



museum of arts and design

**ANDREW BLAUVELT & JOHN UNDERKOFFLER
APPOINTED TO CURATOR-AT-LARGE POSTS AT
THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN**

NEW YORK, NY (January 17, 2019) – The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) today announced the appointments of **Andrew Blauvelt** as Curator-at-Large for Design and **John Underkoffler** as Curator-at-Large for Design Technology, effective immediately. In these new curatorial roles, Blauvelt and Underkoffler will conceive and mount several design-focused exhibitions at MAD, engage leading international designers, and advance the Museum’s scholarship and collecting practices.

“I am excited to welcome Andrew and John to the MAD team at a crucial moment in charting the Museum’s future,” said **Chris Scoates**, MAD’s Nanette L. Laitman Director. “Their innovative ideas, energy, and enthusiasm for MAD’s mission will inject our curatorial program with a strong focus on design and technology, and will play a pivotal role in helping MAD attract and engage contemporary audiences.”



Andrew Blauvelt.

Blauvelt is Director of the Cranbrook Art Museum, part of the storied Cranbrook Educational Community in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Prior to joining Cranbrook in 2015, he spent 17 years at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, serving in curatorial and administrative roles including Design Director, Chief of Communications and Audience Engagement, and Senior Curator of Design, Research, and Publishing.

Blauvelt has curated numerous major traveling exhibitions and edited and designed several accompanying catalogues, including: *Strangely Familiar: Design and Everyday Life* (2003); *Some Assembly Required: Contemporary Prefabricated Houses* (2005); *Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes* (2008); *Graphic Design: Now in Production* (2011); *Hippie Modernism: The Struggle for Utopia* (2015); and, most recently, *Too Fast to Live, Too Young to Die: Punk Graphics, 1976—1986* (2018), which debuted at the Cranbrook Art Museum and will be on view at MAD from April 9 through August 18, 2019.

A practicing communications designer specializing in work for the cultural sector, Blauvelt is the recipient of nearly one hundred design awards. For his work at the Walker Art Center, the institution was recognized with the 2009 National Design Award for Corporate and Institutional Achievement from Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, and from Museums and the Web for the “best museum website” and “most innovative website.” His work also has been regularly selected by AIGA, the professional association for design, in its annual round-up of the fifty best book designs of the year.

Blauvelt holds an MFA in Design from Cranbrook Academy of Art, and is a former national board member of AIGA and an elected member of Alliance Graphique Internationale.

“I’m delighted to partner with the MAD team to bring to the institution a renewed emphasis on design,” said Blauvelt. “Cranbrook Art Museum shares many affinities with the Museum of Arts and Design, especially its interests in the intersections of art, design, and craft. I look forward to fostering that interdisciplinary curiosity and multidisciplinary diversity to MAD.”

Blauvelt will maintain his position as Director of the Cranbrook Art Museum as he undertakes his new role with MAD.



John Underkoffler.

Underkoffler is founder and CEO of Oblong Industries, developer of the g-speak spatial operating environment and the Mezzanine system for immersive visual collaboration. Oblong’s technological trajectories build on fifteen years of foundational work at the MIT Media Lab, where Underkoffler was responsible for innovations in real-time computer graphics systems, optical and electronic holography, large-scale visualization techniques, and the I/O Bulb and Luminous Room systems.

Additionally, he has served as a science advisor to major motion pictures including *Minority Report* (2002), *Hulk* (2003), and *Iron Man* (2008). In 2015, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum recognized Underkoffler with the National Design Award for Interaction Design. He holds a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and

serves on the boards of directors of Sequoyah School in Pasadena, California, and the E14 Fund in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

“The future will show that right about now was the time that the old art-and-science (or design-and-technology) hybrid went from being an occasional novelty to being a crucial mode for addressing the planet’s most urgent problems and opportunities,” Underkoffler said.

“I am thrilled to assist MAD in illuminating—and I expect also to some extent catalyzing—this evolution. And part of the excitement for me is participating at a moment when Chris Scoates’ galvanizing leadership is moving the Museum toward a more and more central role in such important dialogues.”

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. Since the Museum’s founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum’s curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving twenty-first-century innovation, and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design. For more information, visit madmuseum.org.

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