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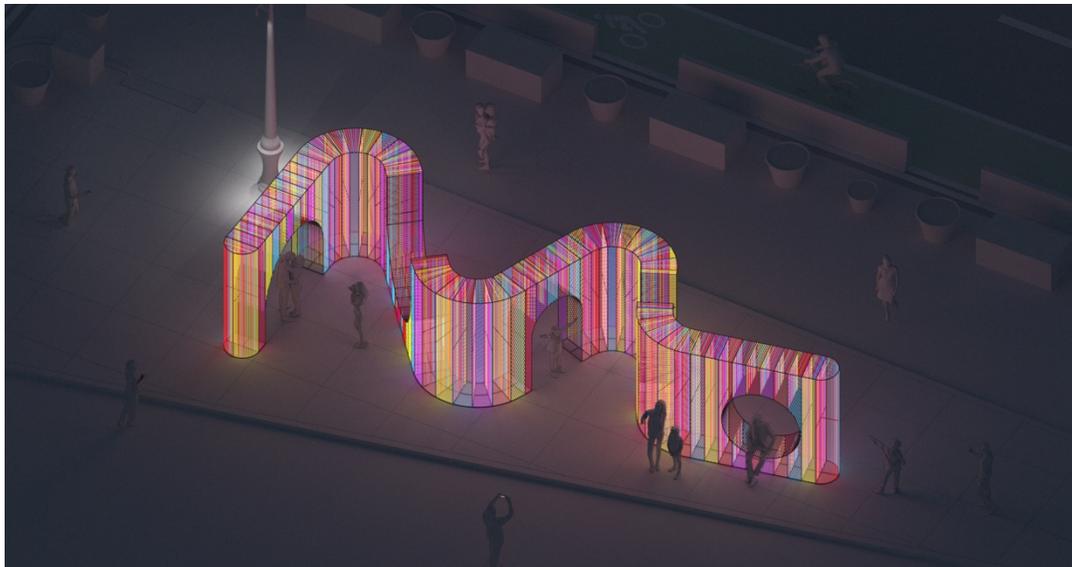
Media Contacts:

Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership: Zac Roy, [zac@anatgerstein.com](mailto:zac@anatgerstein.com), 347-361-9072

Van Alen Institute: Alisha Kim Levin, [press@vanalen.org](mailto:press@vanalen.org), 212-924-7000 x11

## **Flatiron Partnership and Van Alen Institute Announce Winner of the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Flatiron Public Plaza Holiday Design Competition:**

### ***Ziggy* by Hou de Sousa**



**NEW YORK, October 10, 2019** – The Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership and Van Alen Institute today announced the winner of the sixth annual Flatiron Public Plaza Holiday Design Competition: ***Ziggy*** by New York-based team **Hou de Sousa**. On view November 18, 2019–January 1, 2020, ***Ziggy*** will celebrate the holiday season with vibrant hues and playful gestures, creating a highly visible landmark at the heart of the Flatiron District and the centerpiece of the Partnership’s annual holiday programming.

“Our holiday installation is a tradition that evokes the wonder and joy of the season for those who live in, work in, and visit Flatiron,” said **James Mettham, Executive Director of the Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership**. “***Ziggy*** is a fitting centerpiece for our annual ‘23 Days of Flatiron Cheer’ festivities and a vibrant kaleidoscopic beacon that will be a must-see destination this December. We are proud to partner with Van Alen Institute and Hou de Sousa, and we invite visitors from near and far to visit Flatiron this season!”

“Hou de Sousa’s spectacular installation invites us to rethink how we interact with public space, and with one another,” said **Deborah Marton, Executive Director, Van Alen Institute**. “Through the clever use of transparent materials and open gateways, their design creates delightful and unexpected ways to connect with others. We’re thrilled to collaborate once again with the Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership in this annual tradition to create inventive and imaginative visions for an iconic urban plaza.”

Composed of painted rebar and 27,000 feet of iridescent cord, *Ziggy*’s lightweight structure will dynamically filter its surroundings with shifting patterns, color, and light. Its winding form will frame views of the Flatiron District’s many attractions and landmarks, while also serving as seating for locals and visitors seeking a moment of rest. The structure will be installed on the Flatiron North Public Plaza at Broadway, Fifth Avenue, and 23rd Street, as part of the Partnership’s “23 Days of Flatiron Cheer” programming. The installation is permitted through NYC DOT Art and will be open to the public daily, weather permitting.

“Ziggy is a polyvalent creature that strings together gateways, apertures, and seating,” said **Josh de Sousa, Principal & Co-Founder of Hou de Sousa**. “This porous wall will welcome folks arriving from all directions while ringing in the holiday season with a flourish of color and light.”

“This competition continues to demonstrate the importance of both public art and programming in DOT public plazas,” said **NYC DOT Art & Event Programming Director, Emily Colasacco**. “Hou de Sousa’s interactive, larger-than-life-size configuration will bring even more color to the already vibrant Flatiron District, and DOT is pleased to be part of the annual holiday transformation as we enter our sixth year as a partner.”

