

## 5 March 2015

### V&A Groundbreaking

A “ground-breaking” ceremony on the V&A Museum of Design Dundee’s waterfront site marked the formal start of construction work today (Thursday 5 March).

Renowned Japanese architect Kengo Kuma joined with Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs, and representatives of V&A Dundee, Dundee City Council and BAM Construction for a short ceremony.

The new £80.11 million project will create an international centre for design, the first ever design museum to be built in the UK outside London. Due to open to the public in June 2018, it will be architect Kengo Kuma’s first building in the UK.

Director of V&A Dundee Philip Long presented Kuma-san with a commemorative silver vessel, privately commissioned for the ceremony as a contemporary take on a traditional Scottish quach. The vessel was created by Beth Henderson, a level 3 BDes Jewellery & Metal Design student at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design. In a painstaking process taking two full days, Beth raised a fine silver flat sheet into a 3D vessel using a blend of ancient Scottish silversmithing and eastern Keum Boo techniques (literally meaning 'attached gold').

Kuma-san presented a sake bottle made of washi paper created through a project set up after the 2011 earthquake to help skilled craftsmen from the East Japan region to restore their business after the natural disaster. The bottle was designed by Kengo Kuma & Associates (KKAA) and manufactured by Shiroishi Washi Koubou from the Miyagi Prefecture. This cultural gift will eventually be displayed in the new design museum.

Carnoustie based piper Craig Weir, Pipe Sergeant of the Arbroath Royal British Legion Pipe Band and frontman of four-piece Celtic rock band Gleadhraich, wrapped up today's ceremony with a rendition of Bonnie Dundee.

Initial work on site will include the creation of a coffer dam, and the installation of site hoardings.

Kengo Kuma, the museum’s architect, said:

"It's always a great pleasure to Scotland, a country I love very much. When I first arrived for the competition site visit in 2010, Dundee was a very different place. Already you can see the connection between the beautiful waterfront setting, the environment and the city is so much stronger."

"We are delighted that our vision for the V&A Dundee building, which was originally inspired by the breathtaking natural setting, is now starting to take physical shape, creating a real sense of place. We

look forward to forging even closer links between the people and cultures of Japan and Scotland over the coming years."

Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop said,

"Kengo Kuma has set out a spectacular vision for V&A Dundee that heralds a bright future for Dundee as the UK's first UNESCO City of Design. Today work begins in earnest on a world-class design museum for the whole of Scotland and demonstrates our ambitions for the Dundee as well as Scottish culture and tourism.

"Hundreds of thousands of visitors from far and wide will come to V&A Dundee to enjoy its world-class exhibitions. The benefits are much larger than the £11.4 million boost to the economy, V&A Dundee will showcase Scotland's renowned design heritage, the talent of our nation and stimulate innovation to drive our economy forward."

Phillip Long, Director, V&A Museum of Design Dundee, said:

"This is a special day – an historic moment for Dundee. We are beginning the construction of a new building that, through its design, already helps symbolise this city's new confidence. As the building develops, day-by-day it will demonstrate Dundee's growing ambition in a very real and physical way."

"We believe this is a project that has the potential to reshape our national landscape and be of benefit to all of us. We would like to thank everyone who has helped us reach this momentous day and we hope to keep all of our supporters and champions involved and inspired a long way into the future."

Dundee City Council administration leader Councillor Ken Guild said:

"I am delighted that Kengo Kuma and Fiona Hyslop can join the partners behind the V&A Museum of Design Dundee to mark this important occasion for both Dundee and Scotland. Construction of V&A Dundee will give the economy a significant boost and assist in our efforts to create thousands of jobs at the Waterfront. The project to deliver this unique building will bring considerable attention to Dundee even before the doors of the museum open."

We are already enjoying the benefits of the recent award of UNESCO City of Design status, which reflects our growing international reputation. V&A Dundee will help to attract further investment into the city and we are already experiencing unprecedented levels of investor interest."

Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said:

"This day is for Dundee and the scores of people who have laboured behind the scenes for the last seven years to bring the vision of a world-class museum to the city. Thanks to National Lottery players, we look forward to seeing this striking building take shape, an icon of the contribution Scots have made to the world of design and a new chapter in the economic regeneration of Dundee."

