

ECHOES

THE MAGAZINE OF CLASSIC MODERN STYLE + DESIGN



special collector's issue

timeline to the millennium

taking stock: modernism at the millennium
case study house #22 in 2000
modern market report: what's hot
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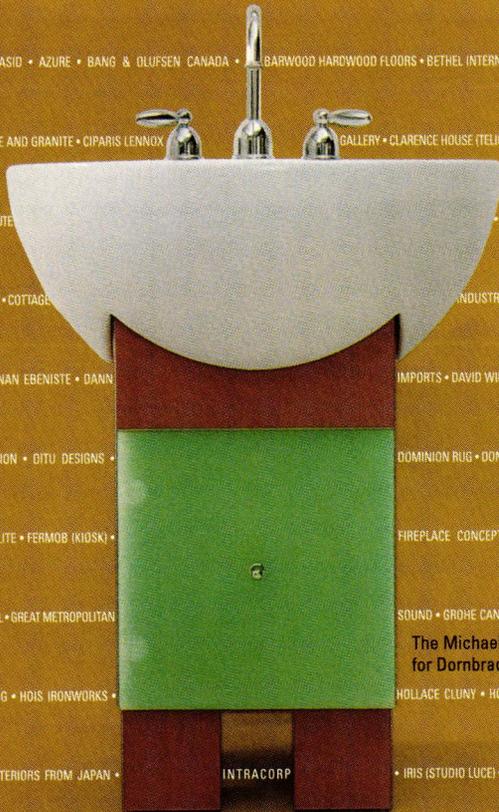
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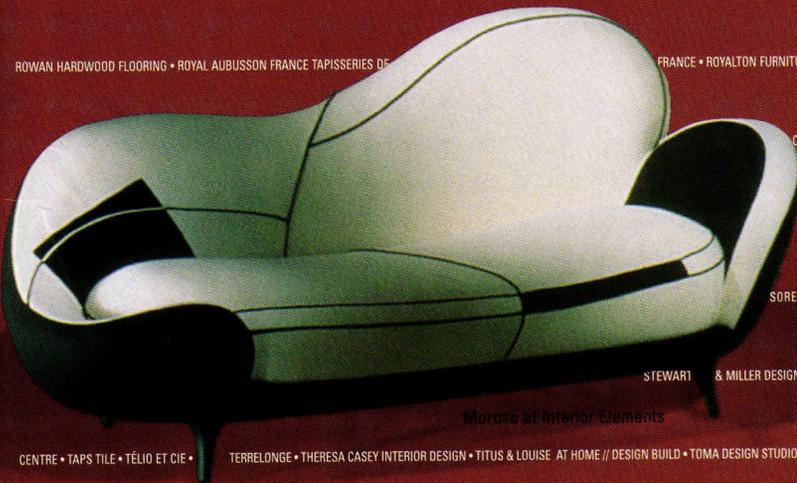
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The Michael Graves collection for Dornbracht USA



Leif Jacobsen



Moroso at Interior Elements



Italiana Luce at Studio Luce

on the cover

One of the most highly published architectural photos of the 20th century, Julius Shulman's *Two Girls* photograph of Case Study House #22 is as much an icon as the house itself. In the year 2000, the house of the millennium, Case Study House #22, will be designated a Historical Cultural Monument. Photograph by Julius Shulman.

features

50 Modernism at the Millennium Timeline to the Millennium

As the millennium approaches, it seems appropriate to review the most noteworthy developments that marked this century of design, to consider those that have had the greatest influence, and to speculate on what 2001 and its successors may bring. By Judith B. Gura.

74 William Kesling, Rogue Architect of Streamline Moderne

A dozen single dwelling houses and duplexes in the Streamline Moderne style have been restored recently in West Hollywood and Silver Lake. They were the work of artist-builder William Kesling. William who? Neither his name nor his work was included in the 1965 *Guide to Architecture in Southern California*, yet his intense building activity resulted in the construction of 35 homes in Los Angeles between 1934 and 1937. Who was this mystery man whose LA building career ended in an indictment for forgery of false labor and material claims? By Ginger Moro.

80 Modern Spaces: Case 22 in 2000

In 1954 newlyweds Buck and Carlotta Stahl lived near a vacant lot perched precariously on a cliff overlooking the LA basin. Despite warnings that the site was a challenge, they dreamed of building their home there one day, and, after four years of payments and a string of interviews with architects, they commissioned Pierre Koenig to build what was to become Case Study House #22. By Ginger Moro.

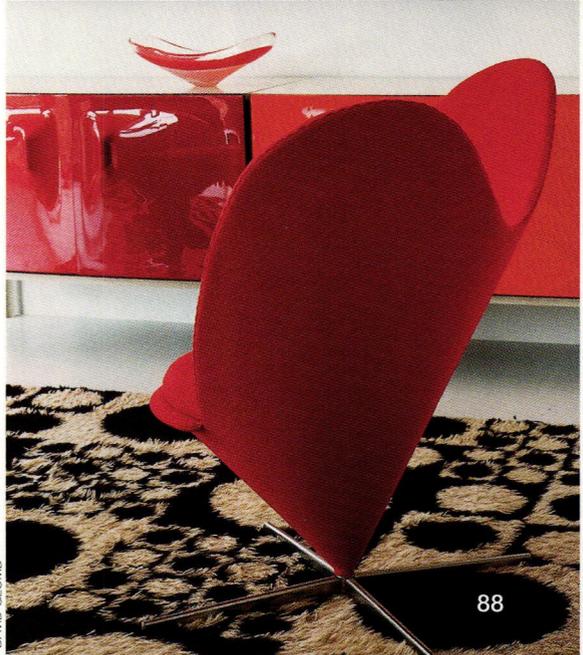
88 Modern Spaces: The Staying Power of Steel

After a post-war building boom, North Palm Springs suffered a period of decline. Today, the area's modern steel-framed homes, designed by architect Donald Wexler in 1961, are being faithfully restored by their new owners. Two such owners, Jim Isermann and David Blomster, stripped their home down to its galvanized steel structure during its renovation and filled the interior space with bold artwork and modern furnishings by Verner Panton and other classic designers. By Tony Merchell. ▶

DAVID GLOMB



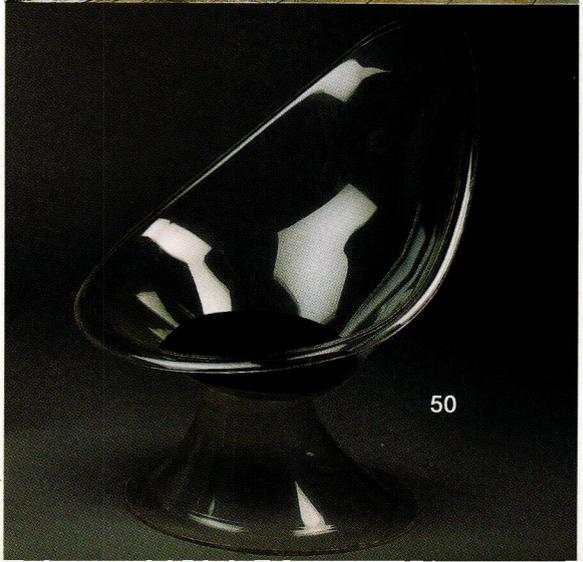
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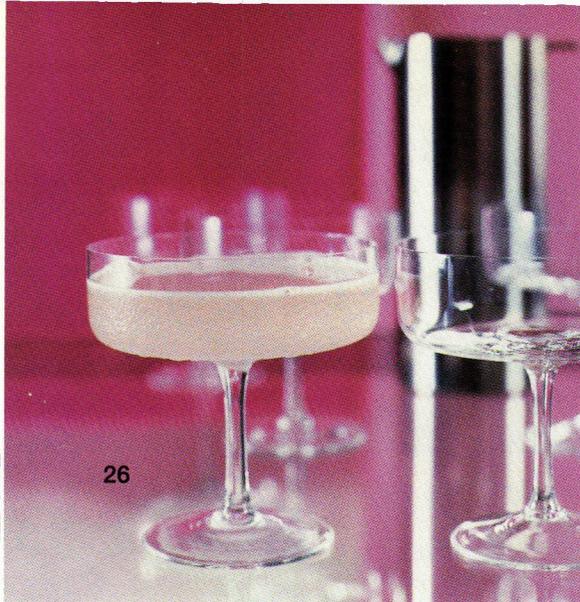


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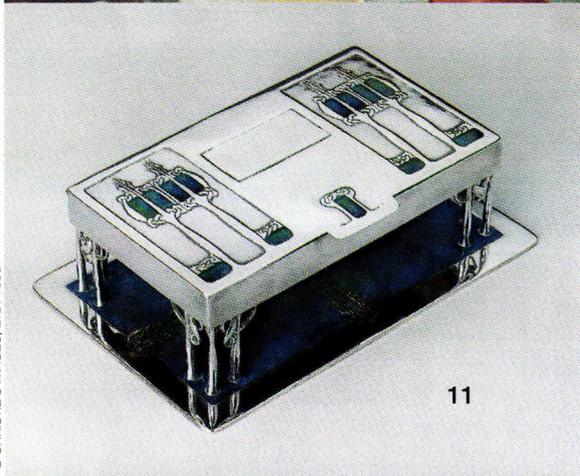




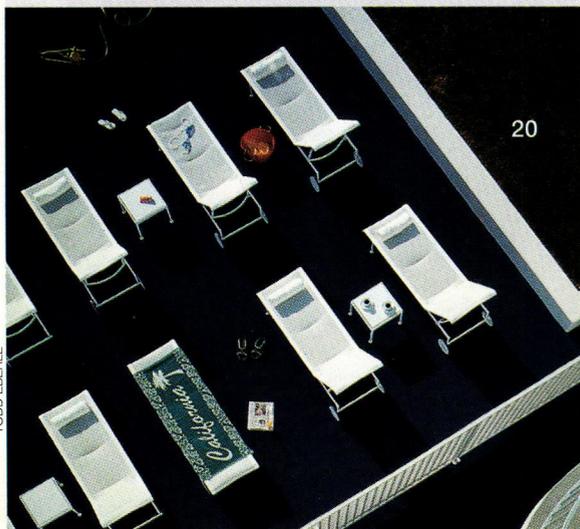
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Americans are now spending more than \$300 billion on their homes. Chances are that a fair amount of that is going into purchasing decorative arts objects, most of which are probably of relatively recent origin. Where's the market at? What's selling, what's not, and what's likely to change? Our quick-take on the top design categories offers some indication. By Judith B. Gura.

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Eames Plastic Pivot; Herman Miller counter stool; *Bubble Lamp* swag cords; Architects as movie stars. By Steven Cabella.

20 Spotlight: Signposts and Indicators

Many factors influence the shifts in buying and collecting patterns and prices. With numerous objects in circulation, the market for 20th century design reacts to news of major sales, museum exhibits, and media hype. We list some recent events which should impact the marketplace, one way or another. By Judith B. Gura.

23 Modernism, eh?

Reporting on modernism in Canada. By Cora Golden

26 Classic Bites

Elsie de Wolfe, the first lady of 20th century interior design, knew how to throw a party. Her patented Pink Lady cocktail, paired with enticing hors d'oeuvres, created legendary evenings. Create your own legends with our recipes for scrumptious bites and, of course, the Pink Lady! By Tucker Shaw.

31 Echoes Abroad

Reporting on the modern market in Europe. By Simon Andrews.

34 Modern Life: Millennial Medicine

Are you ready for the year 2000? Before the millennium is upon us, take a quick trip to your local clinic to make sure you're physically fit to enter the 21st century. By Cesar Padilla and Radford Brown.

42 On View 1: Eames Exhibition

The first exhibition to cover the full spectrum of the careers of both Charles and Ray Eames. Text by Jim Sweeney.

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Alfred Roth, 1930
Bar Trolley AR1

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Alvar Aalto, 1932
Sofa Bed AA1

