

# COOPER HEWITT

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## COOPER HEWITT, SMITHSONIAN DESIGN MUSEUM TO PRESENT “THE SENSES: DESIGN BEYOND VISION” FEB. 27, 2018

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum will present “The Senses: Design Beyond Vision” exhibition, on view April 13 through Oct. 28, which examines how multisensory design amplifies everyone’s ability to receive information, explore the world, satisfy essential needs and experience joy and wonder. “The Senses” features direct sensory experiences and displays practical, innovative and exploratory products to touch, hear, see and smell. The exhibition invites visitors to encounter design with all their senses through several interactive installations, created in collaboration with contemporary designers, from a furry wall with digital sensors that play music to a scent commission by Christopher Brosius inspired by winter.

Organized by Ellen Lupton, senior curator of contemporary design, and Andrea Lipps, assistant curator of contemporary design, the exhibition includes work by more than 65 designers and teams and reveals how sensory design can solve problems and enhance life for all people, including those with sensory disabilities. Contemporary designers are experimenting with materials, exploring technology and embracing the differing needs and experiences of users, in order to heighten sensory awareness and improve daily life.

“Across all industries and disciplines, designers are avidly seeking ways to stimulate our sensory responses to solve problems of access and enrich our interactions with the world,” said Cooper Hewitt Director Caroline Baumann. “The Senses’ shares their discoveries and invites personal revelation of the extraordinary capacity of the senses to inform and delight. Within the inclusive environment created for the exhibition, there will be over 40 touchable objects, as well as services, such as audio and visual descriptions of the works on view, to ensure the exhibition will be welcoming to visitors of all abilities, an important step forward in our ongoing commitment to making Cooper Hewitt accessible to everyone.”

Designed to spark curiosity and wonder in every visitor, “The Senses” amplifies the intimate links between design and sensory experience. The projects on view activate touch, sound, smell, taste, sight and physical experience. A digital animation translates bird songs into bursts of color and motion. A light installation changes from cool to warm in response to visitors’ movements. Unusual vessels reveal the sonic and tactile properties of materials. Unique scents merge with materials, textures and words to build new memories and associations.

The exhibition demonstrates that by opening up to multiple sensory dimensions, designers reach a diverse range of users. Maps that can be touched as well as seen

facilitate mobility and knowledge for sighted and non-sighted users. Audio devices translate sound into vibrations that can be felt on the skin. Tableware and kitchen tools use color and form to guide people living with dementia or vision loss. Each encounter with a product or installation activates the creative synergy of brain and body.

For “The Senses,” Cooper Hewitt has developed an accessible exhibition experience that welcomes visitors of all abilities. Exhibition labels will feature key elements in braille, and a custom smartphone app will connect visitors to full-length content via text or audio. Additional accessibility features include T-coil-enabled audio devices and audio descriptions explaining the visual content of videos. The museum now offers two descriptive exhibition tours a week, in which trained museum educators describe the works on view. With “The Senses: Design Beyond Vision,” Cooper Hewitt is testing new ways to share knowledge with diverse audiences; the museum will continue to include these accessibility features in future exhibitions and programs.

On view in the third floor Barbara and Morton Mandel Design Gallery, the exhibition is organized around the following themes:

## **INTRODUCING THE SENSES**

The exhibition opens with two interactive installations. Tactile Orchestra, created by Studio Roos Meerman and KunstLAB Arnhem, consists of a wall covered in synthetic fur. Touching the wall causes a recording of a string instrument to play; multiple users can play the full composition. Dialect for a New Era explores how scent can expand language. On six translucent pillars, a line of text describes a complex emotional state, such as “a moment of collective déjà vu.” Visitors push a button to release a unique scent and forge new connections between language and smell. The piece was designed by Frederik Duerinck and Marcel Van Brakel, Polymorf and IFF (International Flavors & Fragrances, Inc.), in collaboration with linguist Asifa Majid and perfumer Laurent Le Guerrec.

