

# COOPER HEWITT

 Smithsonian Design Museum

# 2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



# OPEN FOR ALL

Cooper Hewitt is bringing people back together through design.



2021 National Design Awards celebration. Photo: Agaton Strom



2021 National Design Awards celebration. Photo: Agaton Strom



2021 National Design Awards celebration. Photo: Agaton Strom



2021 National Design Award winners. Photo: Agaton Strom



2021 National Design Awards celebration. Photo: Agaton Strom

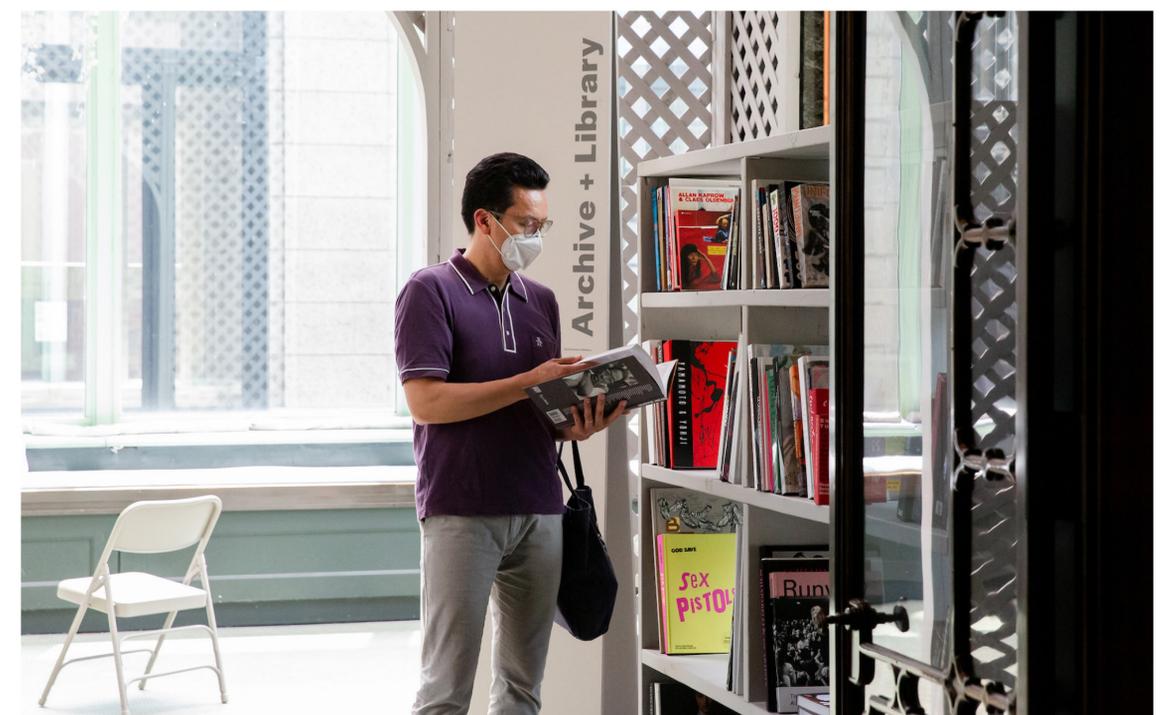
# In 2021, after months of being fully remote, we welcomed visitors back to campus with free admission for all.



Contemporary Muslim Fashions. Photo: Liz Ligon



Underground Modernist: E. McKnight Kauffer. Photo: Matt Flynn



Willi Smith: Street Couture. Photo: Liz Ligon

**And our expanded virtual programming continues to reach students, educators, creators, and users around the world.**



Design Camp. Photo: Scott Rudd



2021 National Design Awards virtual event

**With your support, we're connecting people everywhere with the power of design. See how we're making Cooper Hewitt open for all, together.**

# OPEN DISCOVERY

Illuminating the power of design in our everyday lives.



