Annual Report
2017–18
The Toronto Design Offsite Festival (TO DO) is Canada’s largest cultural celebration of design with over 100 exhibitions and events forming Toronto’s design week, January 15–21, 2018.

TO DO transforms Toronto into a hub for creativity, taking design and art out of the studio and into the urban sphere, bringing people together to celebrate contemporary culture. We provide opportunities for emerging talent, and engage the community with exceptional and accessible public programming.

In January 2018, TO DO had direct participation from 800+ artists and designers, 140K+ visitors, 95+ million press impressions, and 500+ million total brand impressions.
"Each January, the Toronto Design Offsite Festival launches this city’s creative calendar with a bang. TO DO galvanizes Toronto’s art and design communities, their dedicated supporters and the general public to experience a broad and inclusive range of exhibitions, talks, happenings and events.

Craft & Design at Harbourfront Centre values its strong cultural partnership with TO DO and is proud to align itself with this vital component of the cultural landscape of Toronto."

—Melanie Egan, Director Craft + Design, Harbourfront Centre
Mission Statement
TO DO’s mission is to advance design culture in Canada.

We do this by building a thriving community through design, and for design. We collaborate with designers, artists, government partners, media, associations, and local businesses to build a robust and agile platform for showing and talking about contemporary design. We work to bridge the gap between design and community.

TO DO’s vision is to be a leading international festival at the forefront of independent design.
Reach
800+ artists and designers
95+ million press impressions
140K visitors
500+ million total brand impressions.

23K+ followers
16K+ followers
11K+ subscribers
Audience
98% of visitors would recommend the Festival.

29% of visitors are between the ages of 25 to 34, 26% are 18 to 24, 18% are 35 to 44, and 27% are 45+.

40% of our visitors are part of the design industry including interior design, architecture, graphic design, landscape architecture, industrial design, furniture, and urban planning.

60% of visitors are general public, with 14% from the arts, 6% from advertising, and 4% from finance.

29% of visitors have a post-graduate degree or higher, with 64% attending College/University.

51% of visitors identify as either visible minority, person of colour, LGBTQ+, person with a disability, francophone, youth, indigenous, or indigenous person of colour.
“Congrats to you and your team for pulling off so many amazing events and programming. We’re really charged up from the exposure and the amazing folks we got to meet that week. Thanks to TO DO for all your support.”

—Odin Capello, Design Director, GUILD Eyewear
Festival Map
All programming is free except as noted. Festival listings were correct at time of printing. Check directly with venues or our online Festival Schedule at todesignoffsite.com for additional details and any listing updates or changes.
Festival Partners + Sponsors
Festival Highlights
Festival Opening Party

The must-attend bash kicks off Festival Week, with 700+ VIPs, designers, architects, artists, and design-lovers mingling and dancing in the LightForm showroom and warehouse.

Feature installation: String Theory by Jordan Söderberg Mills.
In Place takes the UK-based practice of Aberrant Architecture as a focus and departure point for a group exhibition with four practices that share similar interests, processes, and outcomes, such as an interest in deep research, engaging local communities, and site. Part of TO DO’s inaugural International Guest of Honour Program, this exhibition features the work of Aberrant Architecture, KANVA, Daily tous les jours, Nicole Lattuca, and Dean Baldwin.

In Place is curated by the Toronto Design Offsite Festival with Nuria Montblanch, and co-presented with Harbourfront Centre.
Exploring fresh and original houseware and working products for contemporary life, Work/Life showcases new work by 10 Canadian designers and studios: Allstudio, Area 91, Dear Human, F&Y, Char Kennedy, Jacob Mailman, Mercury Bureau, MPGMB, Geof Ramsay, Stewart Shum and Ange-line Tetrault.

Work/Life is curated by the Toronto Design Offsite Festival in partnership with Umbra.
Matter

Matter is an exhibition that explores acts of material transformation and change through works in wood, paper-rock, Styrofoam, stone, metal, ash, ceramic, reclaimed plastic, concrete, and film.

Curated by the Toronto Design Offsite Festival, the exhibition features the work of 12 artists and designers from Canada and the UK: Brothers Dressler, Andrey Chernykh, Creators of Objects, Dear Human, Habiba El-Sayed, Nicholas Hamilton Holmes, Simon Johns, JP King, Olga Klosowski, Pamela Nelson, James Michael Shaw, and Studio Swine.
Outside the Box builds a map of design in North America.