## **SENSORY CITY**

Cities and neighborhoods are filled with sound. In this section, an overhead speaker will play a piece by Shared\_Studios featuring sounds collected from cities and locations around the world. A special commission by Man Made Music, called Alarm Fatigue, is a 3-D acoustic experience exploring the design of improved sonic environments for hospitals. Also on view will be the Feather Fountain by artist Daniel Wurtzel, which uses aerodynamic principles to create a continuous flow of airborne feathers.

## **TACTILE LIBRARY**

Sighted and non-sighted designers are creating new ways to communicate via touch, using textured ink, 3-D printing and touchable alphabets. Works on view in this section include a 3-D map of the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., that talks when touched, designed by Touch Graphics; the TMAP system for creating tactile maps based on nearly any street address, designed by Joshua Miele, San Francisco LightHouse for the Blind and

Visually Impaired with Raizlabs; and the round, white Dot Watch, the world's first braille smartwatch.

## **SHAPING SOUND**

By translating sound into images and vibrations, designers invite users to perceive sound beyond hearing. The Vibeat wearable device allows users to feel music as vibration against their skin. The COTODAMA Lyric Speaker creates animations of song lyrics, produced with custom software that analyzes the qualities of the music in real time. Ultrahaptics is a new technology that uses sound as a tactile interface. A sound system designed by Sanne Gelissen isolates sound around the space of the user to make it intimate and personal.

## **SENSORY MATERIALS**

The tangible qualities of materials include shape, texture, hardness and weight. The works on view in this section include the Active Textile, created for the exhibition by the Self-Assembly Lab at MIT with Designtex and Steelcase, which features small perforations that open and close in response to changes in light or temperature; and photographic prints of letterforms bathed in frog eggs or crafted from human hair, created by graphic artist Monique Goossens. Artists Lili Maya and James Rouvelle have created an installation exploring the sonic and tactile qualities of glass, while architects Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello have created 3D-printed vessels printed from coffee, tea, sugar, curry and the skins of Chardonnay grapes, which visitors will be invited to smell through special glass vitrines. The Parentesit Acoustic Panels by Arper control the acoustics in a room to make sound more crisp and intelligible.

## **TACTILE EXPRESSION**

Designing for touch creates a humane, engaging and inclusive world. This section invites visitors to participate in the work Seated Catalog of Feelings, by Sosolimited, which sends patterns of vibration through the seat and back of a chair to evoke odd sensations, such as "falling backward into a tub of jello." Also in this section is Snow Storm, a special commission by Christopher Brosius, featuring pale blue balls of felted wool hanging from above, infused with a scent inspired by winter; an interactive lighting installation created by Rich Brilliant Willing, exploring the tactility of light; and the Tip Ton chairs designed by Barber & Osgerby for Vitra, whose blade-like base lets them tip backwards and forwards.

## **SENSORY APPETITES**

Color, shape and texture can amplify taste and smell. On view will be FlavorFactory, a new installation by food artist and designer Emilie Baltz, which uses interactive video to play with our perceptions of sweetness and disgust. Other highlights include The Importance of the Obvious Collection, a series of benches and stools by Kollektiv Plus Zwei, which feature wood, plastic, foam and resin layered to resemble cakes and nougat, and Christophe Laudamiel's Scent Fountain: Fear and Volatile Marilyn, which invites visitors to compare texture and smell. Jonathan Grahm, owner and designer at Compartés Chocolatier, creates vibrantly pictorial package design as well as richly designed chocolate bars, including bars covered in edible gold leaf or studded with dried fruit.

## THE SENSORY TABLE

The dining table is rooted in rituals and embellished by tableware. Featured in this section are Jinhyun Jeon's Sensory Spoons, which are edged with bumps or rippled like waves to catch and pool food and stimulate the mouth; Lina Saleh's Living Plates, made of silicone that bends and conforms to the weight of food; and designer Bilge Nur Saltik's Share.Food dining collection, which encourages social interaction through slanted vessels that are tipped toward dining companions in an offering of food and drink. Also featured are experimental food prototypes by Marije Vogelsang, including Plant Bones, models for new forms of plant-based protein.