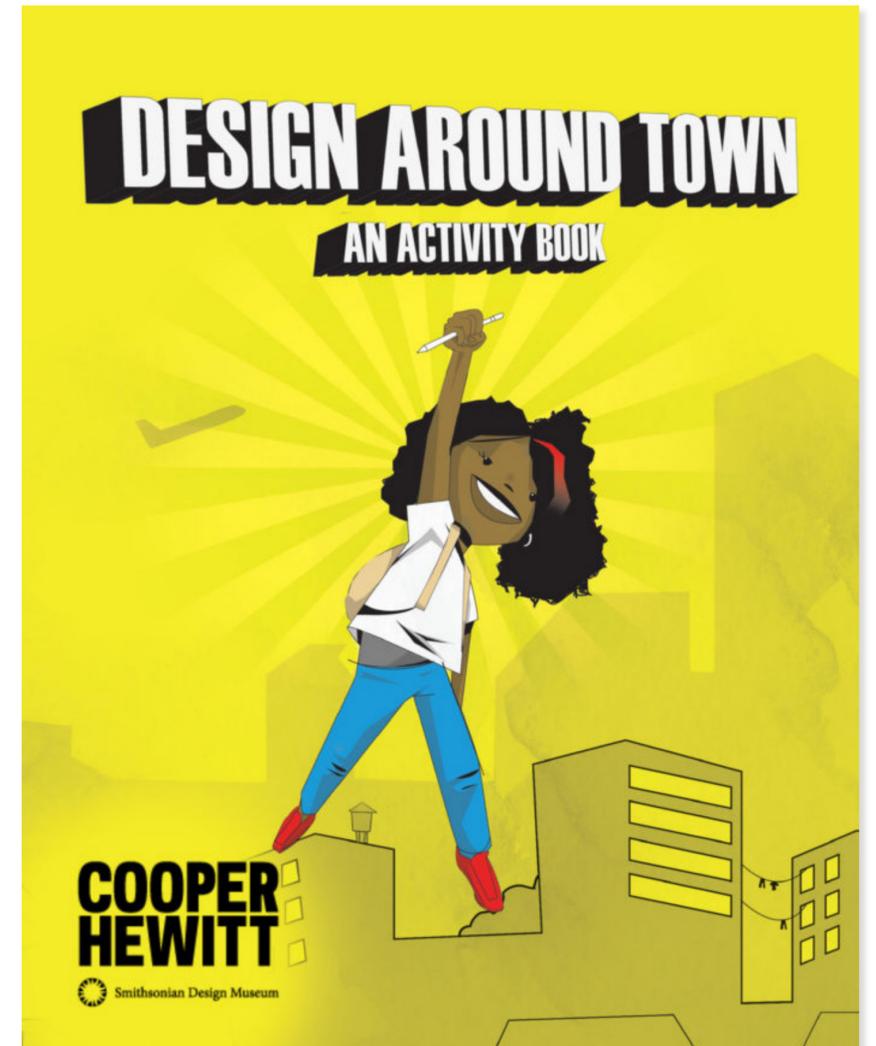
**“The exhibition focuses on moments of resiliency and invention in response to pandemics, past and present.”**

*-The Washington Post*

In December, **Design and Healing: Creative Responses to Epidemics**, co-curated with MASS Design Group, opened to critical acclaim. On view through 2022, the exhibition features the works of communities and individuals who came together in times of crisis to provide aid, design solutions, and push for change.



In 2021, Cooper Hewitt added a range of new objects to its **permanent collection**, including these examples of eighteenth-century Dutch glassware, the generous gift of Beatrice Taplin. The museum continues to digitize its collection, enabling audiences everywhere to discover and explore more than 215,000 historical and contemporary objects spanning 30 centuries.



# 21,000

## FREE BOOKS

distributed across 24 states

**Design Around Town**, the second edition of Cooper Hewitt's design activity book, was published in both English and Spanish. This interactive story is a free resource for young designers to explore their surroundings, understand the role of design in everyday life, and create their own designs.

# OPEN CONVERSATION

Connecting the public with design thought-leaders.



**1,100**  
ATTENDEES

at virtual symposium

**Fashion, Culture, Futures: African American Ingenuity, Activism, and Storytelling**, a virtual symposium co-organized with the National Museum of African American History and Culture, brought together academics, designers, critics, artists, and others to share new perspectives on fashion and the African American experience.



**25**  
COUNTRIES

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represented among National  
Design Month participants

In October, Cooper Hewitt celebrated **National Design Month** by connecting members of the public with the 2021 National Design Award winners through free virtual programs. Hundreds of people participated in talks, workshops, and career fairs with the winners—and more than 30,000 engaged with additional learning resources, short films, and more.

**“Virtual programs like these...  
nurture my love of learning and  
feed my curiosity. Thank you!”**  
–National Design Month program participant



**Mud Frontier: Architecture at the Borderlands** is Cooper Hewitt's feature documentary about Studio Rael San Fratello's work to connect contemporary technology with the legacy of pottery-making and adobe architecture in the southwest United States. It premiered at the Architecture and Design Film Festival in November with free virtual screenings and conversations, open to all.