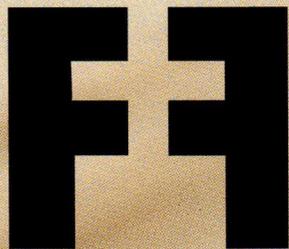
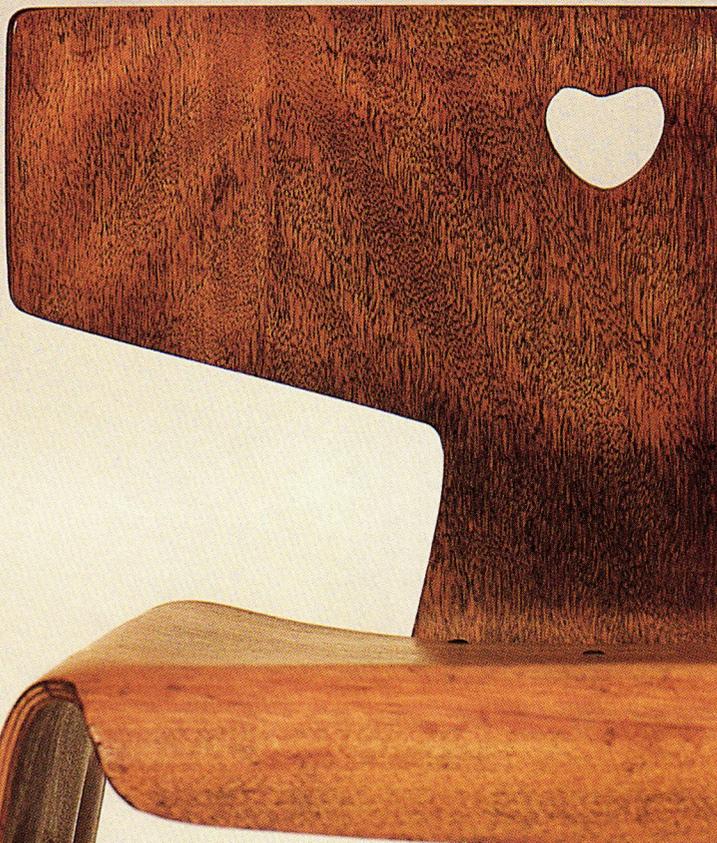
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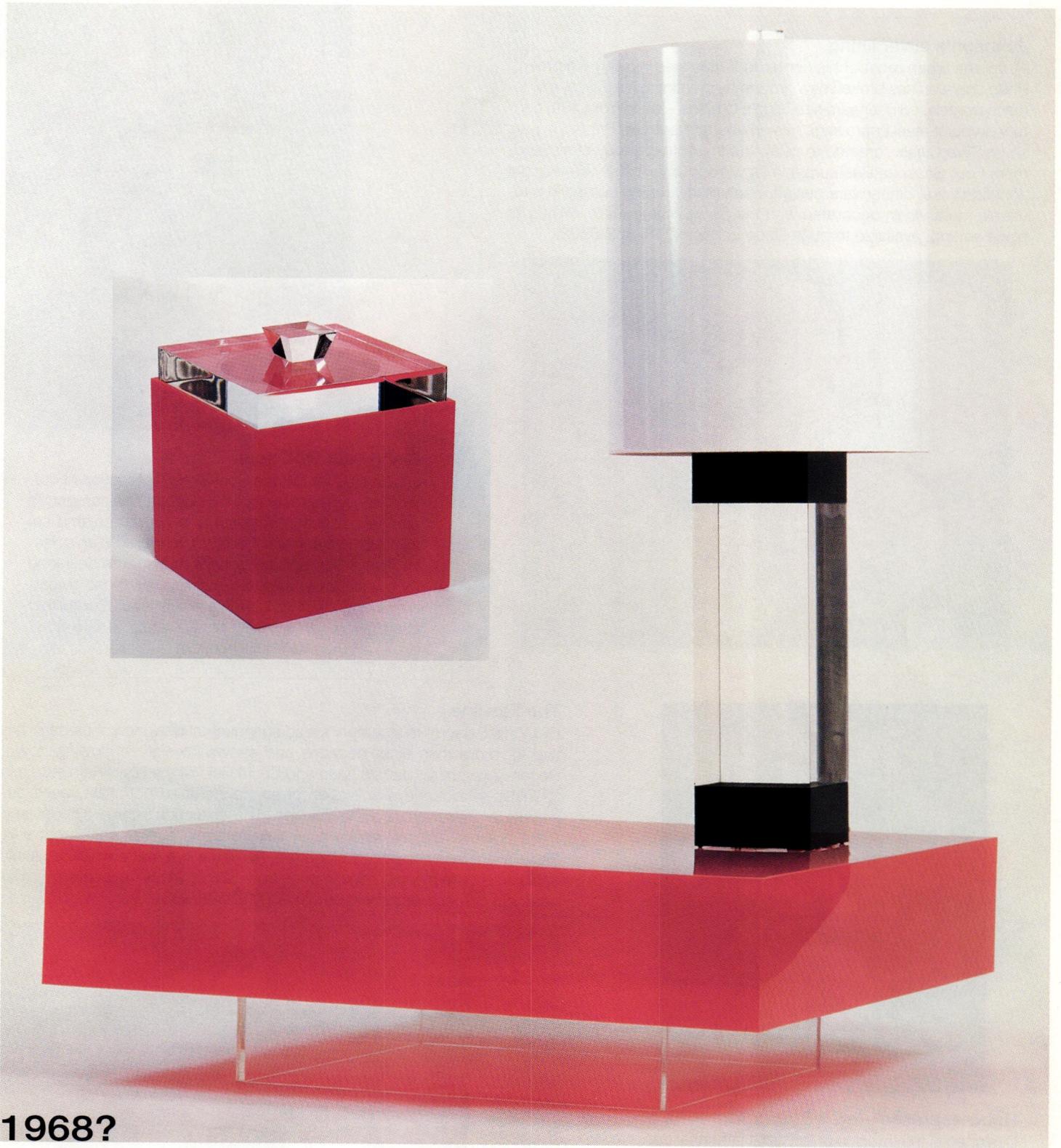
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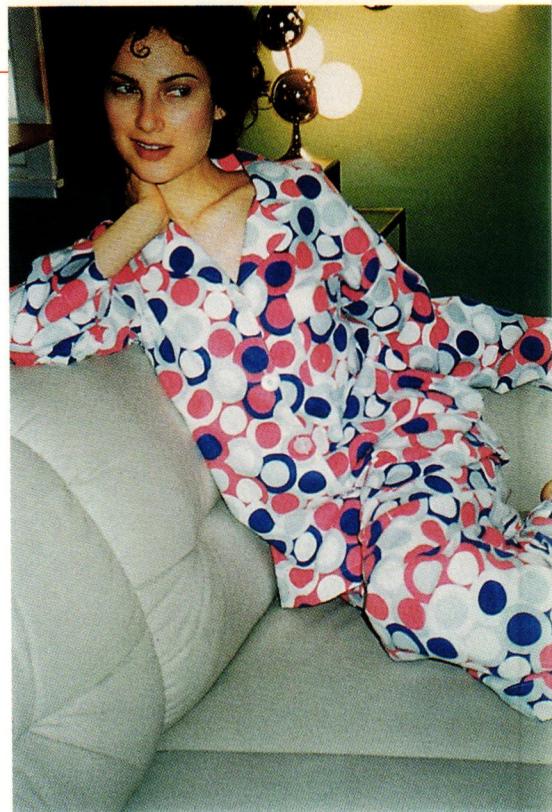
1968?

Baron Alessandro R. de C. Albrizzi opened the first of his many shops in 1968 at One Sloan Square in London. When the words "Jet Set" meant following the sun in Pucci prints to a bossa nova beat, Albrizzi was there. With panache and sophistication he translated the spirit of swinging London into a line of furniture and objects that were just right for the times. Fortunately, the Albrizzi line is available once again. Shown above: Block Lamp (\$3,600), Floating Drinks Table, 36 x 36 x 12" (\$4,050), and Ice Bucket (\$630). Albrizzi Design Inc. (212) 570-0417.

what's hot

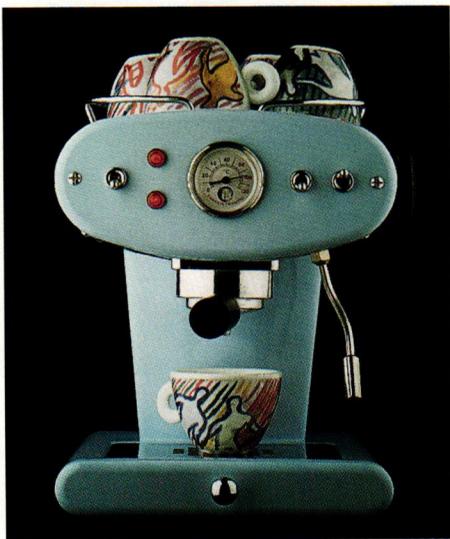
Johnson's silver lining

At an age when most of his contemporaries are enjoying retirement, Philip Johnson has broken new ground by creating *SilverCities*, a nine-piece porcelain dinnerware set using city plans - taken from 19th century drypoint steel engravings - as an abstract pattern. Printed in pale silver, *SilverCities* - created to celebrate the 40th birthday of his landmark Four Seasons Restaurant in New York City - is the 93-year old Johnson's first dinnerware design. Each place setting comes in a reusable metal drum decorated with the *SilverCities* pattern. \$150 per place setting, available through Deco Echoes (508) 362-3822.



Sleepwear with soul

Just in time for fall, the Soul Sister™ collection of cotton-flannel pajamas makes its debut. The company's premier collection consists of a classic pajama set with a drawstring waist bottom, rendered in an eclectic mix of pop and retro-inspired patterns designed by owner Judy Vella. So throw away those sweat-pants and slip into sleepwear with soul! For further information contact Soul Sister™ at (212) 686-5631 or e-mail dream@soulsister.com.



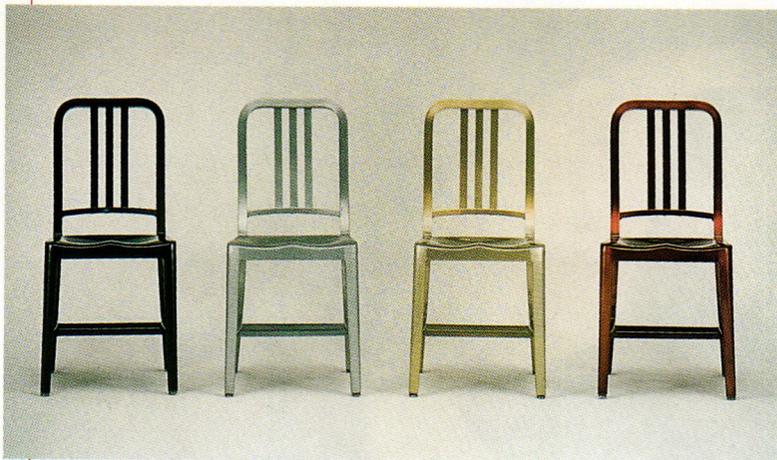
Retro espresso

Designed in the tradition of the great industrial designers of the 1930s, the X1 espresso coffee machine is the perfect accessory for your classic modern kitchen. Offered in five colors - pale blue (shown), cobalt blue, pale gray, canary yellow, and white. \$499. Available through Deco Echoes (508) 362-3822.

The Eva line

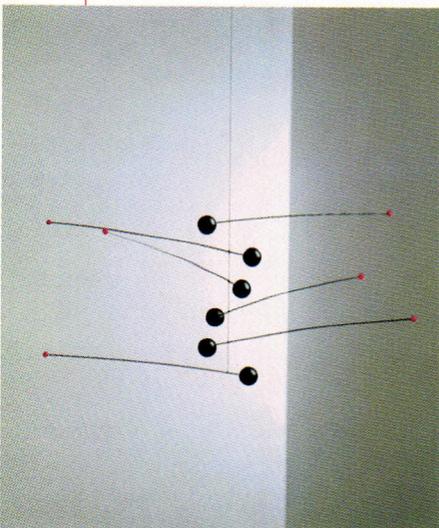
Eva Zeisel, one of this century's leading industrial designers, has been active for more than eight decades and shows no sign of slowing down. Recently ceramists James Klein and David Reid of the Klein/Reid studio in Brooklyn introduced a collection of six handcrafted porcelain vases designed by Zeisel entitled the *Eva* line. The collection's three slender and three bulbous "pillow" vases have fluid, organic curves consistent with Zeisel's well-known sensual signature. Available in a matte white or glossy sepia finish, the pieces range in price from \$38 to \$118. To locate a retailer near you contact Klein/Reid studio at (718) 388-9331.





1000 Series

An icon of American design, the Emeco *1000 Series* chair was originally designed in 1944 for the US navy. Manufactured to satisfy their strict specifications to be durable, lightweight, and rust proof, its versatility permits it to accommodate both residential and commercial environments. As of this June the *1000 Series* is available in eight new colors in addition to the original aluminum finish. The *1000 Series* chair is available exclusively through the ICF Group and retails for \$313 in color. (914) 268-0700.



In thin air

The modern mobile was created in Denmark in 1954 by Christian Flensted and his wife Grethe. Today their son Ole Flensted and his wife Aase continue the tradition through their Modern Mobiles Collection. The Collection consists of ten designs, carefully assembled and balanced by hand, including three Calderesque models and *Futura* (shown at left, \$59.95). To view the entire collection visit their web site at www.simplymod.com, or call (310) 360-8035.

Modern medicine

The striking *Lenox* medicine cabinet, manufactured by Urban Archaeology, has an interesting history. Originally installed in a New York apartment occupied by first Helena Rubenstein, then Peter Revson, and then its current occupant, the cabinets (there were 5) were removed and sold to Urban Archaeology. There they proved so popular that Urban Archaeology decided to reproduce them, and the *Lenox* cabinet is the result. The cabinet is available in many finishes, and with or without an optional marble interior box. Three 3/8" thick glass shelves are provided. Custom sizes are available. As shown in nickel with marble interior: \$3,230. Urban Archaeology (212) 431-4646.



Classic tools

No ember has been left unturned in the design for City Studio's *Prometheus Fireplace Tools*. Metal and wood feature strongly in this clean-lined three-piece set with stand. Wood choices include mahogany and Macassar ebony, with metal finishes in polished or brushed nickel, or brass. As shown in Macassar ebony and polished nickel: \$3,900. City Studio (213) 658-6354.

Design within reach

A unique resource for those searching for designer furnishings that are in stock and well priced has just been launched. It's called Design Within Reach, and through their web site modern classics such as the Brno Tubular chair (shown at right, \$575) can be ordered at a substantial discount since they have no showroom overhead to support. Design Within Reach www.dwr.com.





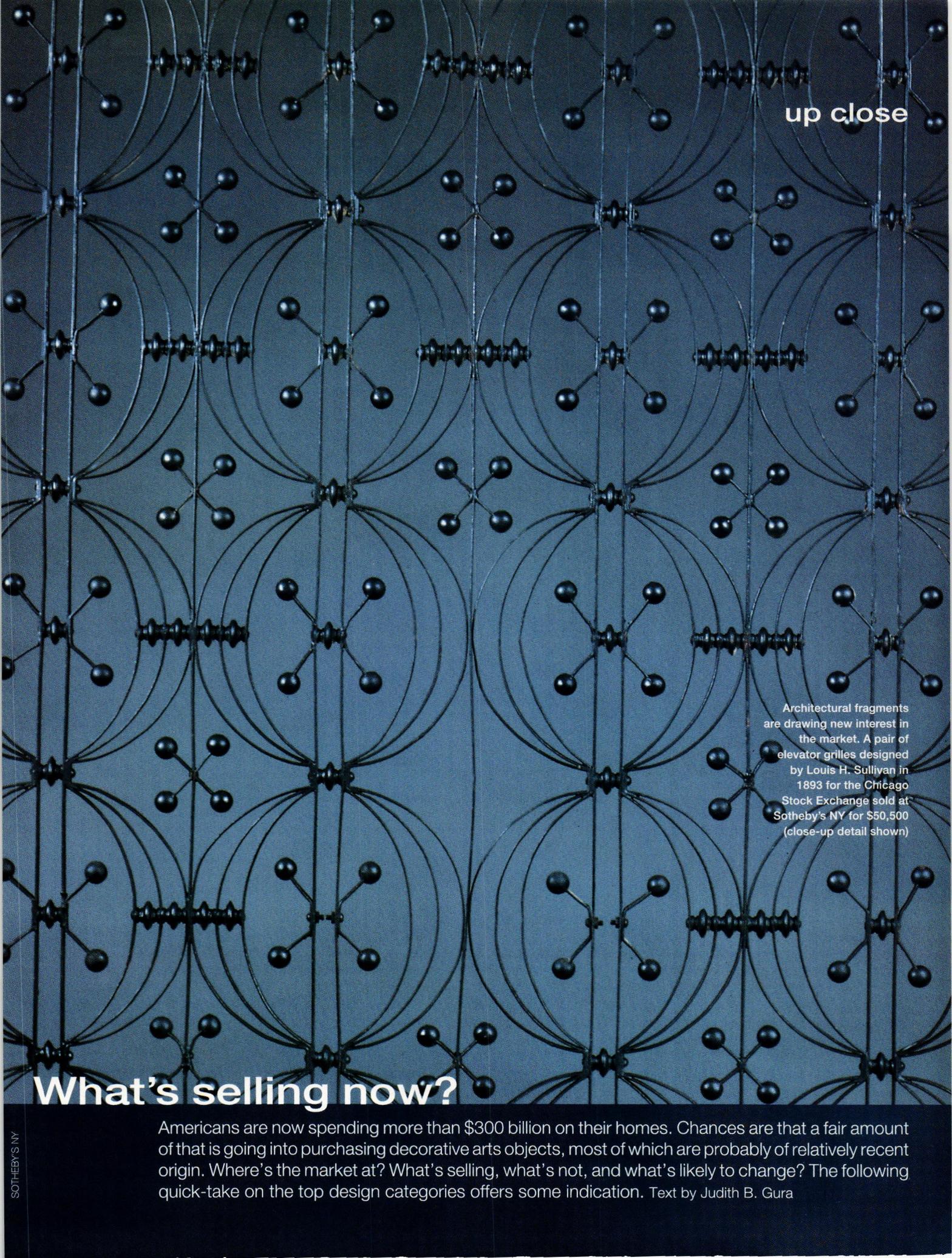
Prototype high-back Coconut chair,
1957-58, to be auctioned on
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up close

Architectural fragments are drawing new interest in the market. A pair of elevator grilles designed by Louis H. Sullivan in 1893 for the Chicago Stock Exchange sold at Sotheby's NY for \$50,500 (close-up detail shown)

What's selling now?