The seventh edition of this annual TRAVELLING exhibition features the work of over 60 designers from 12 cities across Canada and the U.S.: Asheville (North Carolina), Boston, Fogo Island, Montreal, Philadelphia, Portland, Saint John, San Francisco Bay Area, Saskatoon, Seattle, Toronto, and Vancouver. Curated by local correspondents, each Bankers box houses a collection of thoughtfully designed objects, reflecting the particular resources and makers of that area.

Outside the Box is organized by the Toronto Design Offsite Festival in partnership with WantedDesign.
TO DO Talks: Aberrant Architecture

Based in London, UK, Aberrant Architecture is an award winning collaborative studio. Storytelling and research are at the heart of their practice, a practice which includes the first architecture residency at the Victoria and Albert Museum, exhibitions at the Venice Biennale for Architecture and Sao Paulo Biennial, and public installations.

Aberrant Architecture founders David Chambers and Kevin Haley discuss their multidisciplinary practice with friend and past collaborator Beatrice Galilee, Daniel Brodsky Associate Curator of Architecture and Design at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Yonge + St. Clair Lobby Installations

The ongoing renaissance at Yonge + St. Clair continues as Slate Asset Management and TO DO present a series of three lobby installations, public art tour, and architecture talk. International design firms Gensler and IBI Group, as well as local studio superkul, present installations on display near the midtown intersection.
#ohdeer by Gensler

An enormous deer piñata located in the 2 St. Clair West lobby pays tribute to the past inhabitants of the surrounding area, while also creating an interactive installation that will involve the whole community, and seen by over 6,000 pedestrians.
Second Life by superkül

Through a series of curated images and a wood sculpture, this installation at 40 St. Clair West presents construction waste reframed as opportunity. As part of a larger strategy of sustainability, it encourages the practice of creative upcycling through innovation and the adoption of architectural best practices. Seen by over 4,000 pedestrians.
The Space Between
by IBI Group

At 55 St. Clair West, and seen by over 8,000 pedestrians, this two-storey installation explores the positive attributes of “the space between,” and how these attributes may manifest in physical form. IBI Group engages with the public and empowers them to contribute their views on how they interact with the public environment.
TO DO or Die Party

TO DO’s first dance party brings 250+ guests to The Garrison in Toronto, bringing a diverse crowd to celebrate Festival Week with a night of music and dancing.
TO DO Talks Symposium: Designing the Future of Work

TO DO’s third annual symposium brings 12 multi-disciplinary experts and over 200 guests into one room for a diverse and engaging discussion on designing the future of work. The four-hour event features the opportunity for a thoughtful discussion among those in attendance.
Keynote Speaker

Based in Amsterdam, Joost Schouten is a co-founder at Yanomo.com and Nestr.io.

Session 1: Work and Humanity

Jonas Altman, Partner, Social Fabric

Julie Sommerfreund, Innovation Designer, The Moment

Chris Graham, Principal, TellPeople

Chenny Xia, Innovation Designer, The Moment, and

Markus Grupp, Director Experience Design, Indigo

Session 2: Work and Technology

Jon Tirmandi, Co-Founder and Partner, Normative

Nan Zhao, Research Scientist, MIT Media Lab

Sean Hazell, Principal and Strategist, Hazell & Co., and

Nick Hobson, Behavioral Scientist at Psychology Compass, University of Toronto

Heather Dubbeldam, Principal Architect, Dubbeldam Architecture + Design

Dawn Laing, Director of Marketing & Communications, Notion Manufactured Goods
As a compliment to the exhibition Matter, TO DO and the Toronto Society of Architects present an Ideas Forum on the topic—a PechaKucha-style event, featuring artists and designers from Matter, as well as other practitioners speaking about material transformation and change.

Speakers include Lars and Jason Dressler (Brothers Dressler), Joanne Byrne and Jonathan de Swaaf (Creators of Objects), Jasna Sokolovic and Noel O’Connell (Dear Human), Shannon Hilchie (Faet Lab), Habiba El-Sayed, JP King, James Michael Shaw, and Shane Williamson (Williamson Williamson).
TO DO Tours: Geary Avenue

TO DO Tours offer festival attendees the unique opportunity to explore creative spaces not often available to the public. This year, we focus Geary Avenue to see how this former industrial neighbourhood is transforming into a hub for artists and designers. Take a walk with us to the studios of five stand-outs including MADE Design, Watson Soule, Janet MacPherson, GUILD eyewear, and PARTISANS.
The 6th annual TO DO Awards recognizes contemporary design excellence seen at exhibitions across the Festival. Awards are selected by a jury, and by popular vote from 350+ Festival attendees.
2018 Award winners:

**Best in Festival: Exhibition**
Museum of Contemporary Work
An exhibit highlighting artifacts from the past, present and future of work. The objects, both real and fictional, tell stories of how our daily labours are changing—and how they are changing us.

