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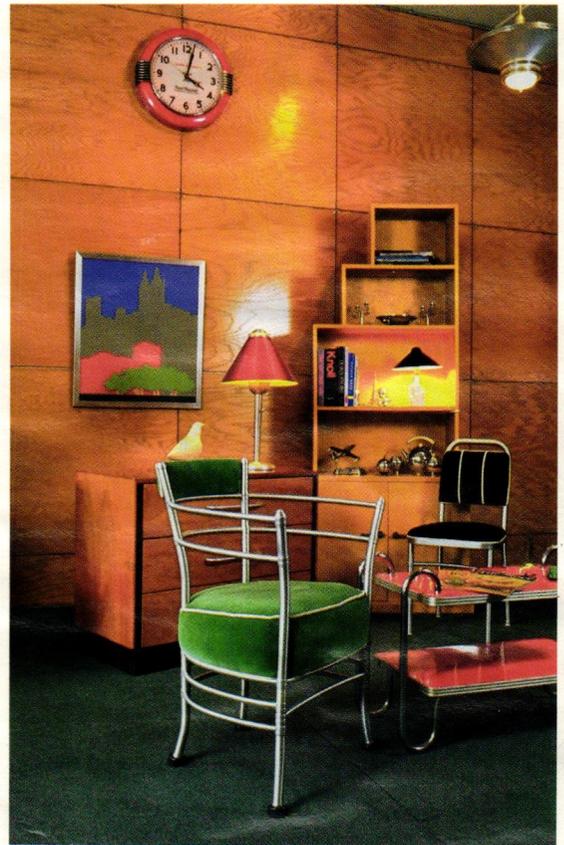
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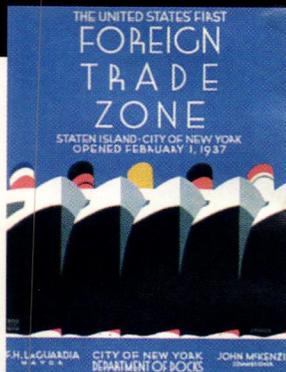
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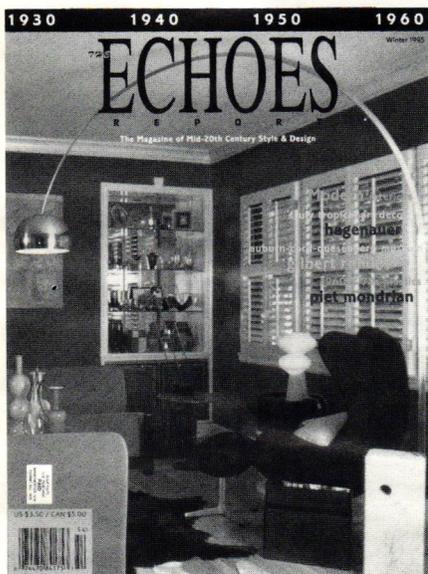
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WINTER 1995 VOLUME 4 NUMBER 3



**On The Cover**  
The living room of Scott Reilly's townhouse is a sophisticated blend of high-end 1960s and '70s designs, with notable pieces from the '40s and '50s added to the mix. For a complete view of Reilly's interior, see the Modern Quarters feature on page 34.

## 10 Truly Tropical Art Deco

by *Juan Carlos Perez*  
Architect Pedro Mendez Mercado adapted the Art Deco style to the needs of the island of Puerto Rico.

## 24 Werkstätten Hagenauer

by *Tran Turner*  
Tran Turner traces the history and achievements of the Werkstätten Hagenauer, about which little has been written, until now.

## 26 Vintage Viewpoint

by *Shawn Bradway*  
The end of another year provides an occasion for Shawn Bradway to reveal his thoughts on the state and direction of the vintage clothing market.

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by *Scott David Reilly*  
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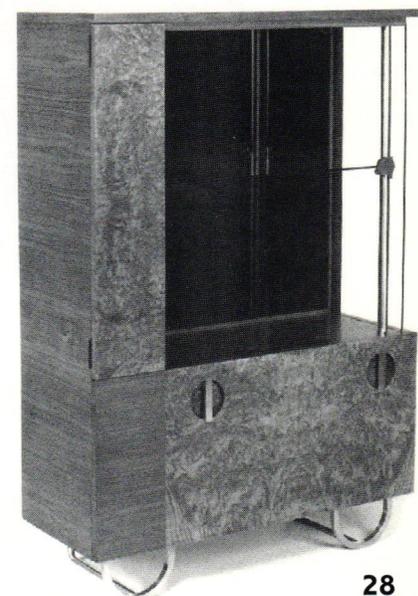
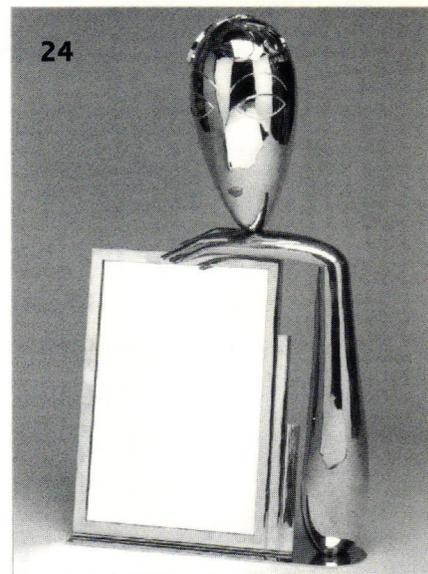
Scott Reilly's town house is a colorful mix of 1960s and '70s pop art and plastic.

## 38 Piet Mondrian

by *Jim Sweeney*  
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# what's hot

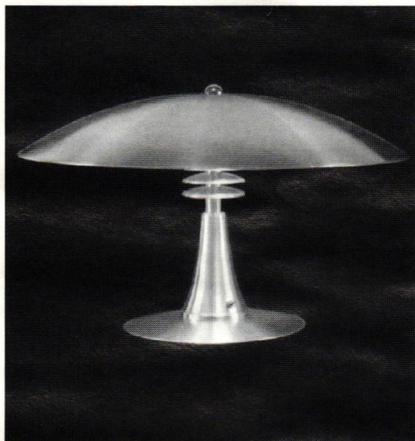
NEW & NOTEWORTHY



**airline chair** Designed in 1935 by architect and streamline pioneer Kem Weber, the Airline chair was greeted with great fanfare for its unique cantilever construction and sleek profile. Praised as one of the great designs of its day, it is still remembered as a hallmark of the streamline era. Despite this, Kem Weber never found a manufacturer to put the Airline chair into regular production - in part because it was too far ahead of its time. Today, in an exclusive arrangement with the Kem Weber Drawing Collection, Modernica is offering the Airline chair as a standard production item for the first time (213) 933-0383.

# what's hot

NEW & NOTEWORTHY



## Utrecht 637

Gerrit T. Rietveld's circa 1935 Utrecht 637 chair is part of Cassina's Masters Collection of licensed reproductions. The armchair, constructed of a wooden structure, polyurethane foam, polyester padding and fabric upholstery, measures 27.56 inches high by 33.46 inches deep by 19.29 inches wide, and is available from Cassina USA Inc. in New York (516 423-4560).

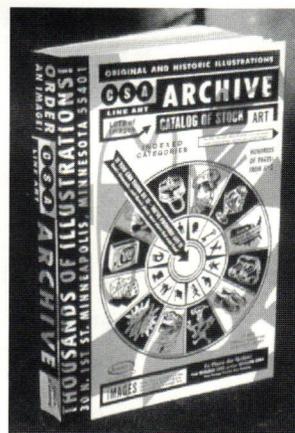
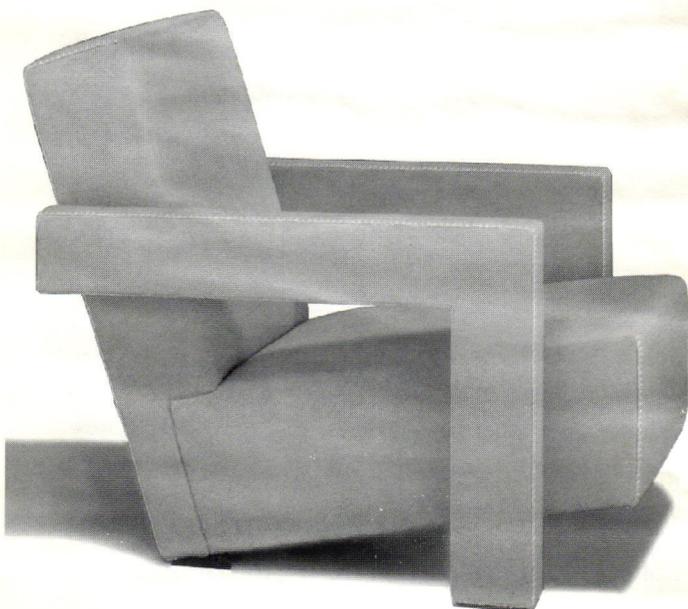
## Vespa Scooter

The famous Piaggio 1960 Clubman, the most favored transportation from that era, has been recreated in die-cast metal at 1:6 scale. The scooter measures 10 inches long by 6 inches high and is available in red with white and black trim, \$60.00. From Deco Echoes, PO Box 2321, Mashpee, MA 02649; 800-695-5768.

## Aluminum Illumination

These fabulous hand-polished, spun aluminum lamps have been recently issued by Modernica. The Berlina Lamp (*far left*) measures 15 inches high by 23 inches wide, while the Metro Lamp (*left*) stands 16.5 inches high and measures 12.25 inches

across. Both lamps, along with several other styles of Machine Age inspired spun aluminum lamps, are available from Modernica in Los Angeles (213-933-0383).



## CSA Archive Catalog

A must for designers, ad agencies and collectors, this limited-edition hard-cover volume highlights over 8,000 historic and original line art images from the CSA Archive. The Catalog is a copyrighted stock resource, with images available for a usage fee. In addition to ordering images in the Catalog, you may request an Archive-wide search for other images that may not be included in the book. \$49.95 + \$5 ship from CSA Archive (PO Box 581639, Minneapolis, MN 55458-1639; 612-339-1263).

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## Truly Tropical Art Deco

*Text and Photographs by Juan Carlos Perez*

GUARDED SILENTLY BY PALM TREES, and caressed by pristine waters, the luxurious Condado sector in San Juan, Puerto Rico, was nothing more than a sleepy town in the 1930s. Big, residential manors, delicate in their architecture, formed the future tourist heaven it is today.

The metamorphosis began one day in 1935 when, practically overnight, its facade changed. And this happened because of Miami. Not Miami the city, but Miami the apartment building. Originally built for an ex-minister of the interior of Venezuela, Antonio Diaz Gonzalez, the seven-story structure, which cost \$90,000 to build on the then Nereidas Boulevard, caused quite a stir. There was no other building like it.

Art Deco had arrived in Puerto Rico, one of the territories the United States won from Spain in the 1898 Spanish-American War. And the man responsible for bringing to the island what made Miami Beach famous was someone who died in relative obscurity, Pedro Mendez Mercado.

Mendez's work was the definitive example of a concrete migration of architectural styles, and how they adapt to their new environment. "Art Deco was born in Paris, and from there it travelled to New York, Miami Beach, other North American cities, and eventually San Juan," explains Kate Rawlinson,

associate curator at Miami's Center for the Fine Arts (CFA), and former director of galleries at Miami-Dade Community College's Wolfson Campus.

"Puerto Rican architects such as Mendez, who studied in this country during the '20s, were influenced by the currents in the field at that time," she says. "But Mendez did more than Art Deco. He wanted to use some of the standards of architecture here, take them to Puerto Rico, and work with the forms, keeping in mind the needs of the island."

The Art Deco movement became one of advancement for the Puerto Rican architects, who were hungry for new styles. The mostly capitalist drive that brought on the construction of hotels and apartment complexes in places like Miami Beach, however, was not the case in Puerto Rico. There, the driving force was a sense of public service, due to the fact that many of the architects in Puerto Rico were employed by the government.

Working for a governmental agency, though, also meant working in anonymity. Mendez thus became part of a generation of architects that fell into oblivion once the modernist movement set in. "They were in a very difficult situation," explains Dr. Enrique Vivoni, director of the Archives of Architecture and Construction at the University of *continued on page 13*

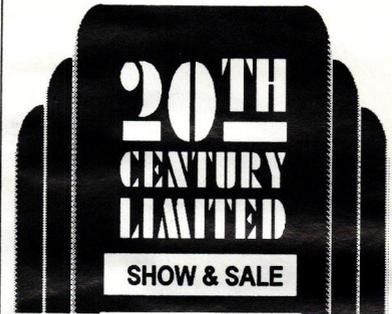
**Above left: Pedro Mendez Mercado's Miami Apartments c.1995, now a condominium in it's third renovation. Average price per unit: \$250,000. Above right: The Miami under renovation, c.1993. Another jewel next door, El Palomar, was turned into a parking lot**

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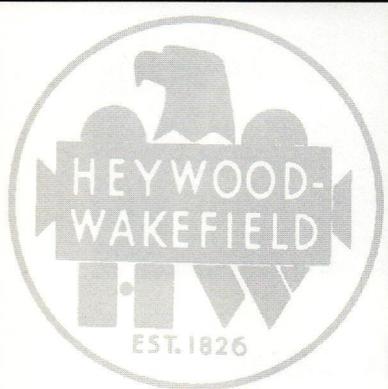
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# spotlight

TEXT BY SHARON OGAN PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY THE AUBURN-CORD-DUESENBERG MUSEUM



## Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum

"THE ART OF BUILDING, OR ARCHITECTURE, IS THE BEGINNING OF ALL arts." Author Havelock Ellis hit it right on the nose. Especially when talking about the Art Deco style. This style of architecture resonates with elegance and sophistication. The impressive showroom of the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum is no exception. From marble floors to crystal chandeliers, the building is a fine example of Art Deco style. Fill it with some of the most beautiful automobiles of all time and you are in for a real treat.

The A-C-D Museum in Auburn, Indiana, is housed in what was originally the dealer's showroom for the Auburn Automobile Company. Auburn dealers from

across the United States came here to see the new models and place their orders. Today more than 100 cars from the 1890s to the 1970s occupy two floors of the company's 1930s headquarters.

In 1924, the Auburn Automobile Company was teetering on the brink of ruin. E.L. Cord was hired as sales manager, with his initial job being to sell 700 Auburns that had been sitting on the lot since early 1923. He had those cars painted in bright colors. He added nickel plating. Then he sold \$60,000 worth of the rejuvenated Auburns. He used some of that money to produce a new line of Auburn cars which were a combination of power and beauty. In 1926, as President of the

Auburn Company, Cord bought the Duesenberg Automobile Corporation. The Duesenberg Model J became the first American car to epitomize both strength and style. Later, less-expensive Auburns and Cords were added to the line, allowing the middle-class to feel equally genteel.