## SENSES AND COGNITION

Color can help people navigate places and products. A colorful button, handle or grab bar stands out from its surroundings, as shown in the Dementia Care Bathroom Fixtures by HEWI. Vividly colored dishes can stimulate the appetite, while tools designed for tactile feedback make everyday tasks easier. Featured here is the Eatwell bowl, designed by Sha Yao, which uses the color blue to help people with Alzheimer's distinguish food from the dish, red-and-yellow exteriors to stimulate the appetite and a tilted floor to make food easier to gather with a spoon; and the Leaven Range of kitchenwares, designed by Simon Kinneir, that uses touch, temperature, movement and color contrast to help people build confidence with cooking and dining. Ode is a personal scent player that diffuses food smells into a room at mealtimes to stimulate appetites for those with dementia.

## INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Inclusive design acknowledges sensory differences by offering people multiple ways to communicate and navigate. Highlights in this section include Tactile City, a proposal by students and faculty at The Cooper Union for a citywide tactile communication system that would use paving with different textures to indicate points of interest, such as a bus stop, a garbage can, a sign or an entrance to a building; the DeafSpace Sensory Design Guidelines, devised at Gallaudet University, which include using light, color, materials and reflective surfaces to enhance communication and wayfinding; and the sensory interior of the LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired in San Francisco, designed by Mark Cavagnero Associates Architects in collaboration with Chris Downey, an architect who is blind, and Arup.

## SENSORY THEATER

Designers and animators use color, line, shape, motion and texture to visualize sound and touch. In this section, eight animations and short films will explore interactions between visual form and diverse sensory realms, including "Visual Sounds of the Amazon" by Andy Thomas, who used particle effects animation software to visualize the sounds of birds and insects; and "The Wikisinger," a film directed by Vincent Rouffiac, exploring the effects of architecture on a song performed by Joachim Müllner in different locations. Audio descriptions, voiced by Michele Spitz, make these videos accessible to people with vision loss.

## EXHIBITION DESIGN

“The Senses” is designed by Studio Joseph. Exhibition graphics by David Genco.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

In spring 2018, a series of public programs will inspire conversation about multisensory design. Planned events include an Experience Café, Thursday, April 18, 6:30 p.m., a multisensory event featuring tastings, demonstrations and conversations with designers from “The Senses,” and a Central Park Smellwalk with designer Kate McLean, Saturday, May 26, 1:30 p.m.

## PUBLICATION

The accompanying 224-page book, designed by David Genco with Ellen Lupton, is co-published by Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum and Princeton Architectural Press. The publication includes essays by Lupton, Lipps, Sina Bahram, Hansel Bauman, Joel Beckerman, Adèle Bourbonne, Karen Kraskow, Binglei Yan and others. Retail: \$30.

“The Senses: Design Beyond Vision” is made possible by the generous support of Delta Faucet Company.

Additional support is provided by the Barbara and Morton Mandel Design Gallery Endowment Fund, the Ehrenkranz Fund, and by Edward and Helen Hintz. Funding is also provided by Jesse Ormond Sanderson, Jr. and Robert Keith Black, Amita and Purnendu Chatterjee, and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

## 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. Housed in the renovated and restored Carnegie Mansion, Cooper Hewitt showcases one of the most diverse and comprehensive collections of design works in existence. The museum’s restoration, modernization and expansion has won numerous awards and honors, including a Lucy G. Moses Preservation Award from the New York Landmarks Conservancy, a Gold Pencil Award for Best in Responsive Environments and LEED Silver certification. Cooper Hewitt offers a full range of interactive capabilities and immersive creative experiences, including the Cooper Hewitt Pen that allows visitors to “collect” and “save” objects from around the galleries, the opportunity to explore the collection digitally on ultra-high-definition touch-screen tables, and draw and project their own wallpaper designs in the Immersion Room.

