

## Oblong Industries CEO John Underkoffler Wins National Design Award

*Cooper Hewitt announces winners of the 2015 National Design Awards, the nation's highest honors recognizing design excellence*

Los Angeles, CA (*Tuesday, May 5, 2015*) – Oblong Industries is thrilled to announce that John Underkoffler, its co-founder & CEO, will receive the prestigious 2015 National Design Award for Interaction Design. Winners in eleven juried categories will be honored at a gala event on October 15 in New York, during National Design Week, October 10-18, 2015.

The National Design Awards were conceived by Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum to honor lasting achievement in American design. First launched at the White House in 2000 as an official project of the White House Millennium Council, the annual awards program celebrates design as a vital humanistic tool in shaping the world, and seeks to increase national awareness of the impact of design through education initiatives. These awards are the highest honors for design achievement in the United States.

John's work is recognized for its "excellence, innovation and enhancement of the quality of life". This work insists that capabilities critical to humans living in a digital world can come only from sufficient evolution of the human-machine interface (HMI). For more than two decades he has built digital systems incorporating dextrous input, bidirectionally-expressive graphical elements, an aesthetics of constant dynamism, and the basic computational acknowledgment of physical space.

At Oblong Industries, he leads development of the g-speak software platform, which enables the construction of distributed, collaborative, gesturo-spatial systems. Among these is Mezzanine, a workplace solution whose multi-surface environment is ideally suited to hyper-visual collaboration among co-located and distributed teams.

John holds a PhD from the MIT Media Lab. His foundational work there included innovations in optical and electronic holography, real-time computer graphics systems, large-scale interactive visualization techniques, and the I/O Bulb and Luminous Room systems. He brought these ideas to Hollywood, serving as science and technology advisor to films including *Minority Report*, *Hulk*, *Aeon Flux*, and *Iron Man*, before founding Oblong Industries to develop real-world versions for the commercial market.

He is joined by designers Stephen Burks, Roseanne Haggerty, Jack Lenor Larsen, Michael Graves, MOS Architects, Coen & Partners, Commune, Heath Ceramics, Project Projects, and threeASFOUR in receiving honors today. Full details are available at [cooperhewitt.org](http://cooperhewitt.org).

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### **About Oblong Industries**

Oblong Industries' innovative technologies change the way people work, create, and communicate. With roots in more than two decades of research at the MIT Media Lab, Oblong's flagship product, Mezzanine™, is a collaborative conference room solution that defines the next era of computing: multi-user, multi-screen, multi-device, multi-location. Mezzanine's groundbreaking Infopresence™ capabilities multiply the effectiveness of distributed organizations and catalyze new, more effective, more collaborative workflows. Oblong is headquartered in Los Angeles and supplies Mezzanine systems to Fortune 500 enterprise customers and reseller partners including IBM, NTT, Dentsu Aegis Network, Boeing, and Beats Music.

Learn more at [www.oblong.com](http://www.oblong.com), and connect via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Google+](#).

### **About Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum**

Founded in 1897, Cooper Hewitt is the only museum in the United States devoted exclusively to historic and contemporary design. On Dec. 12, 2014, Cooper Hewitt opened in the renovated and restored Carnegie Mansion, which offers 60 percent more exhibition space to showcase one of the most diverse and comprehensive collections of design works in existence. Currently on view are 10 inaugural exhibitions and installations featuring more than 700 objects throughout four floors of the mansion, many of which draw from the museum's permanent collection of more than 210,000 objects that span 30 centuries. For the first time in the museum's history, the entire second floor is dedicated to showcasing the permanent collection through a variety of exhibitions. Visitors can experience a full range of new interactive capabilities, including the opportunity to explore the collection digitally on ultra-high-definition touch-screen tables, draw their own designs in the Immersion Room and solve real-world design problems in the Process Lab.

For further information, call (212) 849-8400, visit Cooper Hewitt's website at [www.cooperhewitt.org](http://www.cooperhewitt.org) and follow the museum on [www.twitter.com/cooperhewitt](http://www.twitter.com/cooperhewitt), [www.facebook.com/cooperhewitt](http://www.facebook.com/cooperhewitt) and [www.instagram.com/cooperhewitt](http://www.instagram.com/cooperhewitt).

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Media contacts:

Jennifer Üner, Oblong Industries, Inc  
[juner@oblong.com](mailto:juner@oblong.com) +1 213-683-8863 x 301

Bobby Chilver, Walker Sands Public Relations (USA)  
[robert.chilver@walkersands.com](mailto:robert.chilver@walkersands.com) +1 312-546-4712

Tanya Houston, Wildwood Public Relations (UK)  
[tanya.houston@wildwoodpr.com](mailto:tanya.houston@wildwoodpr.com) +44(0)1293 851 115