Cord wanted a building which reflected the company's success. He commissioned Fort Wayne architect A.M. Strauss to design a building in the Art Deco style. *continued on page 52*

**Above: The museum exterior is a classic of Art Deco design. Inside, shiny terrazo floors, decorative ceiling moldings and beautiful chandeliers add to the elegance of the showroom.**

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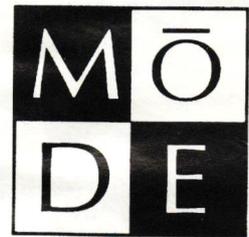
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# modern eye

FACTS, DETAILS, CONNECTIONS TEXT BY STEVEN CABELLA



*Vintage theater-goers; Eames molded plywood chair; George Nelson firescreen, originally \$25; Do-It-Yourself brochure containing plans for a Nelson storage wall*

## Lights, Camera, Architecture.....

All right, enough calls about the rarely seen film *Five*, Mr. Ober's Sci-Fi flick filmed in his L.A. home, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Although I mentioned it in my last column, I don't know where you can get a copy. So if anybody out there does, let me know and I'll pass the information on to those of you who seek vintage films featuring modern furnishings.

For now, let's look at another film dramatizing Hollywood's love/hate relationship with architects. *The Second Woman* is a disturbing little flick starring that "Father Knows Best" guy, Robert Young, who plays a persecuted architect whose artwork, home, and furnishings are mysteriously destroyed. If you get a good print you will be able to see, as the hero walks by a burned out modern room, a pair of barely singed Eames chairs, that have survived the fire intact, with their backs on upside down.

Obviously this is the work of a maniac with a hidden resentment! Also keep an eye out for the Baldwin-Weese teacart Robert Young mixes cocktails from - it was a winner in the 1941 Organic Design Competition at MOMA. Despite its prissy leading lady, for modern design fans this is one scorching feature...Watch for the burning of the Richard Neutra-inspired architectural model, and the lame attempt to save it! This one is available, so check it out.

## How Much Was That?....

Writes G.G. from E.E. "Can you give us an idea of what people paid originally for modern



furniture in the 1950s? Like an Eames chair?"

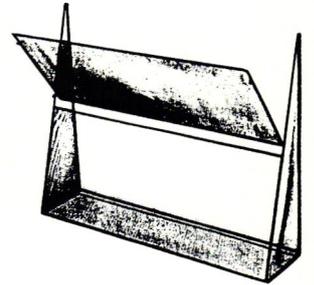
If it was an Eames all wood dining chair that you had the good taste to purchase in 1950, it would have set you back \$35.50, about the cost of four new tires for your car. When they first came out they were intended for indoor/outdoor use and were coated in clear melamine for this purpose. The original projected budget price was supposed to have been under \$20 each!

Some other things that might have been on the young modern's shopping list: Eames folding dining table for H. Miller - \$95 Paul McCobb 6ft. platform bench - \$17.95 George Nelson 6ft. slat bench - \$65 Noguchi glass top cocktail table - \$223 Nelson clocks for Howard Miller - \$19-\$60 The Bawa Lounge Chair - \$32.50 Noguchi lantern for Knoll - \$20.50

## George Nelson, Out of His Mind.....

Dean from Georgia writes, "We all know about George Nelson's popular furniture, clock and lamp designs, but what else did he do?"

O.K. Let's look at some of Mr. Nelson's other stuff. In my files there are over sixty illustrations of clocks designed for the Howard Miller Company, but fewer people know about the many other products he did for the same



company, such as the bent plywood letter-tray he designed in 1946. In the Fifties he created an entire line of very useful modern fireplace accessories that were said to be the first of it's kind. Also, from the same period comes his modern-styled birdhouse and weathervane and later in the Fifties Howard Miller produced his "Ribbon Wall," "Netlites" and indoor planters. Nelson also worked for other companies as well, designing printed fabrics, the Omni storage system, Avard furniture and the "Florence" line of plastic dishes for Prolon.



*- Steve Cabella has been collecting vintage modern furniture, products and design facts for nearly 20 years and he is happy to answer your questions and share your interests. Write to (include a SASE): Steve Cabella, Modern i Gallery, 500 Red Hill Avenue, San Anselmo, CA 94960.*

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# auction highlights

REVIEWS, RESULTS & PREVIEWS OF 20TH CENTURY AUCTIONS



**ON MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 1995** Auctioneers Butterfield & Butterfield sold more than \$369,000 of sports memorabilia featuring property from the collection of Bruce McNall. The property, which included sports collectibles of the late Mickey Mantle, exceeded expectations by 114%.

Media crews crowded the preview and auction mainly in response to the passing of Mantle, a baseball Hall of Famer, the morning prior to the sale. A Mantle 1952 "rookie" card (Topps #311) sold for \$24,150 to a Southern California sports memorabilia dealer, while a reproduction jersey signed by Mantle brought \$977.50. A Mantle autographed baseball brought \$488.75, and a photograph and signed check written by the NY Yankees to Mantle, their center fielder, sold for \$575. The impressive prices realized demonstrated the interest in and appreciation for Mickey Mantle collectibles.

Other baseball items selling very well included an exceptionally rare T-206 Ty Cobb card with a Ty Cobb back which sold for \$19,550. The sale's highest achieving lot was a T206 White Border baseball card set which garnered great interest and sold for \$60,250.

Several lots of hockey jerseys were offered stemming from McNall, a former

owner of the LA Kings. His collection, considered one of the most outstanding accumulations of sports memorabilia ever assembled, was sold by order of a bankruptcy trustee. One lot of five King's jerseys tripled its estimate to sell for \$2,300, while consistently solid prices were paid for signed hockey sticks, lithographs and coins.

Complete sets of cards sold well - a 1957-58 Topps baseball set featuring "Rookie" cards for Bob Cousy and Bill Russell brought \$2,070, while a complete set of 1952 Topps All American Football cards featuring Knute Rockney and Red Grange brought \$1,840.

**A LARGE AND ENTHUSIASTIC** crowd at the preview set the stage for competitive bidding at Don Treadway and John Toomey's 20th Century Auction on August 27 in Oak Park, IL. Session Three of the sale was comprised of over 360 items from the 1950s/Modern and Art Deco movements, as well as Italian Glass. The session opened with two Alvar Aalto armchairs selling for \$1,760 each. An extremely rare chair by Marcel Breuer, designed during his first year in America, of birch plywood construction in original finish, sold for \$8,250, well above its' presale estimate of

\$4,000-6,000. A classic Jean Prouve Compas desk with white laminated top on a double bank of grey metal drawers brought \$3,850.

Two George Nelson pieces, manufactured by Herman Miller, sold well. An elegant Thin Edge cabinet with ten drawers in rich rosewood veneer brought \$3,570, and an Action office desk with wooden top, black lacquer sides and aluminum legs, sold for \$2,310. A Gilbert Rohde dining table, also manufactured by Herman Miller, with a double U-base and an inlaid checkerboard pattern brought well above the expected \$1,000-1,500, selling for \$2,420. A vanity of dramatic design by Rohde, featuring mahogany veneer and three round brass-framed mirrors, brought \$4,500.

Bidders' attentions turned toward the extremely rare Rudder table by Isamu Noguchi with a birch veneered top on one birch and two metal parabolic legs that finally sold for \$13,000. A set of four Norman Cherner armchairs of walnut plywood molded seat and back and elegantly curved arms brought \$2,310, and a Poul Henningsen Artichoke hanging lamp brought well over twice its' presale estimate selling for \$2,920.

The shining star of Session Three was the brilliant *continued on page 22*

**Above:** Viktor Schreckengost's "Egyptian Blue" Jazz Bowl, featuring sgraffito decoration depicting New York City on New Year's Eve. Estimated at \$10,000-\$15,000, the Jazz Bowl sold for \$18,700 at Treadway Galleries' August 27th 20th Century Auction

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**Auction Highlights**

(continued from page 20) "Egyptian Blue" Jazz Bowl by Viktor Schreckengost, c.1931. Jazz Bowls in previous sales have been the focus of great interest and this one did not disappoint. Estimated at \$10,000-15,000, the Jazz Bowl sold for \$18,700.

**ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1995, STUART Waldman Auctions and Uniques & Antiques Auction sales** hosted a 20th Century Design Auction in Glenolden, PA. Highlights of the decorative accessories offered in the sale included a rare George Nelson steering wheel clock, manufactured by the Herman Miller Co. with a brass center, which brought \$302.50; a multicolored Higgins free-form footed bowl with an internal fish decoration and applied conical glass drip feet achieved \$715; a pair of iridescent clear glass Hawaiian dancers with green skirts, necklaces and trim on clear domed bases sold for \$522.50, and a Murano handkerchief vase with bands of blue and purple with a paper label sold for \$467.50.

Furnishing sales of note included a signed Heywood-Wakefield square cock-

tail table with "x" stretcher which realized \$412.50, and an Isamu Noguchi children's table, manufactured by Knoll, with a black circular metal base and white laminated plywood top, in excellent condition with paper label, which achieved \$1,430.

Other sale highlights included a Lightolier floor lamp with nine metal shades, three each of black, white and red, which sold for \$550, and a length of vintage fabric featuring a wonderful multicolored interlocking design which realized \$440.

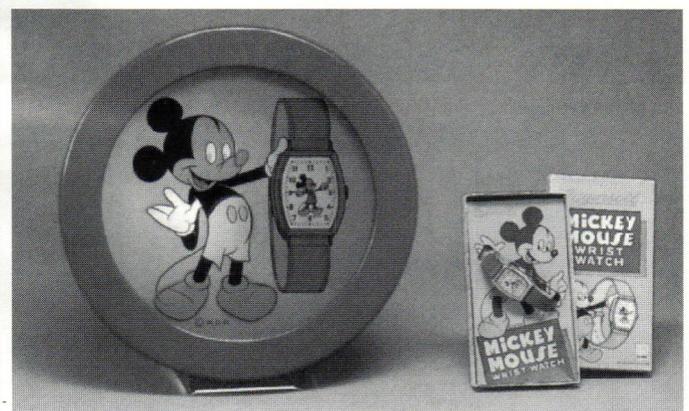
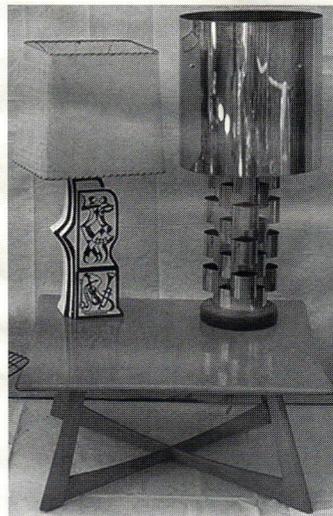
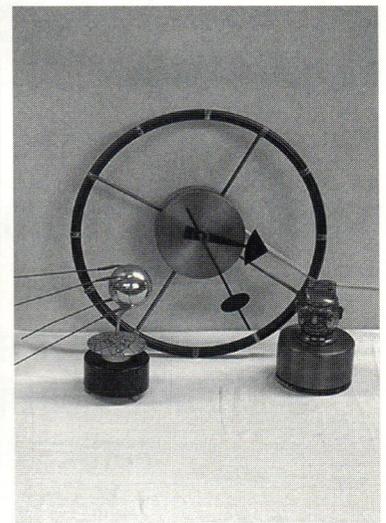
**SOTHEBY'S PHOTOGRAPHS SALE** held on October 5th brought \$2,559,070, the fourth highest total realized for a Photographs auction at Sotheby's. A star lot in the sale was one of only four known examples of the most famous version of Man Ray's important *Larmes de Verre* (Glass Tears), c.1932, which sold for the strong price of \$266,500. Man Ray did at least six different versions of this theme and this is the most famous of all of them, showing a close-up of both eyes with five glass tears. Two bidders competed vigorously for the photograph, one in the

saleroom and one on the phone. The resulting price was the third highest fetched by a photograph at auction.

Other highlights of the sale included Edward Weston's *Nude on Sand*, one of a series of a dozen images of Charis Weston lying nude against the pale, textured backdrop of the dunes of Oceano, California, which sold for an impressive \$79,500. Man Ray's *Lee Miller*, a sequence of three photographs, each an image of *Lee Miller Disrobing Before a Sunlit Window*, sold for \$61,900. A third female nude portrait, Andre Kertesz's *Distortion #172* sold for \$43,700, more than double its presale high estimate.

**ON OCTOBER 5 AND 6 CHRISTIE'S** held a two-day Photographs Sale. Highlights from Part I included Man Ray's *Noire et Blanche*, Paris, c.1926, which achieved the top lot position by selling for \$206,000. Imogen Cunningham's *Magnolia Blossom*, c.1925 realized \$70,700, and a record was set for Paul Strand when *Ranchos do Taos Church*, New Mexico, c.1932, sold for \$63,000.

Sales of note continued on page 44



Clockwise from top left: A Jean Prouve Compas desk sold for \$3,850 at Treadway's August 27 20th Century Auction; Elvis Presley's red "Burnin' Love" stage suit, early 1970s, realized \$107,000 at Butterfield & Butterfield's October 6-7 Elvis Presley Memorabilia Auction; A George Nelson steering wheel clock garnered \$302.50, an Isamu Noguchi children's table for Knoll achieved \$1,430, a Lightolier floor lamp sold for \$550, and a Heywood-Wakefield coffee table realized \$412.50 at Uniques & Antiques September 14 20th Century Design Auction; A rare 1947 Mickey mouse display with an Ingersoll Mickey watch in its box brought \$23,000 at Butterfield & Butterfield's October 14 & 15 Entertainment Memorabilia Sale

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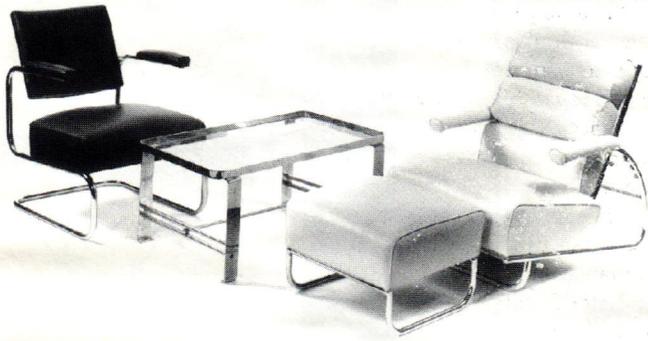
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# Gilbert Rohde

Innovator, Entrepreneur, Catalyst

THE HISTORY OF DESIGN is marked by a movement toward simplicity of form, truth to materials and unity of expression. In the early 20th century, the furniture designer Gilbert Rohde successfully integrated these themes in the creation of a modern style. Through his use of new forms and materials, new manufacturing procedures and new merchandising approaches, he played a crucial role in the introduction, promotion and evolution of modern design.

