

Summer of sun and fun at the Science and Industry Museum

Sunshine will be dazzling Manchester this summer no matter what the weather, as the Science and Industry Museum announce their summer blockbuster exhibition – The Sun.

The exhibition is a joyously fun, visually stunning and utterly fascinating exploration of the awesome power, incredible beauty and dangerous dark side of our nearest star. From ancient Norse myths to upcoming NASA missions, The Sun is full of remarkable stories and unique objects.

Highlights of the exhibition include interactive activities where visitors can 'try on' sunglasses from different eras and cultures, an indoor beach and immersive solar storm plus a prototype fusion reactor and retro posters illustrating how we became a nation of sun worshippers.

Dr Harry Cliff, Lead Curator of the exhibition, said "The fact that the Sun has had such a profound influence on the way we live makes it an incredibly rich subject for an exhibition, crossing huge expanses of time and place. It's also a subject that is increasingly relevant for the way we live now, from the threat of solar storms to the upcoming space missions that will allow humankind to touch the Sun for the first time."

The exhibition is supported by Principal Sponsors Bechtel. Bechtel's UK Managing Director, Paul Gibbs, said: "We are delighted to help bring The Science Museum Group's The Sun exhibition to Manchester, giving thousands more young people the chance to learn more about humankind's long fascination with this unparalleled source of energy, as well as how engineers have harnessed it to power and connect communities around the globe.

"At Bechtel we share The Science Museum Group's mission to fire up young people's curiosity about the world around them. We hope this exhibition will inspire even more children to consider a career in engineering and problem-solving, creating a brighter future for generations to come."

Support for the exhibition also comes from the People's Postcode Lottery.

The exhibition opens on 20 July and is part of a huge summer of fun at the museum, with something for everyone from gamers to history buffs, art lovers to inventors-in-training, families to Instagram obsessives.

The summer also sees the hugely popular retro gaming event Power Up return from 20 July to 1 September. The geektastic gaming event is an annual favourite at the Science and Industry Museum, but now the event will last the whole summer with more opportunities to play than ever before, and for the first time it will feature handheld consoles such as the Gameboy and the Atari Lynx.

Mark Cutmore, Head of Commercial Experiences, said: "We know that Power Up is one of our most popular events of the year, and with sessions selling out for the past few years we decided that a two-week run just wasn't enough. So I'm delighted to announce that Power Up will be in residence for the entire summer, giving more opportunities to play than ever before."

Contemporary art will meet cutting-edge technology to create an array of hands-on 'atmospheric

machines' in Atmospheric Memory, a major new commission by Mexican-Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer which will be unveiled at the museum on 6 July as part of Manchester International Festival.

Presented in a specially-designed structure in the museum, the commission will feature a series of spectacular immersive installations that transform visitors' voices into trails of vapour, ripples on water and even epic 360 degree projections.

Inspired by Charles Babbage's theory that every word is recorded somewhere in the atmosphere, Lozano-Hemmer has created seven "atmospheric machines" that explore the materiality of sound, combining state-of-the-art technology, live performance and public participation.

Visitors can also see the incredible working machinery of the Textiles Gallery, see Stephenson's Rocket back in Manchester after 180 years, learn the stories of the first people to travel by train in the 1830 Station and get hands-on with science in our Experiment gallery and at our monthly Pi: Platform for Investigation – Powered by Siemens.