

Miami Dade College

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## MUSEUM OF ART AND DESIGN AT MDC OPENS NEW EDUCATION LAB

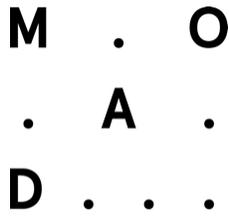
**Miami, FL, January 25, 2022 – Museum of Art and Design (MOAD) at Miami Dade College (MDC) launches a newly redesigned multipurpose Education Lab** on the third floor of the National Historic Landmark Freedom Tower. Adjacent to the Museum’s galleries, this room, conceived and executed by the Miami studio **AMLgMATD**, will host education programs for adults, students, and children and families. The Education Lab opens in February 2022.

In a project several years in the making, MOAD commissioned the designers of AMLgMATD to reimagine its existing education room and make it adaptable to the variety of education programs the Museum offers, from lectures and workshops for adults and college students to hands-on artmaking activities with kids. They created a dynamic ensemble of custom-built cabinetry, furniture, and wall and floor treatments that can be reconfigured for multiple uses. Monochrome wooden surfaces alternate with strategically deployed moments of strong and vivid color. AMLgMATD employed sustainable, healthy, and recycled materials, and invented a unique and engaging hybrid style they call “Tropical Cubism.”

AMLgMATD’s design includes storage cabinets with carved patterns on their doors, shelving units that reveal colorful abstractions between shelves, worktables that can be arranged into a multitude of configurations, and boldly hued geometric floor decals that echo the optical designs wrapped around low stools. The materials used include birch plywood, MDF (medium-density fiberboard, recycled from previous MOAD exhibitions), aluminum tubing (60% recycled), laminated vinyl flooring, polypropylene webbing (unused old stock), and non-toxic eco-friendly coatings. The furniture was designed and built for the room in small modules and assembled on site. The innovative design enables the room to be easily reconfigured, and the furniture to be readily disassembled and reassembled when needed. The furniture was custom fabricated by master cabinetmaker Rudi Repenning. Moonlighter FabLab provided all CNC (computer numerical control) services for custom machine cutting and routing on the project.

According to the founders of AMLgMATD, Laz Ojalde and Natalie Zlamalova, the designers’ approach to designing the space was to create “a fictional historical narrative for the room by developing a new style called Tropical Cubism. This new style is inspired by the blend of Czech Cubism/Functionalism and the fantasy of American Tropical Art Deco. The resulting look highlights the most prominent features and processes of the two influences and repurposes them in a contemporary way.”

Czech Cubism was defined by its use of sharp angles, crystalline shapes, and repetitive forms, as well as the use of avant-garde, modern materials of the time, such as aluminum and plywood, and exploration into new synthetic materials. Tropical Art Deco, a colorful take on French Art Deco and American Streamline styles, combines the bold geometric forms of Cubism and the Vienna Secession with added fanciful thematic elements.



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“In the creation of this pseudo-style,” states AMLgMATD, “we deliberately chose to utilize economical material processes that were newly developed and perfected during the period of the source styles, such as plywood construction, metal tube bending, rapid fastening, and machine weaving. On top of this, we use modern-day conveniences in technology and decorative application: CNC routing, vinyl films, latex paints, non-toxic coatings. Our goal for this room is to create a space where the past inspires the present artistically, while creating an environment that pays homage to our personal historical influences.”

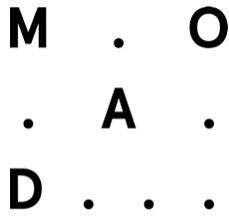
The redesign of the Education Lab is made possible by support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; and the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

### About the Designers

**AMLgMATD**, a Miami-based collaborative studio established by Laz Ojalde and Natalie Zlamalova in 2014, experiments in works of art, design objects, and environments that reflect their love of unusual and overlooked materials. AMLgMATD’s modus operandi consists of incorporating historical and geographical research into their visual language, playing with the sense of nostalgia, the application of familiar materials onto new forms and unexplored materials into familiar settings, and redefining their surroundings. AMLgMATD’s works are collected by private and corporate clients in Miami, New York, and Los Angeles, and their WEBSTR stools are available throughout the US in both boutique and museum stores.

AMLgMATD has shown work in museums and galleries throughout South Florida. For five seasons, they have been invited to participate in creating public seating and installations at Untitled Art in Miami Beach during Art Basel. They also have been selected by the jury in the City of Miami’s Art in Public Places program to complete a large-scale mural and custom hand-made breeze-block security wall at the new ASPCA Community Veterinary Center in Liberty City, Florida. This project, in conjunction with TSAO Design Group, received the AIA Miami Honor Award of Excellence for Divine Detail (2020), the IIDA South Florida Chapter BRAGG 2020 Award (2020), and Honorable Mention in the 2020 Contract Magazine Inspirations Awards (2020). Additionally, AMLgMATD showcased their public seating installation throughout the 2020 and 2021 Design Miami seasons in the Design District.

The background of Miami native Ojalde includes interior and product design, and running a local artist hub called studioLMNOQ, which was mentioned in the 2013 and 2014 annual Louis Vuitton City Guide as a place of interest to visit in Miami. Zlamalova, born and raised in the Czech Republic, earned a BFA with honors in Graphic Design from Otis College of Art and Design. Her personal artwork has been included in museum and gallery exhibitions in Los Angeles and South Florida. The designers met during their residency at ArtCenter/South Florida.



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Located inside MDC's National Historic Landmark Freedom Tower, MOAD at MDC offers groundbreaking exhibitions and programs that aim to foster a reimagined Miami. Exploring the challenges and opportunities we face locally and globally, MOAD convenes artists, designers, and thinkers to address the urgent questions of our time. As the College's flagship museum, MOAD strives to be a catalyst for action and a place that empowers people to remake their city. MOAD follows the College's lead in operating across Miami with its Museum Without Boundaries initiative, which takes place in city neighborhoods and invites everyone to be a part of the conversation.

**WHAT:** MOAD's new Education Lab

**WHEN:** Launches in February 2022

**WHERE:** Museum of Art and Design at MDC  
MDC Freedom Tower  
600 Biscayne Boulevard, Second Floor

**Hours:** Wednesday: 1 – 6 p.m.; Thursday: 1 – 8 p.m.; Friday–Sunday: 1 – 6 p.m.

**Museum admission:** \$12 adults; \$8 seniors and military; \$5 students (13–17) and college students (with valid ID); free for MOAD members, MDC students, faculty, and staff, and children 12 and under; free on Thursdays from 4 to 8 p.m.; free every Sunday.

Accessibility challenges: please call 305-237-7710 for details.

The Museum of Art and Design is open during regular hours. As part of MDC, MOAD and MDC Special Collections will continue to closely monitor COVID-19. MDC is coordinating efforts with the appropriate state and local authorities. We recommend that you visit **MDC's [information and resource page](#) and check back frequently.**

**For more information,** please visit <http://moadmhc.org> and check our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) channels for regular updates.

**For updates and a full schedule of events,** please visit <https://moadmhc.org/programs-events>.

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