



Smithsonian  
*Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum*

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**Cooper-Hewitt Releases a New E-book, *Favelization: The Imaginary Brazil in Contemporary Film, Fashion & Design***

The Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum today announced the release of its fourth DesignFile e-book, *Favelization: The Imaginary Brazil in Contemporary Film, Fashion & Design* by Adriana Kertzer. DesignFile is a line of e-books on design writing and research published by the museum in consortium with academic and institutional partners.

In *Favelization*, Kertzer sets out to understand the ways in which specific producers of contemporary Brazilian culture capitalized on misappropriations of the *favela* (informal squatter settlements that grow along the hillsides and lowlands of many Brazilian cities) in order to brand luxury items as "Brazilian." Published in English and Portuguese, the e-book highlights issues of design and national identity experienced by the author as daughter of a Texan mother and first-generation Brazilian father, growing up in São Paulo.

"In our role as convener, Cooper-Hewitt encourages spirited dialogue and presents discourse on a range of historic and contemporary design topics in various platforms, from exhibitions and white papers to e-books and public programs," said Caroline Baumann, director of Cooper-Hewitt. "Kertzer's book joins the great selection on our DesignFile publishing platform, which launched last year to increase public access to design scholarship and resources."

Through case studies that look at the films *Waste Land* and *City of God*, shirts designed by Fernando and Humberto Campana for Lacoste and furniture by Brunno Jahara and David Elia, Kertzer explains how designers and filmmakers engage with primitivism and stereotype to make their goods more desirable to a non-Brazilian audience.

Originally written by Kertzer as a thesis for the master's program in the history of decorative arts and design, co-offered by Parsons The New School for Design and Cooper-Hewitt, *Favelization*

raises questions about the ethical conundrums associated with using nonformal settlement residents in commercial design work.

Kertzer is a curatorial assistant at the Museum of Arts & Design working on the exhibition “New Territories: Laboratories in Design, Craft and Art in Latin America.” She has a bachelor’s degree from Brown University, a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center and a master’s degree from Parsons The New School for Design.

### **About DesignFile**

Launched in January 2013 by Cooper-Hewitt, DesignFile features a wide range of books, from 8,000 to 30,000 words in length, text-only as well as illustrated publications. The series reaches audiences who are passionate about design practice, theory and pure aesthetics, interested in original design content available quickly on mobile devices and tablets. All DesignFile publications are formatted as EPUB 2.0 files and accessible through any e-book reader. DesignFile is distributed by Artbook D.A.P.

DesignFile is the latest addition to a robust series of initiatives and partnerships undertaken by Cooper-Hewitt to broaden digital access to the collection and transform the museum’s website into a leading design research and educational resource.

### **About the Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum**

As the only museum in the nation devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design, Cooper-Hewitt educates, inspires and empowers people through design. The museum is undergoing a transformative renovation resulting in 60 percent more gallery space and will open in fall 2014 with an entirely new visitor experience. During the renovation, Cooper-Hewitt’s events and education programs are popping up locally at the Cooper-Hewitt Design Center in Harlem, nationally with the Design in the Classroom program in New Orleans, New York City, San Antonio, Washington, D.C., Cleveland and Minneapolis, and globally with exhibitions in Asia.

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