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 Arthur Ross Terrace and Garden, accessible without an admissions ticket, opens at 8 a.m., Monday through Friday. The Tarallucci e Vino café is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is closed on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Public transit routes include the Lexington Avenue 4, 5

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and 6 subways (86th or 96th Street stations), the Second Avenue Q subway (96th Street station), and the Fifth and Madison Avenue buses. Adult admission, \$16 in advance via [tickets.cooperhewitt.org](https://tickets.cooperhewitt.org), \$18 at door; seniors, \$10 in advance via [tickets.cooperhewitt.org](https://tickets.cooperhewitt.org), \$12 at door; students, \$7 in advance via [tickets.cooperhewitt.org](https://tickets.cooperhewitt.org), \$9 at door. 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).

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## FACT SHEET

### DESIGNERS AND PROJECTS FEATURED IN “THE SENSES: DESIGN BEYOND VISION”

#### INTRODUCING THE SENSES

Studio Roos Meerman and KunstLAB Arnhem | TACTILE ORCHESTRA

Frederik Duerinck and Marcel Van Brakel, Polymorf, and IFF, in collaboration with Asifa Majid and Laurent Le Guernec | DIALECT FOR A NEW ERA

#### SENSORY CITY

Amar C. Bakshi, Shared\_Studios | PORTAL\_SOUNDCAPES

Daniel Idzkowski, SkunkLock, Inc. | SKUNKLOCK

Kilo | WOABI PLAY ANTI-POLLUTION MASK

Jeeun Kim and Tom Yeh, University of Colorado Boulder | TACTILE PICTURE BOOKS PROJECT

Man Made Music | ALARM FATIGUE

Kate McLean | SMELLMAP: AMSTERDAM

Daniel Wurtzel | FEATHER FOUNTAIN

#### TACTILE LIBRARY

Vincent Bijlo, Philip Stroomberg, and Esther Krop, *Plain Paper* magazine | BRAILLE MAGAZINE

Elia V. Chepaitis, Andrew Chepaitis, Reed DeWinter, and Hosea Jan Frank, ELIA Life Technology | ELIA FRAME TACTILE WRITING SYSTEM

Cloudandco, Dot Incorporation | DOT WATCH

Steven Landau, Touch Graphics | SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION AUDIO-TACTILE MAP

Joshua Miele with LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, San Francisco, and Raizlabs | TMAP TACTILE MAPPING SYSTEM



## SHAPING SOUND

Arper | PARENTESIT ACOUSTIC PANELS

Eason Chow and Pravar Jain | LABA SPEAKERS AND PROTOTYPES

Naoki Ono and Jin Saito | COTODAMA LYRIC SPEAKER WALL

Sanne Gelissen | SOUND SCENE

Liron Gino | VIBEAT TACTILE AUDIO DEVICE

Johan Kauppi for Glimakra of Sweden | WAKUFURU BENCH

Eujin Pei, Lorenzo Picinali, and Chris Feakes | SOUND SPHERES

Anya Sebton for Abstracta | SCALA ACOUSTIC PANEL

The Partners | LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IDENTITY

Ultrahaptics | ULTRAHAPTICS

## SENSORY MATERIALS

Petra Blaisse, Wolf-Gordon Inc. | CORD #1 SIDEWALL

Bolon | FLOW CARPET

Virginia San Fratello and Ronald Rael | EMERGING OBJECTS and LOOPY TILES

Monique Goossens | VISCERAL TYPOGRAPHY

Lili Maya and James Rouvelle, Maya + Rouvelle | PULSE, DRIFT, PING, ECHO

Organoid Technologies Gmbh | ORGANOID ORGANIC ROSE BLOSSOMS WALLCOVERING

Self Assembly Lab, MIT, Designtex, and Steelcase | ACTIVE TEXTILE

Snarkitecture for Calico Wallpaper | TOPOGRAPHIES WALLPAPER

Studio Banana | KANGAROO LIGHT and OSTRICH PILLOW

Tretford | TILE CARPET



## **TACTILE EXPRESSION**

Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby, Barber & Osgerby | TIP TON CHAIRS