Hou de Sousa is a New York-based architecture, art, and design studio focused on culturally progressive and environmentally responsible projects that foster public engagement and creativity. Over the past two years, Nancy Hou and Josh de Sousa’s office has won open competitions and RFPs hosted by Google; Friends of the High Line; Georgetown BID; Socrates Sculpture Park; Dupont Underground; the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism; and the Architectural League of New York. The *Ziggy* project team also includes Powell Draper, Director of Operations at Schlaich Bergermann and Partner; Dan Bergsagel, Structural Engineer at Schlaich Bergermann and Partner; and steel fabrication by Brian Chu and Conor Coghlan, the Co-Founders of A05 Studio.

Since its inception in 2014, the Flatiron Public Plaza Holiday Design Competition has been a platform for the Partnership and Van Alen Institute to deepen their connections with emerging designers and engage with their local neighborhood. This year’s closed-call competition began in June, when the Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership and Van Alen invited a selection of design and architecture firms to submit proposals. A jury with expertise across the worlds of design and public art, including representatives from the Flatiron Partnership and Van Alen’s Board of Trustees, reviewed proposals by Besler & Sons, Hou De Sousa, New Affiliates, Only If, and Worrell Yeung.

Sponsored by the Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership, *Ziggy* and the accompanying programming “23 Days of Flatiron Cheer” are made possible with generous support from Presenting Sponsor Meringoff Properties.

Throughout the holidays, the Partnership is encouraging visitors to use #ZiggyFlatiron on Twitter and Instagram to share images of the installation to be entered into a contest to win prizes from local businesses.

### **Flatiron Public Plaza Holiday Design Competition - Proposals**

#### **Winner**

##### ***Ziggy | Hou de Sousa***

*Ziggy* softly ricochets between the narrow bounds of its triangular site, echoing the urban and architectural context. Composed of painted rebar and iridescent cord, the project takes full advantage of its high ratio of volume to mass. Voluminous but ethereal, the structure allows wind to pass through unnoticed. The dense pattern of cord that defines its form serves as a colorful static background, but in moving around and through the project, the thirty-inch-thick wall transforms into a dynamic filter that kaleidoscopically mixes hues and visually tints the surrounding context.

#### **Runner-up**

##### ***Mini City Souvenir Plaza | Besler & Sons***

*Mini City Souvenir Plaza* transforms the Flatiron Public Plaza into a partyscape of iconic buildings and experiences, populating the space with large-scale facades of nearby architecture. Fabricated from durable exterior grade post-consumer recycled plastic panels, and reproduced in charming and hypnotic detail, the Flatiron Building, the Toy Center, and other friendly faces from the neighborhood cluster together in an inviting atmosphere, encouraging visitors to explore the limits of recognition and the visual qualities of reproductions.

#### **Finalists**

##### ***Holiday Exchange | New Affiliates***

##### ***Flatiron Portal | Only If***

##### ***Collective | Worrell Yeung***

For more information and images of each proposal, [click here](#).

### **Competition Jury Members**

**Nicholas Athanail**, The Corcoran Group and Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership board member; **Benjamin Cadena**, Founder, Studio Cadena; **Britt Cobb**, Associate Partner, Pentagram; **Nina Marren**, Art Project Manager, NYC Department of Transportation; **Ahmed ElHusseiny**, Founder, AE Superlab; **Jessica Lax**, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Van Alen Institute; **Quardean Lewis-Allen**, Founder/CEO, Made in Brownsville; **Aleksey Lukyanov-Cherny**, Partner, SITU; **James Mettham**, Executive Director, Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership; **Robin Ried**, Senior Manager, Urban Planning, Bloomberg Associates and Van Alen Institute board member.

### **About the Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership**

The Flatiron/23<sup>rd</sup> Street Partnership, formed in 2006, is a nonprofit organization and Business Improvement District whose mission is to enhance the reputation of Flatiron and NoMad as two of New York's most vital and exciting neighborhoods. This is accomplished by maintaining a clean and safe environment for the district's businesses, residents and visitors; by spearheading area improvement projects; and by marketing the diverse business and retail options in this vibrant and historic neighborhood.

FlatironDistrict.nyc  
info@flatirondistrict.nyc  
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: @FlatironNY

### **About Van Alen Institute**

At Van Alen Institute, we believe design can transform cities, landscapes, and regions to improve people's lives. We collaborate with communities, scholars, policymakers, and professionals on local and global initiatives that rigorously investigate the most pressing social, cultural, and ecological challenges of tomorrow. Building on more than a century of experience, we develop cross-disciplinary research, provocative public programs, and inventive design competitions.

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### **About the NYC DOT Art Program**

Launched in 2008, the New York City Department of Transportation's Art Program invigorates the City's streetscapes with engaging temporary art installations. The program partners with community-based organizations and artists to present murals, sculptures, projections and performances on plazas, fences, barriers, bridges, step streets and sidewalks for up to 11 months.

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