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COOPER HEWITT REOPENS DEC. 12 AFTER THREE-YEAR RENOVATION

TRANSFORMED MUSEUM WILL SHOWCASE ONE OF THE MOST DIVERSE AND COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN COLLECTIONS IN RESTORED CARNEGIE MANSION, WITH GROUNDBREAKING INTERACTIVE CAPABILITIES FOR VISITORS

DEC. 9, 2014

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, the only museum in the United States devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design, will open the renovated and restored Carnegie Mansion, Friday, Dec. 12. When the transformed museum opens on New York's Museum Mile, it will offer 60 percent more exhibition space to showcase one of the most diverse and comprehensive collections of design works in existence.

Ten inaugural exhibitions and installations, many of which draw from the museum's permanent collection of more than 210,000 objects that span 30 centuries, will feature more than 700 objects throughout four floors of the mansion. For the first time in the museum's history, the entire second floor will be dedicated to showcasing the permanent collection through a variety of exhibitions.

At the time of the opening, visitors also will be able to experience a full range of new interactive capabilities thanks to Bloomberg Connects, Bloomberg Philanthropies' digital engagement program, including the opportunity to explore the collection digitally on ultra-high-definition touch-screen tables, draw their own designs in the Immersion Room, and solve real-world design problems in the Process Lab. A newly developed Pen, which further enhances the visitor experience through the ability to "collect" and "save" information, will launch in early 2015.

The transformation of the historic Carnegie Mansion (the former residence of Andrew Carnegie) into a 21st-century museum is an astonishing work of design in itself, with an esteemed team of 13 design firms involved. The spirit and character of the landmark building were preserved, with key elements restored to their original grandeur. Much-needed system upgrades were made, allowing for more flexibility to reduce exhibition installation time, better accommodate the movement of objects and, above all, to enhance public access on every level.

The museum will also open with the new SHOP Cooper Hewitt and a café operated by Taralucci e Vino. Unique items on sale in the SHOP will include a glow-in-the-dark edition of *Making Design*, the Irma Boom-designed limited edition handbook of the museum's collection; a suite of designs by Boym Partners that features a Carnegie mansion made of emoticons; and a special series of plates, mugs and trays in collaboration with notNeutral,

which are inspired by the museum’s extensive textile collection. The café will feature a greenmarket-inspired menu and will open daily at 7:30 a.m., so neighbors, tourists and Central Park enthusiasts alike may enjoy a morning coffee in the garden, which will feature an updated landscape design when it opens fulltime for the summer season.

“The opening of Cooper Hewitt is a seminal moment for the Smithsonian in New York City,” said Wayne Clough, Secretary of the Smithsonian. “The inaugural exhibitions showcase the astonishing breadth of Cooper Hewitt’s collection. I am excited about this new chapter of the museum’s history as it continues to serve the public through innovative education and outreach programs.”

“With the unveiling of the newly transformed Cooper Hewitt, the public will access four floors of exhibition galleries—including the first full-floor installation devoted to works from our collection—in spaces completely reimagined for 21st-century audiences,” said Caroline Baumann, Director of Cooper Hewitt. “The new Cooper Hewitt is a must-see and must-do destination to experience historical and contemporary design in a way like never before. The museum’s dynamic exhibition program, enhanced by interactive experiences that draw the visitor into the design process, will shape how people think about the power of design and ultimately, its capability to solve real world problems.”

OPENING FESTIVITES

The opening will be celebrated with a special ceremony the morning of Dec. 12 attended by Clough, Baumann, Cooper Hewitt Board of Trustees Chairman Barbara A. Mandel and Cooper Hewitt Board of Trustees President Beth Comstock, along with New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl, and Majority Leader and Chair, Cultural Affairs Committee, New York City Council, Jimmy Van Bramer, New York City Public Design Commission Executive Director Faith Rose, and New York City Council Member Daniel R. Garodnick. A ceremonial fanfare will be performed by students and alumni of the Juilliard School to mark this historic occasion. The museum officially opens to the public at 11 a.m.

A number of free family design workshops will be offered throughout the opening weekend, including a sketching workshop with guest curator Maira Kalman and a tool-making workshop inspired by the exhibition “Tools: Extending Our Reach.” On Saturdays, the museum will offer extended evening hours and Pay-What-You-Wish admission from 6 to 9 p.m.

INAUGURAL EXHIBITIONS

Cooper Hewitt will open with a rich mix of exhibitions, taking full advantage of its enhanced, expanded and more flexible gallery space. This includes a fivefold increase in square footage dedicated to the permanent collection, which has enlarged from one gallery to an entire floor.

Floor by floor, the 10 inaugural exhibitions and installations at Cooper Hewitt prompt and answer key questions at the heart of design.

- On the third floor, debuting in the versatile new 6,000-square-foot Barbara and Morton Mandel Design Gallery, “Tools: Extending Our Reach” (on view Dec. 12 through May 25, 2015) explores how tools extend the human body, senses,

capacity and action—with results that change the world, and also change ourselves.

