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Carnegie Mellon University's Miller Gallery Presents US Premiere Of "Imperfect Health: The Medicalization of Architecture"

*Exhibition Takes an Innovative, Thought-Provoking View
Of Intersections Between Health, Architecture and Urban Design*

PITTSBURGH—The Miller Gallery, Carnegie Mellon University's award-winning and critically acclaimed contemporary art gallery, presents the U.S. premiere of "Imperfect Health: The Medicalization of Architecture," a new exhibition that examines the complexity of today's interrelated and emerging health problems juxtaposed with a variety of proposed architectural and urban solutions.



The exhibit, organized by the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA), Montréal, will open with a reception from 6 to 8 p.m., Friday, September 14, and will run through February 24, 2013. A tour at 4:30 p.m., led by the curators, will precede the reception. The exhibition and opening events are free and open to the public.

Through photographs, sculpture, video, publications, research and archival materials, design projects, and architectural models and drawings, "Imperfect Health" uncovers some of the uncertainties and contradictions in current ideas of health and considers how architecture acknowledges, incorporates and affects those issues. The exhibition questions common understandings of "positive" and "negative" outcomes within the flux of research on, and cultural conceptions of, health.

"We observe — and suffer daily from — the unforeseen consequences of our actions on the environment," write CCA curators Giovanna Borasi and Mirko Zardini, remarking that society today is anxious about pollution, food safety, allergens, asthma, cancer, obesity and aging. "Now that everything is perceived to be a possible source of disease, the health, defense and fortification of our own bodies has become an obsessive pursuit. We have begun to think of all aspects of our lives in medical terms."

Researchers and designers in the fields of architecture, urban design and landscape design have begun to grapple with health issues and fears in their projects. Their ideas are based on the optimistic premise that design has the capacity to deliver individual and collective well-being. Contemporary projects from around the world propose allergy-free gardens, more trees, cleaner air, soil remediation and new quarantine spaces to prevent epidemic outbreaks. But, are design projects really able to provide a cure for what ails us — or only imperfect solutions?

"Imperfect Health" features works from the CCA's extensive collection and loans from other individuals and institutions, by an international group of architects, artists, and designers including Bernd and Hilla Becher, Berkeley Institute of Design and Intel Labs, BIG (Bjarke Ingels Group), Mel Chin, Todd Haynes, Henry Dreyfuss Associates, Steven Holl Architects, Gordon Matta-Clark, Niall McLaughlin, MIT AgeLab, Morphosis, MVRDV, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture), François Roche, SANAA (Sejima and Nishizawa and Associates), and Alison and Peter Smithson.

An exhibition as innovative and thought-provoking around issues of health, architecture and urban design has never been presented in this region. "Imperfect Health" has particular resonance in Pittsburgh, a city that has recovered from the collapse of its steel industry through its new health care, education and technology industries, and at Carnegie Mellon, a research institution focused on innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creating and implementing solutions for real problems. As with many major cities, Pittsburgh faces environmental challenges — with higher rates of cancer, asthma, and obesity than the national averages, according to recent reports from the American Lung Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

"'Imperfect Health' makes an insightful contribution to local and national dialogues around health problems, and whether architecture and design should take on prescriptive roles," says Astria Suparak, director of the Miller Gallery.

A book of the same title, published by the CCA with Lars Müller Publishers, accompanies the exhibition and is available as an e-book, recently launched on iTunes, and as a print edition in the gallery. Edited by CCA Curators Giovanna Borasi and Mirko Zardini, it extends the research and includes essays by Carla Keirns, David Gissen, Hilary Sample, Linda Pollak, Deane Simpson, Margaret Campbell, Sarah

Schrank, and Nan Ellin. An innovative online TV channel (imperfecthealth.tv) developed by the CCA presents hours of programming on themes related to health and the built environment. In addition, the Miller Gallery will host public programs including a lecture series, panel discussions, screenings, and tours.

The Miller Gallery is located in the Purnell Center for the Arts on Carnegie Mellon's Pittsburgh campus. Admission is free; the gallery is open to the public from noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. For more information, including print-ready images and a list of events, visit

www.cmu.edu/millergallery/exhibitions/imperfecthealth or <http://bit.ly/ImperfectHealth>

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About Carnegie Mellon University: Carnegie Mellon is a private, internationally ranked research university with programs in areas ranging from science, technology and business, to public policy, the humanities and the arts. More than 11,000 students in the university's seven schools and colleges benefit from a small student-to-faculty ratio and an education characterized by its focus on creating and implementing solutions for real problems, interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. A global university, Carnegie Mellon's main campus in the United States is in Pittsburgh, Pa. It has campuses in California's Silicon Valley and Qatar, and programs in Asia, Australia, Europe and Mexico. The university is in the midst of "Inspire Innovation: The Campaign for Carnegie Mellon University," which aims to build its endowment, support faculty, students and innovative research, and enhance the physical campus with equipment and facility improvements.

www.cmu.edu

About The Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University: The Miller Gallery is Carnegie Mellon's contemporary art gallery. The gallery supports experimentation that expands the notions of art and culture, providing a forum for engaged conversations about creativity and innovation. The Miller Gallery produces exhibitions, projects, events and publications with a focus on social issues, and is free of charge and open to the public. The gallery was selected "Best of Pittsburgh" by the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (2011), *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* (2011), and *Pittsburgh City Paper* (2010, 2011).

www.cmu.edu/millergallery

About the Canadian Centre for Architecture: Based in Montréal, Canada, the CCA is an international research centre and museum founded in 1979 on the conviction that architecture is a public concern. Based on its extensive Collection, the CCA is a leading voice in advancing knowledge, promoting public understanding, and widening thought and debate on architecture, its history, theory, practice, and role in society. www.cca.qc.ca

Photo depicts an alternative treatment for respiratory conditions, through overnight therapy sessions in the salty air of an underground salt mine.

Caption: *Speleotherapy: Breathing In*, Solotvyno salt mine, Ukraine, 2009, chromogenic color print, 36.5 x 54.4 cm © Kirill Kuletski.