

## **Press information**

### **Vitra Design Museum takes charge of Hella Jongerius Archive**

Weil am Rhein, 23 January 2024

**Hella Jongerius is one of the leading designers of the last few decades. Her work encompasses textiles, furniture, ceramics, and interior design as well as an internationally acclaimed artistic practice. We are grateful and delighted about her decision to place her extensive archive into the hands of the Vitra Design Museum, whose curators will collaborate with the designer on developing the first retrospective of her work, scheduled to open in 2026.**

From the start of her career in the context of Droog Design in the 1990s, Hella Jongerius has always challenged design approaches catering solely to the demands of markets and mass production. Her work is characterised by ground-breaking research into materials, techniques, decoration, and colour, underpinned by her critical reflection of design practices. Jongerius likes to emphasize how important it is not to be afraid of getting one's hands dirty since this, she says, is the only way of truly understanding materials – their ever-changing properties and the references they carry – and accepting unforeseen errors while disregarding traditional boundaries.

Her unconventional approach resulted in multifaceted research projects, iconic industrial products, and a series of exhibitions, manifestos, and publications that testify to Jongerius' critical views. Her interest in rethinking crafts practices from a contemporary perspective has enabled Jongerius to rediscover the narrative power of decoration and the potential of colour and textiles for design. Jongerius has always been and continues to be a pioneer in her field.

The Jongerius Archive plays a central role for the exhibition, which will provide a comprehensive overview of the designer's work and methodology. Over the past thirty years, her archive has become a source of learning, experimentation, and discovery for Jongerius. The exhibition will explore the archive in all its complexity, from iconic objects and products to small material experiments, prototypes, scale models, drawings, and collages. For Jongerius, the handover of her archive to the Vitra Design Museum and the retrospective exhibition will mark a new chapter in her career.

In a wider view, the exhibition will also examine the archive as a metaphor for collective memory and our relationship to things. In many of her projects, Jongerius implicitly addresses what has been lost through industrial production and documents these changes by combining traditional and new materials and techniques.

Jongerius says: »The word 'serendipity' beautifully describes how an unpredictable process can lead to surprising results and important new insights that reach beyond technical know-how. Materials transmute, evolve, flow; we are all part of a never-ending process of becoming. Humans work with materials and shape things, and vice versa, things and materials shape who we are as human beings.«

Mateo Kries, Director of the Vitra Design Museum, explains: »Hella Jongerius has a long-standing professional relation with Vitra, but we have also been following this wonderful artist and designer's

work from a museum perspective for many years. By bringing her archive to the Vitra Design Museum, this unique treasure will be preserved for future generations and made accessible for research. In our museum, the Jongerius Archive will be cared for alongside other archives and collections of designers such as Charles & Ray Eames, Alexander Girard, and Verner Panton, enabling scholars and students of design to discover and examine fascinating cross-references and parallels within design history.«

The Hella Jongerius exhibition is scheduled to open at the Vitra Design Museum in 2026, followed by an international tour of museums around the world. It will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue documenting the exhibition and the archive.

## **General Information**

Contact: [www.design-museum.de](http://www.design-museum.de)  
T +49.7621.702.3200  
info@design-museum.de

Press images: [www.design-museum.de/pressebilder](http://www.design-museum.de/pressebilder)

Hashtag: #VDMJongeriusArchive

Press contact: Vitra Design Museum  
Maximilian Kloiber  
PR Manager & Editor  
T +49.7621.702.3163  
E [communications@design-museum.de](mailto:communications@design-museum.de)

BUREAU N  
Gabriela Ecke  
T +49.30.6273.6104  
E [gabriela.ecke@bureau-n.de](mailto:gabriela.ecke@bureau-n.de)