



**The Wolfsonian**  
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**'LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND FRATERNITY'**  
***Exhibition Organized by The Wolfsonian–FIU***  
***From the Collection of the Centre national des art plastiques***  
***On View November 25, 2011–March 26, 2012***  
***Reception on Friday, December 2, 2011***  
***During Art Basel Miami Beach***

Miami Beach, FL (September 2, 2011)—The Wolfsonian–Florida International University presents *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*, an exhibition exploring French cultural identity through design produced from the mid-twentieth century to the present. The exhibition will be on view from November 25, 2011 through March 26, 2012 and is organized by The Wolfsonian from the collection of the Centre national des arts plastiques, France (National Center for Visual Arts or CNAP). The opening of the exhibition will coincide with the celebration of Art Basel Miami Beach/Design Miami 2011.

“The French motto—*liberté, égalité, fraternité*—serves as the conceptual framework for this intriguing exhibition,” notes Marianne Lamonaca, The Wolfsonian’s associate director for curatorial affairs and education. “For *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*, we took an entirely new approach to our curatorial practice by engaging in a dynamic dialogue with the French designers and design historian who collaborated with us on this project: matali crasset, Michael Amzalag and Mathias Augustyniak of M/M (Paris), and Alexandra Midal. Together we have shaped a unique presentation of French design objects from the collection of the Centre national des arts plastiques in Paris, France that express ideas about French national identity.”

*Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity* examines the changing political, economic, and cultural contexts in which French design is created and disseminated. It also takes into account the concrete and symbolic impact that design has in shaping perceptions and aspirations. Approximately one hundred and fifty objects will be exhibited, including furniture, industrial design, and craft, created by some of the most celebrated French designers of the past and present, including Pierre Paulin, Roger Tallon, Philippe Starck, and the Bouroullec Brothers, as well as others lesser known in the United States.

“The collaboration is a perfect fit for The Wolfsonian and its mission to foster the understanding and appreciation of design as an active agent in human affairs. In tracing an alternative genealogy of French design history from the late 1940s to the present, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* will identify areas of design practice that engage with social, political, technological, and economic forces and their changing contexts over time,” notes Cathy Leff, director of The Wolfsonian. “The objects on display—from prototypes to industrial design products—have as their underlying premise the belief that design is politically and culturally relevant.”

**A note about the display:**

Presented in nine narrative clusters, the exhibition is displayed within a network of related, yet unique, settings, and joined by viewing rooms for related films. The nine sections focus attention on individual designers, such as Roger Tallon and Philippe Starck; on important episodes in French industrial design history, for example, the seminal work of the research and development division of Thomson electronics in the 1990s; and on the influence of *les villes nouvelles* (new towns) built during the 1960s and 1970s. They each carry evocative titles that inform the interpretation and the display, such as the frame (French design digest), the barricade (design after the 1968 uprisings), and the star (Philippe Starck).

The installation design, conceived as a collaboration among matali crasset, M/M Paris, and Alexandra Midal, will be staged on wood units that can be assembled to serve as stools, plinths, pedestals, or other display elements; all units will be painted blue, white or red in reference to the French flag. The units are based on the *Modulor*, the celebrated measuring system that Le Corbusier created in 1943. Modular is a measuring tool based on the human body and on mathematics. A man-with arm-upraised provides, at the determining points of his occupation of space—foot, solar plexus, head, tips of fingers of the upraised arm—three intervals which give rise to a series of golden sections. It was the organizing measure for Le Corbusier’s designs, from chairs and tables to *la Cité Radieuse*.

**EXHIBITION CATALOG**

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication of the same title edited by Marianne Lamonaca with essays by Lamonaca, Alexandra Midal, and Emilia Philippot (CNAP). The catalog provides an overview of the project and includes color images of the over one-hundred works in the exhibition. The catalog will be available in The Dynamo Museum Shop. To purchase, contact 305.535.2680 or [paola@thewolf.fiu.edu](mailto:paola@thewolf.fiu.edu).

**RELATED EVENTS AND PROGRAMS**

The Wolfsonian will also host a reception on Friday, December 2 at 8pm, which is open to Art Basel Miami Beach and Design Miami VIP cardholders as well as Wolfsonian Diplomat-level members and above. For more information about the events taking place that week, contact Ian Rand at 305.535.2631 or [ian@thewolf.fiu.edu](mailto:ian@thewolf.fiu.edu).

In addition, a series of events to meet the designers engaged in the project will be organized during the week of Art Basel/Design Miami, with additional related programming to follow in early 2012. For more information about upcoming programs, contact 305.535.2644 or [programs@thewolf.fiu.edu](mailto:programs@thewolf.fiu.edu).

*Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity* is sponsored by Van Cleef & Arpels; Centre national des arts plastiques, France (National Center for Visual Arts or CNAP); and Institut Français. Additional support received from Crédit Agricole Private Banking Miami; Services Culturels de l’Ambassade de France/Maison Française; Furthermore: a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund; Funding Arts Network; United Airlines, the Official Airline of The Wolfsonian–FIU; Northern Trust; Chateau Montelena Winery; South Beach Group Hotels; and the Wolfsonian Visionaries.

