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Designing Waste: Strategies for a Zero Waste City
to open at the Center for Architecture in NYC
June 14 – September 1, 2018

The ten-week exhibition, supported in part by The Rockefeller Foundation, asks, “How can architects help design a waste-free New York City?”

New York, NY, May 17, 2018 – The Center for Architecture is proud to announce the opening of [*Designing Waste: Strategies for a Zero Waste City*](#) on **Thursday, June 14 at 6:00 pm**. The exhibition, curated by journalist and independent curator **Andrew Blum** and designed by **Wkshps** – a multidisciplinary design firm – explores how we manage waste in our buildings and neighborhoods, and how design can reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfills. The exhibition is based on the [*Zero Waste Design Guidelines*](#), a resource to help designers, building operators, and planners reduce waste and increase diversion rates for recyclables.

Every day, tens of thousands of trucks filled with food, clothing, and other goods arrive in New York City to be delivered, unpacked, and consumed. And every day, approximately 24,000 tons of discarded materials leave the city as waste. The consequences of this flow are substantial. Sidewalks are often blocked by mountains of trash bags. Streets are crowded with garbage trucks, their emissions contributing to global warming. The infrastructure to process this material disproportionately affects disadvantaged neighborhoods, driving asthma levels above city averages. Much of this waste is then carried to landfills in distant states, where it pollutes the soil and the air. It costs NYC over a billion dollars every year. To combat this seemingly intractable problem, in 2014, New York City announced a Zero Waste plan to reduce the amount of discards sent to landfills by 90% by 2030.

How can architects contribute to the design of a Zero Waste city?

Designing Waste: Strategies for a Zero Waste City focuses on a particular segment of the life-cycle of waste: the brief period between when we discard something and when it rolls away on a truck. This is when waste is closest to us, when it is sorted and stored in apartments, trash rooms, basement corridors, loading bays, and sidewalks. And this is where architects, designers, and building professionals have agency to transform the waste system.

“Cities all around the world are prioritizing sustainability and taking action to prevent and manage waste of all kinds, including food waste,” said **Devon Klatell**, Senior Associate Director at The Rockefeller Foundation. “Reducing waste requires action at every level, and architects, with their unique eye to design, can implement tangible changes that lead to large-scale impact.”

The exhibition examines the architecture of the city’s gray spaces for trash—the overlooked spaces where waste is managed in our buildings. Large-scale architectural infographics identify different typologies of waste management (from those found in walk-ups to million-square-foot office buildings), along with suggested best practices for better managing waste in our homes and workplaces, as well as for food service providers and at the neighborhood scale. Visitors can interact with a Waste Calculator, which estimates how much space and what storage is needed to manage waste based on building type and size. To further bring the hidden world of New York City’s waste flow into the gallery, overlooked equipment (balers, bins, tilt trucks) will be on display.

“Every single person in New York City touches the waste system every day—more than our schools, our transit system or even our sidewalks,” said curator **Andrew Blum**. “A close examination of the role of design in how we manage our waste—not only in landfills, but in the places we live and work—is long overdue.”

AIANY 2018 Zero Waste Challenge

Coinciding with *Designing Waste*, AIA New York will launch a Zero Waste Challenge. For the duration of the exhibition, and culminating in October 2018, the AIANY | Center for Architecture office will closely monitor its waste streams and amplify efforts to reduce overall waste generation. Zero waste stations will be located throughout the Center for Architecture, with one on display on the mezzanine level of the exhibition. Architecture firms throughout the city will be invited to join the challenge as well.

RELATED PROGRAMS

Designing Waste Symposium

Saturday, June 16, 1-6pm

With Andrew Blum, journalist and independent curator; Clare Mifflin, AIANY Committee on the Environment; Juliette Spertus, Jr., ClosedLoops; Caroline Haas, Head of Waste and Public Cleanliness Department, City of Paris

Curator-led Exhibition Tours

Friday, June 22, 10-11am

Saturday, June 23, 11am-12pm

During the AIA Conference on Architecture 2018 (A'18)

With Andrew Blum, journalist and independent curator

A+ Session: Design to Achieve Zero Waste Goals

Thursday, June 21, 12:40pm

During the AIA Conference on Architecture 2018 (A'18)

With Andrew Blum, journalist and independent curator; Clare Miflin, AIANY Committee on the Environment; Elizabeth Balkan, NRDC; Christina M. Grace, Foodprint Group; Juliette Spertus, Jr., ClosedLoops

Waste & Other Infrastructure: Discovering the Invisible City

Thursday, June 28, 6-8pm

Dining Detritus: Zero Waste Restaurants

Thursday, July 12, 6-8pm

Family Day: Design More, Waste Less

Saturday, July 14, 11am-1pm and 2-4pm

With support from:



This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



About the Zero Waste Design Guidelines

The *Zero Waste Design Guidelines* address the crucial role that design plays in achieving NYC's ambitious goal, outlined in OneNYC, to send zero waste to landfills by 2030. As a resource to help designers, building operators, and planners, the guidelines will encourage the collaboration needed to dramatically reduce waste and work toward greater adoption of circular material flows. Rather than languishing in a landfill, the city's waste could be a resource to create compost, energy, and recycled products – but that depends on our ability to conveniently and hygienically separate our waste. The guidelines, made possible with support from The Rockefeller Foundation, were developed in collaboration with the AIA New York Committee on the Environment; Kiss + Cathcart, Architects; ClosedLoops; and the Foodprint Group.

www.zerowastedesign.org

About the AIANY Committee on the Environment

The AIANY Committee on the Environment (COTE) aims to lead, inspire, and educate its members towards the dual objectives of design and sustainability. COTE organizes engaging activities and events focusing on leading architects, outstanding green buildings, current technologies and product research, and sustainable design practices. The committee's efforts are based on the belief that sustainability should be an essential part of the design process and fully integrated with all aspects of a building, including form, function, site, structure, systems,

and construction. AIANY COTE works in partnership with the National AIA COTE and supports the AIA 2030 Commitment to further the role of architects in creating a sustainable future.

AIA New York (AIANY) is the oldest and largest chapter of the American Institute of Architects, with over 5,500 architects, allied professionals, students, and public members. AIANY is dedicated to three goals: design excellence, public outreach and professional development.

www.aiany.org

About the Center for Architecture

The Center for Architecture is the premier cultural venue for architecture and the built environment in New York City, informed by the complexity of the City's urban fabric and in dialogue with the global community. The Center shares a home with the AIA New York Chapter and has the unique advantage of drawing upon the ideas and experiences of practicing architects to produce thought-provoking exhibitions, informative public programs, and quality design education experiences for K-12 students. It also leads New York City's annual month-long architecture and design festival, Archtober. The Center for Architecture's aim is to further public knowledge about New York City architecture and architects, foster exchange and collaboration among members of the design, development, building, scholarly, and policy sectors, and inspire new ideas about the role of design in communities by presenting contemporary and practical issues in architecture and urbanism to a general audience.

www.centerforarchitecture.org

About the Rockefeller Foundation

For more than 100 years, The Rockefeller Foundation's mission has been to promote the well-being of humanity throughout the world. Together with partners and grantees, The Rockefeller Foundation strives to catalyze and scale transformative innovations, create unlikely partnerships that span sectors, and take risks others cannot – or will not. For more information, please visit

www.rockefellerfoundation.org.