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Miami Dade College

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MDC'S MUSEUM OF ART AND DESIGN REOPENS WITH *BY THE PEOPLE: DESIGNING A BETTER AMERICA* EXHIBITION

Miami, March 8, 2018 – The Museum of Art and Design at Miami Dade College (MOAD @ MDC) will present *By the People: Designing a Better America*, a major exhibition on socially responsible design that will mark the **opening of the Museum's newly-renovated facility** located inside MDC's Freedom Tower. *By the People* features 60 design projects from every region across the U.S. and explores the challenges faced by urban, suburban, and rural communities in the U.S. and its bordering countries. *By the People* will be on view in the MOAD galleries from **April 6 through Sept. 30, 2018**.

Organized by Cynthia E. Smith, curator of socially-responsible design at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York, *By the People* is based on more than two years of Smith's field research—traveling to shrinking post-industrial cities, sprawling metro regions, struggling rural towns, along border regions, areas impacted by natural and man-made disaster and places of persistent poverty—in search of collaborative designs for more equitable, inclusive and sustainable communities. The exhibition highlights design solutions that expand access to education, food, health care and affordable housing; increase social and economic inclusion; offer improved alternative transportation options; and provide a balanced approach to land use between the built and natural environment.

The exhibition aims to empower visitors to see themselves as designers—not just of objects, but also of ideas, strategies and solutions that improve our daily lives. It will showcase the innovative and impactful actions generated through design, and inspire creative problem-solving at local, regional, national, and even international levels.

Occupying most of MOAD's galleries, the exhibition includes objects, images, scale models, full-size displays, infographics, and interactive media, and is divided into six themes: Act, Save, Share, Live, Learn, and Make. To orient the visitor, the complexities of poverty, prosperity, innovation and design in the U.S. will be addressed in an introductory section that will feature a captivating video by Cassim Shepard, an interactive data visualization, "Mapping the Measure of America" with graphics that chart social and economic inequalities. *By the People* demonstrates how design can address the world's most critical issues.

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ACT

Addressing entrenched environmental, economic, and social issues, design can act as a catalyst for change. Featured work includes **Building Dignity**, a dynamic collaboration between domestic violence advocates and architects to improve security for families facing domestic violence in Washington state; **Cross-Border Community Station**, bi-national Tijuana River watershed, which provides a platform for user-inspired problem-solving research joining science, education, design, and community outreach; and the compact **OPEN HOUSE**, which was designed to unfold and transform a previously blighted property in rural York, Alabama, into a public outdoor theater.

SAVE

By building on existing assets—culture, natural, and built environments—design can help save what is authentic and essential for communities to thrive. The projects on view in this section include the **Harlem Hospital Pavilion Façade**, New York, which celebrates the building’s historically significant Works Progress Administration murals at a civic scale and establishes a strong community connection; **Belt Line Atlanta Concept**, a grassroots effort to save and transform four old rail lines into a 22-mile green loop that will connect 40 diverse neighborhoods with transit lines, walking trails, bike paths, parks, and adjacent permanent affordable housing; and the **La Salle Cultural Corridor**, which helps to preserve one of New Orleans’ indigenous cultural art forms through the revitalization of a major street in the historically significant Central City neighborhood.

SHARE

The design of civic spaces helps under-represented communities and new voices share, both in the physical and digital commons. Works on view include **Las Abuelitas Kinship Housing**, an affordable housing community in Tucson, Arizona, designed for and by low-income grandparents raising grandchildren; **Underpass Park**, an urban park that activates left-over derelict space underneath Toronto’s elevated roadways, creating a multigenerational community commons that includes public art, recreational, and green open spaces; and **Farm Hack Tools**, designed by an open-source community that nurtures the development, documentation, and manufacture of farm tools and skill sharing for more resilient and sustainable agriculture.

LIVE

This section focuses on improving access to healthcare, clean water, and food. Among the works on view are **Humane Borders Water Stations**, a network of emergency water stations placed in known desert migration routes along the U.S. and Mexico border; **Fresh Moves Mobile Markets**, which transforms former city buses into mobile produce markets bringing fruits and vegetables to “food deserts”—communities with limited access to fresh produce—in underserved Chicago neighborhoods; and **Firehouse Clinics** in California’s Alameda County that are located on the grounds of fire stations to provide a new accessible model of health care provision for the 65 million Americans who live in primary care shortage areas.

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LEARN

Featured works in this section provide wider access to learning and knowledge to help build more resilient individuals, neighborhoods, and regions. Projects on view include **D.C. Neighborhood Libraries**, local branches that have been renovated or rebuilt in Washington to create new civic spaces for numerous historically underserved neighborhoods; **Red Hook WIFI**, a community-led project to close the digital divide, generate economic opportunity, facilitate access to essential services, and improve quality of life for families via the deployment of a wireless Internet mesh network; and **Public Access 101: Downtown L.A.**, an initiative that mixes urban hikes, interactive field exercise, and critical cartography and other interpretive tools to spark creative explorations of everyday habitats.

MAKE

Projects on view examine strategies to engage and develop creative and manufacturing industries. The exhibition will feature works such as **RAPIDO Rapid Recovery Housing** in Brownsville, Texas, which begins with a 400-square-foot core unit erected immediately after a natural disaster and home expansion designed in collaboration with returning families; **Raleigh Denim Workshop**, which enlisted the aid of master pattern makers, sewers, and farmers from the surrounding area to craft classic American jeans with one of the smallest carbon footprints in the world; and **Rebel Nell**, a design initiative in Detroit that offers job training, life management, and financial guidance for women transitioning out of homeless shelters.

By the People will be complemented by the **Citizen Design Lab**, where visitors will be invited to participate in the design process and help envision a better America. Through a series of questions and choices, visitors will be asked to record what they and their communities care about, define issues that matter, and propose design tactics that could make a difference. The *Citizen Design Lab* encourages audiences to consider how design decisions are made all around us every day and in what ways we might engage, empathizing with other points of view and working collaboratively with community stakeholders to contribute as citizen-designers. This process is similar to how designers work when they collaborate with communities to address complex challenges—such as reducing dependence on private cars, improving access to healthcare, or restoring housing after natural disasters.

By the People: Designing a Better America was organized by Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, and curated by Cynthia E. Smith. *The Citizen Design Lab* is an extension of *By the People*, and its activities were developed in partnership with ISA-Interface Studio Architects. The presentation of this exhibition at the Museum of Art and Design, Miami Dade College has been organized by MOAD's Senior Curator, Wanda Texon. *By the People* is made possible by the generous 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 by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

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The accompanying 256-page book, *By the People: Designing a Better America*, is published by Cooper Hewitt and distributed in the U.S. by Artbook | D.A.P. and worldwide by Gestalten. Designed by Other Means, *By the People* contains essays and interviews with featured designers and architects, in addition to highly illustrated project profiles. Retail: \$29.95.

WHAT: *By the People: Designing a Better America*

WHEN: Friday, April 6, through Sunday, Sept. 30

WHERE: Museum of Art and Design at MDC (MOAD @ MDC)
Freedom Tower
600 Biscayne Blvd.

Hours: Wednesday, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, 1 – 6 p.m.; Saturdays 1 – 8 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$12 adults; \$8 seniors and military; \$5 students (ages 13–17) and college students (with valid ID); free for MOAD MDC members, MDC students, faculty and staff, and children 12 and under.

Accessibility challenges: please call (305) 237-7710 for details

For updates and a full schedule of events, please visit <http://www.mdcmoad.org>.

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