

2 E 91ST STREET  
NEW YORK NY 10128

COOPERHEWITT.ORG

MEDIA ONLY

GREGORY GESTNER  
212.849.8360  
GESTNERG@SI.EDU

LAURIE BOHLK  
212.849.8420  
BOHLKL@SI.EDU

SI-396-2016

## COOPER HEWITT TO REPRESENT UNITED STATES AT LONDON DESIGN BIENNALE



**AUG. 15, 2016**

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum today announced that it will represent the United States at the inaugural London Design Biennale at Somerset House this September. The London Design Biennale will mark the first time that Cooper Hewitt's Immersion Room and Pen, developed by the museum in collaboration with leading design firms and made possible through the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies, are available outside of the museum. More than 35 countries will be participating in the Biennale, taking place from Sept. 7 to Sept. 27, which explores the theme of "Utopia by Design."

"Cooper Hewitt's interactive technologies bring design to life in innovative ways and invite people to explore the joy of creativity," said Smithsonian Secretary David Skorton. "As we develop our long-term partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum on a permanent exhibition space in London, the London Design Biennale is another opportunity to introduce the Smithsonian's vast resources and knowledge to a global audience, building a bridge to the important theme of utopia."

"As America's design museum, Cooper Hewitt continually seeks new ways to advance the public understanding of design and serves as a dynamic, global resource," said Caroline Baumann, director of the museum. "We are honored to have the opportunity to share our world-class collection and groundbreaking interactive experience with an international audience at the London Design Biennale."

Cooper Hewitt's Immersion Room—an interactive installation designed by Cooper Hewitt and Local Projects—will offer a selection of digitized wallpapers from the museum's

collection that embody the theme “Utopia by Design.” The Immersion Room uses digital and projection technologies to present the wallpapers at full scale. Using an interactive table in the Immersion Room, visitors will be able to explore wallpapers from the museum’s collection and create their own designs. The installation will focus on how people create ideas of utopia within their own homes, and how the designed home is a “place of respite” or “little slice of paradise.” Cooper Hewitt’s Assistant Curator of Wallcoverings Gregory Herringshaw selected 101 historic and contemporary utopia-related wallcoverings, from the 18th to the 21st century, ranging from secret gardens to youthful indulgences to exotic landscapes.

Visitors to the London Design Biennale will be issued a Cooper Hewitt Pen they can use to explore the collection of wallcoverings in the Immersion Room, save their favorite museum works and create and save their own designs. In addition, installations throughout Somerset House can be collected and saved with the Pen, allowing visitors to develop their interest in design and record their entire visit to the Biennale. Visitors will receive a receipt with a special URL and code allowing them to view their collection online after they have left the Biennale.

The Immersion Room installation and digital experience at the London Design Biennale are made possible by the Secretary of the Smithsonian and the Smithsonian National Board.

Supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Cooper Hewitt’s digital experience in the U.S. is funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies through its Bloomberg Connects program, a global initiative that helps cultural institutions innovate and engage audiences through digital platforms.

Additional support is provided by Amita and Purnendu Chatterjee.

## **ABOUT THE PEN DEVELOPMENT**

Sistelnetworks designed and engineered the Pen’s electronics and antenna, based on their Vwand product. In partnership with the Cooper Hewitt team, the industrial and lighting design for the shell of the pen was developed by the GE Design community. The final design-for-manufacturing was completed by Makesimply. Original concept was introduced by Local Projects and Diller, Scofidio & Renfro.

## **ABOUT THE LONDON DESIGN BIENNALE**

The London Design Biennale is being produced by the team behind the London Design Festival. The curated, three-week long biennale will overlap the festival, bringing a new international element to London, complementing its citywide programme of commissions and partner events every two years.

Sir John Sorrell, Ben Evans and Christopher Turner are president, executive director and director, respectively, of the London Design Biennale. The London Design Biennale’s International Advisory Committee and Jury includes Paola Antonelli, Adelia Borges, James Lingwood, Jeremy Myerson, Jonathan Reekie, Martin Roth, Victor Lo, Ana Elena Mallet, Kayoko Ota, Richard Rogers and Paula Scher.

The London Design Biennale would like to thank Jaguar for their headline sponsorship of the 2016 edition.

[www.londondesignbiennale.com](http://www.londondesignbiennale.com) | [@londonbiennale](https://twitter.com/londonbiennale) | [#LDB16](https://hashtagger.com/#LDB16)

## **ABOUT COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM**

Founded in 1897, Cooper Hewitt is the only museum in the United States devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design. On Dec. 12, 2014, Cooper Hewitt reopened in the renovated and restored Carnegie Mansion, which offers 60 percent more exhibition space to showcase one of the most diverse and comprehensive collections of design works in existence. The renovation of the Carnegie Mansion and museum campus was recognized with LEED Silver certification. Currently on view are nine exhibitions and installations featuring hundreds of objects throughout four floors of the mansion, including the fifth installment of the museum's contemporary design exhibition series, "Beauty—Cooper Hewitt Design Triennial," "Thom Browne Selects" and "Pixar: The Design of Story." Visitors can experience a full range of new interactive capabilities, including exploring the collection digitally on ultra-high-definition touch-screen tables, drawing their own designs in the Immersion Room and addressing design problems in the Process Lab.

Cooper Hewitt is located at 2 East 91st St. 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 Arthur Ross Terrace and Garden and Tarallucci e Vino cafe open at 8 a.m., Monday through Friday, and are accessible without an admissions ticket through the new East 90th Street entrance. The museum is closed on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas 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](http://www.cooperhewitt.org) and follow the museum on [www.twitter.com/cooperhewitt](https://www.twitter.com/cooperhewitt), [www.facebook.com/cooperhewitt](https://www.facebook.com/cooperhewitt) and [www.instagram.com/cooperhewitt](https://www.instagram.com/cooperhewitt).

###