

**Paul Orselli** is President and Chief Instigator at POW! Paul Orselli Workshop. He may be contacted at paul@orselli.net.

If you would like to comment on this article or others in this issue, please go to the NAME page on Facebook or send us a tweet @NAMExhibitions.

Welcome to another edition of Exhibits Newsline! We've got four interesting reports from all over the globe, so let's get started.

First up, Brenda Cowan, head of the FIT Graduate Exhibition Design program, tells us about the new **Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum** in New York City:

*Seb Chan, Director of Emerging and Digital Media, and his team created some of the most elegant and logical uses of technology I've seen in a museum to date. They managed to take the institution's massive collections and over three floors, and*

*in three different multi-user touch tables, make every single object searchable and findable, and a pure joy to look for. The beautiful use of moving graphics, and the ability to grab images and swipe and swing them across a huge table to join in with other images and cross reference data as if you were a child moving magazine clippings around to create a collage, was, well, fun.*

*The "F" word. About a digital database! I was entranced. I've never seen or experienced anything like it. In fact, the institution's exhibitions are riddled with interactive technology, all of which worked, was implicit to use, made sense, and added to the experience and the expiration. There was no waste.*

*The single piece of technology that I couldn't get to work or figure out how to use in the entire place was the hand drier in the ladies' room. Just when I was high with feeling like I could waltz into NASA with my newfound technological competences... there I was with a pair of wet hands wondering where it all went so very wrong.*

*The large-scale installation, Controller of the Universe (2007) by artist Damián Ortega, is a frozen "explosion" of hundreds of hand tools suspended in the gallery (fig. 1). Ortega's work is the signature element of the "Tools" exhibition, and with good reason. This hanging sculptural installation has two paths dividing it so you can walk through it. You simply look and wonder and wonder and wonder, and then you remember, all of the old tools you would pick through as a kid, tools you found rusting in metal boxes in the garage. Or found in*

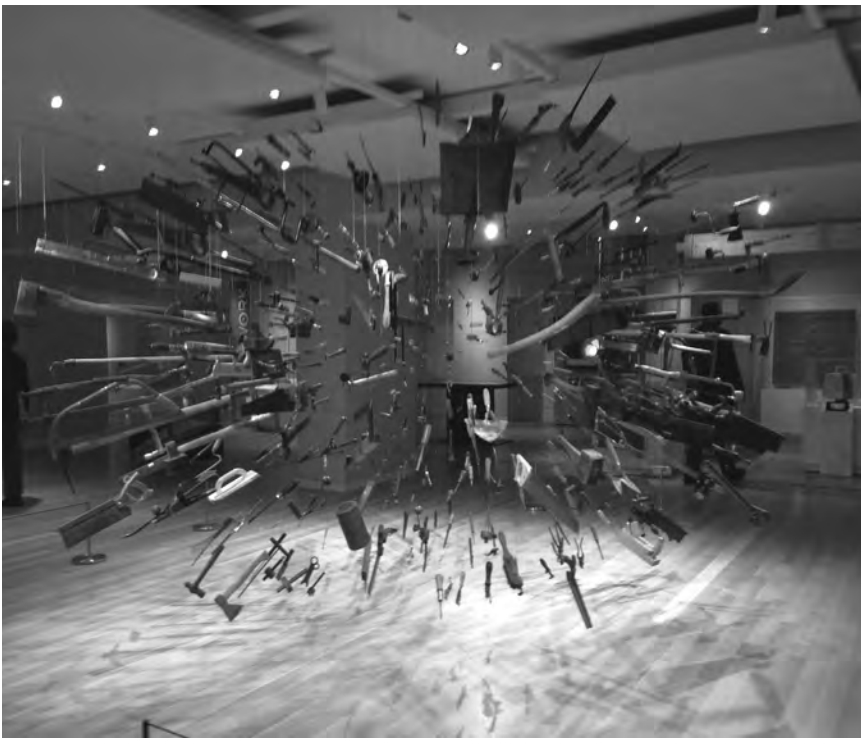


Fig. 1. Controller of the Universe tool installation by Damián-Ortega at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. Courtesy of Brenda Cowan