Americans are now spending more than \$300 billion on their homes. Chances are that a fair amount of that is going into purchasing decorative arts objects, most of which are probably of relatively recent origin. Where's the market at? What's selling, what's not, and what's likely to change? The following quick-take on the top design categories offers some indication. Text by Judith B. Gura



LEFT: Achieving the second-highest Arts & Crafts price at auction, this mahogany linen press by Greene & Greene sold for \$242,000 at Treadway/Toomey. ABOVE: This important white painted oak armchair by Charles Rennie Mackintosh for the drawing room of Mrs. Rowat at Kingsborough Gardens, Glasgow, 1902, realized \$233,500 at Christie's Maurice and Margo Cohen sale

Art Nouveau

This area of the market doesn't appear to be making news, though Denis Galion of New York's Historical Design thinks Art Nouveau will heat up with the turn of the century. So far, Christie's Nancy McClelland says that art glass like Galle and Daum hasn't sprung back from its 1988 high, though the finest objects still command good prices. At Christie's important Cohen Collection sale in June, a silver cigarette box by Archibald Knox for Liberty's brought a record \$206,000...partly attributable to the hype and glamour surrounding the sale. Look for more attention on Knox, and also on Bugatti, aided by the Cleveland Museum of Art's recent show on Carlo and his designer sons.

Tiffany

If anything is a sure thing, this is it. Since its rediscovery at mid-century, the Tiffany star has been on the rise. Lamps and windows are in every 20th century auction, and continue to set records: the latest was a 1905

favrite glass window at Christie's in June, selling for \$552,500, the second highest price for one at auction. Coming up in the same place November 29th is a *Red Lotus* lamp (the last one went for \$2.8 million two years ago). The recent scandal around cemetery thefts should be no deterrent to interest in this prolific source. "It's very blue chip," says Christie's Nancy McClelland.

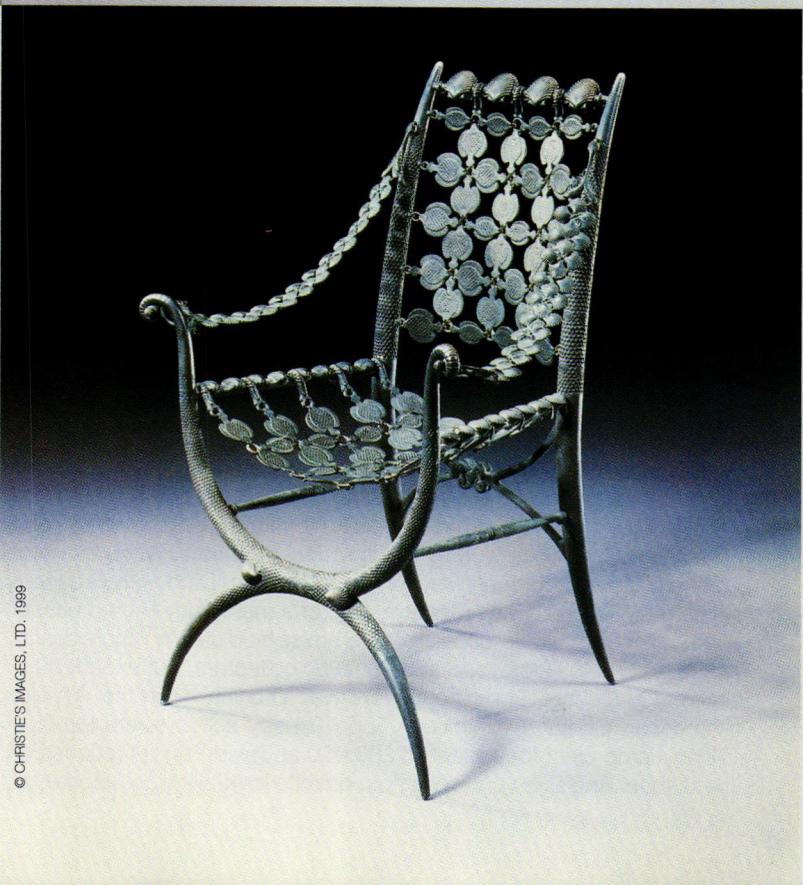
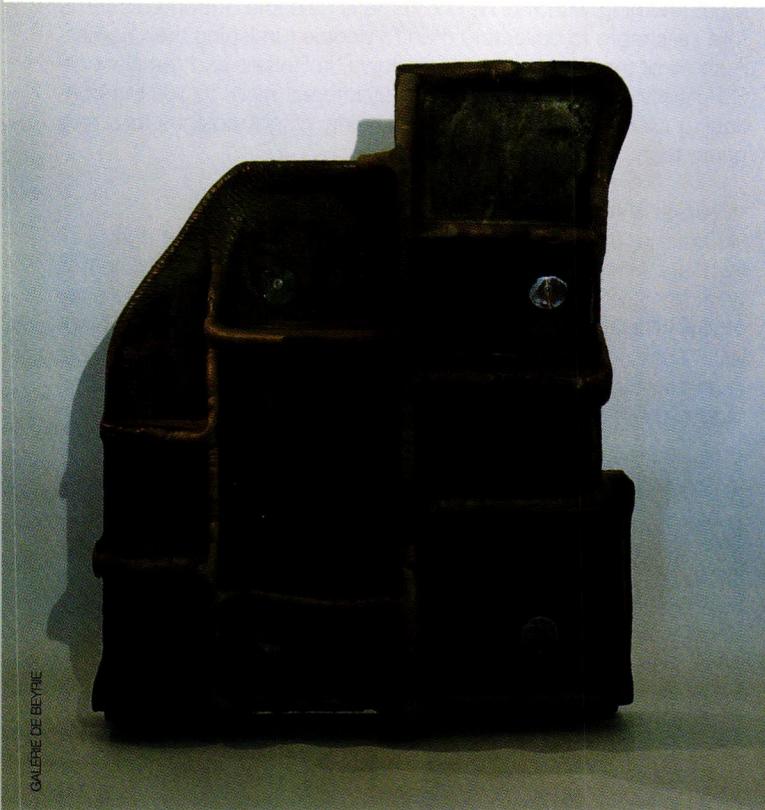
Mackintosh

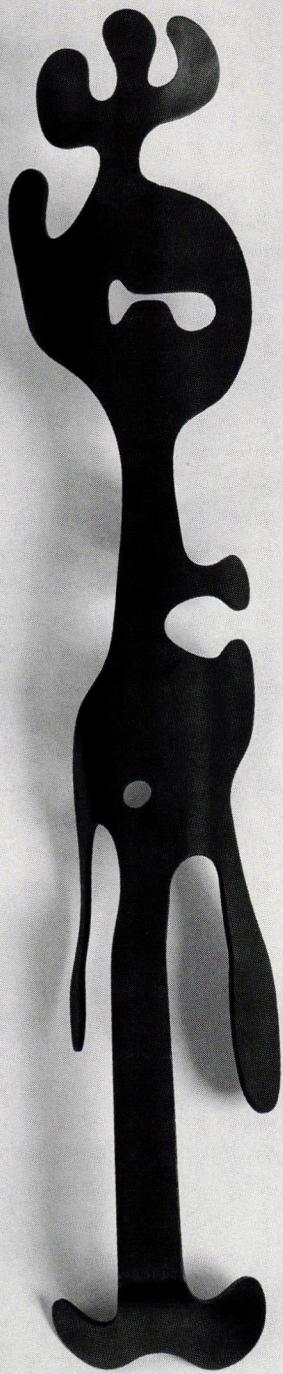
There's just not much around...most of it is in museums or private collections, and dealers can't afford to stock it. As Sandy Smith says, "Nobody is spending \$130,000 to inventory a Mackintosh chair." But when pieces do surface, they make news...an important armchair went for \$233,500 in the Cohen sale.

Arts & Crafts

"Stickley is stronger than it's ever been," reports specialist David

BELOW, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Bookshelves by Gaetano Pesce. 1960s Italian designs are being snapped up by savvy collectors; This prototype *Conversation* armchair by Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen brought \$129,000 at LA Modern Auctions - a world record price for a mid-century modern chair; This rare cast bronze armchair by Armand Albert Rateau, c.1919-1920, achieved a world auction record for a 20th century chair sold at auction by realizing \$640,500 at Christie's NY; *Mandarin* armchair by Jean Royère. 1930s to '50s French design is one of the hot new areas for collectors





ABOVE: Evidence of "Eames mania" - this splint sculpture by Ray Eames realized \$143,000 at Treadway/Toomey's Eames auction last May. **RIGHT:** At Christie's Cohen auction, this "seven ball" bentwood side chair by Josef Hoffmann, c.1906, set a record by selling for \$85,000 - more than quadruple its presale estimate

Cathers, "and it shows no signs of abating." Fine, early pieces (like the one that topped \$200,000 at Craftsman Auctions this Spring) bring high prices, and interest has spread to furniture by the Limberts and Charles Rolfs (whose work is due for more attention). Serious collectors are bidding competitively for the rare items. Ditto with Greene & Greene, as in Treadway/Toomey's sale of a mahogany linen press for \$242,000. The "usual suspects" in ceramics hold steady - there seems to be no end to Rookwood and Roseville collectors, but expect more interest in George Ohr, whose work was showcased in the Whitney "American Century" exhibition. Good Grueby sells...a rare Grueby-Tiffany lamp went for a record \$286,000 at David Rago Auctions this past June. And Dirk von Erp lamps, despite look-alike copies, are still

desirable. Of another generation, but sharing the Arts & Crafts aesthetic, works by George Nakashima have a steady market at all the top auction houses.

Frank Lloyd Wright

In the past decade or so, especially since the Museum of Modern Art exhibition in 1994, Wright objects have been getting more attention...the market doesn't seem to run out of his stained-glass windows, one of which sold at Christie's in June for \$244,500. Almost anything with the Wright name is saleable, though his furniture sells more to collectors than to people furnishing their homes. A show of the Darwin Martin windows, in Buffalo and the National Building Museum, should help keep interest high, as will the continuing licensing program that's bringing Wright designs to a new generation.

Wiener Werkstätte

Hoffman and his compatriots find a steady market, but price can fluctuate with provenance and hype...witness the *Sitzmaschine* that went for \$29,900 at Christie's Cohen sale in June, twice the price of a similar one the previous day at Sotheby's. And a "ball" high-back chair set another record; at \$85,000 the final price was more than quadruple the estimate. There's plenty of bentwood seating around, but good silver items have a steady collector's market, and



FURNITURE DECORATIVE ARTS PHOTOGRAPHY JEWELRY PAINTINGS

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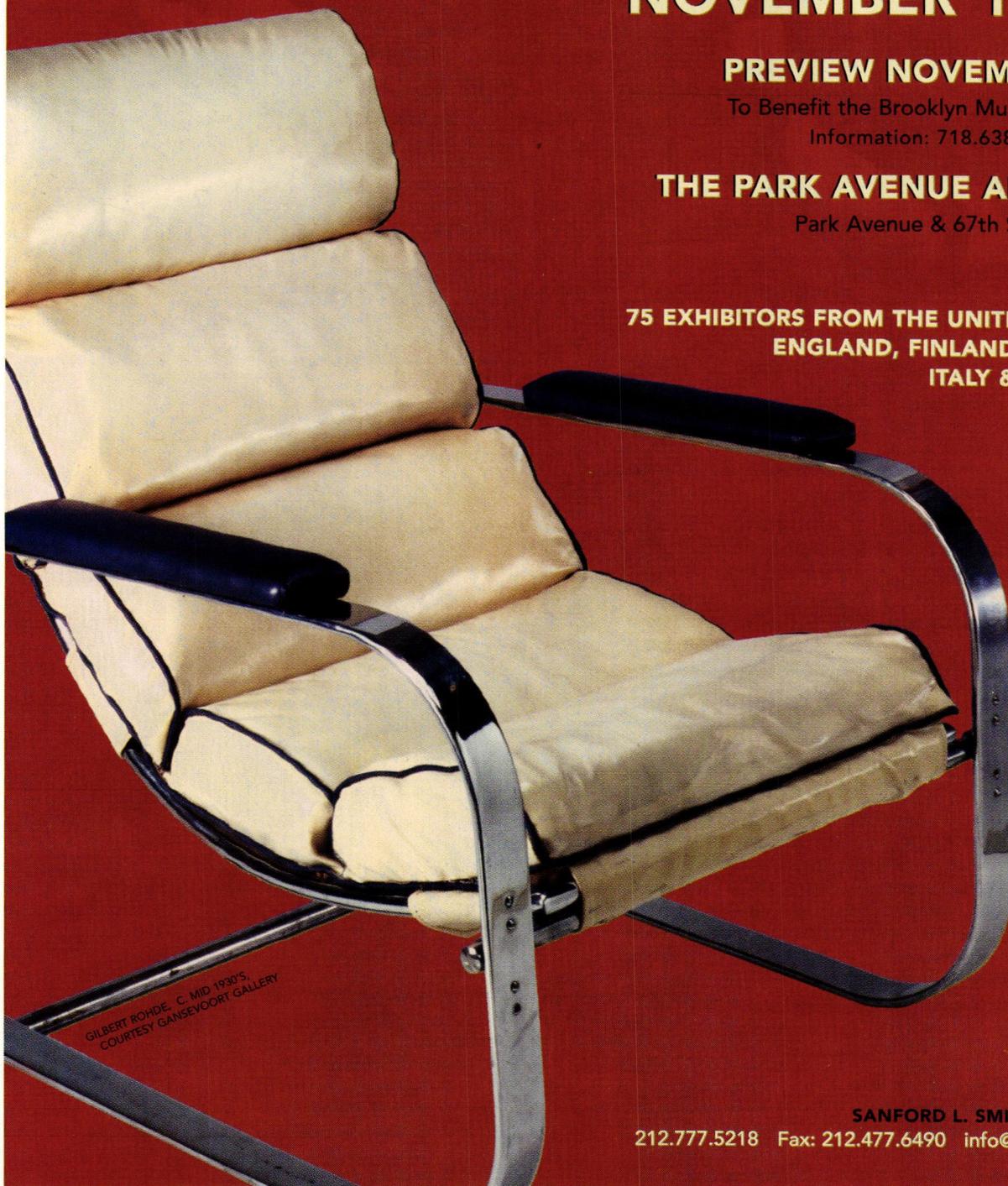
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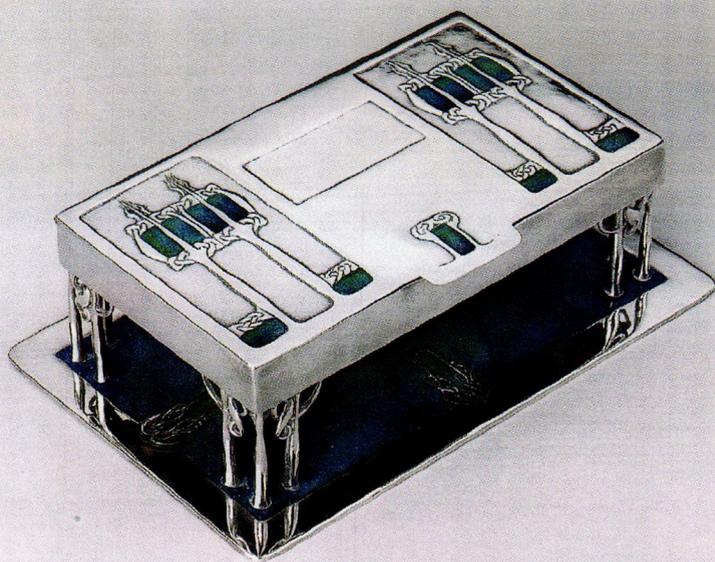
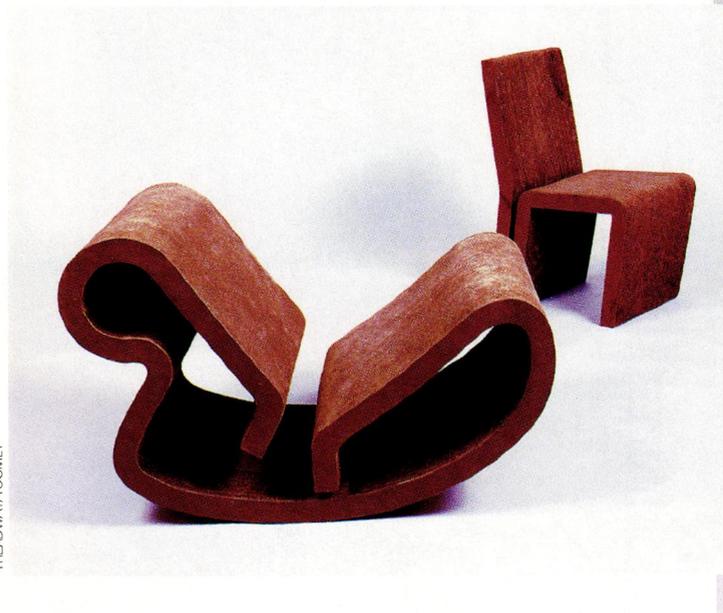


