thanks to his support and the activities of museum directors Alexander von Vegesack (1989–2010), Mateo Kries and Marc Zehntner (2011–2020), and Mateo Kries (from 2020), the collection has continued to grow and now numbers among the largest of its kind.

The Architecture of the Vitra Schaudepot

The Vitra Schaudepot, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, opened in 2016. It combines the visual simplicity of an industrial building or warehouse with the complex requirements of a walk-in museum repository. The monolithic volume characterized by windowless walls and a simple gable roof is animated by its split brick façades. Inside the building, 1600 square metres of usable floor space offer ample room for all its functions. The ground floor houses the large space used for the permanent exhibition alongside the entrance area and shop. Even illumination is provided by fluorescent tubes arranged in a severe grid on the ceiling.

On the basement floor, the Schaudepot Lab sheds light on the materials and processes used in design. Two large windows offer a glimpse of the storage space housing the bulk of the collection. A look behind the scenes is possible in other parts of the building, too: the café has windows to the museum offices and the library, which is open to researchers and students on request, and to the restoration workshop, which can be visited as part of our guided campus tours. By visually or

physically opening up its collections and activities to visitors, the Vitra Design Museum showcases furniture design and interior design as social, political, technological, and economic processes. The task of museums in our world today has expanded from amassing collections and staging exhibitions to conveying a sense of the significance of their holdings beyond the individual object. The Vitra Design Museum's wide-ranging programme of events therefore aims to initiate debates, examine social contexts, and highlight links to the realms of architecture, art, and technology.

The Vitra Campus

The Vitra Schaudapot, Zaha Hadid's spectacular Fire Station (1993), and the Place Jean Prouvé are all part of an attractive public space accessed on foot via the green and leafy Alexander Girard Passage. For visitors coming from Weil am Rhein, the Vitra Designweg makes an attractive walk to the campus: it is marked by twelve columns showcasing a selection of Vitra Miniatures – scale models of classic furniture designs from the museum's collection. The concept for the path was developed by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec.

From the Vitra Schaudapot, visitors follow the Álvaro Siza Promenade to reach the VitraHaus – also designed by Herzog & de Meuron – and the main museum building by Frank Gehry near the campus's northern entrance. Along the way, intrepid adventurers will climb the Slide Tower by German artist Carsten Höller and enjoy an exhilarating slide or simply revel in the view of the Oudolf Garden (2020) and the Vitra Campus with its buildings and artworks by SANAA, Tadao Ando, Álvaro Siza, Nicholas Grimshaw, Renzo Piano, Richard Buckminster Fuller, Claes Oldenburg, Kazuo Shinohara, Tsuyoshi Tane, and Jean Prouvé.

Featured Designers (selection)

Aino Aalto, Alvar Aalto, Virgil Abloh, Ron Arad, Gae Aulenti, Maarten Baas, Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, Andrea Branzi, Marcel Breuer, Humberto and Fernando Campana, Achille Castiglioni, Luigi Colani, Cheick Diallo, Charles and Ray Eames, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray, Konstantin Grcic, Arne Jacobsen, Grete Jalk, Hella Jongerius, Shiro Kuramata, Joris Laarman, Le Corbusier, Minale Maeda, Sabine Marcelis, Christien Meindertsma, Alessandro Mendini, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Jasper Morrison, George Nelson, Marc Newson, Isamu Noguchi, Verner Panton, Charlotte Perriand, Gaetano Pesce, Gio Ponti, Jean Prouvé, Tejo Remy, Eero Saarinen, Jerszy Seymour, Philippe Starck, Superstudio, Patricia Urquiola, Marcel Wanders, Hans J. Wegner, Tokujin Yoshioka, and many more.

General Information

Vitra Schaudapot	Vitra Design Museum collection, with changing presentations
Objects on display:	ca. 400
Basement floor:	Storage space, Eames Office, lamps collection
Schaudepot Lab:	Material library with information on production and development processes, ca. 350 material samples, seventeen prototypes
Head of Collection & Archive:	Susanne Graner
Press contact:	Johanna Hunder Head of Communications T +49 7621.702.3 153 E communications@design-museum.de
Press images:	www.design-museum.de/press_images

All exhibition spaces at the Vitra Design Museum are open daily from 10 am to 6 pm. Exhibitions are accompanied by a wide-ranging programme of guided tours, talks, workshops, and other events.