*the crumbled foundation that'd been grown-over in the back lot. Or that you saw in the neighbor's yard and were curious about but too shy to ask.*

*This exhibit spares you the 1,000-word content label of death, and instead brings to the visitor precisely what a good exhibit should: simple objects that make us wonder and marvel and want to know more. All of the objects in the Tools exhibition are alive, and they resonate with the memory of the human hands that made them, and with the minds that imagined them, and with the stories of their roles within the lives of the people who used them.*

*The words of Marshall McLuhan grace one wall and say what is already ever present in this space: "We become what we behold. We shape our tools, and then they shape us."*

Next up, educator and designer Thomas Sullivan highlights a fun exhibition—*Bounce*:

*Follow the BOUNCE-ing ball to the **Children's Museum of Pittsburgh** to play and learn in their new exhibition all about the "World's Most Amazing Ball!"*

*Inspired by the work of artist and filmmaker Henry J. Simonds, CMP's BOUNCE is as beautiful to look at as it is fun to play in. At CMP, art and aesthetics are heavily integrated into everyday playthings. The exhibition is framed by Simonds' close-ups of the world famous Super Ball, and throughout the space, the museum has created several hands-on exhibits that give visitors opportunities to explore the science behind the ball.*

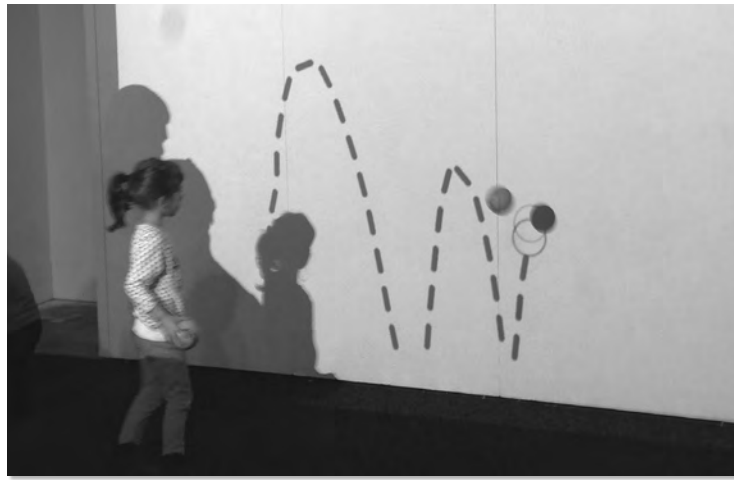


Fig. 2. Ball bounce motion-tracking wall in *Bounce*, an exhibition at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. Courtesy of Thomas Sullivan

*The exhibition features a motion-tracking wall to follow the ball's bounce (fig. 2), a design-a-ball artistic station, a microscope to explore the ball's colors and patterns more deeply, and a fully enclosed ball arena (complete with helmets and safety goggles) giving children a chance to bounce the balls as hard as they can. STEAM [Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math] education is a common thread throughout this excellent exhibition; Simonds has even created his own scientific discipline to go with it, "sphaerology"—the scientific study of Super Balls.*

*The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh is one of those rare museums that flawlessly combine art, science, and fun into a great day full of creative play for their visitors. And their new exhibition, BOUNCE, is a crown jewel amongst those institutional values.*

Lyn Wood, president of Hands On! Inc., relays her impressions of the **Maritime Museum of Denmark** from her summer 2014 travels:

*The spectacular new Maritime Museum of Denmark is now the neighbor of the famous Kronborg Castle (the setting for Shakespeare's Hamlet) in the port town of Helsingør, Denmark. It deservedly has been nominated for the European Museum of the Year Award—2015. It*



