

THE PROGRESSIVE FORUM

Great Minds, Great Answers

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For Immediate Release

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William McDonough at The Progressive Forum April 24, 2012

A preeminent leader of the sustainability movement, William McDonough will appear at The Progressive Forum, Tuesday, April 24, 2012, at the Wortham Center, Cullen Theater, at 7:30 PM. McDonough will greet fans and sign books at the end of the evening.

The event is produced in association with Architecture Center Houston Foundation. Other sponsors include Gensler and Hines Interests.

Tickets range from \$14 to \$54. A limited number of \$84 tickets are available which include a green room reception with Mr. McDonough at 6:15 PM and center-front seating. Tickets are available at www.ProgressiveForumHouston.org or by calling 832-251-0706. There is no physical box office except at the theater on event night.

Randall Morton, Progressive Forum president, said, “Houston has a dynamic architectural and building community, I’m delighted The Progressive Forum is moving into the field of the built-environment with such a visionary, designing for ‘the next industrial revolution.’ ”

An architect, designer, and sustainability pioneer, William McDonough is the co-author of the landmark classic, *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* (2002), a manifesto calling for the transformation of industry towards ecologically intelligent design.

The concept of Cradle to Cradle is inspired by nature. In a *Newsweek* interview,

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McDonough described it as a process where “everything is reused - either returned to the soil as nontoxic ‘biological nutrients,’ or returned to industry as ‘technical nutrients’ that can be infinitely recycled.”

He’s the founding principal of William McDonough + Partners, Charlottesville, Virginia, an architecture and community design firm. He is also the co-founder and principal, with German chemist Michael Braungart, of McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC), which employs Cradle to Cradle design protocols for chemical benchmarking, materials assessment, and sustainability optimization.

In 1999, *Time* magazine named him a “Hero for the Planet.”

McDonough has received three Presidential awards. In 1996, he became the first and only individual to receive the Presidential Award for Sustainable Development. In 2003, he received the Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Award for his work in science and industrial production. And in 2004, he received the U.S. National Design Award recognizing the best in American design.

He was formerly dean of the School of Architecture of the University of Virginia where he’s still a visiting professor. He’s a consulting professor at Stanford University in civil and environmental engineering. At the World Economic Forum, Davos, he served as chairman of the Global Agenda Council on the Future of Sustainable Construction.

One of his most famous projects is an eco-friendly restoration of the city-size Ford Motor River Rouge Complex near Dearborn, Michigan. It now features the world’s largest green roof,

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saving the company millions a year in utility costs. In 2002, the project rolled out 10.5 acres of sedum over the truck assembly plant. Sedum is a low-growing ground cover that absorbs water quickly, as well as provides a natural habitat. Faced with an estimated \$50 million to cleanup toxic storm water that flowed across the vast area of impervious surfaces, McDonough created a system that included wet meadow gardens, porous paving, and bioswales that cleanse and convey the storm water across the site, a system implemented for \$15 million, less than a third of conventional practices. The green roof of sedum also provides insulation to moderate internal temperatures, as well as a natural habitat.

For the furniture maker, Herman Miller, McDonough designed a 295,000 square foot factory and office building called “The Greenhouse.” Constructed in 1993, the building won *Business Week*’s first ‘Good Design is Good Business’ award for documented impacts on the top and bottom line.

McDonough co-founded the Make It Right Foundation New Orleans with Brad Pitt. The organizations is dedicated to rebuilding the Lower Ninth Ward after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. The designs incorporate roof-mounted PV panels, water cisterns, and rain gardens to absorb storm runoff. Responding to the Gulf Coast’s hot, humid climate, the designs provide cool shaded spaces and passive ventilation. To help preserve community spirit, views are available up and down the street, which is also good for security. The materials palette is comprised of Cradle to Cradle Certified products, designed to maintain materials in a sustainable biological cycle, with disassembly strategies for recycling.

Currently under construction, the NASA Research Center’s Sustainability Base, Moffett Field, California, is designed to be a facility that, in time, will utilize only renewable energy, and

provide more energy than it uses. NASA expectations are for the “greenest, highest performing building in the federal government.” The building’s exoskeleton approach offers increased structural performance during seismic events, provides an armature for day-lighting and shading strategies, and creates a column-free interior that facilitates workplace flexibility.

The Progressive Forum is a nonprofit 501(C)(3) civic speaker organization presenting its events at The Wortham Center. It’s the only civic speaker organization in America dedicated expressly to progressive values. Its purpose is to enrich our democracy and culture by striving to present the greatest minds from all the fields of human endeavor, the sciences and the humanities as well as politics and public affairs, great minds it believes are advancing the success of individuals, our species, and life on the earth.

The Progressive Forum premiered on June 13, 2005, with Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Houston Mayor Bill White in a program called “Our Environmental Challenges.” Since then, The Progressive Forum has produced a number of highly acclaimed events. Al Gore launched *An Inconvenient Truth* at The Progressive Forum June 7, 2006, his first U.S. book event for that title. On September 17, 2008, Gloria Steinem celebrated the 30th anniversary of the historic National Women’s Conference held in Houston. On March 27, 2008, Robert Redford introduced a film he produced and narrated, *Fighting Goliath: Texas Coal Wars*, a documentary about 32 Texas cities banding together opposing coal plant permits. In June 12, 2009, Nancy Pelosi became the first sitting U.S. House Speaker to make a public appearance in Houston in modern times. On December 7, 2009, The Progressive Forum produced the national launch event for the first book by premier climatologist James Hansen of NASA, *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth*

about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our last Chance to Save Humanity. And in 2010, The Progressive Forum presented John Paul Stevens, the first U.S. Supreme Court Justice to appear in a public event in Houston.

Other speakers have included Karen Armstrong, Lester Brown, Ken Burns, Richard Dawkins, Jared Diamond, Sylvia Earle, Elizabeth Edwards, Tim Flannery, Jane Goodall, Brian Greene, Arianna Huffington, Seymour Hersh, Molly Ivins, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Bill Moyers, George Soros, Edward O. Wilson, Frank Rich, Garrison Keillor, Joe Klein, Anna Deavere Smith, George Lakoff, Richard Leakey, Bill McKibben, Eric Schlosser, T. Boone Pickens, Michael Pollan, Larry Wilmore, and Edward O. Wilson.

The Progressive Forum originated a new model in civic speaker organizations in Houston to deliver a larger audience and a higher quality experience in a theater rather than a hotel luncheon as with traditional speaker organizations. The Progressive Forum model is similar to that of a performing arts company by using the finest theaters, paying speaker fees to present the top intellectual stars, and marketing to the public throughout the region rather than just organizational members. It offers convenient box office services through its website allowing ticket buyers to print tickets at their computer in addition to traditional phone sales.

Founder and president, Randall R. Morton has owned Randall Morton International, Inc. for 36 years, an independent advertising and public relations agency whose clients have included leading oil equipment in the U.S., Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Morton co-created, co-produced, and co-hosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum from 1994 to 2003, a another speaker platform which is still the largest in the oil industry. While earning a

degree in government from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee. At Georgetown, he was ranked third nationally as a pass receiver in nonscholarship football. He earned a second B.A. degree from the University of Tulsa in communications where he later served as an adjunct professor teaching advertising design and copy writing. He is married to former prima ballerina with Houston Ballet, Suzanne Longley, and they have two children.