**Best in Festival: New Work**
Vases by Mercury Bureau at More like the Weather
More like the Weather presents a new series of compositional vases by Mercury Bureau. The elements of the vases—two distinct vessels and material blocks that anchor individual stems—enact the possibilities of each compositional moment.

**People’s Choice: Favourite Exhibition**
A Mirror’s Surface
In A Mirror’s Surface, Alisa Maria Wronski explores our relationship and the perceived appearance of mirrors. Combining non-traditional materials with her designs, she questions the nature of the mirror’s surface and how it is defined by a viewer’s gaze.

**People’s Choice: Favourite Window Installation**
Beyond the Surface
Beyond the Surface, explores classical geometry and its potential as a contemporary universal design language through reflecting the unseen. Fractal geometry and 2D patterns create 3D spatial experiences reflecting Unity in multiplicity - transporting viewers from the mundane to serene contemplation.

**People’s Choice: Favourite Event**
Love Design Party
Love Design Party is the official celebration for #CUTMR2018 and closing party for the Toronto Design Offsite Festival.

**People’s Choice: Favourite New Work**
#ohdeer by Gensler
An enormous deer piñata will be set up in the 2 St. Clair West lobby, paying tribute to the past inhabitants of the surrounding area, while also creating an interactive installation that will involve the whole community.
Juror’s Choice:
Bindya Lad (superkul):
Complexities and Cloth (as an exhibition)
365 Days of Canadian Design (as an exhibition)
Beverly Stool by Guillaume Roy, Raymond Fong and Ramon Ruiz at Designing for Health, Wellness, Action and Destigmatization

Kristina Ljubanovic (Art Gallery of Ontario & Institute Without Boundaries, George Brown College):
Denim Wigs by Renee Mathews at Hacking Black Futures
Recycling Words by KANVA with Maureen Mathews at In Place
Pulp Lites by Dear Human at Harbourfront Centre Craft & Design Exhibitions Winter 2018

Michael Machnic (Gensler):
He did not beat me by Roxanne Peckham at Come Up To My Room
Always Aware by Liz Durden at OFF COURSE
Punch Clock at Museum of Contemporary Work

Chris Rowe (Herman Miller Canada):
Place and Thing (as an exhibition)
Seattle Box at Outside the Box
Concealed Studio Room by Cheryl Cheng and Mario Sabljak at Come Up To My Room

Stein Wang (independent designer & 2017 award winner):
Transition by Daniel Rossi at Harbourfront Centre Craft & Design Exhibitions Winter 2018
Bulletin by Geof Ramsay at Work/Life
The Naloxon Storage Unit by Maddy Bailey, Winnie Chen, Yifei Li at Designing for Health, Wellness, Action and Destigmatization
Festival Features
Festival Features is a shortlist of events, exhibitions, and/or window installations selected by a jury. The criteria for selection is entirely up to each juror, while considering the calibre of the work or event program, and appeal to a general public and specialist audience. This year’s jurors are Anahita Azrahimi (Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition), Nina Boccia (Design Exchange), and Brendan Cormier (Victoria and Albert Museum).

Beyond the Surface
Beyond the Surface, explores classical geometry and its potential as a contemporary universal design language through reflecting the unseen. Fractal geometry and 2D patterns create 3D spatial experiences reflecting Unity in multiplicity - transporting viewers from the mundane to serene contemplation.

Designing Privacy – The [terms & conditions of] Exchange
Department of Unusual Certainties x Present-Futures are excited to present the second annual Designing Privacy event—an ongoing project which poses the question “what role should design play in addressing privacy?”

Designing for Health, Wellness, Action and Desitigmatization
Themed around health and well being, this exhibition displays spatial and product responses to the opioid crisis. Products for independent learning for elementary school students with special needs will also be displayed, showcasing Design for Health and Wellness programs at OCAD University.

Diligence and Elegance: The Nature of Japanese Textiles
This exhibition presents over 50 textiles from the TMC’s collection of 19th and 20th century textiles, and features the contemporary work of Hiroko Karuno and Keiko Shintani, whose consummate craftsmanship is profoundly connected to the evolution of Japanese textile traditions.

