



Media only: Laurie Olivieri (212) 849-8420
Jennifer Northrop (212) 849-8420
CooperHewittPress@si.edu

Feb. 23, 2012

Media website: <http://www.cooperhewitt.org/press>

Cooper-Hewitt Releases Dataset to Broaden Access to Online Collection

The Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum today announced the release of its collection dataset, which will broaden access and allow for increased analysis of the museum's object holdings. Basic museum data for more than 60 percent of the collection (more than 120,000 records) is now available as a single downloadable file at cooperhewitt.org/data. This open data release is the first of its kind for the Smithsonian Institution.

"Following the lead of NYC's Open Data and Data.gov in driving transparency and access, Cooper-Hewitt's data release connects to a philosophy of publicly shared information, collaboration and inclusive participation," said museum director Bill Moggridge.

"The data release will heighten awareness of the museum's rich resources and connect a potentially new and larger community to the collection holdings," said Seb Chan, director of digital and emerging media at Cooper-Hewitt.

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 the Han Dynasty (200 B.C.) to the present day and total more than 200,000 objects. The museum's collections are organized in four curatorial departments: Product Design and Decorative Arts; Drawings, Prints and Graphic Design; Textiles; Wallcoverings; and are supported by design archives and the National Design Library.

The prospective uses for the metadata in the scholarly realm are extensive, from researchers who may reveal new patterns and connections across the collection, to new relationships between datasets in global catalogs of design and decorative arts, to improved Wikipedia articles. The dataset can also be used by developers in creating exciting new applications, which may combine the museum's collection records with other data to create a timeline, online publication, widget or mobile tool.

Cooper-Hewitt's initial use of the dataset includes a dynamic collection wall prototype with a scrolling display of museum works. Users can explore the collection using this visual browsing interface instead of the more traditional search.

The dataset is being released under the Creative Commons Zero license, which provides the clearest international license for its use and reuse and harmonizes the data with similar data being released in Europe.

Cooper-Hewitt is working to digitize its entire collection by 2015, and the dataset provided will develop and change as the museum's digitization projects continue alongside scholarly research.

About the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum

Founded in 1897, Cooper-Hewitt is the only museum in the nation devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design. The museum presents compelling perspectives on the impact of design on daily life through active educational programs, exhibitions and publications.

Cooper-Hewitt's main facility, housed in the Carnegie Mansion, is undergoing renovation as part of a \$64 million capital campaign that includes enlarged and enhanced facilities for exhibitions, collections display, education programming and the National Design Library, and an increased endowment. During the renovation, Cooper-Hewitt's usual schedule of exhibitions, education programs and events will be staged at various off-site locations, including the Bill's Design Talks at The Greene Space, the Enid and Lester Morse Historic Design Lecture Series at the University Club and the "Graphic Design: Now in Production" exhibition at Governors Island next summer.

###