



Brand new objects to go on display at IWM London following major redevelopment of the iconic Atrium

From 19 July, Free Entry

IWM London's atrium has been transformed. The new space designed by Foster + Partners, includes terraced galleries rising up either side of a central atrium, filled with newly curated displays telling the story of conflict in Britain and the former empire chronologically from 1914 to the present day.

There will be over 400 objects from IWM's rich collections on display in the new atrium – over 60 of which have never been seen before –from aircraft and tanks, letters and personal mementos, through to film and artworks.

On entering the atrium, visitors will be presented with, *Witnesses to War*, nine iconic objects including a Harrier, Spitfire and a V-1 rocket suspended from above, as well as a T-34 tank and a Reuters Land Rover damaged by a rocket attack in Gaza.

In *Turning Points* of the Second World War on Level 1, visitors can explore a number of themes and events, from the role of strategic bombing, the fronts in Russia and Africa, through to the D-Day landings. Objects new to IWM London range from the wreckage of an X7 midget submarine sent to attack the German battleship Tirpitz, and a Japanese Zero fighter which was abandoned in 1943 only to be rediscovered 50 years later in the jungle. A different kind of object is the trunk belonging to a Jewish couple, Leonhard and Clara Wohl. Having safely sent their two youngest children to Britain, the Wohls were planning their escape from Nazi Germany to South America, and sent this trunk ahead of them. Two weeks later war broke out, and, in 1943, the couple died at Auschwitz.

On Level 2 *Peace and Security* will explore themes from 1945 through to the present day and at the heart of the displays lies an original atomic bomb casing, its power and influence over the rest of the century.

Visitors can walk through a 'prefab' house display to discover a range of objects telling the story of how Britain slowly began to rebuild itself after the Second World War, from the demob suits that were given to those who left the services, a model train set made out of materials salvaged from bomb damaged buildings, and posters advertising the 'New Britain'.

Exploring wars fought on British soil, artworks and objects will work simultaneously to evoke the emotional and varied responses to Northern Ireland and the Falklands. 6 drawings and the uniform worn by artist Linda Kitson during the Falklands war, the first British female artist to ever be able to follow troops into the front line, will go on display alongside a puppet of Margaret Thatcher from 1980s television programme *Spitting Image*. While a Humber 'Pig' army vehicle, used at the time of the Bloody Sunday shootings will sit alongside artworks such as John Kindness's *Sectarian Armour* and Bill Woodrow's sculpture *Two Blue Car Doors*.

In *All Changed* –featuring some of IWM's most recent acquisitions - objects large and small will be juxtaposed along the architectural fins to illustrate the gulf between sophisticated military equipment of the West and the unseen, improvised weapons of new enemies. Highly technological equipment such as a Desert Hawk 'drone' used by British forces, sits in opposition to a Honda motorbike used by the Taliban to gather intelligence in person and a simple, yet deadly suicide bombers' vest donated to IWM this year by the Halo Trust.

Queen and Country by film director and visual artist Steve McQueen is placed at the opposite sides of Level 2, which offers an area of reflection and contemplation.

Finally on Level 3, *Curiosities of War* will present some of the more unexpected objects in IWM's collections ranging from a large wooden wheel which British engineers stumbled upon in Poll, Germany, thought to be for a secret new aircraft the Germans were designing, through to the packaging from a seized parcel containing parts for Saddam Hussein's 'super-gun'.

Diane Lees, Director-General of IWM says "Since the Imperial War Museum was founded nearly 100 years ago we have been collecting ordinary and extraordinary objects to record and remember the role of conflict and its effect on people's lives. Every object in our collection, large and small, tells a personal story and through these new and creative displays we will showcase the continuing work of the museum to collect, preserve and display people's experiences."

Nigel Steel, Principal Historian at IWM says "The architecture of the building offered us brand new space to display our vast and varied collection. We were delighted to be given a chance to look at every object and artwork in order to develop a range of displays where objects can tell stories, sometimes painful, sometimes treasured, of the people who made, used or kept them. In the new Atrium everything from jerrycans from the North African desert, to a piece of World Trade Center steel will be put on display. We hope these stories will offer visitors a chance to reflect and contemplate on the nature of twentieth century conflict."

Spencer de Grey, Head of Design at Foster + Partners says "Our project for IWM makes an important contribution to our on-going work in historic buildings. We have peeled away some of the recent additions to celebrate and restore the historic architecture, opening the building up to the park and revealing the gallery levels inside an impressive new atrium."

Michael Jones, Senior Partner, Foster + Partners says "It is a privilege to work with IWM to commemorate this important centenary – the process of learning about the collection and working with the Museum's curators and staff has been fascinating. Today's events are an important milestone in the long-term regeneration of the building, a project that will transform the experience for visitors and establish a new relationship with the surrounding park, which will benefit both."

