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MDC's Freedom Tower in downtown Miami.

Photo by Jose Lopez

## MDC's Museum of Art + Design Reopens With Two Shows After Renovation

NEIL VAZQUEZ | APRIL 6, 2018 | 8:30AM

The Museum of Art + Design (MOAD) at Miami Dade College will reopen its doors this weekend with two major shows following a months-long renovation. The institution, which is housed in the historic Freedom Tower in downtown Miami, will host a group design exhibition presenting selected architectural and urban planning projects from across the nation, as well as display a new immersive installation from Berlin-based artist Tino Sehgal. Titled "By the People: Designing a Better America" and *This Situation*, respectively, they represent the institution's new curatorial directive to present both art and design. And together, they bring to a head months of planning for a museum that's coming back on the scene to an ever-growing local institutional landscape.

"This gorgeous 1920s building was, unfortunately, not originally built to serve our current needs," MOAD executive director Rina Carvajal says of the Freedom Tower's original layout. "The very necessary renovations just completed will allow us to present

larger and more technically demanding exhibitions."

Traveling from the Cooper Hewitt Design Museum in New York City, "By the People" features projects that confront the multitude of challenges faced by urban, suburban, and rural communities, such as natural disasters, increasing population density, and poverty. For two years, Smithsonian curator Cynthia E. Smith interviewed scores of architects, designers, and community organizers nationwide to select the projects in the show.

One piece that'll be particularly interesting for locals, Carvajal says, is *Resist, Delay, Store, Discharge*, by the Rotterdam-based Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA). OMA directly addressed the increasing threat of climate change and sea-level rise. "OMA's strategy seeks to achieve resilience through a risk-reduction approach," she explains, "maximizing environmental, economic, and civic opportunities in the midst of larger population numbers, increased density, and the threat of flooding due to rising sea levels." Essentially, it's a series of strategies that Miami might one day need to employ.



Installation view of "By the People: Designing a Better America."

Courtesy of Cooper Hewitt Design Museum

"The exhibition also aims to empower visitors to see themselves as designers," Carvajal says, "not just of objects, but also of ideas, strategies, and solutions that improve our daily lives."

Pivoting to the more artistic side of MOAD, Sehgal's *This Situation* (2007) draws from the artist's mixed background in dance and economics to create his trademark "constructed situations." The piece is one of the more complex works in the artist's oeuvre. It presents six trained individuals, or "interpreters," who enact salon-like discussions on social and political thought.

"Both [shows] attempt to make audiences more aware of the ways that politics and economics intersect with art and design," Carvajal explains. "'By the People' takes a direct tack of presenting design solutions with a social-justice outlook; *This Situation* lets the viewer participate in an exchange of ideas about society that constitutes a work of art in itself."

**MDC Museum of Art + Design grand reopening.** 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, April 6, at the MOAD, 600 Biscayne Blvd., Miami; 305-237-7700; [mdcmoad.org](http://mdcmoad.org). Admission is free with RSVP via [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com).

**"By the People: Designing a Better America."** Saturday, April 7, through September 30 at MOAD. Admission costs \$12 for adults, \$8 for seniors and military, and \$5 for students aged 13 to 17 and college students with valid ID. MDC MOAD members; MDC students, faculty, and staff; and children 12 and under get in free.

*This Situation.* Saturday, April 7, through April 29 at MOAD. Admission costs \$12 for adults, \$8 for seniors and military, and \$5 for students aged 13 to 17 and college students with valid ID. MDC MOAD members; MDC students, faculty, and staff; and children 12 and under get in free.

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