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## COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM ANNOUNCES DEC. 12 OPENING OF RENOVATED CARNEGIE MANSION AND INAUGURAL-YEAR EXHIBITIONS

### INTERACTIVE PEN PERSONALIZES MUSEUM EXPERIENCE AND DESIGN PROCESS

**JUNE 17, 2014**

NEW YORK—Caroline Baumann, director of Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum (formerly Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum), today announced plans for the opening of the renovated and restored Carnegie Mansion and the 10 exhibitions that will inaugurate the revamped and expanded gallery spaces.

The nation's only museum devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design, Cooper Hewitt will open its doors to the public on Friday, Dec. 12. The museum will boast 60 percent more gallery space to present its important collection and temporary exhibitions and will offer an entirely new and invigorated visitor experience, with interactive, immersive creative technologies.

Cooper Hewitt's renovation provides the opportunity to redefine today's museum experience and inspire each visitor to play designer before, during and after their visit. Visitors will explore the museum's collections and exhibitions using groundbreaking technologies that inspire learning and experimentation. This new participatory experience is specifically designed to engage all audiences—students, teachers, families, young children, designers and the general public.

All visitors will be given a newly developed interactive Pen to collect and create. They will be able to digitally collect design objects on view, as well as additional objects from the ultra-high-definition interactive tables. Visitors will become designers in their own right by creating their own designs with the Pen. Symbolizing and embodying human creativity, the Pen is a key part of every visitor's experience. With it, they will be able to record their visit, which can be viewed and shared online and supplemented during future visits.

"Cooper Hewitt's opening later this year marks a new chapter for the Smithsonian in New York City," said Wayne Clough, Secretary of the Smithsonian. "The museum continues to serve the public on a local and global level through innovative education and outreach programs and expanded online collections access."

The largest initiative in Cooper Hewitt's history, the renovation and expansion of the entire campus on New York's Museum Mile—the Carnegie Mansion, Arthur Ross Terrace and Garden and the museum's two townhouses on East 90th Street—have been achieved through a successful \$91 million capital and endowment campaign.



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"With four floors of exhibition galleries that can now stay open 12 months of the year, free garden access, extended garden and café hours, an inviting new street entrance and the digitization of our collections, Cooper Hewitt will reach a broader audience and be more accessible than ever before," said Baumann. "We have created a 21st-century museum that will bring our collections to life and make design even more relevant and exciting to today's audiences, while continuing to respect the history of this museum and the integrity of the much-treasured Carnegie Mansion."

In addition to Cooper Hewitt's physical transformation, the museum now has a new name, graphic identity, website and custom typeface. Formally the "Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum," the museum has been renamed "Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum," emphasizing the museum's heritage. The museum has taken on a bold new graphic identity designed by Pentagram and the typeface "Cooper Hewitt" designed by Chester Jenkins of Village. The typeface and corresponding drawings will be donated to Cooper Hewitt's permanent collection and will be made available beginning today as a free download on [www.cooperhewitt.org/typeface](http://www.cooperhewitt.org/typeface).

## EXHIBITIONS

Taking full advantage of its enhanced, expanded and more flexible gallery space, Cooper Hewitt will open with a rich mix of exhibitions.

On the ground floor, *Designing the New Cooper Hewitt* will reveal the process behind three years of renovation and transformation at the museum. On the first floor, a hands-on Process Lab will emphasize how design is a way of thinking, planning and problem solving, and provide a foundation for the rest of the design concepts on view in the museum. *Beautiful Users* will premiere in the new Design Process Galleries, which will introduce visitors to the shift toward user-centric design based on observations of human anatomy and behavior, and the guest-curated *Maira Kalman Selects* will assemble objects from Cooper Hewitt and other Smithsonian collections, as well as the artist's own home to suggest a life story, from birth through death.

For the first time the entire second floor will be dedicated to showcasing the permanent collection with a variety of exhibitions. The amount of gallery space for the collection has increased five fold. *Making Design* will bring together more than 350 objects for the museum's first long-term survey of works from its collection; *Hewitt Sisters Collect* will be the first exhibition to share the story of Eleanor and Sarah Hewitt, who in 1897 established a museum within Cooper Union modeled on the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and the V&A in London; *Passion for the Exotic: Lockwood de Forest, Frederic Church* will evoke the fascination of late 19th-century America with the arts of India; *Models & Prototypes* will provide insights into the important role of models and prototypes to the design process; and the Immersion Room will feature Cooper Hewitt's extraordinary collection of wall coverings, allowing visitors to select their favorites—or create their own designs with the Pen—and then project them onto the walls surrounding them at full scale.



*Tools: Extending Our Reach* will be presented in the versatile new open-plan galleries on the third floor. The full-floor exhibition will include approximately 175 objects from Cooper Hewitt and nine other Smithsonian collections, spanning 1.85 million years of tool use and design, to explore how tools extend the human body, senses, capacity and action—with results that change the world and also change ourselves.

## THE RENOVATION PROJECT

The transformation of the Carnegie Mansion into a 21st-century museum respects the spirit and character of the landmark building (the former residence of Andrew Carnegie), restoring key elements to their original grandeur while providing much-needed upgrades to lighting and signage, more flexibility to reduce installation time and better accommodate object handling and above all to enhance public access on every level.

The multiphase project has also provided for the creation of the new Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Library (completed in 2011), which includes the Arthur Ross Reading Room, an additional study room, the Fred and Rae S. Friedman Rare Book Room, reference spaces, a workroom, open stacks and offices, as well as the development of the museum's website, the collection move to expanded off-site facilities and the growth of the endowment.

