

Press release

**Verner Panton
Form, Colour, Space**

23 May 2026 – 9 May 2027
Vitra Schaudapot, Weil am Rhein

He hung chairs from the ceiling and transformed interiors into colourful playgrounds; few designers have shaped design in the second half of the twentieth century as decisively as Verner Panton (1926–1998). To mark the 100th anniversary of the Danish designer's birth, the Vitra Design Museum is presenting a comprehensive retrospective of his work at the Vitra Schaudapot. The exhibition »Verner Panton: Form, Colour, Space« illuminates Panton's work in its full breadth, from iconic designs such as the Panton Chair, the Cone Chair, and the Flowerpot lamp to visionary living landscapes as well as rarely shown furniture and architectural projects. A walk-in reconstruction of the legendary Fantasy Landscape (1970, edition 1/8) invites visitors to immerse themselves in Panton's sculptural, colour-saturated worlds.

As a graduate in architecture from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, Verner Panton emerged from the legendary tradition of Danish furniture design and gained his first professional experience in the office of the renowned architect Arne Jacobsen. But he soon turned in a completely different artistic direction: from the late 1950s onwards, Panton developed radically new spatial concepts in which colour, textiles, and light played a central role. With swings and living towers, he used domestic space in playful and informal ways, while light, patterns and carefully applied colour scales helped him modulate the mood and character of his interiors.

While Panton's unconventional living environments reflected changing conventions and the laid-back lifestyles of the post-war years, the designer executed his creative visions with the precision of an industrial designer. A key example is the Panton Chair, whose basic concept emerged in the mid-1950s but took until 1967 to be launched as a serial product by Vitra. As the first chair without back legs made from a single piece of plastic, it was a technical masterpiece and caused an immediate stir in the international media. One of Panton's most famed interiors, the organically shaped Fantasy Landscape (1970), was created for his Visiona II exhibition and realized in collaboration with the chemical company Bayer, which had commissioned him to demonstrate the possibilities of new synthetic materials. With Visiona II, Panton created a Gesamtkunstwerk that radically redefined domestic space and became a milestone of modern design.

The chronologically structured exhibition shows how systematically Verner Panton pursued his design ideas. Already his early interiors of the 1950s were bold, colourful statements that broke out of Scandinavian design traditions. Panton's collaboration with the company Plus-linje led to his first internationally known seating designs, including the cone-shaped Cone Chair. During the 1960s and 1970s, the designer broadened his scope, creating works that range from corporate and private interiors to entire furniture systems, textiles, and lighting. Projects such as the Panton Chair brought the designer

international recognition, followed by major commissions including the Visiona exhibitions (1968 and 1970), the interior design for the Der Spiegel publishing house in Hamburg (1969), or the Varna restaurant in Aarhus, 1971. Each of these major projects allowed Pantón to combine his different fields of work and merge them into multisensory environments with a distinctive, club-like atmosphere. Pantón's later works from the 1980s and 1990s illustrate how the designer continuously developed his formal language while remaining true to his core themes, such as colour and a playful approach to design.

The exhibits are embedded in a scenography that references Pantón's immersive spaces: a colourful ribbon runs through the entire Schauderpot, transporting visitors into a Pantón-inspired world of chromatic colour scales. All objects come from the Verner Pantón Archive at the Vitra Design Museum which includes furniture, prototypes, experiments, models, as well as more than 40,000 documents, among them about 20,000 plans and drawings. Drawing from this unique source, the exhibition presents works from all creative periods, thus offering a more differentiated view of the legendary designer oeuvre than before. For instance, Pantón's mostly unrealised architectural work is shown in detail for the first time, and the design process behind many of his projects is highlighted. The exhibition was developed in close collaboration with the Verner Pantón Design AG, holder of all rights in Verner Pantón's work. It casts new light on a designer whose optimistic belief in the future may seem distant today, yet has lost none of its enduring fascination.

General information

Exhibition title:	Verner Pantón. Form, Colour, Space
Duration:	23 May 2026 – 9 May 2027
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