

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**THE DESIGN MUSEUM ACQUIRES JASPER MORRISON'S HANDLEBAR TABLE FOR ITS COLLECTION WITH HELP FROM THE ART FUND**

The Design Museum, with support from the Art Fund has added Jasper Morrison's Handlebar Table, to its Collection. Designed in 1983, the Handlebar Table with its unique bicycle handlebar base and top and Beachwood column, demonstrates Morrison's simple, innovative approach to design. This piece defined the beginning of Morrison's career and represents his moderate approach to the design excesses of the 1980s and an early fascination with the 'found' object.

The Handlebar Table, regarded as Morrison's first piece of significant furniture design, will join the Design Museum Collection and will go on display as part of an exhibition celebrating pieces from the museum's collection.

The Design Museum is developing its Collection ahead of its relocation to new premises at the former Commonwealth Institute, west London in 2014. The Collection is made up by over 2500 objects that range from the early Modernism of the 1900s to the cutting edge of contemporary design. The Collection also consist of a series of specialist collections, including one that contains first significant works by leading UK based designers including Tom Dixon, Kenneth Grange, James Dyson and Jasper Morrison. In addition to the Handlebar Table the Design Museum Collection also includes Morrison's Stackable bottle rack for Magis 1994, The Air Chair for Magis 2000 and The Rowenta electric kettle, 2004.

Deyan Sudjic, Director of the Design Museum, said: 'The acquisition of Jasper Morrison's Handlebar Table is an exciting addition to the Design Museum's Collection and we are very grateful to the Art Fund for their support. It is our vision to communicate a history of contemporary furniture and product design in our Collection and The Handlebar Table is a perfect example of this.'

Stephen Deuchar, Director of the Art Fund, said: 'This is the first time the Art Fund has given a grant to the Design Museum, and we are thrilled to be supporting the museum's bold new commitment to developing its permanent collection from the outset. The fascinating, complex and often provocative objects so often created when art and design collide are a hugely rich vein for collecting and enquiry, and we look forward to helping the Design Museum to explore this terrain further in years to come.'

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**Image credit:** Jasper Morrison Handlebar Table, 1983, image courtesy of Phillips de Pury.

### **About the Design Museum**

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to architecture and industrial design. It is working to place design at the centre of Contemporary culture. It demonstrates both the richness of the creativity to be found in all forms of design, and its importance. The Design Museum is the definitive voice of contemporary design in the UK. Founded in 1989 and currently located in Shad Thames, its work encompasses all elements of design, including product design, graphic design, and fashion. For the past 22 years, the museum has hosted exhibitions showcasing some of the most important pioneers of design including, Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, and Dieter Rams. The Design Museum plans to relocate from its current home at Shad Thames to the former Commonwealth Institute building, in Kensington, West London. The project is expected to be completed by 2014. Leading designer John Pawson will convert the interior of the Commonwealth Institute building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions, showcase its world class collection and extend its learning programme. For more information please visit: [designmuseum.org](http://designmuseum.org)

### **The Art Fund**

The Art Fund is the national charity which helps museums and galleries to buy, show and share art for the enjoyment of all. Over the past five years, the Art Fund has given over £24 million towards art of all kinds, from Old Masters to new media, and supported a range of programmes which share and show art to wider audiences, including the national tour of ARTIST ROOMS and the Art Fund Prize for museums. The Art Fund is independently funded and the majority of its income comes from 90,000 supporters who purchase a National Art Pass, costing from £50, which gives free entry to over 200 museums, galleries and historic houses across the country as well as 50% off many major exhibitions. Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at [www.artfund.org.uk](http://www.artfund.org.uk).

### **The Handlebar Table**

The Handlebar Table is sometimes understood as a reference to the curved tubular steel furniture that architect and designer Marcel Breuer pioneered, when he studied and taught at the Bauhaus in the 1920s. Breuer became fascinated by the potential of tubular steel by studying the handlebars of his Adler bicycle. Made from beech wood, glass and chromium steel bicycle handlebars, the table expresses Morrison's early fascination with the 'found' object. Morrison sought to find ways to give his work the quality of mass produced machine made objects, but without access to the level of investment of tooling that was required, so this work with its off-the-shelf bicycle handlebars allowed him to achieve this. Other work in a similar vein includes a chair he made using laundry basket fabrication techniques, and his 1984 Flower Pot Table made from a glass circle and supported by a stack of ordinary flower pots.

### **Jasper Morrison Biography**

Jasper Morrison is a leading industrial designer. He is renowned for his ascetically elegant, quietly humorous style. Born in London in 1959, Morrison studied design at Kingston Polytechnic Design School and the Royal College of Art. During his student years, Morrison became interested in the work of modernist pioneers such as Buckminster Fuller, Gerald Summers, Jean Prouvé and Le Corbusier. Another inspiration was the flamboyant furniture he saw at the Memphis movement's first exhibition in Milan in 1981. In 1986, a year after graduating from the RCA, Morrison opened his Office for Design in London, determined to design for industrial production. His 1984 Flower Pot Table was made from a glass circle

supported by a stack of ordinary flower pots. In 1995 he designed a tram system for the city of Hanover, the largest European light rail production contract of its time. He also collaborated with Herzog & de Meuron, the Swiss architects of London's Tate Modern to furnish its public spaces with his Low Pad Chairs and 1998 Op-lá tray table for Alessi. Morrison has held solo exhibitions at the Axis Gallery, Tokyo, the Yamagiwa Centre, Tokyo and the Paris Design Fair.

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