Gilbert Rohde was born on June 1, 1894. Little is known of his early life. His father, Max, emigrated to the U.S. from Eastern Prussia and settled in New York City as a cabinet maker. His mother, Mathilda, was a homemaker. A precocious youth who dabbled in painting, chemistry, electricity and engineering, Gilbert originally desired to be an architect. Family finances dictated otherwise and upon high school graduation, Gilbert worked at various jobs including photography, newspaper reporting, political cartooning and freelance furniture illustration. In 1923, he was hired as a full-time furniture illustrator for the New York department store Abraham & Straus. There he met his future wife Gladys Vorsanger who, in 1927, persuaded him to visit Europe and pursue his interest in furniture design. This trip proved enlightening: in Paris, Rohde became aware of French avant-garde furniture; in Germany, he learned of the Bauhaus designers and architects.



Upon his return to New York, Rohde opened his own industrial design office and began producing his own furniture. The extensive use of bakelite and chrome in these early pieces perhaps owed to his recent exposure to Bauhaus designs. He also worked on several commissions: decorating the Avedon fashion stores in Connecticut as well as the design and furnishings for the Norman Lee penthouse in New York City. This latter job received considerable attention. Articles on its design and furnishings were featured in both national and international publications.

Although Rohde enjoyed this early work, he found its scope too limited. A main goal was to produce quality modern furniture for the mass market. Furniture output in the 1920s consisted primarily of historical reproductions of antiques or designs based on historicism. Some modern furniture was available, however its cost prohibited its purchase to but a relative few. In 1930, Rohde obtained his first commercial contract with the Heywood-Wakefield company thereby allowing him the opportunity to move towards realizing his goal. The contract was for a comprehensive line of indoor and outdoor furniture. A bentwood side chair, whose design suggested an affinity with the work of Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto, was the most noted piece from this contract. Its popularity was so great that variations of the design were later produced by both the Kroehler Manufacturing and the Herman Miller Furniture companies.

Perhaps the most important step in achieving Rohde's goal was his association with the Herman Miller Company. His beginning with the company, however, was not an easy one. In



early 1930, Rohde approached various furniture companies in hopes of producing his contemporary designs. The conservative nature of the furniture companies along with the limited market caused by the Great Depression made this task seemingly impossible. A Herman Miller salesperson stated: "All of the art moderne designs in the late twenties were closeouts... the trouble was that nobody believed in contemporary furniture. The forms were unacceptable and they were not accepted."<sup>1</sup> In spite of these obstacles, Rohde was able to convince two companies - the John Widdicomb Company and the Herman Miller Company to take a chance with his designs. To Herman Miller, Rohde "promoted himself as a 'student of living' claiming 'I know how people live...and I know how they are going to live. Modern living calls for smaller houses with lower ceilings and this in turn calls for a different kind of furniture.'"<sup>2</sup>

Rohde's first line for the Herman Miller Company, however, was considered too severe and unacceptable by most at the company. Steadfast in his belief that the furniture would be publicly accepted, Rohde refused to alter his designs; the smaller, simplified forms fit well with the smaller living quarters and increased mobility of the public. D.J. DePree, the founder of the company, finally agreed and Rohde's first Herman Miller furniture line was produced. DePree said at the time:

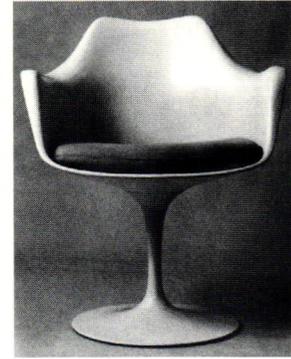
"I came to see that the starting point of our design had been immoral. It was immoral chiefly in its pretense, but that pretense hid other immoralities: moldings and carvings were used to conceal sins of sloppy workmanship, for instance. With his simplicity, Rohde had taken away our means of covering up. We had to learn new manufacturing techniques, such as how to make mitered joints in a very precise way."<sup>3</sup>

Happily, a major New York furniture retailer purchased a good quantity of Rohde's new line and secured his position with Herman Miller.<sup>4</sup>

Later Rohde-designed Herman Miller furniture continued to build upon his "student of living" philosophy. The concepts of storage spaces, sectional sofas and modular furniture units were introduced to the mass market. Rohde's "Living-Sleeping-Dining" group further expanded the philosophy by providing a multiplicity of function - the pieces could be used in any room of the house. The Executive Office Group (EOG), fifteen pieces that could be combined into four hundred groupings, took Rohde's theme into another market - that of office furniture. The EOG also entered Herman Miller into a new industry market. Previously Miller sold only household furniture. The EOG line brought them into the office furniture market where they had never before contended. This feat was important not *continued on page 37*



**Opposite page, clockwise from top: Gilbert Rohde armchair, manufactured by Troy-Sunshade, c.1930s, with cantilevered chromed tubular metal frame and black leather upholstery, and a rare and elegant Rohde reclining chair and ottoman, manufactured by Troy-Sunshade, c.1934, of tubular chrome with cream leatherette upholstery, adjustable back; An important Rohde Art Deco china cabinet, manufactured by Herman Miller, c.1930s, of walnut with inlaid contrasting lightly burlled veneer, on chrome U-legs with chrome pulls; Rohde armchair, manufactured by Herman Miller, c.1930s, a massive streamlined form on walnut block feet; Rohde buffet and dining table with chairs, manufactured by Herman Miller, c.1930s, of walnut with inlaid contrasting lightly burlled veneer**



Saarinen, Eames, Jacobsen - and own services" by each. Yet, my modernism is truly by the bold colors, shapes, and materials' of the "Neo-Modern" followed. This period lived with the majority of great design being manufactured in Europe, particularly Italy. A truly unique and historically unprecedented aesthetic developed which was underscored by great social upheaval and the changing culture of the times, yet the catalyst for the aesthetic was the technology itself. Indeed, the notion of *absolute* organic design was not new; the technology to mass-produced it was.

Nelson, and eral "classical" passion for manifested unusual applicationism" which was short-

In the late 1940s, the United States experienced a well-documented and recently much discussed modern movement which included a nexus of post-war designers who forever changed the way we think about home furnishings. These designers faced a challenge of conceptually challenging and changing the design of domestic objects through shape and form with a strong sensitivity to ergonomics. While working with post-war technological advances in materials and production, it was not until the late 1960s that the imaginations of designers around the world were truly freed to create objects which had no historic precedent - indeed, the decorative arts from this period could have been created in no previous time and, while well-documented, have remained in an relatively unexcavated neo-modernist limbo.

Verner Panton designed his classic prototype chair of a single unjointed material in 1960, yet the technology to mass-produce the chair did not exist until 1967; Finnish designer Eero Aarnio was able to create a truly novel form with his *Pastille* chair from 1968, and, in 1966, Chilean Roberto Sebastian Matta created *Malitte*, a five-piece upholstered foam jigsaw puzzle which could be personally arranged for seating. While plastic and foam were not new materials, the technological advances within the industry, improvements to the materials themselves, and the production of injection molds for the mass-production of large items, allowed their creation.

# POP GOES THE PLASTIC:

## The Visual and Cultural Aesthetic of a New Technology, 1960-1975

In 1975, an enthusiastic eleven year old on a trip to the mall with Mom was smitten with a chocolate brown plastic chair which was so space-age modern. The chair was a floor sample on sale for \$59 at Bloomingdale's; needless to say, the chair remained at Bloomie's, but he vowed that someday he would own one.

Ten Verner Panton chairs later (although chocolate brown plastic is no longer a favorite), this collector has developed an ever-consuming passion for design from the late 1960s through the early '70s, with an emphasis on plastics and upholstered foam. As a collector of modernism, I have long admired the work of American and Scandinavian mid-century architects -

Expanded polyurethane foam freed furniture from the restriction of traditional construction. The development of soft foam forms permitted the creation of endless variations in modular seating and hard foams with simultaneously molded "outer-skins" resulted in a plethora of eccentric forms including Gufram's late 1960s icons - blades of grass to sit on, coat racks in the shape of cacti, and boulders, rocks, and column capitals on which to rest.

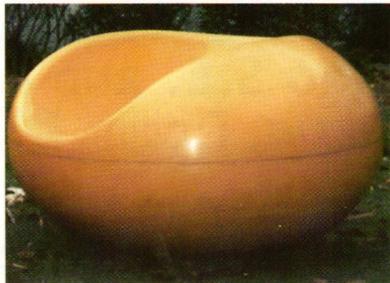
Wet-look polyurethanes, glossy ABS, and transparent acrylics and PVC's all made for a shiny image of chairs, jewelry, and dinnerware. Large objects could be blow-molded and plastics

**This page: Verner Panton's cantilevered chair for Herman Miller, the first to be made out of one piece of plastic; Eero Saarinen's Pedestal chair for Knoll. Opposite page clockwise from top: A row of JVC VideoSphere televisions; Additional Seating System of jersey-covered polyurethane foam slabs by Joe Colombo; Eero Aarnio's Pastille chair; Stacking storage units by Anna Castelli Ferrieri**

Text by Scott David Reilly

could be inflated using air as the support mechanism for seating. Zanotta's *Blow* chair from 1967, along with the endless designs manufactured by Italy's Kartell are a testament to the new aesthetic which the technology enabled.

Simply stated, it provided the medium for designers to push the envelope with shape and form to create objects which often do not resemble their intended function. An orange plastic chair which looks like a cross between an M&M and an alien spacecraft had no historic precedent. It was a time of mannerism - creating decorative arts in unusual shapes for the sake of now being able to create them. The social and cultural climates were



ripe for change and the "fun furniture" from the 1960s was ushered in by a new generation of designers which radically broke and rebelled against all prior rational and functional theories. Furniture no longer existed within a room, it existed as an integral part of a domestic environment. While the concept appears to be radical, designers from the 1950s were moving towards this logical end. A plastic Panton chair emerges organically from the floor with no "legs" in the traditional sense of how a chair is supported. The surface to be used and the physical support for its use have been integrated. One need only look at Eero Saarinen's *Pedestal Group* for Knoll in 1957 to see the logical transition. Saarinen's solution for cleaning up

what he deemed "the slum of legs" was through a single pedestal acting as a "leg." Panton, in essence, made the "leg" part of the seat.

With upholstered foam seating, the same organic unity was achieved. Kadzuhide Takahama's *Marcel*, *Raymond*, and *Suzanne* (1965) seating systems for Gavina and subsequently for Knoll are simply blocks of upholstered foam in various sizes which can be attached in endless combinations to create personalized seating. This block of foam provides not only the surface to be used, but serves as the physical support for the seating itself.

The need to stack, store, personally arrange, assemble, inflate and "throw away" were the operative phrases for a society which was becoming increasingly mobile and informal. It also anticipated what our home furnishings' needs would be in outer space and with space travel. This visionary nature of design had its obvious roots in our race to space. These objects did not convey a sense of the present, they rather provoked a future - the shape of things to come. The race to space prompted a number of articles on life in the future and the advances we would all enjoy by the year 2000. For those of us who still lived on Earth, our cities



would be enclosed in giant spheres through which we would meander in the air on jet-packs; for those of us opting to live "off-world" we would live in self-contained compact domestic environments with all the comforts of home at the flick of a button.

2001: *A Space Odyssey*; *Run Silent, Run Deep*; *Soylent Green*; *Barbarella*; *Sleeper*; *Logan's Run*; *Space 1999* were the films which showed us what our lives would be like in the near future and European designers all created and used the decorative arts from the present to evoke this aesthetic of the future. The enthusiasm for what the future held was manifest through the consumer products which we could purchase to "share this space-age fantasy." Because it became clear very quickly that we all were not going to go to the moon in our lifetime, we could at least own a piece of it through the unusual objects created in our time to evoke that man-made future.

All of this was great in theory; yet, in reality, the average consumer had been socialized to view home furnishings as an investment, not something frivolous or to be used up. And in reality, for seemingly disposable furniture, their high prices negated their ideological premise. In 1968, Eero Aarnio's *Pastille* chair was \$288; Vico Magistretti's ubiquitous stacking tables for Artemide, \$44 each; and Anna Castelli Ferrieri's *Toadstool* cafe table for Kartell a whopping \$300. In 1995 dollars, these prices would be four to five fold - hardly next year's trash!

While intended for the masses, they were ultimately for the very few. This great foray into plastics only succeeded for the masses in its 'trickle-down' design

*continued on page 59*



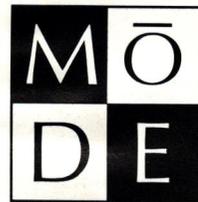
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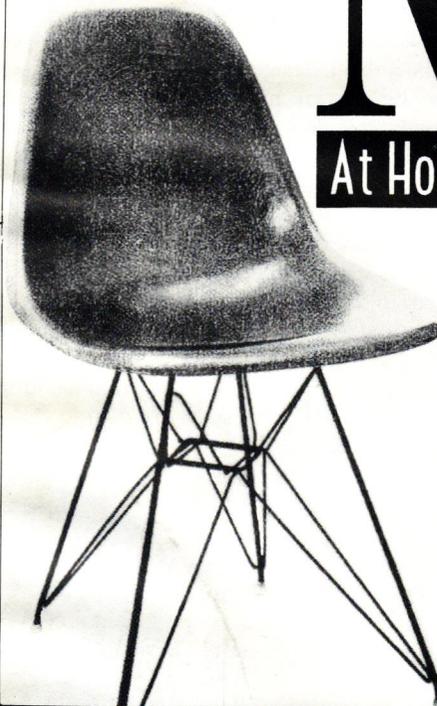
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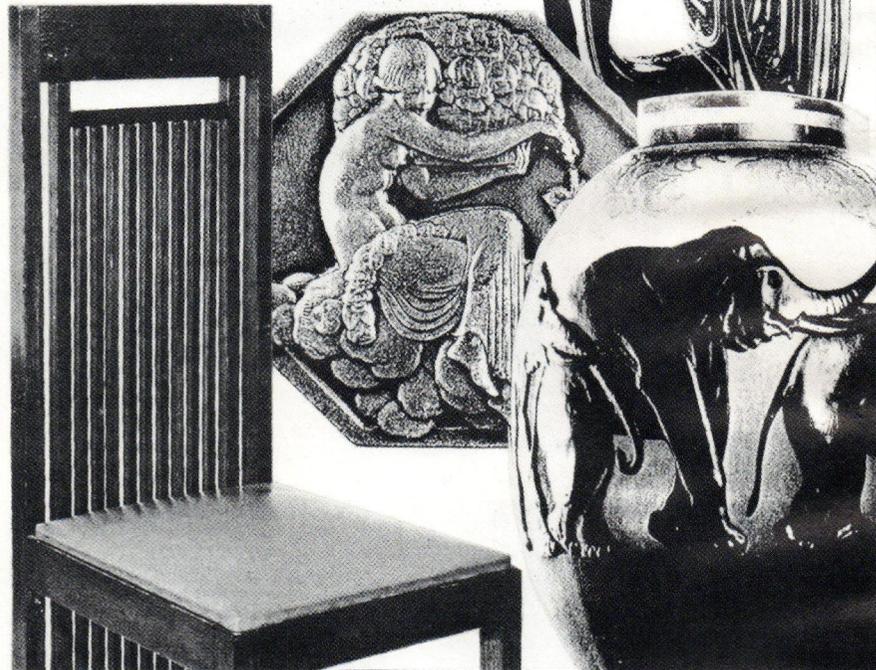
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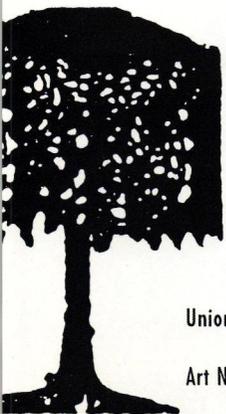
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# Modern Quarters

For Scott Reilly's town house, the style is all in the mix of 1960s and 1970s pop art and plastic, resulting in an interior which is streamlined, colorful, fresh and modern



"The style of the '90s is how we dissect the 20th century and then reassemble it," says Scott Reilly, the director of development for Nexus Contemporary Art Center and a Harvard graduate with a degree in Art History.