GILBERT POWDE, C. MID 1930'S,
COURTESY GANSEVOORT GALLERY

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CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: Though Art Nouveau doesn't seem to be making news in the market right now, this silver cigarette box by Archibald Knox for Liberty's brought \$206,000 at Christie's Cohen sale; Once-affordable Bakelite is commanding top prices, such as this *Pumpkin Man* pin from the Ripley Collection which sold for a record-setting \$22,000 at Treadway/Toomey; Frank Gehry's *Easy Edges* corrugated cardboard furniture from the 1970s now sells for serious money

TREADWAY/TOOMEY



© CHRISTIE'S IMAGES, LTD. 1999

the next decade should strengthen that, as the pieces turn the century mark. Collectors still buy Loetz and Lobmeyer crystal, too, and the few fine ceramic pieces that come up.

Bauhaus

Most authentic Bauhaus production is in private hands or museums. The few items coming up at auction are in a relatively fragile condition which makes them interesting only to serious collectors. People who want to live with and use the pieces are likelier to buy quality reissues than the originals. Classics by Mies, Corbusier, and Breuer aren't likely to burst into the marketplace. Exception: the 1937 furniture Mies van der Rohe did for Bryn Mawr College, his first US commission, which is generating buzz among dealers.

Art Deco

French Art Deco, particularly on the East Coast, is heating up. According to Sotheby's Greg Kuharic, "Art Deco is the last great design period...period." Alan Moss, the New York dealer who's been handling Art Deco for more than 25 years, reports that skyrocketing Paris prices, nearing the 1980s peak, have encouraged a lot of fakes. It's a market for the knowledgeable, moving higher at the top level. Ruhlmann is a given (the Tajan sale in Paris in January brought six-figure prices), and Jules Leleu, Dominique, and others are admired, but Rateau is the name of the moment (a cast-bronze chair brought a world-record \$640,000 at Christie's this Spring). Edgar Brandt, Albert Cheuret, Raymond Subes, and other metalwork is gaining interest. This Fall, Barry Friedman and Parisian dealer Valois will open a New York gallery for top-of-the-line French Art Deco. "\$50,000 will be the lowest price," Friedman promises. With interest in the furniture comes interest in the accessories as well. James Pessy of Art Deco Décor in Laguna, CA, sees a 50% rise in the market for bronze figurines like those of Chiparus, steady sellers at the top auction houses. Also heating up is Clarice Cliff, whose *Bizarre* wares > 106



THE RIPLEY COLLECTION

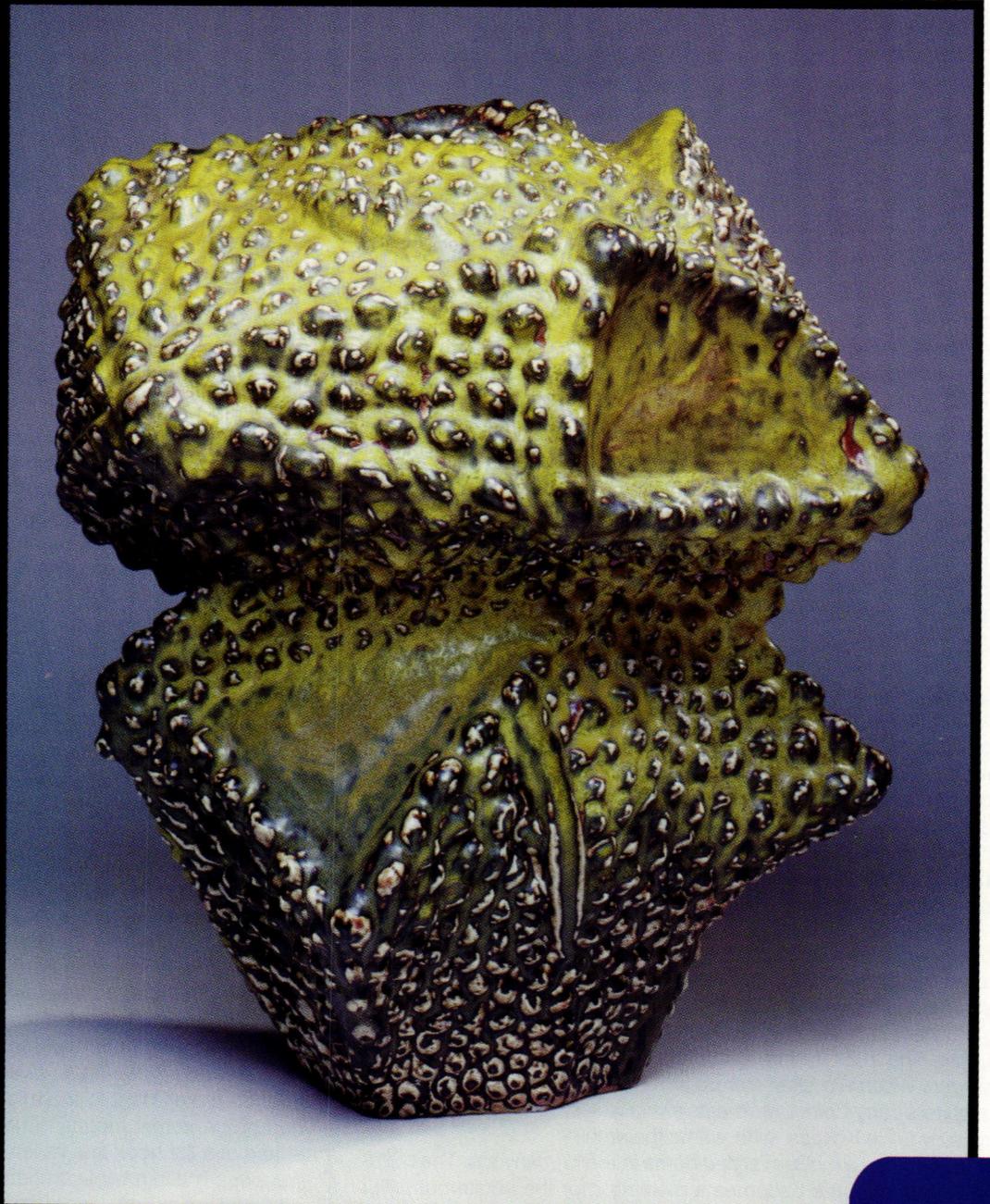
october 27-november 18

Forces of Nature

Axel Salto

An exhibition
featuring ceramics
and artwork of
Danish master
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shown beside
Danish Modern
furniture by
designers including
Finn Juhl,
Hans Wegner,
and Poul Kjørholm

Presented by
Kim Hostler
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Vase by Axel Salto, Royal Copenhagen, 1945, h. 20"

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Eames mystery solved

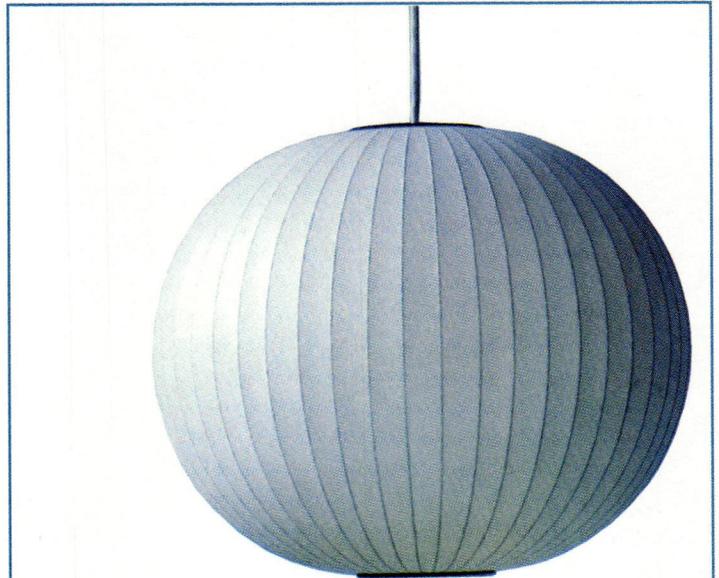
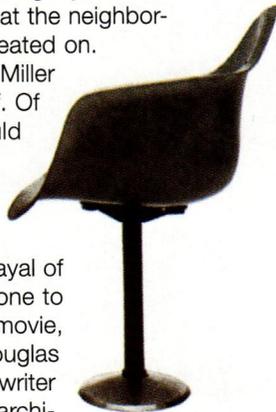
A reader writes that she has an Eames fiberglass side chair with two small upholstered cushions attached to the seating shell by means of a few screws through the bottom and back sides. "It looks odd but original" she stated. Well, it is original, having been offered in the late 1950s by Herman Miller as the *Secretarial Plastic Pivot Chair*. This re-design was the direct result of the complaints received from large corporations who had purchased vast amounts of the original under-padded fiberglass shell chairs only to hear major protests from their secretarial pools whose members were not happy or comfortable sitting on the all-fiberglass chair from 9 to 5.

Drinking with Herman Miller

Produced during the late 1950s through the '60s, Herman Miller offered a counter stool in a wide variety of Naugahyde colors. Next time you nuzzle up to a cold Miller beer at the neighborhood bar, take a look at what you are seated on. That could be a Charles Eames/Herman Miller bar stool you just climbed on - or fell off. Of course, in that latter position you could check to see the Herman Miller label.

More architects as movie stars

Those of you who enjoy watching Hollywood's wacky and unrealistic portrayal of the architect in movies should add this one to your list. The 1961 swinging suburban movie, *Strangers When We Meet* starred Kirk Douglas as architect Larry Cole. Cole meets a wild writer played by Ernie Kovacs, who wants the architect to build him a modern styled home in the LA canyons. The building of Kovacs' home becomes a metaphor for the adulterous affair the architect has with a neighbor's misunderstood yet very horny wife, played by Kim Novack. The house is a hit, destined for the pages of *House and Garden* magazine, Kim goes on to the next guy, and Larry goes home to a plain suburban ranch house with one Eames chair and a very unhappy wife. It's not all bad for Larry though; in the end he's slated to head for Hawaii to build a whole new post-war modern city. Too bad it was fiction!

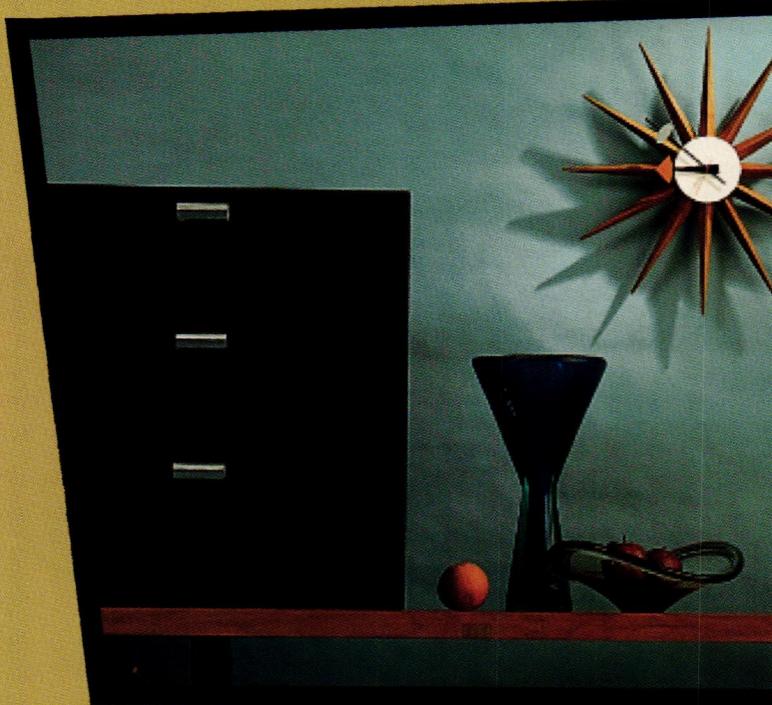
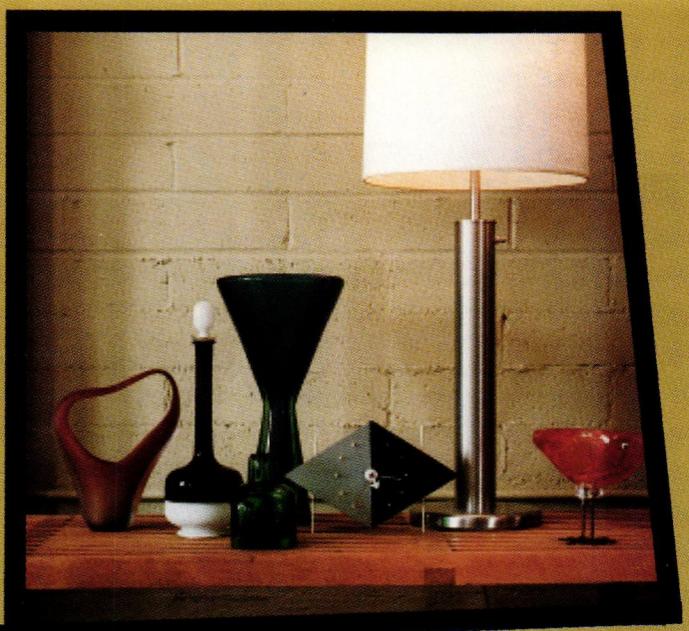


George Nelson's hang-ups

"How's it hanging?" is a question I get asked often. This phrase brings to mind a puzzle regarding the translucent *Bubble* lamps by George Nelson for Howard Miller. These lamps came in all sorts of wild shapes and were available on three-legged metal floor stands or as a swing-out wall mounted wooden arm version, or you could hang them directly from an overhead electrical outlet in the ceiling. But what if what you have is a *Bubble* lamp with a very l-o-n-g cord, what's the story with that? These were swag cords. Swag cords were meant to be plugged in a wall socket with the cord trailing up the wall to the ceiling and then swagging across to where you hung the lamp. While middle America was into swagging their lamps, they most often did and still do use a hideously ugly pot metal Rococo-style swag hook meant for the situations when you have already admitted to yourself that the lamp you want to hang is ugly. The Rococo-style hooks were perfect for giving you a preview of the ugliness hanging at the end of the line.