Fig. 3. At the Maritime Museum of Denmark, beautifully displayed artifacts and associated interactives help visitors explore the challenges of navigation. Courtesy of Lyn Wood

*intentionally does not intrude on the castle's visual domain, so you have to carefully scan the horizon to find it.*

*Award-winning Danish architects Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) chose to site the museum underground, using the void of an existing abandoned dry dock as the architectural infrastructure. You descend by sloping bridges that weave down and through light-filled galleries, making this one of the most intriguing museums to navigate and explore. The experience is remarkable, made even more delightful by the thoughtful, playful, and dramatic exhibition environment that is seamlessly integrated with the architecture. Kossmann.dejong (a design studio in Amsterdam) deftly used film, light, and sound to add to the narrative of maritime themes. Personal stories and the museum's fantastic collection are presented in fresh and intriguing ways (fig. 3). This is exhibition storytelling at its best.*

*My only regret is that I was unable to get a tattoo at the special light projection and "inking" interactive stations because it seemed as crowded as a Saturday night in a busy port*

*of call with young sailors vying to proudly get marked. Apparently, there is a bit of sailor in all of us!*

*More photos and videos of the exhibition can be found at: <http://mfs.dk/en/about-museum/about-museum/kossmanndejong> (Maritime Museum of Denmark) and <http://www.kossmanndejong.nl/projects/view/102> (Kossman.dejong).*

We typically include exhibitions that have already been built, but this next component is so massive, and had such a nerve-racking process to complete, that I thought our readers would enjoy it as much as I did. Here's the account from Sean Duran, Vice President of Exhibition and Design at Miami's Patricia and **Phillip Frost Museum of Science**, who details one of the largest exhibition projects ever featured in this column:

*Beginning Friday, December 12, 2014, crews worked nonstop for 24 hours, 48 minutes, and 59 straight seconds to place over 1,200 cubic yards (120 trucks) of concrete, making up more than 9,000 square feet of tank surface area, filling the walls of the massive cone-shaped Gulf Stream tank aquarium and marking the museum's biggest milestone in construction to date (fig. 4).*

*The 500,000-gallon tank, open to the sun and sky, will serve as the centerpiece of the new Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science. Not only will this be the city's newest iconic landmark, but also one of the most complex projects being undertaken in the United States.*



Fig. 4. View of workers and internal structure during concrete pour of the “Open Ocean” tank at the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science, scheduled to open in 2016. Courtesy of Sean Duran

*In addition to the erection of monumental amounts of shoring and formwork, impressive in and of itself, the laborious groundwork included the installation of over 370 tons of epoxy-coated steel reinforcement intertwined by a web of 57 pipes containing over 700 high-strength post tensioning cables that generate over 14,000 tons of compression force into the concrete to prevent cracking once poured.*

*Stepping onto the outdoor top level of the “Living Core” once the museum opens in 2016, visitors will encounter the 100-foot open surface of the tank vessel to catch glimpses of such marine creatures as hammerhead sharks and tunas.*

*One of the most significant achievements in architectural design and one whose shape alone has never been done before, the tank is now prepared to support over 4 million pounds of sea water and...*

*SHARKS! Complex in its conical shape, inclination and suspension, as well as a 30-foot diameter oculus at the bottom of the basin, the shape is energy-efficient and ideal for sharks as there are no sharp corners, maximizing the cruising surface while reducing the amount of water.*

*This milestone means the museum is officially more than halfway through construction and on track to open its doors in the summer of 2016.*

*In a city where construction cranes dominate the skyline, this museum is undeniably the most elaborate project being built in Miami, and we’re excited to celebrate key milestones with you. You can find a time-lapse video of the process at: <http://youtu.be/MyNUEQGOaJU>.*

Wow! There are four more places to add to your “must-visit” list! If you’d like to contribute to future Exhibits Newsline columns, just send me an email at: [paul@orselli.net](mailto:paul@orselli.net). ☀