Reilly's town house is a sophisticated blend of high-end 1960s and '70s designs with notable pieces from the '40s and '50s added to the mix.

One of his biggest challenges, Reilly says, is finding the dealers who sell the pieces he collects. This is gradually changing, however. With the recent attention of a major New York Modernism *continued on page 36*

**Clockwise from above:** Reilly's living room features a mixture of late 1950s through mid-1970s design. Castiglioni's Arco lamp hovers above a Robsjohn-Gibbings coffee table. Chadwick's foam-block seating system for Herman Miller plus Jacobsen's Egg chair for Fritz Hansen complete the room; The master bedroom features a white plastic bed by Studio P.R.O. for Kartell with inflatable pillows by Peter Max and Keith Haring, Chapter One Dresser, and Molar chairs; The study features a desk from Broyhill's Chapter One range of plastic veneered furniture, a JVC VideoSphere television, and an orange Panton chair for Herman Miller; Scott Reilly sits among his eye-popping plastic furnishings; The upstairs study features a Platner coffee table for Knoll flanked by Aarnio's Pastille chairs in green and white and Takahama's Marcel foam-block seating for Knoll in brilliant magenta and orange Knoll fabric.



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20TH CENTURY POST-SHOW REVIEWS & PRE-SHOW DETAILS

## Deco-'50s Holiday Sale

The largest Art Deco to '50s sale in the country will make its second appearance of 1995 at the Concourse Exhibition Center in San Francisco, California on the weekend of December 2-3. Over 200 dealers from across the U.S. will be selling furniture, accessories, rugs, art, dinnerware, pottery, books, jewelry, vintage clothing and collectibles from the 1920s, '30s, '40s and '50s.

Designer furniture by Gilbert Rohde, Kem Weber, Norman Bel Geddes, Paul Frankl, Donald Deskey, Charles Eames, George Nelson, Eero Saarinen, and Paul Lazlo, among other notables, will be offered for sale, along with decorative accessories by Chase, Frankart, Hall, Fiestaware, etc.

A vintage fashion show will be held on site on Saturday, December 2 at 2pm, featuring '20s, '30s, and '40s fashions and accessories for the holidays.

The Concourse Exhibition Center is located at 8th & Brannan Streets in San Francisco, California. Show hours are Saturday 10am-6pm and Sunday 11am-5pm. Admission is \$5. For further information call (415) 599-DECO.

## Miami Modernism

The third annual Miami Modernism Show and Sale is scheduled to take place January 19-21, 1996 at the James L. Knight Center in Miami, Florida. Virtually every major fine art and design movement from 1900 to 1970 will be represented by 70 outstanding dealers: Art Deco, Moderne, Art Nouveau, Cubism, Bauhaus, WPA, Social Realism, Arts & Crafts, Regionalism,



From top: Modernism Gallery's booth at the 20th Century Ltd. show held in Oak Park, IL on Oct. 7-8; A snapshot of the Modern Times Show held in Glendale, CA on Oct. 7-8; Belgian ceramic Boch Freres vases, to be offered for sale at the Miami Modernism Show January 19-21

Machine Age, Surrealism, and Fifties and Sixties.

A new feature of the show is the Friday evening "Early Buyers Preview" held from 6pm to 10pm. Tickets are \$35 per person and include readmission to the show throughout the weekend.

The James L. Knight Center is located at 400 S.E. Second Avenue in Miami, Florida. Show hours are Saturday 11am-8pm, and Sunday 11am-6pm. Admission is \$10 per person. For further information call (313) 886-3443. For complete discount travel, hotel and Miami Modernism ticket packages call ARTours International at (800) 226-6972.

## Triple Pier Shows

Each year designers, decorators, store owners and collectors from every corner of the globe plan their New York buying trips around one unique antiques extravaganza - the Manhattan Antiques & Collectibles Triple Pier Expo. So mark your calendar! This comprehensive indoor event, featuring over 600 dealers each weekend, returns to New York City's Passenger Ship Terminal Piers on February 17-18 and 24-25, 1996.

Discovery is what the Triple Pier Expo is all about. Regardless of your particular collecting interest, the show is likely to have what you're seeking. It's simply a matter of knowing where to look. Regular attendees know that Pier 88 is the pier to find the best in 20th Century collectibles, including vintage fashions, Art Deco, '50s furniture, chrome, lucite, costume jewelry, and more. Admission is \$10. For further show information call (212) 685-4641 ☐

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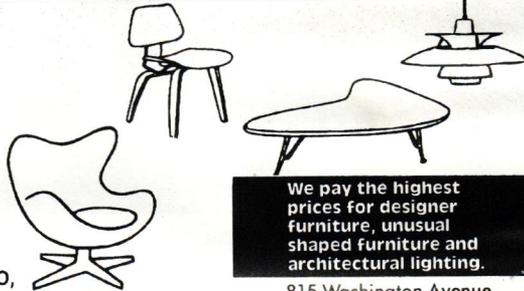
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# calendar

DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH 1996

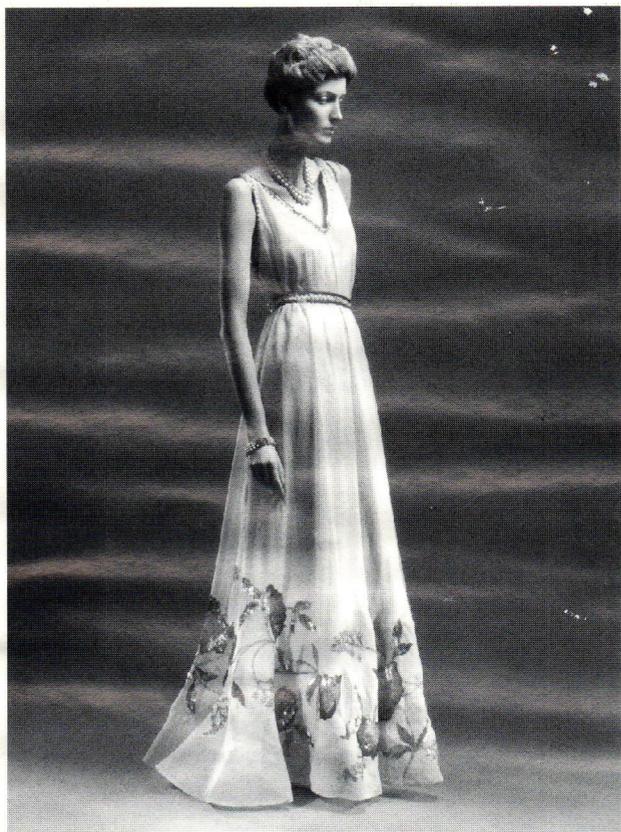


Photo: The Costume Collection, Museum of the City of New York

## DECEMBER

- 1** Christie's 20th Century Bronzes and Sculptures Auction, South Kensington, London  
**2-3** 9th Annual NorthEast Collectibles Extravaganza, Boston, MA (508) 568-0856  
**2-3** Philadelphia Antiques Expo, Philadelphia, PA (212) 255-0020  
**2-3** Art Deco-50s Holiday Sale, San Francisco, CA (415) 599-DECO  
**2-3** New England Holiday Antiques & Collectibles Show & Sale, W. Springfield, MA (203) 758-3880  
**3** Treadway Galleries' 20th Century Auction, Oak Park, IL (513) 321-6742  
**6** Christie's Jewelry Auction, New York, NY (212) 546-1000  
**6** Christie's Continental 20th Century Decorative Arts Auction, South Kensington, London, England (071) 321-3236  
**6** William Doyle Galleries' Couture Auction, New York, NY (212) 427-2730  
**7** Christie's East Art Deco Auction, New York, NY (212) 606-0400  
**8-9** Christie's Art Nouveau & Art Deco Auction, New York, NY (212) 546-1000  
**10** Modern In Manhattan Auction,

New York, NY (800) 419-3060

- 10** Decofairs London Art Deco Fair, Battersea Town Hall, Battersea, London  
**11** Christie's East Film & TV/ Posters Auction, New York, NY (212) 606-0400  
**13** William Doyle Galleries' Important Estate Jewelry Auction, New York, NY (212) 427-2730  
**13** Butterfield & Butterfield's Jewelry & Timepieces Auction, San Francisco and Los Angeles, CA (213) 850-7500  
**14** Butterfield & Butterfield's Photographs Auction, San Francisco & Los Angeles, CA (213) 850-7500  
**14** William Doyle Galleries' Military Miniatures, Lead Soldiers, Antique Toys & Trains Auction, New York, NY (212) 427-2730  
**16** Christie's East Animation Art Auction, New York, NY (212) 606-0400  
**17** The World of Art Deco Fair, Greenwich Boro Hall, Greenwich, London  
**30** Decofairs Kensington Art Deco Fair, Commonwealth Conference Center, London  
**30-Jan.1** New Year's Coliseum Antiques Show, New York, NY

*Evening dress, ca.1935, Gift of Mrs. Harrison Williams. Part of the exhibition "Uncommon Threads: Three Hundred Years of New York Style" at the Museum of the City of New York through February 11, 1996. (212) 534-1672*

(212) 255-0020

## JANUARY

- 1** Private Collections' Deco, '40s and '50s Auction, Sarasota, FL (941) 966-3255  
**10** William Doyle Galleries' Belle Epoque Auction, New York, NY (212) 427-2730  
**12-14** Miami Art Deco Weekend, Miami, FL (800) 226-6972  
**19-21** Miami Modernism Show, Miami, FL (313) 886-3443  
**27-28** 10th Florida Collectibles Extravaganza, Orlando, FL (508) 568-0856  
**28** Cincinnatti 20th Century Revue Show, Cincinnatti, OH (513) 738-7256

## FEBRUARY

- 11** Decofairs London Art Deco Fair, Battersea Town Hall, Battersea, London  
**17-18** Triple Pier Show, New York, NY (212) 255-0020  
**24-25** Triple Pier Show, New York, NY (212) 255-0020

## MARCH

- 3** Treadway Gallery's 20th Century Auction, Chicago, IL (513) 321-6742  
**16-17** 20th Century Ltd. Show, Oak Park, IL (708) 879-5603  
**16-17** Modern Times Show, Glendale, CA (310) 455-2894  
**16-17** Cyclorama Show, Boston, MA (617) 426-8196  
**23-24** Atlantic City Show, Atlantic City, NJ (609) 926-1800  
**23-24** New York Coliseum Antiques Show, New York, NY (212) 255-0020

## ONGOING...

- September 7 - January 2** "Stieglitz at Lake George" at the Museum of Modern Art in NY (212) 708-9400  
**September - January 7** "Shaken Not Stirred Exhibition" at the Milwaukee Art Museum in Wis. (414) 224-3200  
**September 12 - December 31** "Pop In Orbit: Designs from the Space Age" at the Design Exchange in Toronto, Canada (416) 216-2160  
**September 23 - January 7** "Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, Georgia O'Keeffe, Alfred Stieglitz: In The American Grain" at the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC (202) 387-2151  
**October 1 - January 23** "Piet Mondrian:

1872-1944" at the Museum of Modern Art in NY (212) 708-9400

**October 6 - December 16** "Rethinking English Arts & Crafts: The Modernist Tradition in Turn-of-the-century British Design" at Moderne Gallery in Philadelphia, PA (215) 923-8536

**October 7 - January 14** "Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology" at the Guggenheim Museum in New York (212) 423-3500

**October 10 - October 1, 1996** "Vienna Moderne: 1895-1930" at the Norwest Center in Minneapolis, MN (612) 667-5136

**October 13 - December 31** "Arshile Gorky: The Breakthrough Years" at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, NY (716) 882-8700

**October 15 - January 8** "Two X Immortal: Elvis and Marilyn" at the New York Historical Society in NY (212) 873-3400

**October 15 - February 4** "1965-1975: Reconsidering the Object of Art" at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, CA (213) 626-6222

**October 15 - July 28** "Images of an Era: Examining MOCA's Art Acquisitions Between 1940-1975" at MOCA in Los Angeles, CA (213) 626-6222

**October 17 - January 7** "Alfred Stieglitz: Seen and Unseen" at the J.Paul Getty Museum in Malibu, CA (310) 458-2003

**October 18 - February 11** "Uncommon Threads: 300 Years of New York Style" at the Museum of the City of New York in New York (212) 534-1672

**October 22 - January 7** "James Rosenquist: Time Dust, The Complete Graphics 1962-92" at the Neuberger Museum in New York (914) 251-6100

**October 26 - February 25** "Craft in The Machine Age: European Influence On American Modernism 1920-1945" at the American Craft Museum in NY (212) 956-3535

**Through January 7** "Roy Lichtenstein" at the Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University in Columbus, OH (614) 292-0330

**November 11 - April 28** "The Arts of Reform and Persuasion, 1885-1945" at the Wolfsonian in Miami Beach, FL (305) 531-1001

**November 11 - January 7** "Louis Armstrong: A Cultural Legacy" at the New Orleans Museum of Art in New Orleans, LA (504) 488-2631

**November 16 - February 11** "An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster" at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in CA (415) 357-4000

**November 30 - January 31** "Pictographs of Adolph Gottlieb" at the Arkansas Art Center in Little Rock, AK (510) 372-4000

**December 17 - February 25** "Tina Modotti: Photographs" at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, TX (713) 639-7300

**January 5 - March 3** "Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62" at the International Art Museum in Miami, FL (305) 554-2890

**January 13 - March 17** "Arshile Gorky: The Breakthrough Years" at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, TX (817) 738-9215

**March 31 - July 14** "Hot Cars, High Fashion, Cool Stuff: Designs of the 20th Century" at the Dallas Museum of Art in Dallas, TX (214) 922-1200

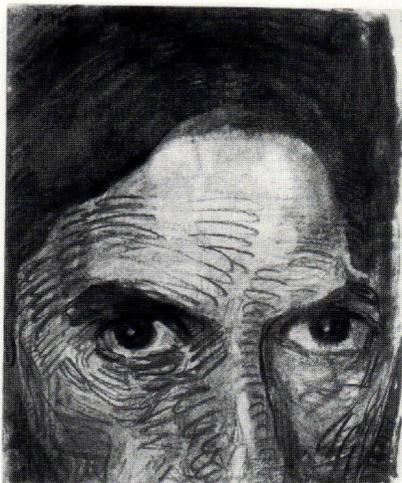
**Event Schedules are subject to change. Please call to confirm dates, locations and times.**

when they deride modern art by saying a child could do it. Thus, another reason for the claim that Mondrian was simply following a formula may be to imply that no creativity or thought went into his work.