A team of leading design firms has joined forces to realize the project. Gluckman Mayner Architects developed the overarching design vision for the interior renovation of the mansion, in collaboration with executive architect Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners LLP, which oversaw the engineering, architectural and historic-preservation aspects of the project. Hood Design is evolving the original Richard Schermerhorn Jr. garden design from 1901, using durable local New York schist as terrace pavers, garden pathways and in the reimagined rockery, tying the garden to its larger context of Central Park. Diller Scofidio + Renfro designed exhibitions in the ground-, first- and second-floor galleries, as well as the new SHOP Cooper Hewitt retail space; Thinc Design conceived the *Tools* exhibition design; Local Projects focused on the design and production of the interactive media concept; and Ideum developed the interactive table hardware. Goppion designed casework on the ground-, first- and second-floor galleries.

The concept for the Pen was developed especially for Cooper Hewitt by Local Projects with Diller Scofidio + Renfro as a way to invite visitors to learn about design by designing themselves. Beyond working as a digital Pen for drawing, it encourages visitors to engage with the works on view in the museum, rather than looking at them through their mobile devices.

Turning a concept into custom-designed hardware has required an international team. Early prototypes of the Pen were based on Sistel Networks's vWand, an inventory control device used in health care. GE and Sistel Networks, working alongside Cooper Hewitt and Undercurrent, turned sketches into working prototypes. Sistel changed the way the vWand's electronics operated, and then GE's industrial design team designed a sleeker form for museum use. This collaborative industrial design process mirrors how designers

solve real-world problems and the process that many of the objects in the museum's collection have undergone. As Cooper Hewitt receives feedback from users, this new visitor experience will continue to evolve, like any good design.

Cooper Hewitt's visitor experience is sponsored by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

“Cooper Hewitt is a great example of how technology can help arts organizations educate, expand horizons and engage audiences in new ways,” said Michael R. Bloomberg, philanthropist and former Mayor of New York City (2002-2013). “The museum's digital technology gives visitors a chance to become designers and collectors themselves, and it makes a trip to the museum an even more rewarding experience.”

Through reprogramming of portions of the mansion and the adjacent townhouses, as well as reconfiguring conservation and collection-storage facilities, the project will increase the museum's total exhibition space from approximately 10,000 square feet to 17,000 square feet, including the 6,000-square-foot gallery on the third floor, the Barbara and Morton Mandel Design Gallery, which has never before been used for public exhibitions.

Other major components of the museum renovation include:

- Restored first-floor galleries providing an exciting interactive introduction to design
- Second-floor galleries expanded by converting existing office space to provide more room to showcase the museum's collection
- Restored historic features of the Carnegie Mansion, including cleaning and repair of exterior masonry and wrought-iron fence, painstaking re-creation of teak floors and meticulous restoration of the Carnegie Mansion's former family library—the only interior designed by Lockwood de Forest that remains intact in the building for which it was created
- Upgraded lighting and signage systems, including a heightened street presence at the new public entrance on 90th Street
- Expanded and upgraded facilities for exhibition preparation to accelerate the installation of new exhibitions, enabling the museum to remain open year round, without long transition periods between exhibitions
- The intricate intertwining of new mechanical services, the creation of a freight elevator and shaft for oversize objects, a new passenger elevator and a new public staircase that connects all four levels of galleries
- Unique pivot system of cornices that preserves historical detailing while also accommodating the installation of large design objects
- 2,000 pound “secret” pivot door in the Great Hall that conceals back-of-house functions

In keeping with Cooper Hewitt's design mission, the building project is expected to receive LEED Silver certification. The project also honors the historical integrity of the

site, fully preserving the exterior of the mansion, recording and carefully storing historic materials and architectural elements for future study and reference.

## SPONSORS

*Beautiful Users* is made possible by major support from the Adobe Foundation. Additional funding is provided by Amita and Purnendu Chatterjee, the August Heckscher Exhibition Fund, the Ehrenkranz Fund, the Bill Moggridge Memorial Fund, The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, Deborah Buck, May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation, Inc. and IDEO.

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*Passion for the Exotic: Lockwood de Forest, Frederic Church* is made possible in part by the American Express Foundation. Restoration of the Teak Room is supported in part by the American Express Historic Preservation Fund.

*Tools: Extending Our Reach* is made possible by major support from GE. Generous support is also provided by Newell Rubbermaid and Esme Usdan. Additional funding is provided by the August Heckscher Exhibition Fund, the Ehrenkranz Fund, and Smithsonian Institution funds from the Grand Challenges Consortia.

## ABOUT COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM

Founded in 1897, Cooper Hewitt is the only museum in the nation devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design. The museum educates, inspires and empowers people through design, presenting compelling educational programs, exhibitions and publications. International in scope and possessing one of the most diverse and comprehensive collections of design works in existence, the museum's rich holdings range from Egypt's Late Period/New Kingdom (1100 B.C.) to the present day and total more than 210,000 objects.

Cooper Hewitt is located at 2 East 91st Street at Fifth Avenue in New York City. Hours are Sunday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. The café and garden open two hours prior to the museum. The museum is closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Public transit routes include the Lexington Avenue 4, 5 and 6 subways (86th or 96th Street stations) and the Fifth and Madison Avenue buses. General admission, \$18; senior citizens and college students, \$12. Cooper Hewitt members and children younger than age 18 are admitted free. Pay What You Wish, every Saturday, 6 to 9 p.m. The museum is fully accessible.

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For further information, please call (212) 849-8400, visit Cooper Hewitt's new website at [www.cooperhewitt.org](http://www.cooperhewitt.org) and follow us on [www.twitter.com/cooperhewitt](http://www.twitter.com/cooperhewitt) and [www.facebook.com/cooperhewitt](http://www.facebook.com/cooperhewitt).

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