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Detroit Institute of Arts and Midtown Detroit, Inc. choose eight finalists for Plaza Connections project
Finalists to make public presentations in Detroit June 13–14

May 22, 2018 (Detroit)— The Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) and Midtown Detroit, Inc. (MDI) are pleased to announce that eight finalists have been selected to move forward in the “DIA Plaza and Midtown Cultural Connections” design competition. Forty-four submissions representing over 10 countries and 22 cities from around the world were received. The competition centers around enhancing and enlivening the visitor experience in the arts and cultural district and seeks an outstanding integrated design team for developing an urban and landscape design strategy to connect all 12 educational and cultural institutions in Midtown Detroit.

Teams were asked to submit their qualifications and were rated on the following criteria:

- + Exceptional design flair and creative ability – 20%
- + Demonstrated design sensibility and approach – 20%
- + Role of civic participation in prior work – 20%
- + Related experience of project team – 10%
- + Role of women and minorities in the proposed scope of work – 10%
- + Proven ability to meet budget and schedule – 10%
- + Understanding local context and issues in prior work – 10%

The finalists are listed in alphabetical order:

- + [agence ter](#), Paris, France
Team Partners: [Akoaki](#), [Harley Etienne](#), [rooftwo](#), and [TranssolarKlimaEngineering](#)
- + [Hood Design Studio](#), Oakland, CA
Team Partners: [NADAAA](#), [Alibi Studio](#), [Culture Lab Detroit](#), and [Arup](#)
- + [Mikyoung Kim Design](#), Boston, MA
Team Partner: [James Carpenter Design Associates](#)
- + [Spackman Mossop Michaels](#), Detroit, MI
Team Partners: [SITU](#), [MIT Civic Data Design Lab](#), [Brandan “BMike” Odums](#), and [Britney Stoney](#)

- + **[Stoss Landscape Urbanism, Boston, MA](#)**
Team Partners: [McEwen Studio/A\(n\) Office](#), [Tiff Massey](#), [Tetra Tech](#)

- + **[UNStudio, Amsterdam, The Netherlands](#)**
Team Partners: [SurfaceDesign](#), [inFORM Studio](#), [Futurecity](#), [Giffels Webster](#), [Silman](#), and [Atelier Ten](#)

- + **[Ten x Ten, Minneapolis, MN](#)**
Team Partners: [MASS Design Group](#), [Local Projects](#), [D MET Studio](#), [Atelier Ten](#), and [HR&A Advisors](#)

- + **[WXY architecture + urban design, New York, NY](#)**
Team Partners: [DesignJones LLC](#), [Leong Leong](#), [McEwen Studio/A\(n\) Office](#), and [Tiff Massey](#)

“The overall quality and depth of the submissions far exceeded our expectations,” said Salvador Salort-Pons, DIA director and Chair of the competition jury. “This is testimony to the exciting challenge of transforming Detroit’s arts and cultural district, which represents more than 12 important cultural institutions in the city and benefits all the residents in the region.”

The jury consisted of:

- + Salvador Salort-Pons, Director, President + CEO | Detroit Institute of Arts
- + Julie Bargmann, Associate Professor Landscape Design, University of Virginia | Founder & Principal, D.I.R.T. Studio
- + Maurice Cox, Urban Planning Director | City of Detroit
- + William Gilchrist, Planning and Building Director | City of Oakland, California
- + Jonathan Massey, Dean | Taubman School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan
- + Cara McCarty, Curatorial Director | Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum
- + Dr. Juanita Moore, CEO | Charles H Wright Museum of African American History
- + Mario Moore, Artist
- + Richard L. Rogers, President | College for Creative Studies

The eight firms will each make 45-minute public presentations followed by 30-minute Q&A sessions in the DIA’s Danto Lecture Hall on June 13 and 14. “We’re really excited to present these design teams to the public in June,” said Susan T. Mosey, MDI executive director. “This project requires new design strategies and thinking about connectivity between our institutions and our citizens. It’s a great opportunity for the community to engage in the overall process.”



Three finalists will then be selected to design and amplify the possibilities of the project. The three firms will make public presentations on Jan. 23, 2019 at the DIA and the winning team will be announced in March 2019.

To register for the June 13-14 public presentations, please visit: midtownculturalconnections.com.

The DIA Plaza and Midtown Cultural Connections design competition planning process is funded by the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), [William Davidson Foundation](#), and the [Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation](#) with support from the [Boston Consulting Group Detroit](#) Office led by Xavier Mosquet.

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The Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), one of the premier art museums in the United States, is home to more than 60,000 works that comprise a multicultural survey of human creativity from ancient times through the 21st century. From the first Van Gogh painting to enter a U.S. museum (*Self-Portrait*, 1887), to Diego Rivera's world-renowned *Detroit Industry* murals (1932-33), the DIA's collection is known for its quality, range and depth. The DIA's mission is to create opportunities for all visitors to find personal meaning in art individually and with each other.

Programs are made possible with support from residents of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

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Midtown Detroit, Inc. (MDI) is a nonprofit planning and development agency charged with revitalization of Detroit's Woodward Corridor. Representing over 100 area stakeholders, including Detroit's anchor educational, medical and cultural institutions, MDI provides public space maintenance and security services; marketing support; technical assistance; infrastructure and real estate development; small business support; grant administration; and arts programming for the district.

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