The exhibit's final room covers Mondrian's working process, showing how he experimented with the placement of lines and the colors on a canvas. Many of his sketches don't relate directly to any finished canvas; often, he was simply experimenting with arrangements of lines and color.

Most of Mondrian's surviving sketches are in charcoal, with colors only noted by abbreviations. The final arrangement and balance of colors were worked out on the canvas, the curators believe. An unfinished 1934 oil shows many erased charcoal lines, suggesting that Mondrian repeatedly moved the grid lines and color blocks.

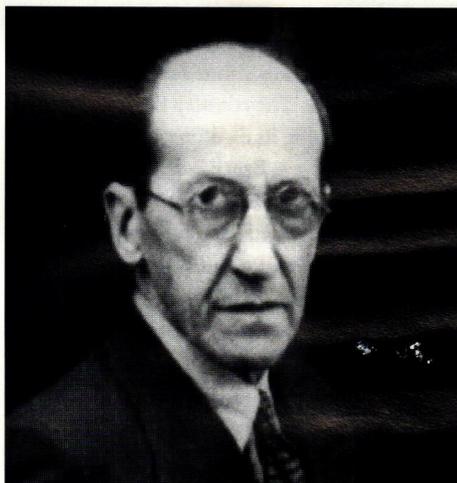
After he moved to New York, Mondrian began working with colored stripes. He discovered colored tape, which he applied to the canvas as a quicker way



his composition. He first did this in 1918, and returned to this format repeatedly. In a 1919 letter to Theo van Doesburg, a leader of the De Stijl group, he said that the "lozenge" format was good "because you look at the painting, and not at its outward appearance."

Mondrian sought out the modern component in all the arts. He was interested in dance and music, writing articles on these arts and maintaining a friendship with the composer Edgar Varese. Jazz especially interested Mondrian, and that should be kept in mind when viewing his paintings. He was associated with the Dutch design movement called De Stijl, and lived in the art centers of his time - Paris (1919-1938), London (1938-1940) and New York (1940-1944).

Some of his titles refer to music and dance, either explicitly or implicitly: *Foxtrot*, *Boogie Woogie*, *Rhythm of Straight Lines*. He often spoke in musical terms. When he reworked several paintings after moving to New York, he said he was



differences often consist of a repositioned horizontal or vertical line, a different color in one block, a brighter tone in the same color. The easiest way to see this evolution, and the way his work changed from series to series, is to walk rapidly through the exhibit, or quickly page through the exhibition catalog.

Details in Mondrian's paintings are subtle, and often don't show up in book reproductions. Even visiting a painting in a museum can be frustrating, as details are often hidden behind protective glass. For instance, the "background" in many of his paintings, especially those done before 1931, is not truly white, and Mondrian didn't consider it a mere ground. The paint is often tinted with bluish-gray and other pigments. He often muted primary colors by mixing them with white. In some paintings, the black paint in the grid lines appears to have been toned down with gray, especially where the lines divide lightly tinted planes.

Just as Frank Lloyd Wright empha-



to experiment with various compositions.

Mondrian felt the method by which his works were displayed was critical. He often provided purchasers with detailed instructions on framing, frame color and display height. He requested some paintings be hung unframed. Other paintings were framed by a ribbon of tape. He built his own frames out of narrow strips of wood. Many paintings in the show still have their original frames.

The curators found that *Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue* (oil, 1935-1942) originally had a wooden strip frame that was horizontally crosscut. By 1942, Mondrian had reworked the painting and given it a strip frame that was vertically crosscut. They believe Mondrian changed the frame to emphasize the painting's strong vertical structure.

Mondrian was also a pioneer in using the diamond format, literally turning the traditional canvas on end to better match

giving them "more boogie-woogie" by adding floating bars of color.

The writer Paul Bowles said in a 1943 article in *View* that "Mondrian's painting can be fully appreciated only if seen in connection with the playing of a boogie-woogie record." He added that the staff at Valentine Gallery, Mondrian's New York dealer, would play such music as background for visitors on request.

Mondrian intended to convey a sense of movement with the horizontal and vertical black lines and the blocks of color in his paintings. In 1930, the sculptor Alexander Calder visited Mondrian in his Paris studio. Calder suggested making the colored rectangles in his paintings oscillate. Mondrian replied that his paintings were "already very fast."

Many of Mondrian's works are part of a series. Like musical compositions, his series often consist of variations on a theme. In comparing works within a series, the

sized the horizontal orientation of some of his buildings with horizontal brickwork, Mondrian often emphasized the vertical or horizontal direction of his paintings with striated brushwork. The final overpainting of the white areas in his paintings often consists of a layer of paint that is visibly horizontal or vertical, and the catalog concludes that "this subtle brushwork constituted an important element in Mondrian's expressive language." Again, this detail is often lost in reproductions.

To allow visitors to experience the works as Mondrian intended, and to show off the subtle details that are so often obscured, the curators removed protective frames and glass from many works, if lenders would permit.

*Piet Mondrian: 1872-1944* is on view at the Museum of Modern Art in New York through January 23, 1996. The accompanying 400-page exhibition catalog is available from the MOMA Book Store. **E**

The most comprehensive exhibit to date on Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) is presently on view at The Museum of Modern Art in New York. The first major exhibit on Mondrian in more than 20 years, the 171-work show marks the fiftieth anniversary of his death. The criterion for the selection of works presented was to assemble the highest quality works in the very best condition.

The show emphasizes Mondrian's later works, when he came into his own style; more than half the works he produced from 1932 to 1944 are here. Although half of Mondrian's work was done during the years of 1890-1907, those earlier works are more representative of 19th century art trends. Mondrian preferred to think of himself as a modern artist.

"Neo-Plasticism." If these earlier works weren't in a show devoted to Mondrian, the visitor might not be able to identify the artist.

The American venues of this exhibition offer visitors three additions which weren't available at the show's original site in the Netherlands. First, some North American lenders didn't want their works to travel overseas, so this version of the show is larger. Second, this version includes sensitive works on paper which could not be shown at the museum in the Netherlands because the galleries there are lit by daylight. Third, the U.S. show includes a room devoted to Mondrian's working process (which includes many of those fragile works on paper).

The aim of the exhibition is to reinter-

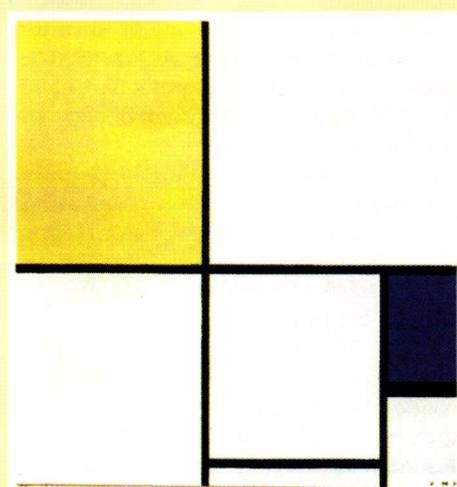
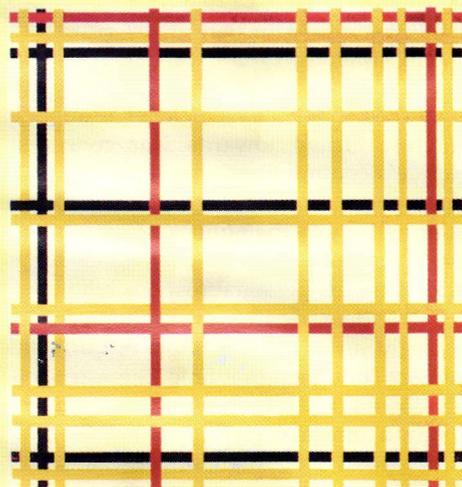
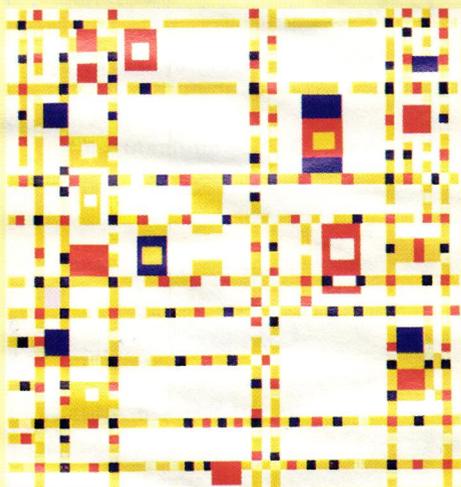
historians have tried to decode the supposed fixed mathematical proportions of the lines and blocks in his works, seeing them as a painted Stonehenge.

While he made sketches before picking up his brushes, much of the final composition was "worked out on the canvas," Rudenstine says. He worked in a "highly intuitive, sensitive, painterly process," Rudenstine argues. "This is not the work of a designer," she adds. The exhibit describes Mondrian's neo-plasticism as "neither random nor systematic."

X-rays of several of his works show that the final composition is very different from what was originally on the canvas. For instance, the catalog notes, X-ray analysis of the 1914 oil "Tableau No. 1" shows that "the composition was initially much

# PIET MONDRIAN

THE FIRST MAJOR EXHIBIT ON MONDRIAN IN MORE THAN 20 YEARS IS ON VIEW IN NEW YORK



One of the show's curators, Prof. Yve-Alain Bois of Harvard University, says that Mondrian was "not a late starter, but a late bloomer." Another reason to downplay the earlier works is that previous exhibitions have already focused on that period, he says.

Visitors who have never seen the earlier works will find evidence of early talent and a willingness to explore various styles. These works are very different from the later works for which Mondrian is known today; the combination of bold black lines and primary colors that Mondrian styled

pret Mondrian's work and dispel myths. Despite his fame, the curators believe that Mondrian's work hasn't been examined in great detail. Furthermore, they believe his contribution to 20th century art is underestimated and often misunderstood.

One myth, says guest curator Angelica Zander Rudenstine, is that Mondrian based his work on geometric formulas or carefully plotted his works ahead of time. He constantly defended himself against the notion that he worked according to a system, and told friends that his working process was "intuitive." Yet some art

more explicitly divided into smaller squares and rectangles," but "reworking resulted in an opening up of the forms." This evidence, plus the substantial reworking evident on several unfinished canvases in the show, provides ample support for Rudenstine's argument.

One reason that Mondrian's work may seem to be carefully planned may be his influence on architecture and design. These are two professions where planning is critical.

Mondrian's seemingly simple work may be what some people have in mind

**Above from left: "Broadway Boogie Woogie" c.1942-1943, oil on canvas, Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; "New York City I" c.1941-1942, oil on canvas, Collection of the Musee National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges**

**Pompidou, Paris; "Composition with Yellow and Blue" c.1932, oil on canvas, Collection Beyeler, Basel; Opposite page from left: "Self Portrait:: Eyes" c.1908-09, charcoal on paper, Collection Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, The Neth-**

**erlands; Photograph of Mondrian at the Museum of Modern Art in 1943, Photo courtesy Robert Storr; Mondrian in his 353 East 56 Street Studio in 1941 with an early stage of "New York City I" on the easel, Photo by Emery Muscetra.**

TEXT BY JIM SWEENEY PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

## Gilbert Rohde

(continued from page 29) only to the Herman Miller Company but to the furniture industry as well. During the 1930s, the furniture industry was stratified. Herman Miller's entry into a segregated market opened some of those barriers - no small feat and a strong contribution to American design.<sup>5</sup>

Rohde made numerous other contributions to Herman Miller. Prior to Rohde's arrival, the company only made case goods. Rohde's designs introduced seating and Miller, after initially farming out the work, added an upholstery department. In the mid-1930s, metal furniture was added to the Miller lines. And in 1934, to sell these new lines, Rohde implemented new and innovative marketing techniques. Prior to Rohde's arrival, salesmen used the tactic of "friendly persuasion" to make a sale. Rohde established the idea that sales be made through an understanding of the design principles and philosophy behind the new furniture lines, rather than through mere persuasive talk. Independent showrooms were set up in major furniture centers allowing greater access to architects and designers who previously had to make their purchases through department or furniture stores. The idea of the independent showroom later became commonplace for most of the furniture industry.<sup>6</sup>

Concurrent with his work for Herman Miller, Rohde worked on other commercial contracts. Furniture clients included Lloyd, Widdicomb, Brown-Saltzman, Thonet, Troy-Sunshade, Valley Upholstery, Kroehler, and Heywood-Wakefield. Rohde also made his work and his name known through exhibits at contemporary design shows sponsored by museums, other institutions and prominent department stores. In 1932, Rohde exhibited at the Philadelphia Museum's "Design for the Machine." In 1933, he was at Chicago's "Century of Progress" and in 1934, at the New York Museum of Modern Art's "Machine Art Show" among others. A written design philosophy accompanied one exhibit of his work:

"Modern furniture is our expression of the ancient and simple desire to make beautiful and useful things, suited to their purpose and to the materials and tools available. Great changes have come about in the last two generations...[resulting]...in changed ways of living. The apartment house has come; rooms are fewer and smaller. The modern creative artist tries first to satisfy our living needs. Often the same room must serve two purposes, so he designs furniture to meet these needs. We find that by careful designing, chairs can be made just as comfortable as the huge clumsy ones we formerly had. There is no excuse for a 'modern' chair not

being as comfortable as an older chair of the same type. If chairs are low, it is not because sitting near the floor has anything to do with the idea of modern chairs.