The Howard Miller Company was savvy enough to design their own swag hooks for the swagging of the *Bubble* lamp. It is a very simple design affair, and while they are no longer available, they are easy to have made or make yourself. (Though, after reading this, I suspect they will be back in production and offered by the company presently producing the *Bubble* lamp.) The Howard Miller/Nelson swag hook is a two inch piece of 1/16 inch metal, bent in the middle at a 45 degree angle. One end has a screw mounting hole and the other end is in the shape of a flat hook into which the cord is pressed. This holds the swag line in a tight position as the cord travels up the wall and over the ceiling. Once you are at the ceiling you can swag/drape the cord over to the fixture or shoot the cord over in a tight straight line to where the *Bubble* hangs. It hangs very well, thank you.

By Steven Cabella. Questions? Write to: eye@modern-i.com



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spotlight

20th century design in the marketplace

Many factors influence the shifts in buying and collecting patterns and prices. With numerous objects in circulation (as opposed to, for example, ancient art or objects of the 17th century), the market for 20th century design reacts to news of major sales, museum exhibits, ready-to-wear styles, and media hype. The following are some recent events which will impact the marketplace, one way or another:

American Century

The Whitney Museum's "American Century," showcasing American decorative arts (relatively few of them) along with sculpture and paintings of the 20th century in a prominent museum venue.



WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

20th Century in London

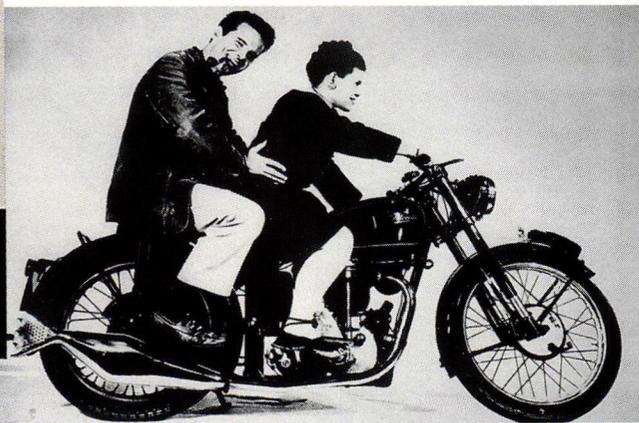
The success of 20th century design sales in Christie's, Sotheby's, and Bonhams in London this spring, suggests increasing interest in the century by major auction houses. (This rare No.41 chair set a record for this design by achieving £24,000 at Christie's SK.)

Eames-mania

The ubiquitous Eames-mania that, along with the major traveling exhibition, and some news-making auction action, have brought Charles and Ray Eames rock star celebrity.



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Bugatti exhibition

The Cleveland Museum's Bugatti exhibition, giving the idiosyncratic early 20th century designer's work the attention it deserves, plus a healthy accompaniment of publicity in the media.

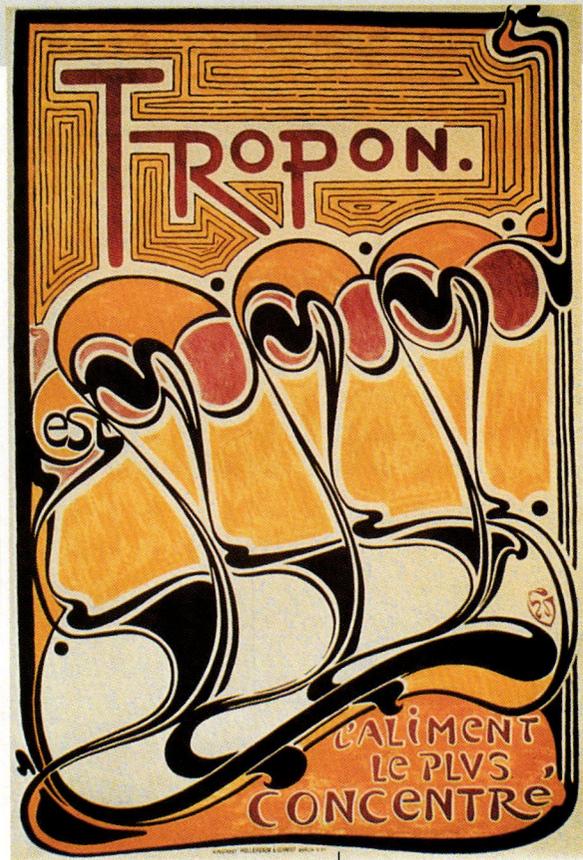


CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Text by Judith B. Gura



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MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Norwest Collection donation

The donation of the Norwest Collection of Modernist Design to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, which will open a new gallery of modern design in the coming year, putting more of these objects in the public eye.



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Tiffany Garden Museum

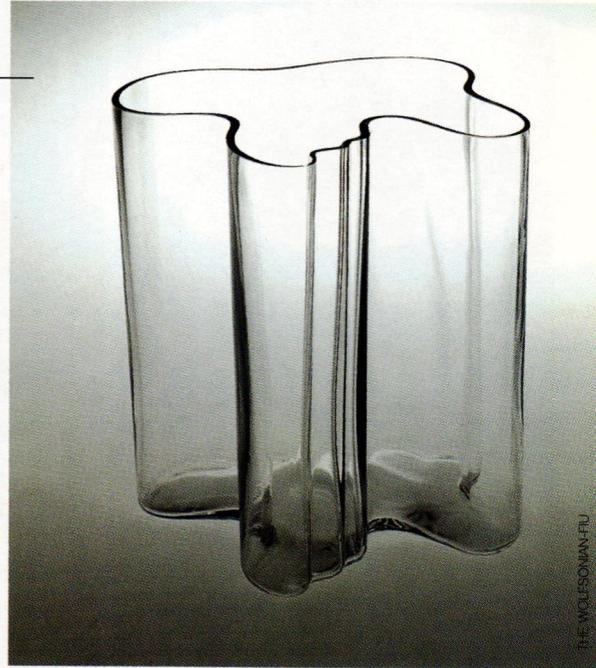
The Tiffany Garden Museum, for which Japanese collector Horiuchi has been acquiring some of the most spectacular (and costliest) objects of the genre, is scheduled to open in April 2001.

Vital Forms

The Brooklyn Museum's upcoming (in 2001) "Vital Forms" exhibition, highlighting organic design in art and decorative arts of 1940-60.

Show Competition

The first Chicago Modernism Show, debuting last March, the new modernism show scheduled by the Houghtons this November, and another from Stella... competition is heating up as modernism goes mainstream.



THE WOLFFSONIAN-FIU



TODD EBERLE

The Standard

LA's trendiest new hotel, The Standard, is a showcase of retro design with Nelson tables, Lucite swings, blow-up couches, and shag carpeting...motel-modern gone high fashion.

Art Nouveau at the V&A

The upcoming Art Nouveau exhibition at London's V&A, scheduled to travel to Washington's National Gallery...the first time that esteemed art institution will host an all decorative art exhibition.



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modernism, eh? modernism in canada

CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: At Sotheby's, a modernist diamond and sapphire-studded platinum and gold bracelet and matching clip/brooches by Suzanne Belperron realized \$101,500; "Moda" an exhibition tracing Krizia's fashions from 1954 to the present is on view at the Design Exchange; This 1952 silver tea pot by Henning Koppel for Georg Jensen, part of a four-piece set, brought \$63,000 at Sotheby's in Canada



SOOTHEBY'S CANADA

Toronto 2000?

Discussions are underway for a city-wide "Focus on Design" event by Toronto's 20th century dealers. Text by Cora Golden

European modern furniture

Monsoon restaurant recently presented its second furniture exhibition, "Objects of Design: European Modern Furniture Classics." The award-winning restaurant showcased a number of unusual vintage pieces, as well as current reissues of classic furniture that patrons were permitted to interact with (i.e. sit on while dining). Sponsors included Beaton Agencies, which provided contract furniture by Mario Bellini (Italy), Pepe Cortes (Spain), and Verner Panton and Paul Volther (Denmark). Toronto vintage retailer Inside supplied objects by French designers Bernard Rancillac, Jacques Chambon, and Regis Mayot, as well as furniture by Hans Wegner (Denmark), Gaetano Pesce (Italy), and Tom Dixon (UK).

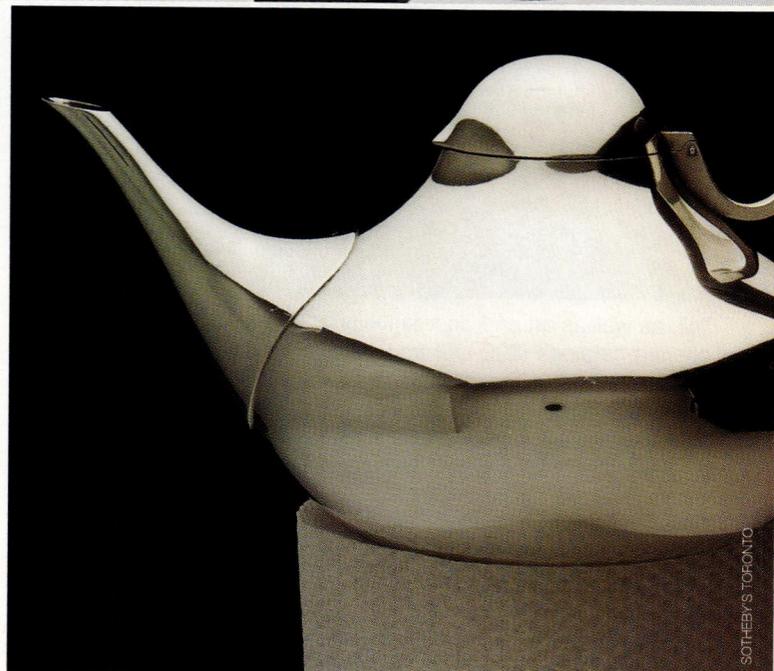
This unique event brings design to people who don't normally shop the 20th century decorative arts stores, and is well received by the restaurant's patrons. In conjunction with the Sandra Ainsley Gallery, the restaurant will co-host a Dale Chihuly glass event this fall. Monsoon (416) 979-7172. www.toronto.com/monsoon

Inside opens warehouse

Early in September, 20th century retailer Inside opened a 2,500 sq.ft. warehouse at 23 Tecumseh, near its main Toronto store. The second location offers more vintage furniture with a decidedly European >



DESIGN EXCHANGE



SOOTHEBY'S TORONTO



Watch for further details in the next issue of *Echoes*.

Design month: Toronto 2000?

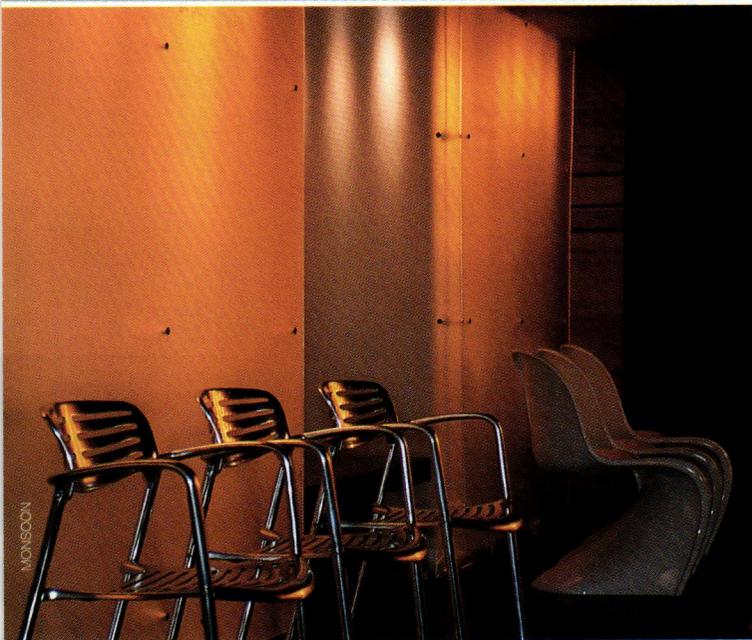
In a similar vein, preliminary discussions are underway for some of the two dozen 20th century retailers in Toronto to create a city wide "Focus on Design" event in the year 2000. Although themes and other details are still very much up in the air, one suggested approach is to link the event to a planned Design Exchange exhibition on Canadian design. It's timed to coincide with the publication of a new book on post-war Canadian design written by the DX's curator, Rachel Gotlieb, and the author of this column. To express interest in some type of "Focus on Design" event, call or write to the address at the end of this column.

Interior Design Show 2000

The Interior Design Show has announced its second annual show, January 20-23, 2000, which includes a sneak preview the evening of the 20th. Exhibit space for the show has increased from 125,000 to 200,000 sq.ft. to accommodate more international design firms, as well as additional feature exhibits and speakers. (416) 599-3222. www.interiordesignshow.com

At the museums

Opening October 16 and running through January 23, 2000 at the Vancouver Art Gallery is "Vision of Paradise, Fred Varley in British Columbia," the Group of Seven painter's experiments in early mod-



flair, as well as art and decorative arts. Owner Daniel Aguacil is also offering catalogs (\$20 US) from his recent exhibition of two dozen designs from the French firm *Votre Maison*, 1949-1960. The well-crafted furniture by Jacques Chambon and Robert Guillaume has rarely been seen on this continent. *Repos*, a totemic chair, was shown to great effect at the recent Monsoon European furniture exhibition.

