



**Media only:** Linda St.Thomas (202) 633-5188; [stthomasl@si.edu](mailto:stthomasl@si.edu)  
Laurie Bohlk (212) 849-8420; [bohlkl@si.edu](mailto:bohlkl@si.edu)

June 6, 2013

**Media website:** <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

## **Caroline Baumann Named Director of the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum**

Caroline Baumann has been named director of Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in New York, effective June 16. Since joining Cooper-Hewitt in 2001, she has held many leadership positions at the museum, most recently as acting director.

Baumann will oversee the only museum in the United States devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design. In this role, she will strengthen Cooper-Hewitt's reputation to educate, inspire and empower people through design and oversee the renovation of the museum and the reinstallation of its galleries, which are set to reopen in fall 2014.

"Caroline is passionate about design and reaching people—physically and digitally—with its lessons and insights," said Smithsonian Secretary Wayne Clough. "She has been key in the museum's growing success over the years and has been especially adept at forming substantive partnerships in New York, in Washington, across the nation and, indeed, around the world."

"I am honored to serve as the fifth director of Cooper-Hewitt at this seminal time in the museum's history," said Baumann. "We're rolling out an extraordinary plan for a vibrant future and establishing Cooper-Hewitt as the Smithsonian's design lens on the world. The new Cooper-Hewitt visitor experience—physical and digital—will be a global first, a transformative force for all in 2014 and beyond, impacting the way people think about and understand design."

Baumann has been acting director of the museum since September 2012. She also served as associate director, acting director and deputy director between 2006 and 2009. From 1995 to 2001, Baumann worked at the Museum of Modern Art, where she raised funds for the museum's Yoshio Taniguchi building project among other accomplishments. Before that, she was the director of development at the Calhoun School in Manhattan and art book editor at George Braziller Publishers. She received a master's degree in medieval art from the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University and a bachelor's degree in the history of art and French literature from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine.

Baumann is a member of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee for the U.S. Postal Service and the NYC Landmarks50 Advisory Committee and a director of the Royal College of Art U.S. Alumni Group Advisory Board. She is a member of the Collective, which staged the Collective.1 Design Fair in May in New York. Baumann is also a member of the NYCxDesign steering committee for New York City's citywide event showcasing design.

During her tenure, Baumann has worked on a wide range of issues, including developing and implementing the museum's strategic plan, leading the most ambitious fundraising campaign in the museum's history and managing the museum's educational, curatorial and digital efforts. Baumann is the liaison to the 32-member board of trustees. She played a critical role in the museum's master planning process from 2004 to 2006 and participated in the selection of design architect Gluckman Mayner Architects and executive architect Beyer Blinder Belle.

Cooper-Hewitt's main facility, housed in the Carnegie Mansion at East 91st Street and Fifth Avenue, is undergoing an expansion as part of a \$64 million capital campaign that was launched in 2006, and includes a \$54 million expansion and \$10 million endowment. The expansion includes enlarged and enhanced facilities for exhibitions, collections display, education programming and the National Design Library, and an increased endowment. Baumann spearheaded this \$54 million capital campaign.

Phase one of the expansion involved renovating the museum's East 90th Street townhouses in order to free administrative space within the Carnegie Mansion and to create 60 percent more exhibition gallery space. The renovation of the townhouses was completed in September 2011. The second phase of the renovation, which involves mansion restoration and the creation of a new 7,000-square-foot gallery, is 100 percent funded and construction is nearly 60 percent complete.

During the mansion renovation, Cooper-Hewitt's usual schedule of exhibitions, education programs and events are being staged at various off-site locations, including the Cooper-Hewitt Design Center in Harlem, which Baumann secured. The museum's "Design in the Classroom" program, which teaches 21st-century skills by using design as a tool across the curriculum, has served 36,000 New York City K-12 public school children during the past two years.

Baumann has also overseen the expansion of the Cooper-Hewitt's digital frontier with the launch of Object of the Day, a section of the website that features a new collection work daily and draws from more than 217,000 objects spanning 30 centuries.

Baumann succeeds Bill Moggridge, who was Cooper-Hewitt's director for two years until his death in September 2012.

Secretary Clough named Baumann on the recommendation of a search committee chaired by Richard Kurin, the Smithsonian's Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture, with Kurt Andersen, Barbara Mandel and Judy Francis Zankel, all members of the museum's board of trustees. The committee also included Emily Rafferty, president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Michael Caruso, editor-in-chief of *Smithsonian* magazine; and Seb Chan, director of digital and emerging media at Cooper-Hewitt.

### **About Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum**

The museum has more than 70 full-time staff members, including curators, conservators and design education specialists, and the fiscal year 2013 operating budget is \$16 million. The museum is 70 percent funded by earned and contributed income, the remainder coming from federal appropriations. Cooper-Hewitt presents compelling perspectives on the impact of design through 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 217,000 objects.

The museum was founded in 1897 by Amy, Eleanor and Sarah Hewitt—granddaughters of industrialist Peter Cooper—as part of The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. A branch of the Smithsonian since 1967, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum is housed in the Andrew Carnegie Mansion on Fifth Avenue in New York City.

###

**Note to media:** For a high-resolution image of Baumann, go to <http://newsdesk.si.edu/photos>.