You will notice...that in every case the furniture is shown against ordinary simple backgrounds such as are found in the interior of the average home...We need no special architecture whatever in order to use modern furniture. A perfectly plain wall is best, which is just what is found in the average apartment."<sup>7</sup>

Rohde also lectured extensively and taught at several schools. From 1936-38 he directed an industrial art school in New York, the Design Laboratory, and from 1939-1943 he was head of New York University School of Architecture's Industrial Design Department. Rohde was also a member of the American Designers Institute, The American Union of Decorative Artists and Craftsmen, and one of the founders of the Society of Industrial Engineers.

The onset of World War II brought considerable changes to Rohde's environment as well as to that of the American public. Manufacturers were increasingly enlisted to assist the war effort, limiting non war-related involvements. The public's interest turned towards war concerns, Rohde's commissions shrank as did publicity about his work. Much of his office staff left to join the military effort and his present work and future plans grew more and more his personal responsibility.

Rohde's death on June 16, 1944 brought an end to his short but brilliant career. Though at that time, the war overshadowed his significant contributions, today a more accurate appraisal is possible. To the Herman Miller Company, Rohde initiated their growth from an indistinct furniture company to a recognized member of the international design world. To the general public, he introduced and promoted a modern expression. To the design world, he introduced new forms and materials, new manufacturing procedures and new marketing approaches. Indeed, Rohde played a crucial role in the introduction, promotion and evolution of modern design. **E**

1 Cherie Fehrman, *Postwar Interior Design 1945-1960* (Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1987) p.42

2 Quoted in Fehrman, *ibid.*, p.43

3 Quoted in Fehrman, *ibid.*, p.43

4 Derek Ostergard and David A. Hanks, "Gilbert Rohde and the Evolution of Modern Design, 1927-1941," *Arts Magazine*, October 1981, p.103

5 *Ibid.*, p.103

6 *Ibid.*, p.105

7 Quoted in Fehrman, *op.cit.*, p.44



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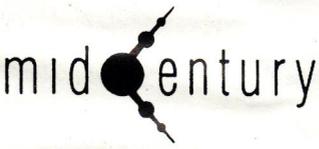
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### Modern Quarters

(continued from page 34) show dedicated to the period, and a rash of magazine articles, there is a growing interest in the designs of 1960s and '70s. No longer are the times when period furnishings would "sit through Sunday" on the floors at shows and be withdrawn from auctions for not meeting the reserve - high design from the 1960s and early '70s is now among the first to be sold at previews. Prices have soared in the past two years and, it seems, demand is now beginning to outpace supply.

This should have been expected. Design from this period was often made in short production runs with most of it remaining in Europe. That which made it to the United States often ended up in Hollywood's period sci-fi sets or was specifically ordered through an interior designer for a wealthy client in Miami or New York.

As with any collectible, the most sought-after designs are those which manifest the uniqueness of the period and ultimately were made in limited quantities for a short period of time. Furniture by Pierre Paulin, Roberto Sebastian Matta, and Olivier Morgue command high prices. While more plentiful than their foam counterparts, plastic decorative arts (many are still in production), rely on condition and color to dictate pricing. Anna Castelli Ferrieri's stackable storage icons of the period, *Round Up* from 1969, are still produced by Kartell in a limited color range. Nevertheless, those in yellow, orange, and green are vintage and sought after.

These obstacles have not deterred Scott Reilly from amassing an impressive cache of the elusive high-end designs from the 1960s and '70s; in fact, if anything, they add a "thrill of the chase" element to the process of building his collection, along with a network of dealers and friends who share his passion for the long-overlooked designs from this short-lived, exuberant period. **E**

### Facts On Collecting 1960s and 70s Decorative Arts

**Pay attention to that which is still being made and how it is priced.** As with much of mid-century modern furniture, a surprising number of objects can still be purchased new. A plastic Panton chair is about \$295 through Vitra; an Aarnio *Pastille* chair about \$1,300 through Finland's Asko Oy. With this resurgence in acquiring vintage objects from the period, many manufacturers are re-introducing many classic plastic designs. As many will use the original molds, the end result is an identical object which might be purchased for less new than its worn, vintage counterpart.

**Condition is paramount.** Any decorative art which relies so heavily upon shape and material to achieve its pure aesthetic (e.g. plastic or upholstered foam) needs to be just that - pure. Scratches and discoloration severely detract from the aesthetic of plastic decorative arts; similarly, a tear in a block of upholstered foam is a serious disruption to its overall design. And, unlike a number of other materials, plastic is not easily repaired. Minor scratches can often be polished out using care with a cleaner specifically designed for plastic. Discoloration to plastics caused by the surface chemically reacting to sunlight cannot be corrected. This is a serious problem with many vintage plastics on the market that appear to be cream or tan colored which were, in fact, designed to be bright white.

### Scott Reilly's Resources

#### A&J 20th Century

Lafayette Street, New York City  
Ana's enthusiasm for the 1960s and '70s, coupled with her love of designer plastics, makes this shop a must for any collector of "all things bold and beautiful" from the period. If you want a specific item, she'll find it for you.

#### Art & Industrial Design

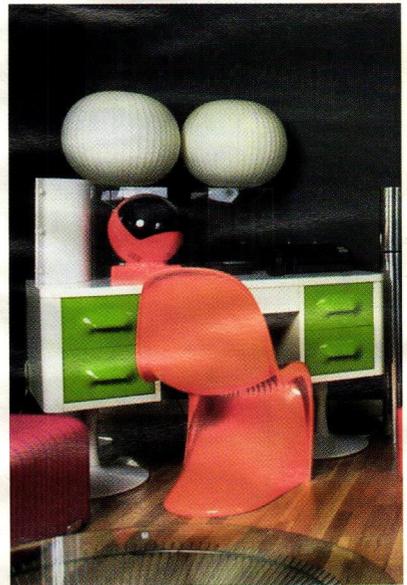
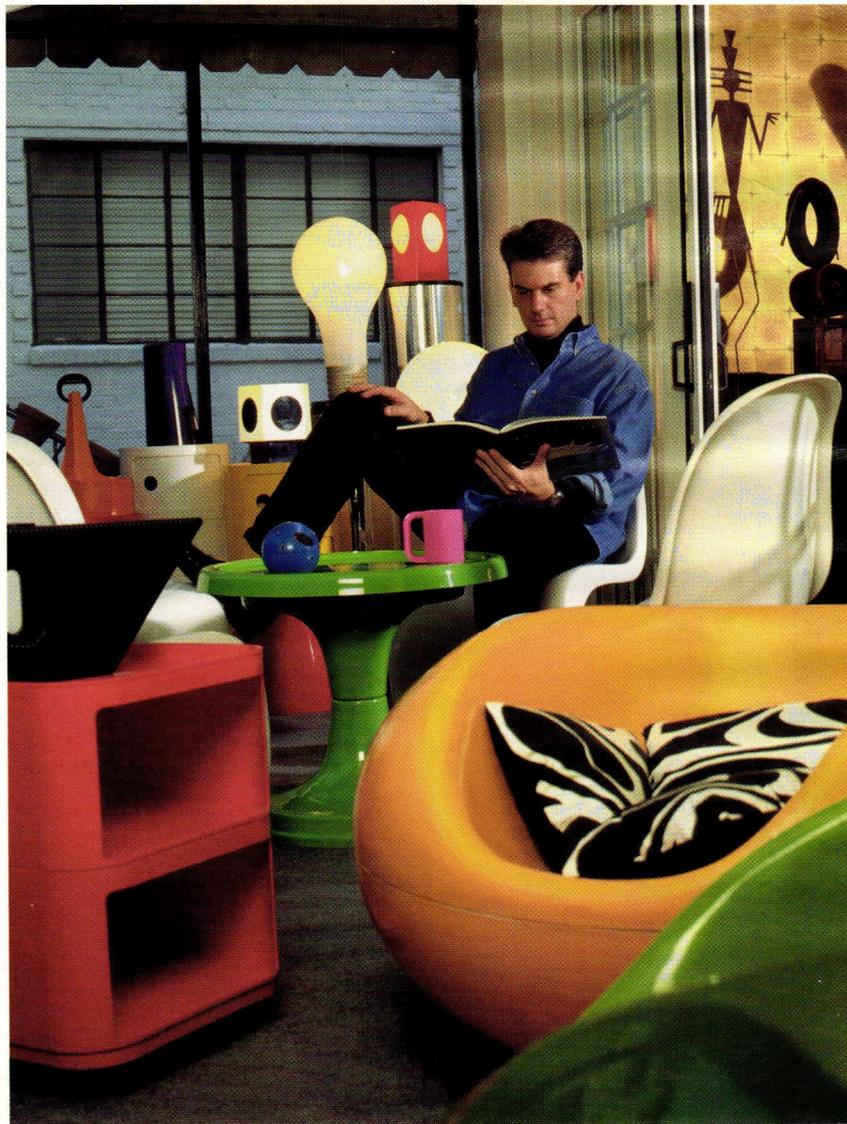
Lafayette Street, New York City  
Without a doubt, one of the finest collections of rare 1960s and '70s designs; indeed, outside of design books and museum catalogues, one of the few places in the United States where one can actually see these objects (and better yet, they're for sale!).

#### Moss

Greene Street, New York City  
Murray's shop is a must-see for the 1960s and '70s collector. He carries (in-stock) a number of classics from the period which are still in production as well as an array of today's designs destined to be tomorrow's museum exhibitions.

#### Domus

Dawson Boulevard, Atlanta  
Simply a treasure for Southerners! Manager, Jeffrey Shelley, is an expert at tracking down vintage designs which are currently in production. Whether it is a Zanotta *Sacco* chair or an Aarnio *Pastille*, if it is in production, Domus can get it.



Cameron Wood

### Auction Highlights

(continued from page 44) and Miriam Haskell pieces captured the top lot positions of the sale, with a Trigrere Pate-de-Verre floral bib necklace of gilt metal, c.1960, at the top, selling for \$11,500 to a American private collector. A Trigrere Collar of gilt metal set with faux sapphires and emeralds, c.1960, more than tripled its' presale estimate, selling for \$6,900. A Miriam Haskell multiple strand necklace with a gilt metal clasp, c.1955, also sold high at \$4,370 and a Haskell Parure of gilt metal with an ornate choker, matching bracelet, brooch, necklace, two pairs of earrings, and two rings, c.1955, was taken home by an American private collector for \$3,680.

A SALE OF ELVIS PRESLEY MEMORABILIA realized nearly \$1.5 million at auction October 6 and 7 when auctioneers Butterfield & Butterfield and Bonhams of London offered more than 1,200 Presley items to fans and collectors filling the venues in Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

The ten-hour auction included property owned by friends, family and former associates of Presley. A raw silk suit worn by Presley in the film *Live a Little, Love a Little* brought \$24,150, while Elvis Presley tuxedo tails from *Frankie and Johnnie* fetched \$31,625.

Concert stage suits brought strong prices. A mid-'70s white Presley stage suit sold to an elated buyer for \$68,500. The famous red wool *Burnin' Love* one-piece jumpsuit brought a hunka hunka change - selling for \$107,000, while a white leather jeweled stage belt brought \$25,300.

Collectibles bearing Presley's initials or signature were of great interest to fans, many of whom traveled from all over the U.S. to attend the sale. Presley's personalized 14K gold Rolls Royce key with "Elvis Presley" engraved along its side sold for \$2,070. Presley's first American Express charge card, signed on the front, fetched \$63,000.

Instruments Presley played sold well, such as the Hagstrom V-2 guitar from his 1968 NBC *Comeback Special*. It brought \$57,500 during the first of the sale's two sessions.

Prices were strong, bidding competitive, and the attendance high. Fan clubs, more than 500 world-wide, used the sale as an opportunity to congregate, enhance their personal collections, and share and compare stories of Elvis.

ICONS FROM THROUGHOUT HOLLYWOOD'S history realized nearly half a million at auction October 14 & 15 when Butterfield & Butterfield offered more than 1100 items to entertainment fans and collectors. The selection included an exciting variety of posters, costumes, and signed

documents from legendary film, television and music figures.

Disneyana from the private cache of film and television star Ruth Warrick sold well. An extremely rare 1947 Mickey Mouse display with an Ingersoll Mickey watch still in its original box brought \$23,000. A superb edition of *Fantasia*, c.1940, autographed by Walt Disney and belonging to Disney's former schoolteacher garnered \$4,600.

The auction featured an extensive collection of vintage Hollywood movie posters. The French poster from *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Paramount, 1961, brought \$6,900, the title card from *The Wizard of Oz*, MGM, 1939, realized \$6,900, and a half-sheet from *Gone With the Wind*, MGM, 1939, garnered \$6,325. Movie posters remain a hot item in the collectibles market.

Star costumes and autographs that sold well included the Munchkin costume designed by Adrian from *The Wizard of Oz*, MGM, 1939, going for above estimate at \$12,625. The Margaret O'Brien child's coat from *Meet Me in St. Louis*, MGM, 1944, brought \$2,070. The Beatles Signed Contract dated 31 December 1974, confirming the purchase of MacLen Limited Studio by Apple Corps Limited, also topped its estimate at \$6,325.

MAD FEVER WAS HIGH ON OCTOBER 20 as more than 200 collectors from around the country packed Sotheby's main salesroom, each hoping to acquire a piece of original artwork from *MAD* magazine. Nearly every one of the 400 pieces, which ranged from cover art of *MAD*'s first irreverent mascot, the smiling Alfred E. Neuman, to hilarious satires of every major film of the 1970s and 1980s, found a home with the sale bringing a grand total of \$832,628. Both Al Jaffee, the genius creator of *MAD*'s famous "Fold-In" feature and legend artist Mort Drucker, graced the salesroom with their presence, signing autographs for devoted fans and beaming as the audience vigorously responded to years of their work.

