

Red, radiant and recycled

The Conran Shop unveils its 2019 festive display



Thousands of red, recycled and re-usable ribbons place colour on the centre stage for this year's display.

As with the Oxford Street lights and Claridge's Christmas tree, The Conran Shop windows are one of London's most sophisticated harbingers of the holiday season. Unveiled each November, the windows are some of the most creative presentations in retail, and has become an annual highlight for all to see Conran's bold new take on Christmas.

This year's edition is another Conran classic. Thousands of deep-red ribbons, of varying lengths, are suspended from the ceiling, creating a gently quivering, textured backdrop for a series of long crimson plinths laden with The Conran Shop's rich gift selection. The hanging ribbons introduce a subtle touch of movement, playing with light and shadow in a manner evocative of a flickering candle or open fire. An illuminated gap at the base of the plinths creates the illusion that the tables are floating. The overall effect is reminiscent of a magical dining table piled high with a cornucopian Christmas feast – a spectacular tableau that draws the viewer in and communicates an unmistakably joyful message without employing any of the typical trappings, symbols or clichés.

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Installation view of The Conran Shop window display.

Reflecting the growing importance of sustainable design and its long-standing centrality to The Conran Shop's ethos, this year's display has been created with the specific aim of generating as little waste as possible. The ribbons are made from recycled plastic, through a low-energy manufacturing process in which PET bottles are transformed into a polymer that can be woven into a ribbon. After Christmas, the ribbons will be repurposed by the store's complimentary gift-wrapping service, ensuring they have a second life beyond the display (and potentially, many more beyond that). PET bottles are also used to produce EchoPanels, the thick felt material that covers the plinths. The use of this sound-proofing interiors fabric – made by Australian sustainable-textile specialist Woven Image – means that the vast majority of the display is made from recycled plastic bottles.

Colour is the dominant feature. After the all-white light show of last year, The Conran Shop's Head of Creative Presentation Betsy Smith and her team decided early on in the process that they wanted to draw on the drama and impact of red-on-red, deployed at scale, for the 2019 window. For inspiration, they looked to the art of Rothko, the pigment sculptures of Anish Kapoor and James Turrell's light installations, aiming to capture that moment when colour is deployed so powerfully that it becomes more emotive than decorative.

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The seemingly floating plinths hold newly launched limited editions, as well as Bauhaus inspired highlights from the AW19 lighting collection.

For the Conran team, headed up by Creative Director Stephen Briars, creating a display that lives up to or exceeds expectations is one of the store's most rewarding challenges. The ultimate aim of the window is not merely to display products, but to create an arresting, visually rich and shareable experience that seizes the attention of passers-by.

"The store visit begins and ends with the window, it's the first and last thing our customers experience. We want them to be drawn into the store and wowed as they enter. What we showcase in the windows really does matter – it's central to the Conran shopping experience. This year's immersive installation encapsulates a glow and sense of warmth befitting for the festive season in a simple, contemporary and surprising way."

– Betsy Smith, Head of Creative Presentation, The Conran Shop

At the centre of the display, facing the doors, the ribbons form a stage-curtain frame around the recently launched Saarinen Tulip Table, a limited-edition created exclusively for The Conran Shop in collaboration with Knoll. This edition of the iconic piece of furniture is topped with Fusion Fire granite from Brazil – a very rare stone with an exquisitely beautiful red colour and texture. Above it, a pair of OE Quasi

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Pendant Lights designed by the artist Olafur Eliasson for Louis Poulsen, hang like oversized, modernist baubles.

Displayed atop the plinths, at varying heights to introduce depth to the display, The Conran Shop's 2019 gift selection contains items for a wide range of tastes and budgets, including cushion covers and throws, ceramics and furniture. Shoppers can pick up recent highlights of the AW19 lighting collection – such as the Bauhaus-inspired Cubelight and the Mondrian-like Trinity Lamp – as well as innovative accessories such as the Bananatex Roll Pack, woven from banana plant fibres. The gifts on show will change week by week, keeping the display fresh and interesting in the run-up to Christmas.



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Notes to editors

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About The Conran Shop

Founded by Sir Terence Conran in 1973, The Conran Shop has established itself as one of the leading lifestyle retailers in the world, offering an eclectic, hand-selected collection of gifts, furniture, lighting and personal accessories from some of the world's most respected designers and emerging talents. With its unique heritage, dedication to providing an unbeatable shopping experience and its carefully curated products, including vintage and modern designs, expert interior advice and personal services, The Conran Shop is the go-to destination for any type of gift or interiors inspiration. The Conran Shop currently has 11 stores across the world – three in London, two in Paris and six in Japan – with the forthcoming opening in Seoul, South Korea, on 14 November 2019.

conranshop.com

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