

No Scottish building has ever become a LEGO® set. A Dundee designer and Kengo Kuma want to help change that.

LEGO's Architecture range includes Himeji Castle, the Great Pyramid of Giza and the Flatiron Building. It has never included a building from Scotland. A fan-built model of V&A Dundee - backed by the museum and by its architect, Kengo Kuma - is just over 7,000 public votes away from changing that.

The model was designed and built by Brian McNicoll, founder of the Dundee mobile and web studio 532 Design, and is live on LEGO Ideas, the platform through which the LEGO Group takes fan submissions into official production. Any project reaching 10,000 supporters enters formal review by LEGO's design team. It currently has nearly 3,000 votes.

Kengo Kuma, whose work includes the Japan National Stadium built for the Tokyo Olympic Games, gave his backing to the model earlier this year. Speaking about the LEGO version of the museum, he said:

It's an honour to see my building recreated in LEGO and I'm impressed with how well Brian has translated the design. The building design was inspired by the Scottish landscape and now the building is inspiring Scottish designers.

I always wanted the building to be a gate through which the city can connect with the world, reflecting Dundee's once thriving global trade routes on the river. If this design becomes an official LEGO set, then people all over the world will be building a Dundee landmark.

It's a joy to see the city get behind the project, especially so many school children, and I hope the support continues until it reaches 10,000 votes.

Kuma's Tokyo office has since shared the campaign with its own audience on Instagram.

A building made for the medium

V&A Dundee, which opened on the city's waterfront in 2018, is clad in 2,500 precast concrete panels arranged in horizontal bands that shift as they rise - a form Kuma drew from the cliffs of the north-east Scottish coastline. It is that banded, angular façade that makes the building unusually well suited to reconstruction in LEGO bricks.

McNicoll built the model using a 3D version of the building contained in a Dundee Waterfront mobile app, allowing him to rotate, zoom and check scale and angles from every side as he worked.

"This model captures the angular design and textured façade of the V&A Museum Dundee," said McNicoll.

"Getting to 10,000 is the hard part. Every vote needs a free LEGO Ideas account, and that one extra step is where most campaigns die. It takes about a minute, and we've now put a step-by-step guide online to make it as easy as possible."

Growing support

Alongside Kuma, the campaign has been backed by V&A Dundee itself and by broadcasters and writers with strong Dundee and Scottish connections, including Lorraine Kelly, Brian Cox, Edith Bowman and Danny Wallace promoting the campaign on social media. Schools across the city have taken part, with pupils creating posters to promote the project.

Dundee was designated a UNESCO City of Design in 2014, and remains the only city in the UK to hold the title.

How to support

The campaign runs at legovadundee.com, which includes a one-minute guide to registering and voting, images of the model, and a link through to the LEGO Ideas project page.

Notes to editors

Campaign site

<https://legovadundee.com>

LEGO Ideas project link

<https://ideas.lego.com/product-ideas/f3ae350e-f5a7-42bf-a245-b4cfcc26c914>

Attribution note

Kengo Kuma's quoted comments were given in support of the LEGO model earlier this year and were first issued via V&A Dundee. They are reproduced here with that context. Kengo Kuma & Associates have separately shared the campaign with their own audience.

About Brian McNicoll

Brian McNicoll is the founder of 532 Design, a Dundee-based game studio.

About V&A Dundee

V&A Dundee is Scotland's design museum and the first Victoria and Albert museum anywhere in the world outside London. Designed by Kengo Kuma & Associates, it opened in September 2018 and was Kuma's first completed building in the UK.

About LEGO Ideas

LEGO Ideas is the LEGO Group's fan submission platform. Members of the public submit designs, and projects that reach 10,000 supporters within the qualifying period proceed to formal review, from which a small number are selected for commercial production as official LEGO sets.

Images

High-resolution images of the model are available at legovadundee.com or on request.

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