"The overwhelming appeal of *MAD* magazine was confirmed today," commented Jerry Weist, Sotheby's Comic Art consultant. "Today's sale is not only a tribute to the remarkable talent of *MAD*'s exceptional staff of artists but to the magazine's insightful and hilarious way to examine and challenge cultural, social and political issues. Tackling issues from anti-smoking to racism, *MAD* magazine's influence on youth from the 1950s to the present is too great to be measured." ■

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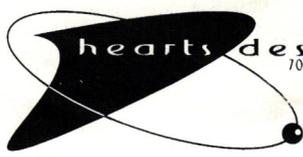
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**Wanted:** Frankl style sofa; Robsjohn-Gibbings Mesa coffee table; Deco rugs, any size. (213) 653-3479.

**Wanted:** Franciscan Starburst. Contact Susan Sterge or Terry Duncan, 435 Loudon Road, Apt. 3, Loudonville, NY 12211. (518) 427-5006.

**Wanted:** Reddy Kilowatt items; Mighty Mouse battery powered child's riding toy. (503) 485-0445.

**Wanted:** Scandinavian ceramics and glass; Saxbo, Orrefors, Royal Copenhagen, Iittala, Gustavzberg, Nuutajarvi, etc. (414) 962-9269.

**Wanted:** '39 New York World's Fair memorabilia. Al's Archives, 4154 Glenbrook Ct., Sterling Heights, MI 48310.

**Wanted:** Radios from late 1930s thru 1959. (214) 821-7150.

**Wanted:** Art Deco/Nouveau genuine or reproduction mantle lamp set in bronze with colored glass globes.

C.Cagin, 411 Laurel Street, Des Moines, IA 50314.

**Wanted:** Mexican Silver: Spratling, F. Davis, Aguilar, Los Castillo and others. Also Bakelite jewelry and boxes. 1 (800) 382-2413.

**Wanted:** George Nelson Ball clock; Franciscan Starburst, Housewares pattern (English); and large turquoise Sunbeam Mixmaster bowl. Curtis Gannon, 4049 W. Wonderview #119, Phoenix, AZ 85019-2882. (602) 841-2414.

**Wanted:** Ruba Rombic by Consolidated Glass and Muncie pottery; Cubist art and sculpture; Abstract Zsolnay ceramic pieces; Paintings by Robert Gilberg. Call Paul (415) 325-8490.

**Wanted:** Six vintage dining chairs in excellent condition: Eames, Corbu, Mies, etc. Call Bill (602) 381-0410.

**Wanted:** French Art Deco, Ruba Rombic, Muncie pottery, Galloway pottery. Moderne Gallery, 111 North 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. (215) 923-8536.

**Wanted:** If Harding Black means anything to you, contact me.

Thomas Hooper, PO Box 191422, Dallas, TX 75219. (214) 526-4005.

**Wanted:** Anything by Maxfield Parrish. Send photo, description and price to: Lisa Stroup, PO Box 3009, Paducah, KY 42002-3009.

**Wanted:** High quality men's and women's clothing, accessories and wristwatches, circa 1930s-1950s. Rudy's Vintage, 1424 1st Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101. (206) 682-6586.

**Wanted:** Any items by Elsa Schiaparelli, especially perfume bottles, dolls, clothing. Also wanted are commercial perfumes in mint condition, boxed; figural lighters; cocktail shakers, and smokerama. Shirley Hanick, 704 Brian Hill Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6B-1L3.

**Wanted:** Charles Eames molded folding plywood screen. Good to excellent condition. Write to: Perry, 412 Daniels Street, Raleigh, NC 27605. Call (919) 821-5455.

**Wanted:** 1940s Orange-Crush or Kool cigarettes advertising items. Gary Deans, 16 Burt Ct., Stoney Creek, Ontario, Canada, L8G 3H4.

**Wanted:** Russel Wright American Modern square coffee table (pg.48 Kerr book). Any condition. Call Ken Allan (908) 477-4165.

**Wanted:** Electric toasters from 1908-1940, must be in pristine condition. Call Mel (213) 747-9585 day, (310) 541-6530 evening.

**Wanted:** Art Deco bed, Full size, very streamlined, 1930s style. Sean Mauer, 1142 Taylorsville Road, Washington Crossing, PA 18977.

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**Wanted:** Vintage suitcases and cosmetic boxes. Everything from brown leathery to hot pink plastic. Call (602) 494-4890 Heather.

**Wanted:** Russel Wright cutlery, glassware, lamps, aluminum, dinnerware. Also seeking Nelson furniture. Please call/fax: (212) 580-0186.

**Wanted:** Verve and Blue note Jazz records - also '50s vintage clothing, large or XL shirts! D-Ray Reece, 33 E. Las Palmas Avenue, Fremont, CA 94539.

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**Wanted:** Peter Max sneaker and clothing. (916) 442-2962.

**Wanted:** Kraft Swanky-Swigs. Contact by phone (918) 627-2439 or 7012 E. 53 Street, Tulsa, OK 74145.

**Wanted:** Russel Wright spun aluminum pieces. Nancy (303) 337-0236.

**Wanted:** Help! Looking for Roseville Artcraft pedestal, blue/green glaze. Also Holt Howard Pixeware, Franciscan Starburst, and cover for Bird Chair and footstool with cover. Call (804) 231-2978.

**Wanted:** Metronome - plain wood with metal arm, pyramid-shaped box. E. Maltz, 20 East 74th Street, NYC 10021. (212) 794-0023.

**Wanted:** Looking for old wrist and novelty watches; '40s, '50s pedal bikes; gabardine clothes (mens); shake machines. Monti Colombi, 29 Moorhead Way, Kidbrooke, London, SE3 9PO, England.

**Wanted:** Modern flatware, all materials, send image. Designer patterns available. Jeryll Habegger, 7404 North Sheridan Road, Chicago, IL 60626-2091. (312) 338-4914.

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**Selling:** Chambers Stove. White enamel, gas, four burners, great condition, runs perfectly. Photo available. Located in Princeton, New Jersey. Call (609) 921-8544 before 8pm. Best offer over \$300.

**Selling:** Christian Dior black bakelite eyeglasses, '60s style with 18K gold trim/diamonds. Also large collection of Mr. John hats - '40s-'60s, all high style. (717) 458-5233 L.Russell, RD1, Box 27A, Millville, PA 17846.

**Selling:** Dunbar, Robsjohn-Gibbings, Knoll, McCobb, Nakashima, Rohde, and Eames. Interested in lighting and textiles from '40s and '50s. Russell-Simpson Co., 8109 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

**Selling:** Town-Country: Cruet with stopper, \$78; Ramekins, \$58; Dinners, \$32; More! Carol (413) 443-6622.

**REGENERATIONS:** Specializing in affordable designer and generic midcentury furniture. 223 E. 10th Street, NYC. (212) 614-9577.

**Selling: Chase Chrome:** "Two-in-Hand" tray, \$130; "Lotus" sauce boat/liner, \$90; Cocktail Ball (R. Wright), \$95; Salad fork & Spoon, \$115 pr.; "C" Lamp, \$150. **Mary Wright** "Country Gardens" Cream/Sugar, \$300. **Sunbeam T-9**, \$110; "Twin-O-Matic" Waffle (Ratcliff, 1939 World's Fair), \$180; Sunbeam Coffee & Tea Servers, very Deco, \$85 ea.; Fabulous Deco Drink Mixers. R.W. Ramekin Lids: (2) Granite, \$50 ea. Carol (413) 443-6622.

**Selling:** Heywood-Wakefield triple and double arch dining tables and sets of chairs; Aristocraft couch and chair sets; Sculptura 5pc. bedroom set; Kohinoor 6pc. bedroom set; Encore 7pc. bedroom set; Encore 7-drawer double chest, triple dresser; Selection of occasional chairs and tables; Conant Ball Russel Wright couch and chairs, dinette set. Plus large selection of Deco-'50s bedroom sets, living room couches, chairs,

and sectionals. Tom Gibbs, Streamlined Style [ see our ad on page 15].

**Selling:** 4pc. aqua sectional. Looks great with Wakefield! \$600.00. Call (609) 753-8978.

**Selling: Russel Wright**-spun aluminum and American Modern; buy, sell, trade, conversation. Joni & Monte Gordon [Los Angeles] (310) 475-3161.

**Selling:** Melange Vintage Clothing 1800s-1970s Accessories, Textiles. 1484 Hertel Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14216. (716) 838-9290.

**Selling:** Art Deco mohair sofa and chair. Excellent original condition. \$1200 firm. (412) 487-1146.

**Selling:** Russel Wright: several hundred pieces - most lines, some rare. Joseph Lonzi, 28 Linwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209.

**New Shop! THE VILLAGE GREEN** 306 Main, Port Washington, NY 11050. Selling '20s-'70s American dinnerware. (516) 767-3698.

**Selling:** 4 copies of the Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts, Brazil Theme, 1995 issue, \$15 each. Call (508) 420-1507, or write PO Box 1914, Mashpee, MA 02649.

**Selling:** Studio ceramics by Adolf Odorfer. Offering 30 years of work - 1930-59. One of the first of the Viennese trained studio ceramists to settle in the U.S. Major awards at Syracuse and Cranbrook shows, in major museum collections. Over 320 examples of the work of this Moderne California artist. A large ceramic collection worthy of an exhibition. Archives included. Serious parties only. \$13,000. Steven. Modern i. (415) 456-3960.

**Selling:** Vintage clothing and mid-century furniture and furnishings. Near Washington, DC. Call or visit. 7120 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, VA 22003. (703) 931-1742.

**Looking for architectural plans to build a 1950s style modern home.** At least 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, up to 2,000 square feet. No ranches! More like Eames Case Study House style. Also would be interested in learning of architects who presently build/design in this modern style. Scott Cheverie, PO Box 1914, Mashpee, MA 02649. (508) 420-1507. E-mail scheveri@capecod.net

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## CLASSIFIEDS

**Selling: Warren McArthur catalogue reprint**, ca.1930, 70 full page photos, \$35.00 + postage/sales tax. To order call (703) 549-4672 or Fax (703) 549-4733. **Also:** We are actively buying vintage Warren McArthur. Call us today!

**Selling:** Yardgoods. Authentic vintage fabrics 1940s-'60s. Bark-cloths, tropicals, geometrics, hand-block prints. Call (212) 645-8880 for swatches. Eclectic Encore NYC.

**For Christmas:** animals, autos, etc. \$19+, over 45 character phones that beep, flash, etc. when ringing. Also, over 85 phones dated 1892-1980s. (608) 582-4124.

**Selling:** Wakefield love seat and wing chairs (original upholstery and finish), Rohde springer and clocks, others. The Red Accordion (510) 834-1661.

**Wanted:** Frank Lloyd Wright furniture; Nelson; Eames furniture; Calder-like mobiles; Good clean glass (Preiss & Briard). Will sell/trade vintage fabric 1940-1970. (405) 521-1710.

**Wanted:** 1960s leather miniskirts, microskirts, and hotpants. No suede or vinyl. Steve Hannan, 141 East Central Street, Natick, MA 01760.

**Advertising Representatives**  
The Echoes Report magazine is looking for enthusiastic, professional, experienced individuals to work as independent advertising representatives on a commission basis. For further information, contact Scott Cheverie (508) 428-2324.

**Looking to buy:** Bakelite jewelry. Interesting figural pins, deeply carved bracelets. (516) 484-4794.

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#### fourth world congress

The International Coalition of Art Deco Societies has designated Los Angeles as the site for the Fourth World Congress on Art Deco, to be held May 22-26, 1997. The Los Angeles Art Deco Society will host the event, which will revolve around the theme of "Art Deco and the Movies." A variety of speakers will be presented on that topic. For further information on the Congress, call (310) 659-DECO.

#### retro color

The folks at Sherwin-Williams have dug into their paint archives to create several new retro color collections based on hues from past decades.

The Jazz Age Palette, which was drawn from the 1920s, features bold, bright colors - Chinese Red, Peacock Blue - which reflect the optimism of that era, and the Suburban Modern Collection lets your walls say "1950s!" with such classic hues as Chartreuse, Flamingo Pink and Turquoise Blue. For more information and sample chips visit your local Sherwin-Williams retailer.

#### focus on style

William Doyle Galleries has announced a new series of talks, entitled "Focus on Style" to be launched in December. On the 12th stylemaker Temple St. Clair Carr will discuss the eclectic influences that have inspired her jewelry collection. Using 22 karat gold and a variety of precious stones, Ms. Carr's designs mix splashes of contemporary taste and color with the aesthetics and feelings of antiquity. William Doyle Galleries' December 13 Estate Jewelry auction will take place the day after Ms. Carr's talk.

During the week of January 7th, photographer Joyce Tenneson will examine the creative impulses that give rise to her haunting, ethereal, pen- sive images. Ms. Tenneson's work has appeared in over 100 exhibitions, including a single artist show at the International Center of Photography, and is

seen in numerous museum and private collections. Additionally, Ms. Tenneson is a renowned portrait, fashion and beauty photographer whose distinctive style will captivate guests and prove a fitting compliment to William Doyle Galleries' January 10th Belle Epoque sale.

Reservations are required, as space is limited. Talks are scheduled from 7pm-8:30pm. To make a reservation or to receive more information call (212) 427-2730.

#### good design

This year, over 80 products and graphics (out of 600 entries) were selected by a jury of leading industrial design professionals for consumer products that they felt were worthy of the Chicago Athenaeum: Museum of Architecture and Design's prestigious "GOOD DESIGN®" label.

The Athenaeum's "GOOD DESIGN" program has historic significance. The program was founded in Chicago in 1950 by Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, Eliot Noyes, Russel Wright, George Nelson, and Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. as a way in which to recognize the best contemporary industrial design produced by America's most significant design firms and manufacturers. The goal of the program was to persuade consumer taste about the merit of important modern design. Their last presentation of "Good Design" took place in Chicago in 1957, until The Chicago Athenaeum resurrected the program in 1990.

Award winners are entitled to use the Museum's "Good DESIGN®" logo on product packaging, labeling, and marketing. The "GOODDESIGN®" logo was designed by

Morton Goldsholl in 1950 and remains a trademark of The Chicago Athenaeum: Museum of Architecture and Design.

The 80 design winners, plus another 125 submissions selected by the jury, form this year's "GOOD DESIGN" exhibition at the museum, which will remain on view at the museum through January 13, 1996. For further information call (312) 251-0175.



#### red 1950

Prescriptives has recently released a line of highly concentrated red lipsticks called "Red 1950," which replicate the fabulous reds of the postwar decade. These super-saturated reds, previously obtained by using the now-banned red dye, are user friendly due to modern science and technology. Even the stick shape is retro - a smooth ellipse as opposed to today's wedge shape. About \$15 at Prescriptives cosmetics counters nationwide.