Roger Mann, founder and Creative Director at Casson Mann says "As exhibition designers these new spaces offered a fresh challenge - an opportunity to create something very different from the previous atrium displays. Working closely with historians Nigel Steel and Roger Tolson, we were entrusted with great creative freedom in how to represent key themes and events. Choosing to draw out the stories from the predominantly large and often surprising groups of objects themselves, we devised a series of collectively chronological yet distinct display 'clusters' that we dramatized and choreographed to explore themes, events and personal stories."

IWM London is temporarily closed and will reopen on 19 July 2014 with new First World War Galleries and atrium displays. For more information iwm.org.uk/ww1

– Ends –

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Notes to Editors:

About the Atrium:

- **Architects:** Foster + Partners
- **Designers of the displays:** [Casson Mann](http://www.cassonmann.com)
- **Access:** They are free and are suitable for all ages
- **Objects:** There will be **over 400 objects and artworks** on display including over 80 large objects made up of 4 suspended and 2 displayed aircraft, 2 tanks, 6 large artillery pieces, 4 large artworks, 10

bombs, missiles and torpedoes, 7 wheeled vehicles from Monty's Staff Car through to a Humber 'Pig' armoured car, 2 submarines and many more.

- **Objects on display for the first time include:** X7 wreckage; Mrs Thatcher puppet; Zero fighter; the witness stand from the Lockerbie trial; the suicide vest and many many more.
- **Captions:** Notes from IWM historians, curators and design company Casson Man will be included in the caption panels throughout providing a variety of different perspectives about the objects and themes.
- **The atrium is made up of 4 levels** which are divided into a series of clusters, these are:
 - Level 0 - Witnesses to War**
 - Level 1 - Turning Points:** *War on the Way, Mindset, Lifeblood, Bombers, Shifting Sands, Wasteland, Overlord, Dust to Ashes*
 - Level 2 - Peace and Security:** *Shadow of the Bomb, Your Britain, News from Abroad, War on the Doorstep, War that Never Was, Drawing the Line, All Changed, two reflection points Steve McQueen's Queen and Country and the Lockerbie Witness Stand*
 - Level 3 - Curiosities of Conflict**

Funding and Supporters

IWM London has undergone a £40 million (approximate figure) major transformation, which includes the building of the new Atrium and new First World War Galleries thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund; Department of Culture, Media and Sport; Pears Foundation; Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd; DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund; as well as support from the IWM Foundation, chaired by Lord Rothermere, which has received gifts from Peter Harrison Heritage Foundation; Garfield Weston Foundation; Lord Rothermere; Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC; Westfield; The Duke of Westminster Foundation; Wolfson Foundation; Foyle Foundation; Clore Duffield Foundation; Kirby Laing Foundation; Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation; The Reuben Foundation; The Sackler Trust and The Finnis Scott Foundation. Additional support has been received from other philanthropic donations, trusts and foundations as well as corporate partners, IWM Friends, and members of the public.

Public Event

[In Conversation with Foster + Partners: The Regeneration of IWM London](#)

1 October 2014, 7pm – 9pm (Doors at 6.30pm)

Adult £15; Concession £12; IWM Friends £12

Join writer, broadcaster and director of the Design Museum, Deyan Sudjic, as he discusses the *Transforming IWM London* project with Michael Jones and Spencer de Grey from Foster + Partners – the architects behind the project.

Also opening from 19 July 2014;

- **First World War Galleries** - To mark the start of the Centenary of the First World War, IWM London is opening new, permanent First World War Galleries. Visitors can discover the story of the war through the eyes of people in Britain and its empire, both on the home front and the fighting fronts. They will see how the war started, why it continued, how the Allies won and its global impact.

Drawing on IWM's First World War collections, the richest and most comprehensive in the world, visitors will see over 1,300 objects on display, many of which have never been seen before. They range from weapons, uniforms and equipment to diaries and letters, keepsakes and trinkets, photographs, film and art.

- **Truth and Memory: British Art of the First World War** the largest and first major retrospective of British First World War art for almost 100 years featuring over 110 paintings, sculptures and drawings from IWM's collections. For more information please see the [press release](#).
- **IWM Contemporary: Mark Neville** showcases a series of artistic responses by British-based artist Neville to the Afghan conflict. Neville's work including photographs and three films – some on show

for the first time – gives us a different and arrestingly intimate perspective on British troops and their daily encounters with Afghan people, present a rarely-seen side to modern warfare.

IWM London

From 19 July 2014, open daily: 10am – 6pm. Last Admission 5.45pm

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IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the [First World War](#).

Our unique Collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches attract over 2 million visitors each year. [IWM London](#), our flagship branch, is transforming with new First World War Galleries and a new atrium with large object displays which will open in summer 2014 to mark the Centenary of the First World War (Please note IWM London is currently closed and will reopen on 19 July 2014). Our other branches are [IWM North](#), housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; [IWM Duxford](#), a world-renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; [Churchill War Rooms](#), housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser [HMS Belfast](#).

First World War Centenary

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the [First World War](#), a landmark anniversary for Britain and the world. IWM will mark the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year programme of cultural activities across the country, including the opening of brand new First World War Galleries at IWM London in 2014. For more information visit www.1914.org

