



Harley-Davidson Museum ‘*Helmet Project*’ marks MIAD first

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Summary: *The Helmet Project*, October 23 – November 8. Harley-Davidson Museum “Garage,” 400 W. Canal St. Free with museum admission. harley-davidsonmuseum.com; 877.436.8738 (IMAGES AVAILABLE)

MILWAUKEE... In a unique partnership with the Harley-Davidson Museum, MIAD has kicked off the fall semester with the most ambitious cross-disciplinary project in the college’s history. *The Helmet Project* – involving 100 art and design students, 10 faculty members and the museum’s professional staff – will be on view as the first feature exhibition at the museum’s “Garage,” 400 W. Canal St., October 23 – November 8.

The Helmet Project challenges students to deconstruct the conventional notion of a helmet and re-envision its function and meaning through art and design that push visual and conceptual boundaries in this first of its kind undertaking. Students are also creating the show – from exhibit fabrication and installation to exhibition graphics and marketing.

Under the project leadership of Harley-Davidson Museum Curatorial Director Jim Fricke, the dynamic history of helmets and the debate surrounding the helmet relative to motorcycling also come alive through a multi-media display of museum artifacts.

Fricke said, “We were familiar with the impressive caliber of MIAD student work, so this exhibition idea was expressly developed to create an ambitious college-wide project.”

In developing the concept for the project, the Harley-Davidson Museum hoped to challenge MIAD Sculpture, Integrated Studio Arts and Industrial Design students to react to and extend the rich history of helmet design, and Interior Architecture + Design and Communication Design students to design, fabricate and install the exhibit. The students are working both in teams and as individuals through a juried process.

“This unprecedented collaborative effort, unfolding over two short months, is intense and inspiring,” said Fricke. “The reward is in the creation: both the collaborative act and the resulting exhibition, which will be informative, provocative and beautiful.”

In addition to Fricke and the museum’s curatorial, archival and marketing staffs, principal jury members providing guidance and input throughout the project are Michael Davidson, artist, design consultant and great-grandson of Harley-Davidson Motorcycle Company co-founder William A. Davidson; and James Donnelly, multidisciplinary designer and principal of Milwaukee’s The Design Office.

MIAD Provost David Martin said, “Our students have embraced this intensively pedagogical experience, which is broadening not only their skills and real-world experience, but also their well of inspiration as related to art and design, and to the Harley-Davidson cultural and historical phenomenon.

“We are proud and gratified to have been chosen to be a part of the museum’s first feature exhibition and to build on the growing relationship with Harley-Davidson, which began three years ago with the Industrial Design PowerSports course developed with the Harley-Davidson Stylists from the Product Development Center.”

The Harley-Davidson Museum and its “Garage” exhibition space are located at 400 West Canal Street. Admission to *The Helmet Project* is included with museum general admission. For more information, museum hours and tickets, visit www.harley-davidsonmuseum.com or call 877.436.8738.

MIAD is Wisconsin’s only college devoted exclusively to the education of professional artists and designers. Founded in 1974, it is accredited to award the bachelor of fine arts degree in 11 majors. With 80 percent of its 3,000 graduates using their innovative skills in Wisconsin, the college contributes a vital “brain gain” to the state that shapes its creative and economic future.