**About the exhibition and publication contributors and designer**

**matali crasset**, an award-winning French industrial designer, is a graduate of Les Ateliers-Paris Design Institute (École Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle). She founded her own agency in 2000 after working with famed designer Philippe Starck. Her work is included in the Museum of Modern Art, the CNAP, Centre Georges Pompidou, and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Crasset's awards include the Baden-Württemberg International Design Award in 2002; the Nombre d'Or at the Salon du Meuble, Paris in 2003; the International Interior Designer of the Year at the British Interior Design Awards in 2004; and Creator of the Year at the Salon du Meuble, Paris in 2006. Always in search of new territories to explore, she collaborates with eclectic worlds, from crafts to electronic music, from the hotel industry to trade fairs, realizing projects in set design, furniture, architecture, and graphics.

**M/M Paris (Michael Amzalag and Mathias Augustyniak)**, are graphic designers and creative directors in the fields of art, fashion, and music. Their work in the art world ranges from commissions for museums such as Centre Georges Pompidou and Palais de Tokyo in Paris, to collaborations with artists like Philippe Parreno and Pierre Huyghe. Amzalag and Augustyniak also work as creative consultants to Paris *Vogue*.

**Alexandra Midal**, is a freelance curator, design historian, and professor in history and theory of design and the head of the Masters in design at the University of Art & Design, Geneva. A graduate of La Sorbonne, Paris and the School of Architecture at Princeton University, she served as director of the Regional Fund for Contemporary Art of Haute-Normandie (FRAC) and assistant to artist Dan Graham. She has curated numerous exhibitions, authored many articles, and written several books, including *Tomorrow Now: When Design Meets Science Fiction*; *Florence Doléac, climatologie domestique et cataclysmes émotionnels*; and *Design: Introduction à l'histoire d'une discipline*.

**Emilia Philippot**, is heritage curator for the decorative art, craft, and industrial design collection at the Centre national des arts plastiques (CNAP). Prior to joining the CNAP, she was the heritage curator at the Réunion des Musées Nationaux (RMN). She jointly curated *Warhol's Wide World* exhibition at the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais in 2009 and co-wrote the catalog *Le grand monde d'Andy Warhol* for the exhibition. Philippot has also contributed to a number of other publications, including *Masterpieces?* at the Centre Pompidou Metz in 2010 and *Vilac, 100 Years of Wooden Toys* at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris in 2010.

**About the Centre national des arts plastiques (National Center for Visual Arts)**

The mission of the Centre national des arts plastiques (CNAP) is to promote and support contemporary artistic creation in all fields related to the visual arts: painting, sculpture, photography, installations, videos, multimedia, design, etc.

It is one of France's major agents for the policies and activities of the Ministry of Culture and Communication with respect to contemporary art. It is directly involved in the art market as a national collector, buying works on the State's behalf which then become part of France's national contemporary art collection, managed and conserved by the Centre. It also implements the Ministry of Culture and Communication's policy regarding state-commissioned works.

At the same time, the Centre supports research and innovation in the arts through research grants awarded to artists involved in experimental work, and financial assistance to professionals in the contemporary arts sector (galleries, producers, restorers, art critics etc.).

Its website [www.cnap.fr](http://www.cnap.fr) also provides artists, associations, institutions, local authorities and businesses with a platform for information on contemporary art and its economy. The Centre national des arts plastiques is both an institutional intermediary and an economic player in the art world, as well as an active partner in many places where contemporary art is shown. It works with both public (museums, regional contemporary art collections, art centers, national monuments) and private partners (foundations, companies, publishers etc.) to organize exhibitions in France and internationally, and to publish works on contemporary art.

### **About The Wolfsonian–Florida International University**

The Wolfsonian is a museum, library, and research center that uses objects to illustrate the persuasive power of art and design, to explore what it means to be modern, and to tell the story of social, historical, and technological changes that have transformed our world. The collections comprise approximately 120,000 objects from the period of 1885 to 1945—the height of the Industrial Revolution to the end of the Second World War—in a variety of media including furniture; industrial-design objects; works in glass, ceramics, and metal; rare books; periodicals; ephemera; works on paper; paintings; textiles; and medals.

The Wolfsonian is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, FL. Admission is \$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors, students, and children age 6 -12; and free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, and children under six. The museum is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday from noon-6pm; Friday from noon-9pm; and is closed on Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at [www.wolfsonian.org](http://www.wolfsonian.org) for further information.

The Wolfsonian receives ongoing support from the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; the City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council; the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation; and United Airlines, the Official Airline of The Wolfsonian–FIU.

### **About FIU**

Florida International University is one of the 25 largest universities in the nation, with more than 42,000 students. Nearly 130,000 FIU alumni live and work in South Florida. Its [colleges and schools](#) offer more than 200 [bachelor's, master's and doctoral](#) programs in fields such as engineering, international relations and law. As one of South Florida's anchor institutions, FIU is worlds ahead in its local and global engagement, finding solutions to the most challenging problems of our time. FIU emphasizes research as a major component of its mission. The opening of the [Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine](#) in August 2009 has enhanced the university's ability to create lasting positive change in our community. For more information about FIU, visit <http://www.fiu.edu/>.

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