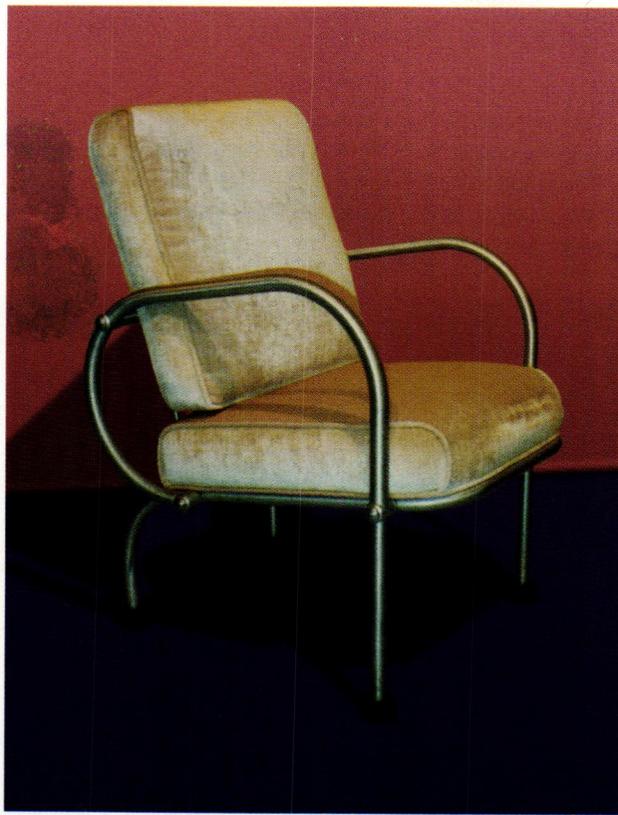
Design week 2000

Design in Business Nova Scotia is planning a design week event in September, 2000. Currently headed by Fred Holtz, who is curating the Beveridge ceramics exhibition, it features a number of events (to be announced) in Halifax and elsewhere in Nova Scotia, including an exhibition by contemporary weaver Suzanne Swannie at DalTech.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A shot of the European modern classic furniture exhibition hosted by the Toronto restaurant Monsoon; This pair of silver five-light candelabra by Johan Rohde for Georg Jensen, c.1945-51, realized \$57,500 at Sotheby's Toronto; Detail of the *Repos* chair by Jacques Chambon and Robert Guillaume of the French firm *Votre Maison*

ernism. (604) 682-4668. www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

Opening November 1 to 12, a retrospective exhibition on the work of Nova Scotia ceramists Eleanor and Foster Beveridge. The Beveridges created modernist-inspired ceramics from the late 1950s to 1985, and were represented in the 1957 National Fine Crafts Exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada. Members of the Canadian Potters Guild in the 1960s, their work is identified by a hand-written "Beveridge, N.S." mark. A catalog for the exhibition will be produced. The show is curated by Fred Holtz, and appears at the Anna Leonowens Gallery at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, > 108



Warren McArthur, an upholstered anodized aluminum chair, one of a pair. Designed for the Biltmore Hotel, Phoenix, Arizona, circa 1929. Estimate: \$4,000-6,000. Available in artnet.com auctions in October.

online. auctions.

Sleek American machine-age furniture. Glamorous 1940s French furnishings. Cocktail Shakers. Bauhaus and the Wiener Werkstatte. Porch and Patio Furniture. Surfboards. Frank Lloyd Wright. Turned-wood bowls. Redefining how one looks at design. 20th Century Decorative Arts. The bidding has begun.

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classic bites

Elsie de Wolfe, by all accounts the first lady of 20th century interior design, welcomed the century by clearing out her gloomy Victorian decor, transforming her Irving Place townhouse into a modern masterpiece - white walls, mirrors, lucite, chrome, and her signature zebra skin rugs. The then-shocking look of her home was the perfect backdrop for her legendary cocktail parties. She'd serve enticing hors d'oeuvres, much like those pictured here: deviled eggs (with a little caviar for decadence), marinated olives (with a hint of pepper to spice things up), and her patented Pink Lady cocktail - Prohibition be damned. As the de Wolfe century comes to a close, her sense of style continues to inspire decorators and party-givers the world over.

in the pink

the patented (and potent) Pink Lady cocktail favored by Elsie de Wolfe
cocktail shaker: courtesy Ad Hoc



Photographer: Mary Ellen Bartley
Recipes and food styled by: Susan Ottaviano
Props styled by: Loren Simons
Text (Elsie de Wolfe background) by: Tucker Shaw

enticing offerings

curried deviled eggs with caviar, spicy olives, parmesan and cheddar cheese straws, smoked salmon canapes
zebra rug and metal and glass table: courtesy Ace
metal tray: courtesy Ad Hoc
Dansk brown basalt saucer, clear glass bowl, and white melamine butter tray: courtesy Brian Roark



resources

Brian Roark - private dealer by appointment. (212) 684-0203
Ace - 269 Elizabeth Street, NYC. (212) 226-5123
Mood Indigo - 181 Prince Street, NYC. (212) 254-1176
Ad Hoc - 410 West Broadway, NYC. (212) 925-2652

pink lady cocktail

5 oz of premium gin
1 oz pink grapefruit juice
1 oz Cointreau

Chill a 10 oz martini glass. Fill a stainless steel cocktail shaker with ice cubes, pour in gin, grapefruit juice, and Cointreau. Shake vigorously until well chilled. Strain into glass. (makes one serving)

curry deviled eggs with caviar

10 large hard-boiled eggs, peeled and halved lengthwise
3 tbsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp nonfat plain yogurt
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
1/4 tsp curry powder plus 1/2 tsp for garnish
salt and pepper
1 oz sevruga caviar

Carefully remove yolks from the eggs and place in a small bowl. Add mustard, yogurt, cayenne pepper, curry powder, and salt and pepper to taste. Beat together until well combined. With a small teaspoon, mound equal portions of the egg yolk mixture into the egg white cavities. Garnish each egg half with a pinch of reserved curry powder and a 1/4 teaspoon of caviar. (makes 20 eggs)

spicy olives

2 cups mixed country olives
2 serrano or jalapeno peppers, thinly sliced with seeds
1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
1 tsp chopped thyme
1/4 tsp hot pepper flakes
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
freshly ground black pepper to taste

In a bowl, toss the olives with the serrano peppers, garlic, thyme, and pepper flakes. Stir in oil and season with fresh black pepper. (makes 2 cups)

smoked salmon canapes

1 16" thin loaf Italian or French bread, cut into 1/4" thick slices
1/2 lb smoked salmon, thinly sliced
1/4 cup sour cream
2 tsp fresh chives, snipped

Arrange bread slices on a large platter. Cut salmon into 1" wide strips, rolling each strip slightly to fit each slice. Spread a 1/2 tsp of sour cream on each slice and top with salmon. Garnish with chives. (makes 30 slices)

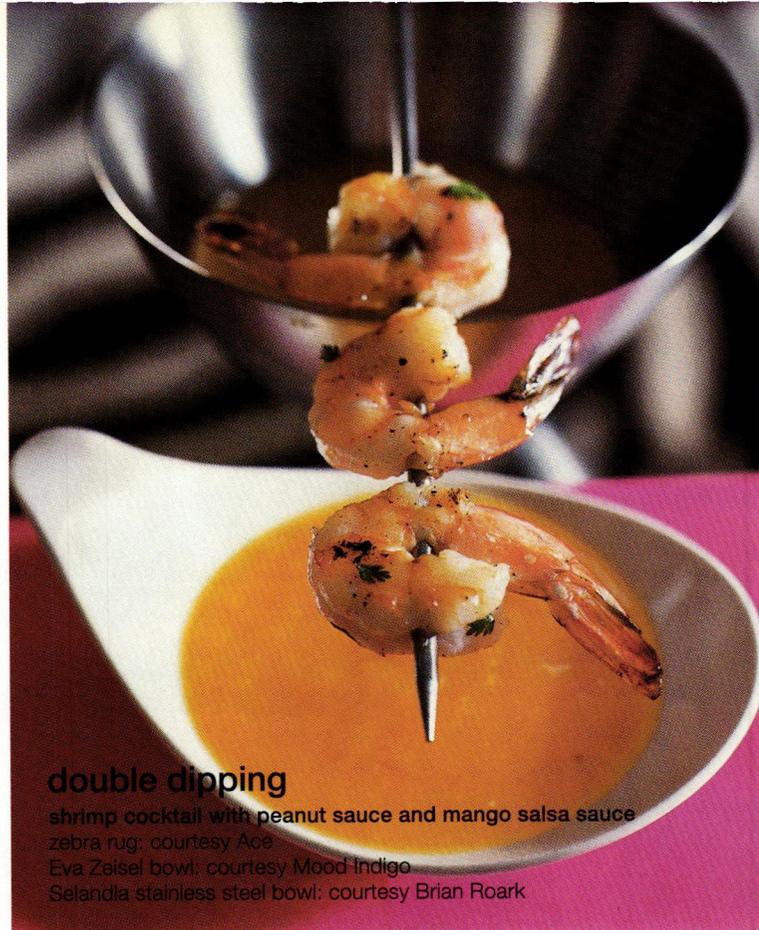
parmesan and cheddar cheese straws

1 lb of frozen puff pastry, at room temperature
4 tbsp course-grained mustard
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
1/4 cup sharp white cheddar cheese, grated
2 tbsp poppy seeds

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Roll pastry on a lightly floured work surface to a rectangle 12 x 14". Spread with mustard and sprinkle with Parmesan and cheddar. Fold in half. Cut into 20 long, thin strips. Sprinkle with poppy seeds. Twist each strip and arrange on greased baking sheets. Bake for 15 minutes or until puffy and golden. (makes approximately 20 straws)

shrimp cocktail two ways

1 1/2 lbs medium shrimp, peeled



double dipping

shrimp cocktail with peanut sauce and mango salsa sauce
zebra rug: courtesy Ace
Eva Ziesel bowl: courtesy Mood Indigo
Selandria stainless steel bowl: courtesy Brian Roark

with tails on and deveined
1/4 cup olive oil
3 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
2 sprigs of fresh cilantro, finely chopped
20 bamboo skewers, soaked in water for 30 minutes
salt and pepper to taste
peanut sauce
mango salsa sauce

In a large bowl combine shrimp, oil, garlic, lemon, cilantro, and salt and pepper. Marinate shrimp mixture in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Remove shrimp from the marinade and thread on bamboo skewers (about 3-4 per skewer) and place on a platter. Discard remaining marinade. Prepare grill to medium-high heat, or preheat broiler. Grill shrimp until cooked through, about 3 minutes per side. Serve skewers of shrimp with Peanut Sauce and Mango Salsa Sauce on the side for dipping. (Serves approximately 1-2 skewers per person)

peanut sauce

1 cup of creamy peanut butter (do not use chunky)
1 cup canned chicken broth
1 tbsp fresh ginger, peeled and thinly chopped

1/4 cup fresh lime juice
2 tbsp soy sauce
1/2 cup light coconut milk
1 tsp fresh cilantro, chopped

In a medium saucepan mix peanut butter, chicken broth, lime juice, soy sauce, ginger, and coconut milk. Stir over medium heat until smooth. Pour sauce into bowl and garnish with chopped cilantro.

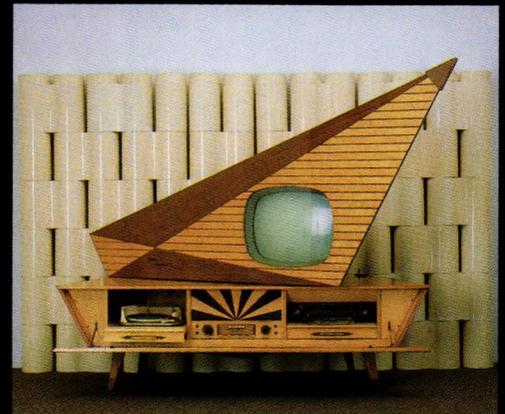
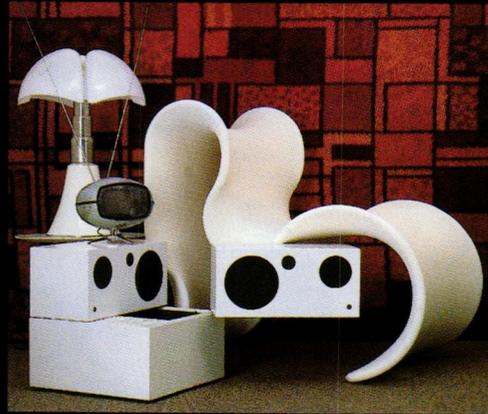
mango salsa sauce

2 mangos peeled, seeded and chopped
2 yellow or orange bell peppers, cored and chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 scotch bonnet (Habenero) pepper, or 2 serrano or other yellow or orange hot pepper
1/4 cup olive oil
3 tbsp tequila
juice of 2 lemons
salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp fresh cilantro, chopped

In a food processor blend together mangos, peppers, onion, garlic, hot peppers, olive oil, and lemon juice until smooth. Add salt and pepper. Transfer to a bowl. Garnish with cilantro. Serve with shrimp skewers.

& INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

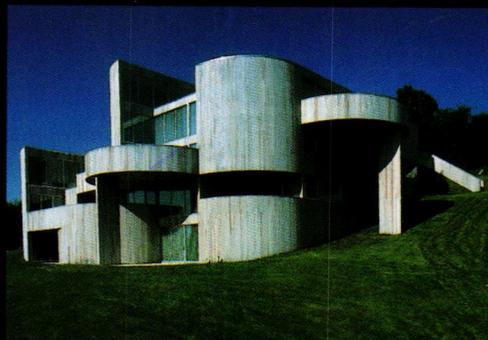
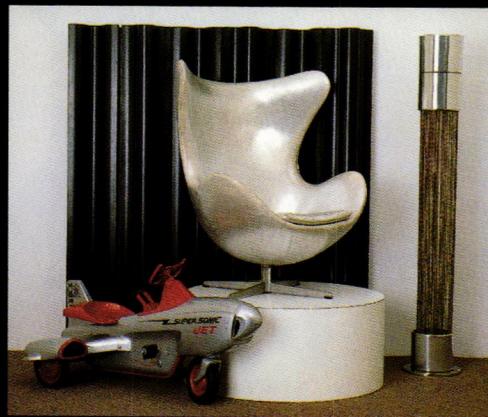
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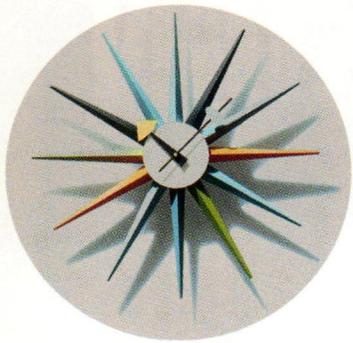
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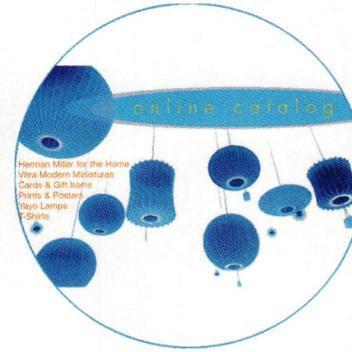
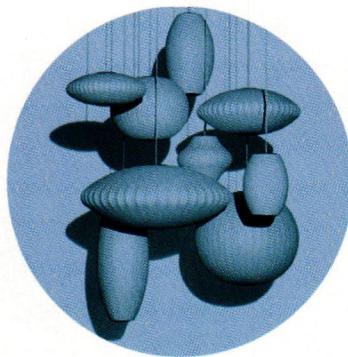
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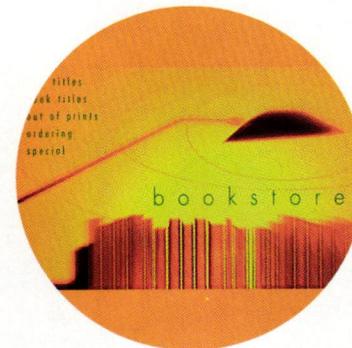
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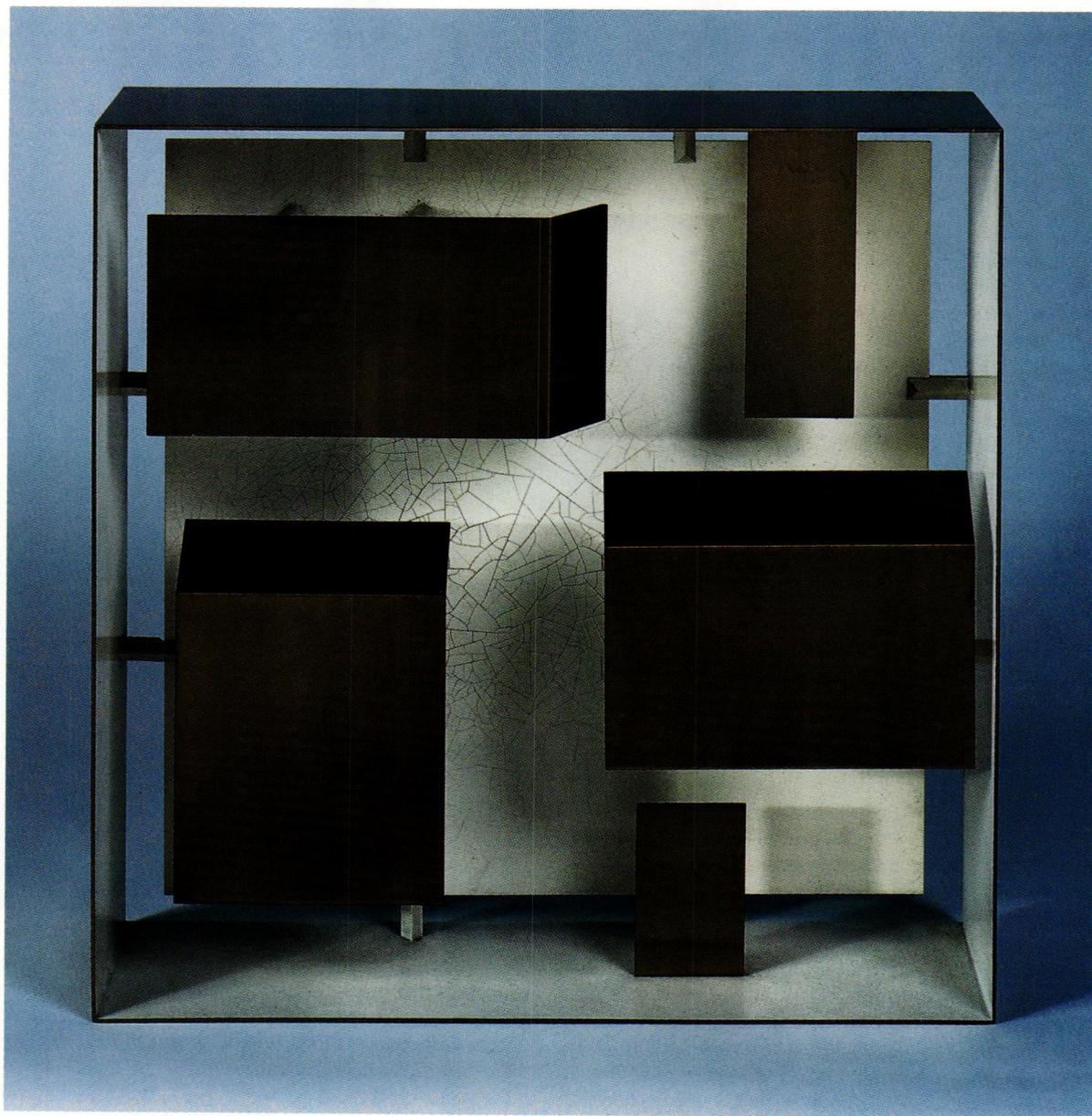


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drying up?

Good quality lots are becoming increasingly scarce in the UK. Text by Simon Andrews

Looking back to the Spring and early Summer auction season in London, a total of 500 design-related lots were handled both by Christie's and Bonhams. The analysis of the results and sold percentages generated by these sales is useful for the interpretation of the present state of this market.

On May 11, Christie's King Street held the second specialist sale to be devoted to the art and design of The Chair. Presenting a varied and thorough selection of designs from early bentwood furniture to the present, numerous outstanding prices were noted. One of the highest prices of the sale, at £120,000, was a very early stained

wood armchair by Gerrit Rietveld, c.1918. Similar to the famous *Red-Blue* armchair, the price attained by this example is indicative of the very strong demand from museums and collectors alike for genuinely significant examples of modern design. Other examples of early Rietveld furniture surfaced a week later in the Decorative Arts sale held at Christie's Amsterdam, generating equally competitive bidding. The 1930s Modernists commanded high prices in The Chair sale, as an early *Wassily* chair by Marcel Breuer made £50,000, and a *Barcelona* chair by Mies van der Rohe also brought £50,000. One of the more surprising results of the sale, and perhaps indicative of the influence of the decorator market, was the £75,000 that secured a pair of Jean Royere *Bear* armchairs, c.1951, against a £15,000-20,000 estimate. Very contemporary designs by Marc Newson and Ron Arad proved more difficult to navigate; however, an acrylic stool, c.1990, by Shiro Kuramamura realized £16,000. One of the other >

PREVIOUS PAGE: *Alitalia* lamp by Gio Ponti, £2,800 at Christie's South Kensington's Italian Design sale. THIS PAGE: *Asteroid* lamp by Ettore Sottsass, £4,000 at Christie's South Kensington's Italian Design sale.

surprises of the sale was an Arne Jacobsen *Drop* chair of 1958, made specifically for the SAS Hotel in Copenhagen, which quadrupled the high estimate to sell at £8,000.

Italian Design was the subject of the June 9 sale at Christie's South Kensington. Selling percentages were slightly down compared to the similar sale held the previous year, and this is possibly due to the rapidly diminishing availability of rare, unseen examples. Certain leaders were very clearly identifiable in this sale, notably Gaetano Pesce, who was represented by several pieces, including a 1969 *UP-7* chair in the form of a giant foot (£3,000); a brass and steel firescreen, c.1985, with good provenance (£9,500); and a large gouache painting, c.1986 (£5,000). Ettore Sottsass continues to generate strong competition, including a 1958 painted metal chandelier which tripled estimate to realize £13,000, and a 1969 *Asteroid* lamp which sold for £4,000. Prices for Gio Ponti remain stable, as expressed by a 1960 chest of drawers (£4,200), a large wall shelving unit c.1955 (£3,800), and a rare brass wall light for use in the Milan Alitalia terminal which almost doubled its low estimate at £2,800. Less popular within the sale were examples of late 1960s Pop and Anti-Design, and this is possibly suggestive of a trend away from foam and plastic towards well-crafted wooden furnishings. The majority of the buyers within this sale were European, with only two out of the top ten prices being attained by American collectors.

The absence of American buyers during this season was also illustrated by the Bonhams Design sale on June 29. Selling percentages were generally low; however, this may in part be due to over-aggressive estimates. Highlights of the sale included a 1934 Gerald Summers armchair at £13,500, a George Nelson 4658 desk at £6,000, and a rare variant *Cone* chair at £4,000. A nest of tables by Jean Royere, c.1950, realized £5,500. However a 1969 plastic desk by Maurice Calka did not sell at £10,000. This last result illustrates some of the inconsistencies to be seen in the market, as a similar example had doubled estimate to sell at £20,000 in another sale-room some three months previously.

The stronger estimates placed on lots in recent sales articulates the changing nature of the Design market in Britain. Good quality lots are becoming increasingly scarce; consequently, higher estimates must be offered in order for the auction house to secure that object for sale. The buying public, however, often appears to be unaware of the "drying up" of the material, and will continue to anticipate items with the same estimates as they had in 1998 or 1997. Consequently, a situation has developed wherein only those dealers and auction houses fully involved in the business appear to be aware of the true scarcity of material. This argument is supported by the increasingly aggressive bidding that surrounds the truly rare items, such as the



1958 Sottsass lamp or the Jacobsen *Drop* chair in the two Christie's sales. This must be regarded as a temporary hiatus in the market, for as the material really does dry up so too will prices increase. Other factors will influence this market, which it must be remembered is still in its infancy, such as fashionable taste. Outrageous 1960s plastic furniture which sold so well in 1997, has now been overtaken by handcrafted Scandinavian furniture which was sold cheaply three years ago. All represent good examples of good design. It is simply that stylists, decorators, and other influencers of fashion exert an effect on the market.

As we look forward to the new millenium, it is inevitable that the market for collecting all types of 20th century design will assuredly go from strength to strength. The termination of each century will always prompt us, the public, to reassess both our place in the present and our hopes for the future. The industrial societies of the second half of the 20th century have produced some of the most expressive, explorative, and optimistic designs. As such these objects, be they chairs, lamps or jewelery, are all in one way or another visions of the future, and will be certain to exert an increasingly important role in our consciousness, and our pockets, in the future.

- Simon Andrews is the head of the Modern Design Department at Christie's South Kensington.

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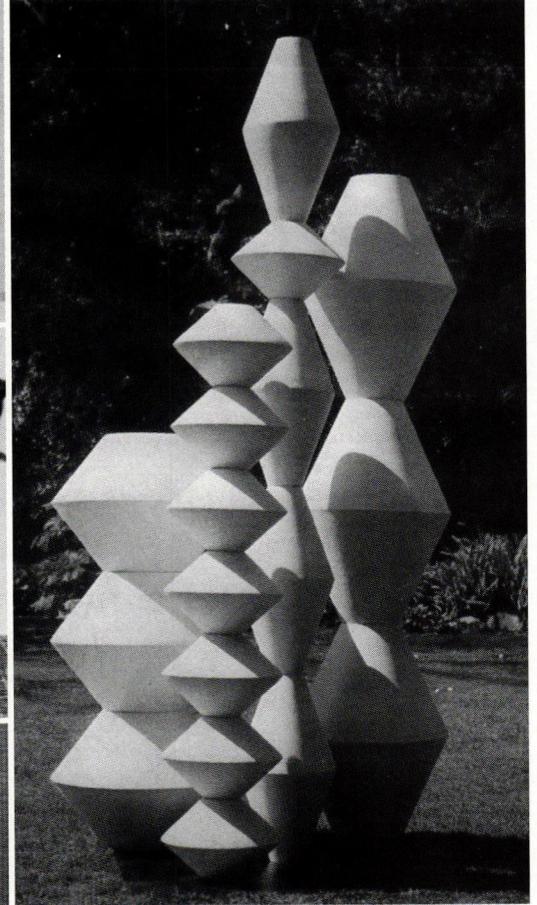
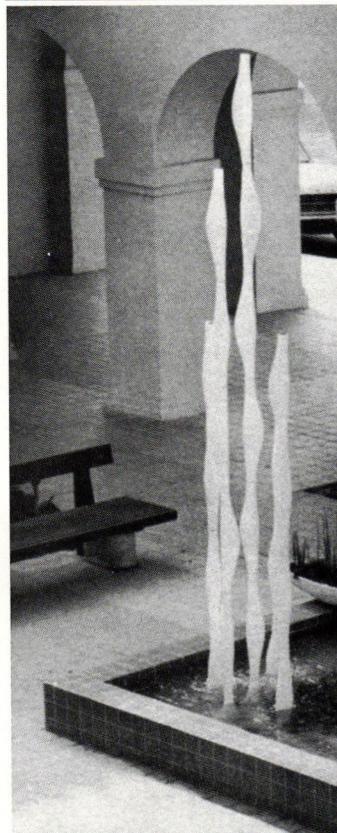
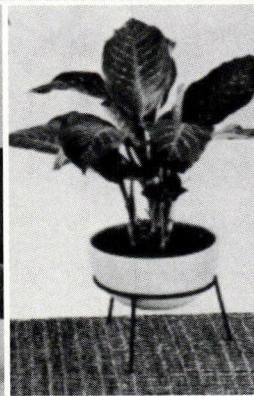
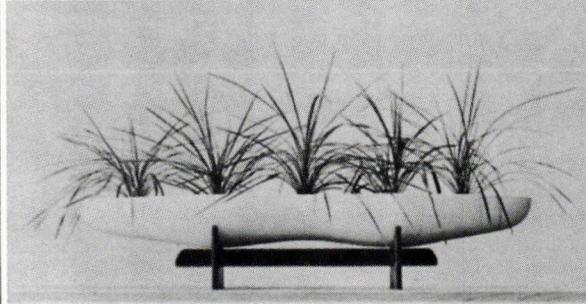
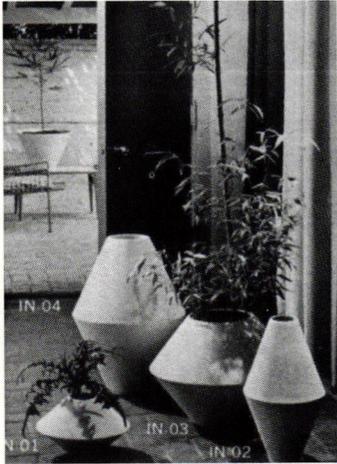
jean royère

commissioned for an apartment in 1950
couch, red upholstery, metal frame
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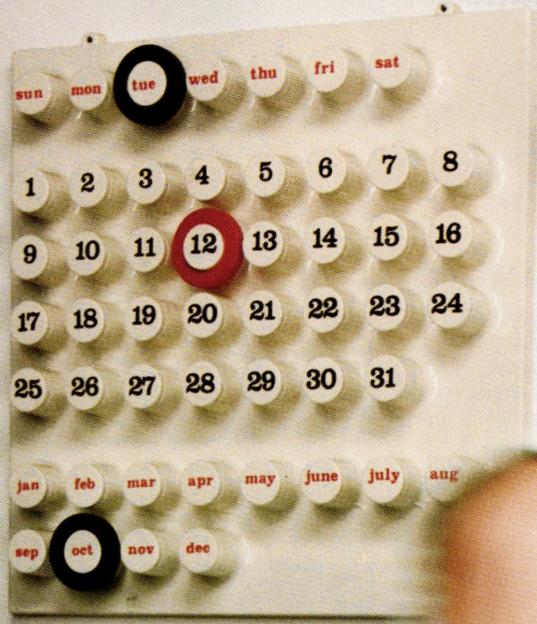
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modern life



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millennial medicine

Are you ready for the year 2000?
Before the millennium is upon us,
take quick trip to your local clinic
and make sure you're physically fit
to enter the 21st century

do you have an appointment?

modern patients know arriving on time makes the staff much friendlier

Nurse wears vintage 1970s clinical Courreges dress

Calendar Plastic Ring-a-date calendar by Giorgio Della Beffa, c.1971



the waiting game

*don't look at it as wasted time -
you never know who you might meet*

He wears magenta two-piece Mod suit

She wears 1970s orange knit dress and early '60s Hermes bracelet

Table white laminate Stowe-Davis side table

Chair Seating for Amsterdam Airport (courtesy R)