# OPEN CREATION

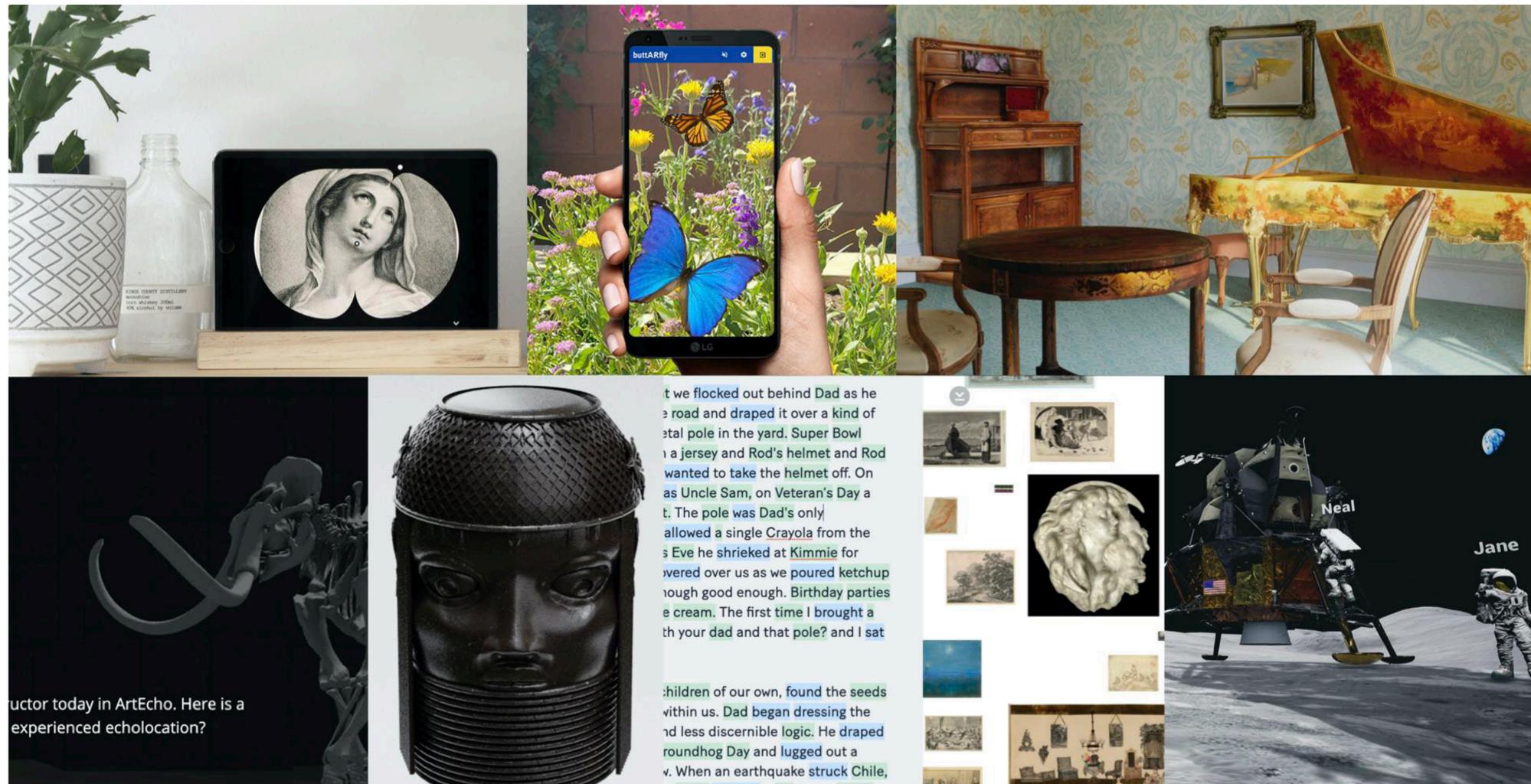
Empowering rising designers to ideate and collaborate.



**“It’s really innovative to bring young people [together]...and understand that their thoughts and ideas are valuable and integral to creating an inclusive space.”**

**-Dahlia Locke, student and program architect**

This was the inaugural year for **Design Hive**, a program designed by students, for students. Young designers aged 16–22 are invited to dive into the museum’s exhibitions, collections, and resources and develop their own collaborative projects. Participants receive a stipend and work with design practitioners and museum staff across departments and disciplines.



**100+**  
**SUBMISSIONS**

in response to the open call

Cooper Hewitt’s Interaction Lab launched **Activating Smithsonian Open Access (ASOA)**, an open call for proposals to create engaging interactive experiences with 2D and 3D objects in the Smithsonian Open Access dataset. Seven finalists received funding and support to develop their ideas and presented their prototypes in August for the public to use and test.

**“...One of my highest priorities as Secretary is to create a truly virtual Smithsonian. [...] Activating Smithsonian Open Access helps show what this path forward might look like.”**

-Lonnie Bunch, Secretary of the Smithsonian



NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL  
DESIGN COMPETITION

**WHAT WOULD YOU  
DESIGN TO CREATE A  
HEALTHIER WORLD?**

**815**  
**ENTRIES**

from 97 high schools

The **2021 National High School Design Competition** challenged students around the country to design a healthier world for all. Three finalists were selected to participate in virtual mentoring workshops with design experts and presented their final designs to a panel of judges.

**“Through the Cooper Hewitt program, I learned about a college major that incorporates design. In some way, I want to incorporate it into my career.”**

–Aditi Jha, member of the winning team

# **ALL THIS AND MORE—THANKS TO YOU, OUR COMMUNITY.**

**Thank you for helping make Cooper Hewitt open for all!**

## **WHAT'S NEXT?**

In 2022, Cooper Hewitt celebrates its 125th anniversary.

Upcoming exhibitions and programs will reflect on the legacy of the museum's founders, Sarah and Eleanor Hewitt, and continue their vision of advancing public understanding of design—from the ways in which it aided nation-building at the 1900 Paris World's Fair to the role it can play today in building peace and resilience for the future.

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Learn more at [COOPERHEWITT.ORG](https://COOPERHEWITT.ORG)  
[CHDevelopment@si.edu](mailto:CHDevelopment@si.edu)

**2 E 91ST STREET  
NEW YORK NY 10128  
212.849.2950**

**@cooperhewitt  
#CooperHewitt**