- The second floor features four exhibitions highlighting aspects of Cooper Hewitt’s renowned collection, including “Making Design” (on view Dec. 12 through 2015), which brings together more than 350 objects for the museum’s first long-term presentation of works from its collection; “Hewitt Sisters Collect” (on view Dec. 12 through 2015), the first exhibition to share the story of Sarah and Eleanor 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, which later became the basis of Cooper Hewitt’s collection; “Passion for the Exotic: Lockwood de Forest, Frederic Church” (on view Dec. 12 through September 2015), which evokes the fascination of late 19th-century America with the arts of India; and an inaugural installation of 18th and 19th century staircase models in the Models & Prototypes gallery (on view Dec. 12 through 2015), which provides insights into the important role of architectural models and design prototypes.
- The new Immersion Room, also on the second floor, features more than 200 examples of Cooper Hewitt’s extraordinary collection of wallcoverings, one of the largest in North America, and allows visitors to select their favorites or draw their own designs, and then project full-scale versions onto the gallery walls.
- “Beautiful Users” (on view Dec. 12 through April 26, 2015) premieres in the new Design Process Galleries on the first floor and demonstrates the shift toward user-centric design based on observations of human anatomy and behavior.
- A hands-on Process Lab allows visitors to immerse themselves in design practice through physical and digital activities to emphasize how design is a way of thinking, planning and problem solving, and provides a foundation for the rest of the design concepts on view in the museum.
- Also on the first floor, the guest-curated “Maira Kalman Selects” (on view Dec. 12 through June 14, 2015) is an assemblage of objects from Cooper Hewitt, other Smithsonian collections and the artist’s own home that suggests a life story, from birth through death.
- On the ground floor, “Designing the New Cooper Hewitt” reveals the process behind three years of renovation and transformation at the museum from the perspective of the design firms involved in the project, plus Irma Boom who designed the museum’s first collection handbook since 1997.

“Tools” and “Beautiful Users” will be accompanied by fully illustrated catalogs. Other reopening publications include *Making Design: Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Collection*, designed by Boom; *Life of a Mansion: The Story of Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum*; and two books by Kalman, *Ah-ha to Zig-Zag: 31 Objects from Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum* and *My Favorite Things*.

PROJECT TEAM

A team of 13 leading design firms were recruited by Cooper Hewitt to realize this project. Gluckman Mayner Architects designed the interior renovation of the Mansion, in collaboration with executive architect Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners LLP, which oversaw the engineering, master planning and historic-preservation aspects of the project. Hood Design is evolving the original garden design. Diller Scofidio + Renfro designed the casework and the initial configuration of the movable display cases for the exhibitions in the first- and second-floor galleries. They also designed the new visitor services desk, the new SHOP Cooper Hewitt retail space, the new 90th Street entrance canopy and the LED lighting of the historic granite piers of the museum's fence. Thinc Design conceived the "Tools" exhibition design. Local Projects focused on the design and production of the interactive media experiences. Ideum developed the multi user ultra-high-definition interactive tables. Goppion engineered and fabricated the casework in the first- and second-floor galleries. Pentagram designed the museum's bold new graphic identity and signage. The "Cooper Hewitt" typeface, available for free download, is designed by Chester Jenkins of Village. GE design community, Sistelnetworks and Undercurrent comprised the international team that converted the concept of the Pen into a robust piece of consumer hardware.

SPONSORS

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"Beautiful Users" is made possible by major support from Adobe Foundation and Amita and Purnendu Chatterjee. Generous support is also provided by Dorit and Avi Reichental. Additional funding is provided by 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.

Process Lab is made possible by major support from Alice Gottesman. Generous support is provided by The Hearst Foundations. Additional funding is provided by May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation Inc., Beth Comstock and Nike Inc. Generous in-kind support is provided by 3D Systems.

"Maria Kalman Selects" is made possible by the Marks Family Foundation Endowment Fund.

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"Hewitt Sisters Collect" is made possible by generous support from Nancy Marks. Additional support is provided by Margery and Edgar Masinter and the Smithsonian Women's Committee.

"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.

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Wardrobe for Cooper Hewitt's visitor experience and shop staff is generously provided by Theory.

Duracell is proud to power the new interactive Pen.

Lecture Room and Garden furniture, Herman Miller

Lecture Room and Café furniture, Design Within Reach

Textiles, Maharam

Café Accessories, Alessi S.p.A.

Café lighting, FLOS USA Inc.

Shop carpet, Ruckstuhl AG, Switzerland

ABOUT COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM

Founded in 1897, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum 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., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. The café and garden open prior to the museum – Sunday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday, 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. 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. Adult admission, \$18; seniors, \$12; students, \$9. 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.

For further information, call (212) 849-8400, visit Cooper Hewitt's website at www.cooperhewitt.org and follow the museum on www.twitter.com/cooperhewitt, www.facebook.com/cooperhewitt and www.instagram.com/cooperhewitt.

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