

# Herman Miller and Hip Hop Architect Michael Ford Host “Conversations for Change” Series

*The Series is Centered Around an Eames Lounge Chair and Ottoman Remixed by Michael Ford*

Herman Miller (NASDAQ: MLHR) and “The Hip Hop Architect,” Michael Ford, are collaborating to provide a platform for honest conversations about racial inequity, social justice, and hope. In 2020, the tragedy of George Floyd’s death sparked a global movement for equality where the world was forced to recognize a history of systemic racism and racial inequities faced by Black and Brown people. In the wake of protests came the need for greater education and purposeful action, as well as an intentional place for refuge.

The collaboration is centered around a remixed Eames Lounge Chair (ELO) as a symbol of refuge: a setting for open and honest conversation with the goal of leading to real and lasting change.

When Charles and Ray Eames conceptualized the Eames Lounge Chair, they defined it as a “special refuge from the strains of modern living”. In continuing this mission, Michael Ford remixed the iconic chair with handwritten names of victims of racism in the US as a stark reminder that these Black men, women, and children were not afforded the privilege of refuge.

The ELO will travel across the US from January 18, 2021, through February 2021 and people of influence; activists, actors, artists and design professionals will sit in the remixed ELO as they speak with Ford over Instagram Live via @HermanMiller and @thehiphoparchitect, about the racial disparities in their industries and the injustice that they’ve faced. Michael and each guest will look to the future and discuss what steps can be taken to encourage positive change.

The tour started in Detroit, and will continue to D.C., Atlanta, LA, and Wisconsin.

The mission of the series is to encourage people to listen, learn, engage, reflect, and take a stand against injustice. Along with this important dialogue, those facing the adverse effects created by systems of oppression will be supported via funds raised for charitable organizations working to disrupt inequitable systems. Funds raised will go to The Hip Hop Architecture Camp and Boys and Girls Club of Dane County located in the state of Wisconsin, which has been named the worst state for Black Americans to live\*\*. The two nonprofit organizations will also create a grant to support grassroots organizations providing places of refuge. Interested parties can share this opportunity with their local organizations and can apply for the grant, via the website, beginning in February 2021.

Audiences can join the discussion from their own space by watching the conversations between Michael and a roster of actors, artists, activists, and design professionals on Instagram Live.

Audiences are encouraged to support, take action and stand against complicity by making a donation to support the cause at [www.designxmikeford.com](http://www.designxmikeford.com). Whilst all donations are welcomed, please consider the following impacts of investment:

- \$200 covers 1 student’s enrollment in a 1-week Hip Hop Architecture Camp
- \$500 covers 1-week’s pay of a student’s internship in the design industry
- \$1,000 will grant the opportunity to be awarded the remixed Eames Lounge Chair & Ottoman. Donors are required to submit a statement indicating why they are “taking a stand”. Donors may make multiple donations of \$1,000 each if they would like to submit different statements to be judged for winning the chair. Statements are limited to a maximum of five sentences. The winner will be announced at the end of February 2021, via Instagram Live with @TheHipHopArchitect and receive an email. Please note, potential recipients of the chair must be in the continental United States. Additional rules can be found at [www.designxmikeford.com](http://www.designxmikeford.com).

*\*\*Source in 24/7 Wall St. ranked the nation’s metropolitan areas based on racial disparities in income, education, health, incarceration, and white-black achievement gaps in other socioeconomic outcomes using*

*data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics.*

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#### **About HIP HOP Architecture Camp**

**The Hip Hop Architecture Camp®** is a one-week intensive experience, designed to introduce underrepresented youth to architecture, urban planning, creative place making and economic development through the lens of hip hop culture. The Camp is based on the "4C's" which are Creativity, Collaboration, Communication and Critical Thinking. During the camp, students are paired with architects, urban planners, designers, community activists and hip hop artists to create unique visions for their communities which include the creation of physical models, digital models and the creation of a Hip Hop Architecture track and music video summarizing their designs.

#### **About Boys and Girls Club of Dane County**

We are a local not-for-profit youth development organization serving over 7,500 youths in eleven locations, including nine school-based sites and three traditional Club sites. The Clubs fuel kids with the inspiration to dream and teach them the skills to achieve when they're most impressionable through quality programs in five core areas: Character & Leadership Development; Education & Career Development; Health & Life Skills; The Arts; and Sports, Fitness & Recreation. See the impact we make in the life of each Club member here: [www.bgcdc.org](http://www.bgcdc.org)

#### **About Herman Miller**

Herman Miller is a 115 year-old company that places great importance on design, the environment, community service, and the health and well-being of their customers and employees. Herman Miller Group, inclusive of their family of brands, lives their shared corporate purpose - "Design for the good of humankind". As part of a commitment to cultivating meaningful, lasting change in the workplace, CEO Andi Owen joined more than 1,400 business leaders around the world in signing the CEO Action Pledge for Diversity and Inclusion. The company also defined a set of actions that will guide their diversity, equity, and inclusion work moving forward, and continues to donate 1.5% of its pre-tax corporate profits and partners with charitable organizations that share its vision for a more equitable and sustainable future for all. Learn more at [hermanmiller.com/equity](http://hermanmiller.com/equity)

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