Christopher Brosius, I Hate Perfume | RITUAL CLEANSE and SNOW STORM

Eone | BRADLEY ELEMENT EONE TIMEPIECE

Guy Featherstone for Diagonal Records | DIAGONAL RECORDS

Eric Gunther, Sosolimited | SEATED CATALOG OF FEELINGS

Alessandro Perini | TACTILE HEADSET

Rich Brilliant Willing | IN LIVING COLOR

## **SENSORY APPETITES**

2 x 4 for Andrew Goetz and Matthew Malin, MALIN+GOETZ | MALIN+GOETZ SCENTED CANDLES AND PACKAGING

Michael Angelo for Flavor Paper | CHERRY FOREVER SIDEWALL

Emilie Baltz, UNICORN EXISTS | FLAVORFACTORY

Matthias Borowski, Kollektiv Plus Zwei | IMPORTANCE OF THE OBVIOUS COLLECTION

Michael Edwards | FRAGRANCE WHEEL

Jonathan Grahm, Compartés Chocolatier | COMPARTÉS CHOCOLATIER

Christine Kelly | ANOSMIA: THE MONOTONY OF SMELL LOSS

Christophe Laudamiel and Ugo Charron | SCENT FOUNTAIN: FEAR AND VOLATILE MARILYN

Kate McLean | URBAN SMELLSCAPE AROMA WHEEL

Bruno Mesz, Marcos A. Trevisan and Mariano Sigman | TASTE OF MUSIC

oNotes | CYRANO SCENT PLAYER

## **THE SENSORY TABLE**

Bilge Nur Saltik | SHARE.FOOD TABLEWARE

Bitossi | SPOT COLLECTION

Roxanne Brennen | DINING TOYS

Matali Crasset and Pierre Hermé for Alessi | ESSENTIEL DE PÂTISSERIE PLATE

Jinhyun Jeon | SENSORY SPOONS

Lina Saleh | LIVING PLATES

Verena Schreppel | SINGLET COLLECTION

Marije Vogelzang | PLANT BONES FOOD PROTOTYPES and VOLUMES

## **SENSES AND COGNITION**

HEWI | HEWI DOOR HARDWARE AND BATHROOM FIXTURES

Filipa Nogueira Pires | FEELIPA COLOR CODE

Ben Davies and Lizzie Ostrom, Rodd Design, with Demeter Fragrance Library | ODE SCENT PLAYER

Simon Kinneir, The Everyday | LEAVEN KITCHEN WARES

Sha Yao, Sha Design LLC | EATWELL ASSISTIVE TABLEWARE

## **INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS**

Hansel Bauman, Gallaudet University | DEAFSPACE SENSORY DESIGN GUIDELINES

Mark Cavagnero Associates Architects with Chris Downey | LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED, SAN FRANCISCO

Shane Myrbeck, Arup, with Chris Downey | ACOUSTIC MODEL VIDEO

Theodore Kofman and students from The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture, The Cooper Union | TACTILE CITY

Hall McKnight, AECOM | GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

## SENSORY THEATER

Alexander Chen and Tim Kahn | MTA.ME

David Genco | SYNESTHETIC CALCULUS

Chris Hardcastle, Ben Black, and Jack Brown, Mainframe | FOR APPROVAL

Vincent Rouffiac, TOUCHÉ Videoproduktion for Joachim Müllner | THE WIKISINGER

Andy Thomas | VISUAL SOUNDS OF THE AMAZON

Karen van Lengen and James Welty | NEW YORK SOUNDSCAPE: NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Anny Wang and Tim Söderström | WANG & SODERSTROM REEL

Ran Zheng | LOOK/HEAR

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