#### lost highways

If you believe that old trailers, motorhomes and the roadside America of our recent past are ITSVILLE, then you should participate in The Lost Highways Classic Trailer & Motor-home Club, a newly founded club dedicated to the world of classic trailers. Members receive four quarterly newsletters filled with articles, member photos, restoration tips, and classifieds.

Club meetings and rallies are also being planned. Membership dues are \$24 per year. Write to: Lost Highways, PO Box 43737, 615 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106; (215) 925-2568.

#### breaking ground

Construction is finally about to commence on the new Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, after nine years of planning and fundraising. The museum will occupy a former mill complex in North Adams. When completed, the 170,000 square feet of renovated space will be divided into exhibition space, performance space, sound and video stages, and commercial space. The work is predicted to take over two years to complete, with the museum scheduled to open to the public in the fall of 1997.

#### book arcade

The Bohemian Bookworm, New York's Rare & Vintage Booksellers, established the Antiquarian Book Arcade in New York in 1993. The Arcade is a consortium of more than 65 of the finest American booksellers. The success which followed inspired the opening of their London Antiquarian Book Arcade on October 1. Featuring multiple computer linkage with New York, it's London's most technologically advanced showcase for antiquarian and vintage books. Customers are able to purchase books from either place without any of the hassles normally attributed to trans-Atlantic book buying. While individual dealers are not present, the Arcade's knowledgeable staff has the ability to locate any title since all books are listed on the computer. The London Antiquarian Book Arcade is located at 37 Great Russell St., London WC1. [E]

## Pop Goes the Plastic

(continued from page 31) and kitsch interpretations - mushroom lamps, parson-style occasional tables, and Taiwanese inflatable chairs.

Most Americans simply were never able to see good 1960s design for sale. With the exception of upscale department stores and specialty shops in large urban areas, the public simply had restricted access to the objects only through interior designers (not unlike most European design which followed), further negating the movement's ideological egalitarianism. The public's ignorance and suspicion of the objects were only reinforced by American furniture manufacturers whose reactionary response to design from Europe was to offer heavily carved "Spanish Mediterranean" or "Italian Provincial" furniture. The American irony of the technological advances in plastics was that they were used to create faux wood veneers for these products and - heinous to even imagine - create the entire piece completely molded from the plastic itself.

There were some bright moments. America's Broyhill created *Chapter One* (1970), its 'Premier' line of bedroom furniture which was a thoughtful rendition of Raymond Loewy's 1965 *DF 2000* series of brightly-colored, plastic-veneered case goods. *Chapter One's* tremendous scarcity in the United States only belies its commercial viability at the time. What of Knoll and Herman Miller? Each produced several successful lines of upholstered foam-block modular seating which were marketing by and large as contract furnishings for corporate environments, further reinforcing the public's notion that this was seating for lobbies, not living rooms.

The materials - foam and plastics - simply did not connote the substance which its high price tag did certainly denote. While Verner Panton and Eero Aarnio has us sitting in shaped pieces of plastic, Pierre Paulin and Olivier Morgue had us reclining on shaped pieces of fabric-covered foam, and Joe Colombo designed the self-contained environments which we would call home, it all remained a fantasy for the general public to be enjoyed at the movies.

From the vantage points of the 1990s, the interest in acquiring decorative arts from the 1960s and '70s predicts the way in which collectors of modernism now acquire. With a quarter-century of collecting modernism well-documented, a conclusive and obvious pattern has emerged: in the 1970s, Art Deco was aggressively collected and, in the 1980s, a vigorous renewed interest in mid-century modern emerged; simple extrapolation suggests that the 1990s would be about the 1960s and early '70s - and it is. Nevertheless,

with this linear trend so named, it has become self-fulfilling. Our interest in the 1960s at this time only reinforces our anticipated future interest in the late 1970s and early 1980s by the year 2000. Had we progressed in a vacuum with no self-awareness, this would be so. Our collecting the 1960s and '70s at this time has also heralded a perceived need to likewise collect everything up to the present. Offering design from the 1960s for sale, has also engendered the offering for sale of late 1970s "High-Tech" and "Neo-Functionalism," as well as early 1980s "Post-Modernism."

Collecting decorative arts from the 1960s has been a catalyst for determining that which we believe to be significant design from the more recent past and not waiting to acquire it at some future date - we have speeded up the previously noted linear chronology through our awareness of the chronology itself. Yes, I have recently acquired several Memphis pieces from the early 1980s and several pieces by Philippe Starck from the late 1980s. I have friends who are purchasing decorative arts by Jasper Morrison and Tom Dixon at this time because, as collectors of modern design, they are certain that they will also want them later - we will as well.

Our renewed interest in the 1960s and early 1970s is about a great deal more than the period's decorative arts. It is about our collective awareness that modernism is less about any one decade in the 20th century and more about a century of several modern movements of which our collections now, in 1995, are an assemblage. **E**

## Further Reading

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Decelle, Phillipe, Hennebert, Diane, and Loze, Pierre; *L'Utopie du Tout Plastique 1960-1973*; Editions Norma, Paris, 1994.

Chapoutot, Anne; *Pierre Paulin, Un Univers de Formes*; Editions Du May, Paris, 1992.

*Catalogo 1995/96*; Kartell spa, Milan, 1995.

*Italy: The New Domestic Landscape Achievements and Problems of Italian Design*; edited by Emilio Ambasz; Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1972.

DiNoto, Andrea, *Art Plastic: Designed for Living*.

Katz, Sylvia; *Plastics Designs and Materials*; Studio Vista, London, 1978.

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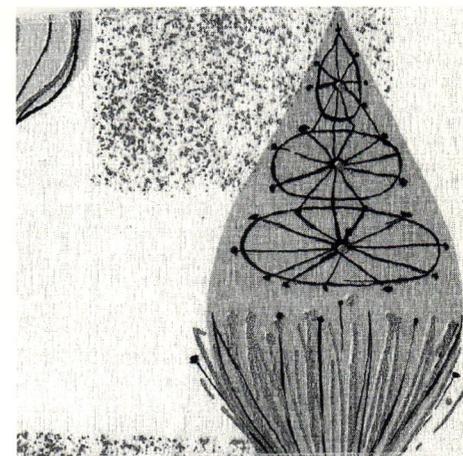
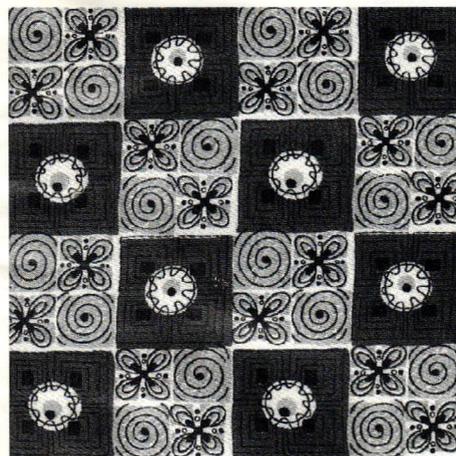
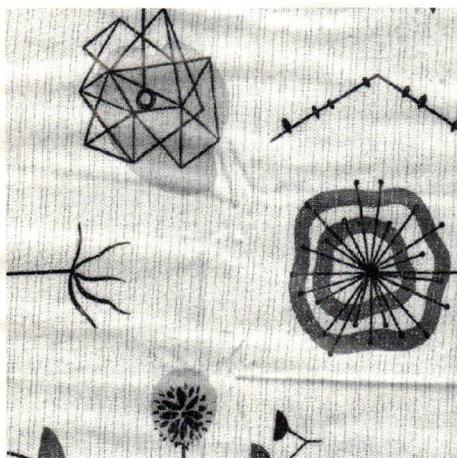
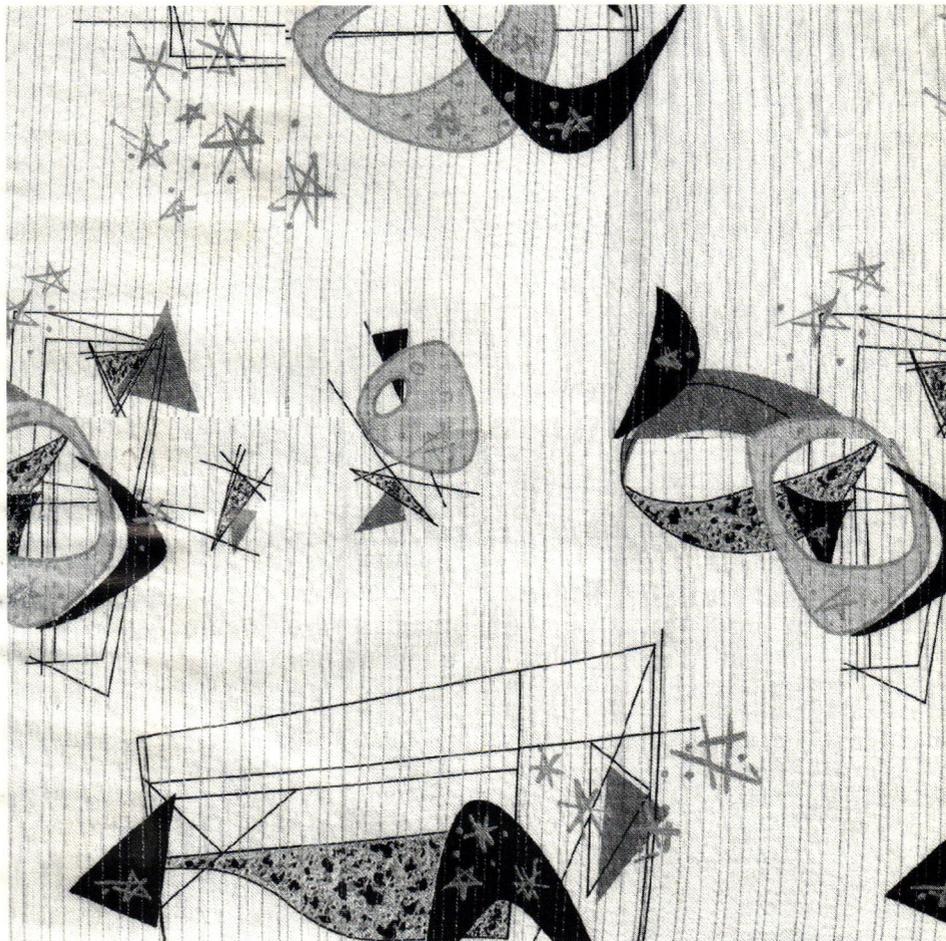
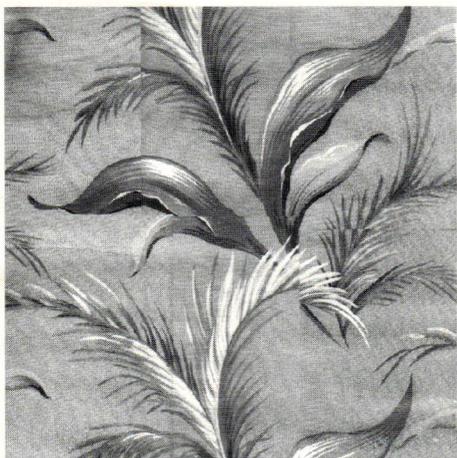


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# last look

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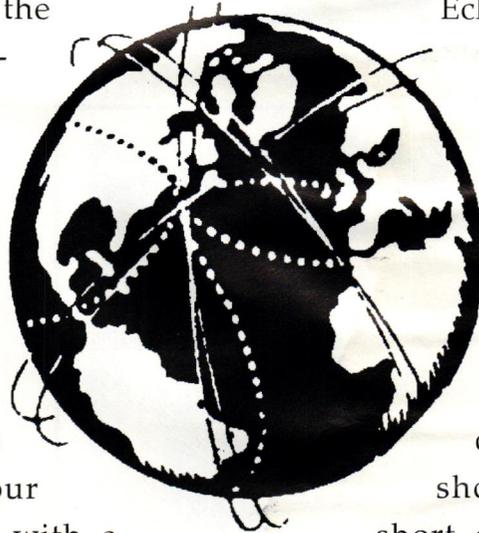
Midcentury fabrics are the canvas upon which the different facets of 1950s popular culture were painted. The expressive, abstract, futuristic patterns of the period reveal the strong influence fine art played in textile design - especially the works of Calder and Joan Miro. The public's fascination with science and technology was expressed in the "world of tomorrow" fabrics featuring geometric and amoeboid shapes, atoms, boomerangs, molecules, beakers and rockets. Everyday items and activities were transformed into whimsical caricatures of themselves - with cars, golf clubs, rockets, cityscapes, animals, rock 'n roll couples, musicians and more dancing and rollicking across the woven threads, bringing a feeling of fun and lightheartedness to the otherwise austere living rooms of mid-century America. And the usually

demure classic florals were transformed into larger-than-life versions of themselves, with sweeping palm fronds, tropical birds and vibrant blooms bringing their brilliant colors into America's post-war homes. The demand and competition for these vintage textiles has never been higher, as set designers, architects and collectors vie for the elusive yardage. As Gideon Bosker states in the introduction to *Fabulous Fabrics of the Fifties* (Chronicle Books), "To be sure, collectors of vintage barkcloth share the thrill of convention-bashing which lies at the core of much of Americans' fascination with their abundant kitsch culture. But novelty drapes hold a sharper ironic crease: embracing contradictions, they are at once elegant and gauche, sophisticated and homey. In one graceful sweep they mock nostalgia and celebrate it."

<http://www.deco-echoes.com>

There's a tremendous new addition to the Mid-20th Century marketplace - the Deco Echoes Web site on the internet! Having established The Echoes Report magazine as the premier source for news, information and resources regarding the growing Modern movement, Deco Echoes is committed to establishing an equal resource on the Internet, creating the definitive Web site for Mid-20th Century Style & Design. The Deco Echoes Web site is state-of-the-art, and includes a Vintage Shops section where Mid-20th Century enterprises can promote their businesses online, a Calendar of shows and events, a Bookstore, Art Deco Society information, Issue Archives, a Sample of our current issue including a feature story, Catalog shopping, Links to other related sites, and much more! With our targeted distribution, vast network of contacts, and registration with all the major search engines and directories within the Web, Deco Echoes will constantly and actively promote the address of our site and those businesses which advertise within

it, therefore increasing your business. Advertising within the perfect complement to ad- port magazine! Best of all, your business within site is easy and inex- You don't need to own out a paper copy of see and proof, and you regular mail, fax or tele- page for your business us a photograph of your you wish to sell, along with a



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**Look for these shops coming soon on the Deco Echoes Web site:  
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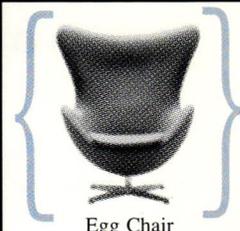
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