Hacking Black Futures
The Hacking Black Futures exhibition presents design speculations on Black-centric societies that are devoid of oppression, discrimination, and systemic racism.
Mountain Fold
This installation sees fragile glass carefully folded and shaped like a vernacular file folder, then hung in suspended animation in a floor-to-ceiling installation. Drawing upon origami as inspiration, “Each folder becomes functional because of a simple.

Museum of Contemporary Work
An exhibit highlighting artifacts from the past, present and future of work. The objects, both real and fictional, tell stories of how our daily labours are changing—and how they are changing us.

Obsolete
Obsolete features new work from 8 furniture designers. The participants bring new life to a series of antiquated furniture. Application of contemporary practices to outdated objects results in a unique and playful body of work.

Place and Thing
‘Place & Thing’ presents a striking installation at Aesop Queen Street West. Conceived by MSDS Studio, the display features a series of custom lighting objects in mixed materials, designed in response to Aesop’s sensory in-store experience.
TO DO Ambassadors are representatives of the Festival’s creative community. As leaders of Toronto design locally and globally, they are a great resource for Festival information, and familiar faces at Festival events.

Jonathon Anderson
Assistant Professor of Interior Design, Ryerson University
Principal, Jonathon Anderson Studio
—
I became an ambassador to help promote and celebrate the festival and design community. I strongly support TO DO’s mission to transform Toronto into a hub for creativity.

Marsha Robb
Sales Rep, Momentum Group
—
There is no better way to bridge the gap between design disciplines than to build a community that supports each other. As an ambassador I want to be a link that can help connect people.

MSDS Studio
Designers
—
MSDS believes that TO DO plays an important role in organizing and advocating on behalf of Toronto’s design community.

Savi Pannu
Creative Director, GUILD eyewear
—
I’m excited and honoured to be a TO DO Ambassador. I’ve always loved discovering emerging artists, designers, and makers that are really contributing to the cultural life of our community. I can’t wait to meet, see, and share my experiences throughout the year. Bring it on!

Matthew Hague
Writer, Special to the Globe and Mail
—
TO DO is a great festival. Toronto has amazing design talent. I’m happy that I can help share the story.

Nathaniel Garcia
Founder, Garcia Rep Group Inc.
—
I want to support an organization that is creative, unique, and has an exciting approach to programming.

Kimberley Brown
Executive Editor, House & Home magazine
—
I attended the first ever Toronto Design Offsite Festival when it launched in 2011 and have been telling anyone who will listen why they should participate every year since. I finally thought: why not make this official?
“The Toronto Design Offsite Festival is a very special event that we continuously love to be a part of. It offers access to all kinds of design within Canada and beyond, to local enthusiasts and particularly young designers who are able to participate because of its open structure and accessibility. It’s the only event of its kind in Canada, but also a unique model worldwide.”

Jasna Sokolovic and Noel O’Connell, Dear Human, Designers and Co-Founders
Operations
The Team

Executive
Jeremy Vandermeij, Executive Director
Deborah Wang, Artistic Director
Michael R. Madjus, Marketing Director

Operations + Development
Philippa French
Marilyn Maxim
Olga Klosowski Schellenberg

Programming
Victoria Chin
Simon Mhanna
Kelsey Miner
Robyn Wilcox
Safoura Zahedi

Marketing
Christine Lieu
Kerala Woods
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As of January 21, 2018

Founders
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Julie Nicholson
Jeremy Vandermeij
Deborah Wang
Christina Zeidler

Address
Toronto Design Offsite Festival
1214 Queen Street West, Studio 203
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M6J 1J6

todesignoffsite.com
hello@todesignoffsite.com

For Sponsorship and Partnership opportunities, please contact:
Jeremy Vandermeij, Executive Director
jeremy@todesignoffsite.com

Festival Week photographers
John Abila, Pansy Cheung, Stephen Chu,
Alana de Haan, Jono Details, Basma
Laamlaoui, Jelena Lazarevic, Saggi
Malekanian, Arthur Mola, Luba Rusin,
Jenna Wakani, Chanel Wase, Grace Wong,
Magda Vasko

Cover image by Jenna Wakani

Data Sources
TO DO Festival Survey, TO DO Attendance
Records, MRP Report, City of Toronto
Signalized Intersection Traffic Data,
Google Analytics, Facebook, Twitter,
and Instagram