

Scott Olson, Rollerblades, and SkyRide

The Dutch are serious ice skaters, and in the early 1700s a Dutchman hoping to skate during the summer nailed wooden spools to strips of wood and attached them to the soles of his shoes—the first inline skates. Many more would be developed over the next 250 years, but none as refined as the version designed by American inventor and serial entrepreneur Scott Olson.

Olson didn't invent the Rollerblade, as the company he founded and the skates it made came to be called, but he perfected it. A former minor league hockey player, he had a ready community of collaborators to help him test and perfect the concept, similar to the way Leonardo worked. And like Leonardo, his creative work on one project ultimately led him to another: SkyRide, an elevated exercise and transportation system.

Don Harley and Associates

Don Harley was an entrepreneur with real-world skills, which helped his St. Paul design firm thrive from the 1950s through the 1980s. He served in the FBI during World War II, then as director of product development at the St. Paul promotional publishing company Brown & Bigelow, before going on his own.

Harley's firm designed hundreds of products for retail and industrial clients such as Honeywell, 3M, and Infanseat, one of the first producers of child safety seats. This group of renderings shows innovations in child safety seats between 1959 and 1973. Two nearby drawings show an imaginative concept for a safety car with a rotating cockpit. Used as "talking drawings" to discuss designs with clients, they seem straight from the TV show *Mad Men*—most had protective covers that could be pulled off for a reveal of the concept during a client meeting.

Dr. Tariq Rahman and the Wilmington Robotic Exoskeleton (WREX)

Imagine having full control of your hands and fingers, but not the strength to lift your arms. In the mid-1990s, Dr. Tariq Rahman, head of pediatric engineering at Nemours Biomedical Research in Delaware, developed a supportive exoskeleton to help children with neuromuscular conditions defy gravity and move their arms on their own.

Rahman went back and forth between sketching and creating prototypes, but the designs proved too bulky for small children, who soon outgrew them anyway. So Rahman and his team turned to 3D printing, pumping out parts in lightweight, inexpensive, but durable plastic that allowed them to design, test, and improve in a fraction of the time. Magic Arms for the World, a Minneapolis foundation, is now working with Rahman and the 3D printer company Stratasys, in Eden Prairie, to make the technology accessible to patients worldwide.

Crochet Reef Attribution

The Crochet Coral Reef is a project developed by Margaret and Christine Wertheim through their Los Angeles-based Institute For Figuring, an organization that aims to promote public understanding of the poetic and aesthetic dimensions of science and mathematics.

The large-scale Coral Forest sculptures here have been made by Margaret and Christine, and also incorporate pieces from a core group of Reef collaborators around the world: Sarah Simons (CA), Anna Mayer (CA), Jemima Wyman (CA), Christina Simons (LA), Evelyn Hardin (TX), Helen Bernasconi (Australia), Marianne Midelburg (Australia), Helle Jorgensen (Australia), Barbara Wertheim (Australia), Ildiko Szabo (England), Heather McCarren (CA), Dr. Axt (VT), Anitra Menning (CA), Shari Porter (CA), Clare O'Callaghan (CA), Kathleen Greco (PA), Nadia Severns (NY), Arlene Mintzer (NY), Jill Schrier (NY), Pamela Stiles (NY), Siew Chu Kerk (NY), Irene Lundgaard (Ireland), Orla Breslin (Ireland), Una Morrison (Ireland), Sally Giles (IL), Pate Conaway (IL), David Orozco (CA), Ann Wertheim (Australia), Elizabeth Wertheim (Australia), Katherine Wertheim (Australia), Lucinda Ganderton (UK), Beverly Griffiths (UK), Jane Canby (AZ), Jennifer White (AZ), Sharon Menges (AZ), Tane Clark (AZ), Nancy Youros (AZ), Gina Cacciolo (CA), Chantal Horeau (CA), Ying Wong (CA), Matthew Adnams (UAE), and Suha Malqi (UAE), and unknown Chinese factory workers.

The miniature Coral Pod-Worlds in the vitrines contain works by: Sarah Simons (CA), Diana Simons (CA), Vonda N. McIntyre (WA), Sue Von Ohlsen (PA), Rebecca Peapples (MI), Mieko Fukuhara (Japan), Anita Bruce (UK), Gunta Jekabsons (Latvia), Jane Canby (AZ), Dagma Frinta (NY), Lucia LaVilla-Havelin (TX), and wire models by contributors to the Chicago Satellite Reef and the Irish Satellite Reef.

Minneapolis Satellite Reef

In addition to the works displayed here, the Crochet Coral Reef project has a social dimension. Through the Institute For Figuring, the Wertheims work with communities in cities and countries around the globe to create local “satellite” reefs. So far, nearly 8,000 people have joined in making an ever-evolving archipelago of woolen reefs worldwide. This growing constellation now incorporates more than 35 local reefs in New York, London, Latvia, Ireland, Australia, Germany, and elsewhere.

Organized by the MIA and created by the community through the spring and summer of 2015, the Minneapolis Satellite Reef will be exhibited at the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization Community Facility (MWMO) from August 23 to September 30, 2015. Visit www.mwmo.org for more information.

For more information about the Reef project please visit www.crochetcoralreef.org.