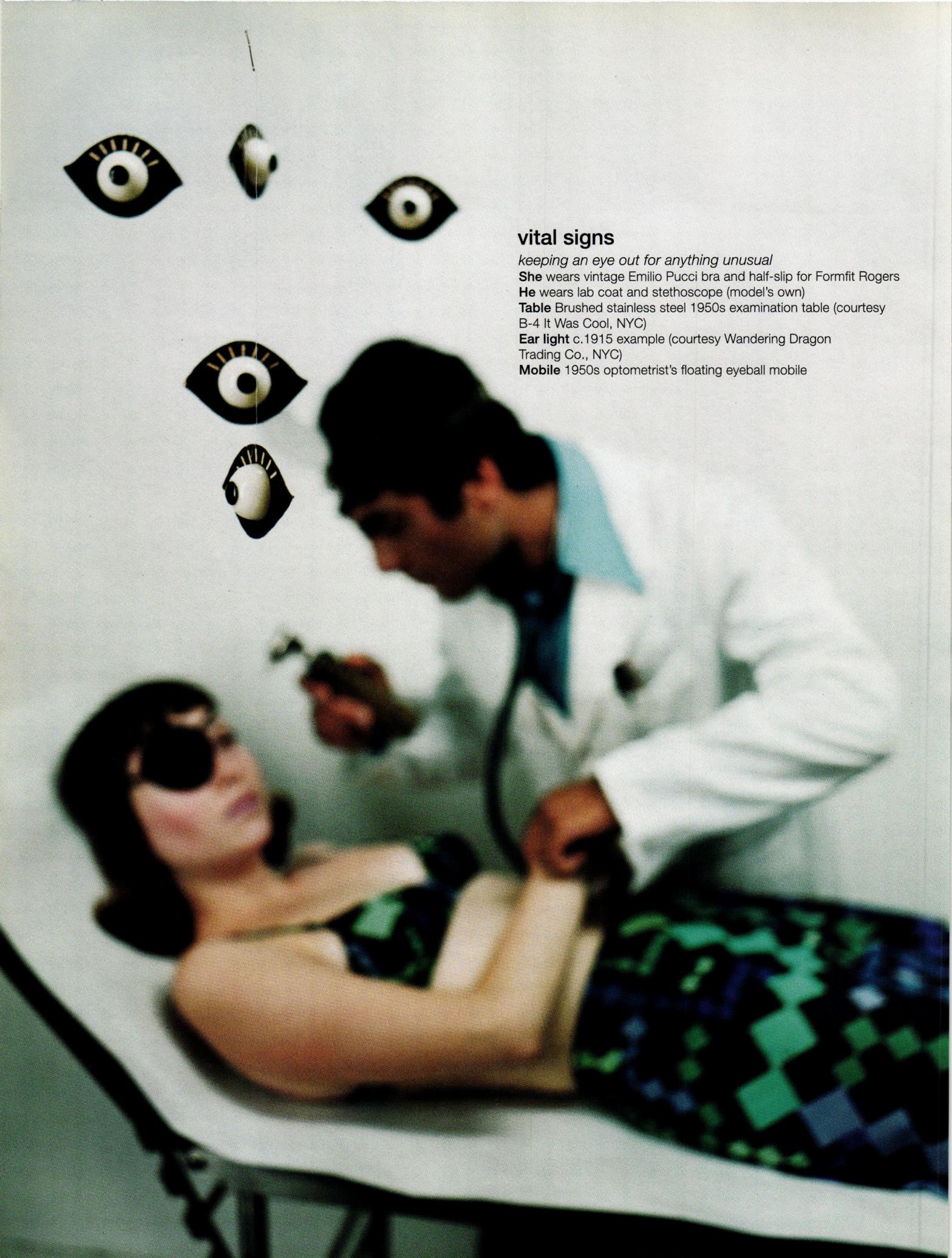
Op-Art 1970s Greg Copeland silkscreen



you're next

just as you've struck up an interesting conversation, the nurse calls your name

Nurse wears vintage 1970s clinical Courreges dress
Calendar Plastic Ring-a-date calendar by
Giorgio Della Beffa, c.1971



vital signs

keeping an eye out for anything unusual

She wears vintage Emilio Pucci bra and half-slip for Formfit Rogers

He wears lab coat and stethoscope (model's own)

Table Brushed stainless steel 1950s examination table (courtesy B-4 It Was Cool, NYC)

Ear light c.1915 example (courtesy Wandering Dragon Trading Co., NYC)

Mobile 1950s optometrist's floating eyeball mobile



ooooooooohhh!

biorhythm feedback

She wears sequined tube top (courtesy Resurrection) and leather culottes

Equipment 1960s biorhythm mixing board, amp, and headset

Table 1950s industrial aluminum Shaw Walker side table

Chair 1950s industrial aluminum General Fireproofing side chair

Chart Frohse digestive system illustration, c.1940s, by Max Brodel (courtesy B-4 It Was Cool)



zzzzzzzzzz's

the doctor had an exhausting day at the clinic

He wears 1970s blue dress shirt and dead stock 1960s olive dress trousers with a vintage Pierre Cardin belt

Chairs two chairs by Kho Liang Le for Artifort, Holland (courtesy R, NYC)

Mirror vintage 1920s medical head mirror (courtesy Wandering Dragon Trading Co., NYC)

Exceptional objects
from the 20th century



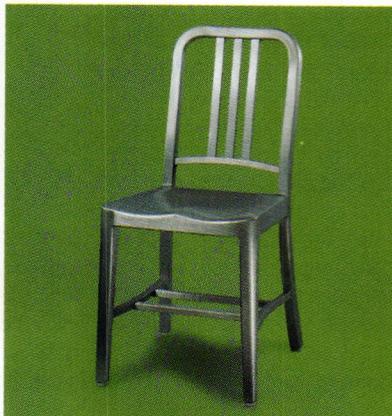
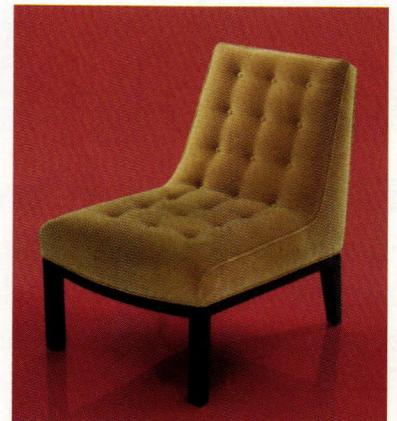
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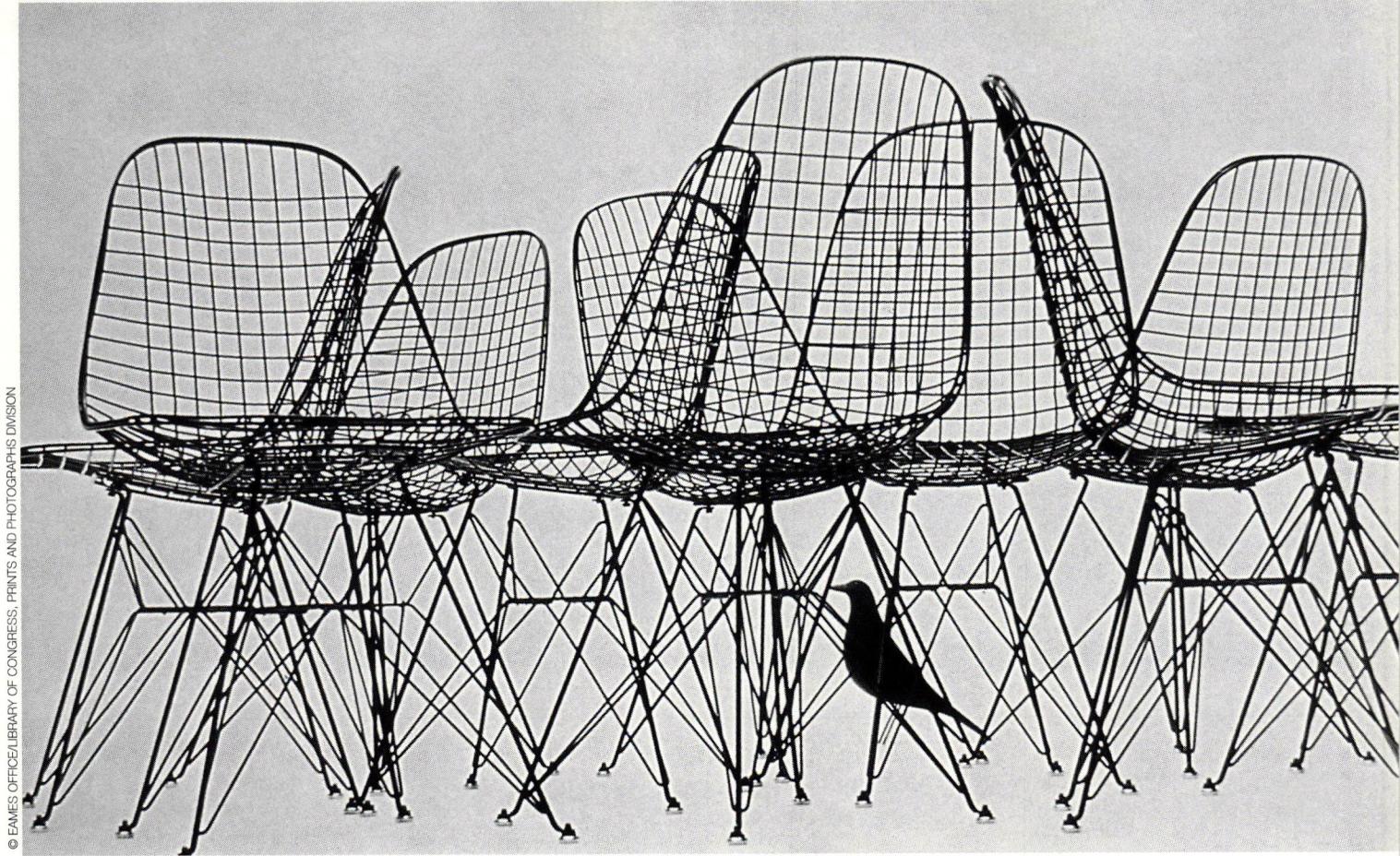
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on view 1



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The Eames retrospective

Fueling the present Eames-mania is the first exhibition to cover the full spectrum of the careers of both Charles and Ray Eames.

Text by Jim Sweeney

A retrospective on Charles and Ray Eames opened this spring at the Library of Congress in Washington. Shortly afterwards, a local utility company began running a TV ad for its energy management service which was clearly influenced by the Eameses' film *Powers of Ten*. A mix of film and computer animation, it shows areas of an office where the service can be used. Then the camera jumps through the roof to show an aerial view of the entire neighborhood. The camera again zooms out to show the entire planet.

Whether the timing was deliberate or not, the ad demonstrates their ongoing influence, and shows why now, as we approach the 21st century, is a perfect time to review the contributions of this husband and wife team who were a very important part of 20th century design.

The exhibit, the first posthumous retrospective of the Eameses' careers, provides two important lessons. First, the exhibit focuses on both Charles (1907-1978) and Ray (1912-1988). In the past, Ray's



contribution to their designs has often been downplayed. Older books and exhibits sometimes attributed work to Charles alone. Perhaps it was partly a sexist attitude that led to minimizing Ray's role. Whatever the reason, the current exhibit emphasizes the collaborative nature of their work.

Second, the exhibit covers all their work. Over time, many artists, designers and architects become known for just a handful of their creations. In the case of the Eameses, their furniture designs

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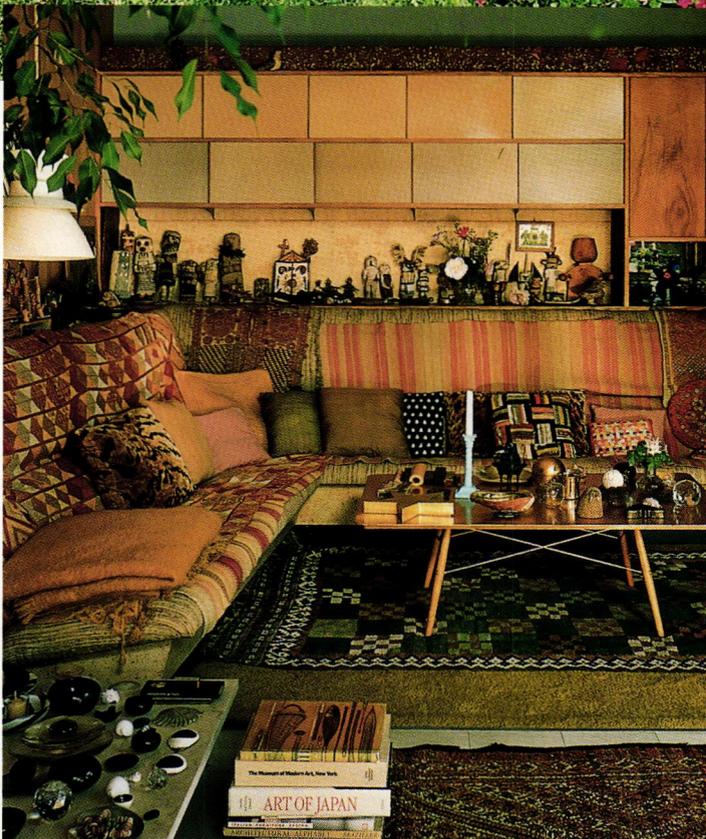


TIM STREET-PORTER © EAMES OFFICE

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: Photograph used in Herman Miller's advertisement for Eames wire chairs, c.1951. BOTTOM: Charles and Ray Eames in a scene at the end of *Kaleidoscope Jazz Chair*, 1960. THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Eames house exterior, 1993; Charles and Ray photographing a scale model of the *Mathematica* exhibition; The Eames house living room, 1993



© EAMES OFFICE



TIM STREET-PORTER © EAMES OFFICE

have overshadowed their other work. "Eames chair" has almost become one word. Partly that's because so many Eames chairs are out there; some of their designs for Herman Miller have been in continuous production since their inception. Partly it's because their chairs were well designed and often imitated.

The way the Eameses worked prefigures many trends of today. They began their design business in 1943 in a converted garage in the Los Angeles neighborhood called Venice, then an industrial district. Industrial influences on American design have become pervasive since then, and the business started in a garage is a cliché in some industries, such as computers. Since 1943, the West Coast has become a major cultural/design center. And the Eameses' global travels, and their global projects, anticipated today's global economy.

Charles's daughter, Lucia, terms their approach to design and life as "seamless." They took on all sorts of assignments. They did not see work and play as separate, nor function and aesthetics. The Eameses were multimedia before the term was invented. They tried their hands at everything. In working with Herman Miller, they often art-directed their own photo shoots and graphic layouts. They also designed showroom settings for their furniture. Over time, their work shifted from product design to communications systems: exhibits for museums and corporations, books, films.

Eames Demetrios, their grandson, runs their design firm today. He says "the films are Charles and Ray's essays, the clearest > 112

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**A pair of Charles and
Ray Eames plywood child
stools, manufactured by
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The Eames Auction on

May 23, 1999 set new heights

for prices in postwar design.

A record high was set when

the Ray Eames Splint sculpture

sold for \$143,000. A DCW

sold for \$38,500, a surfboard

table brought \$9,900 and a

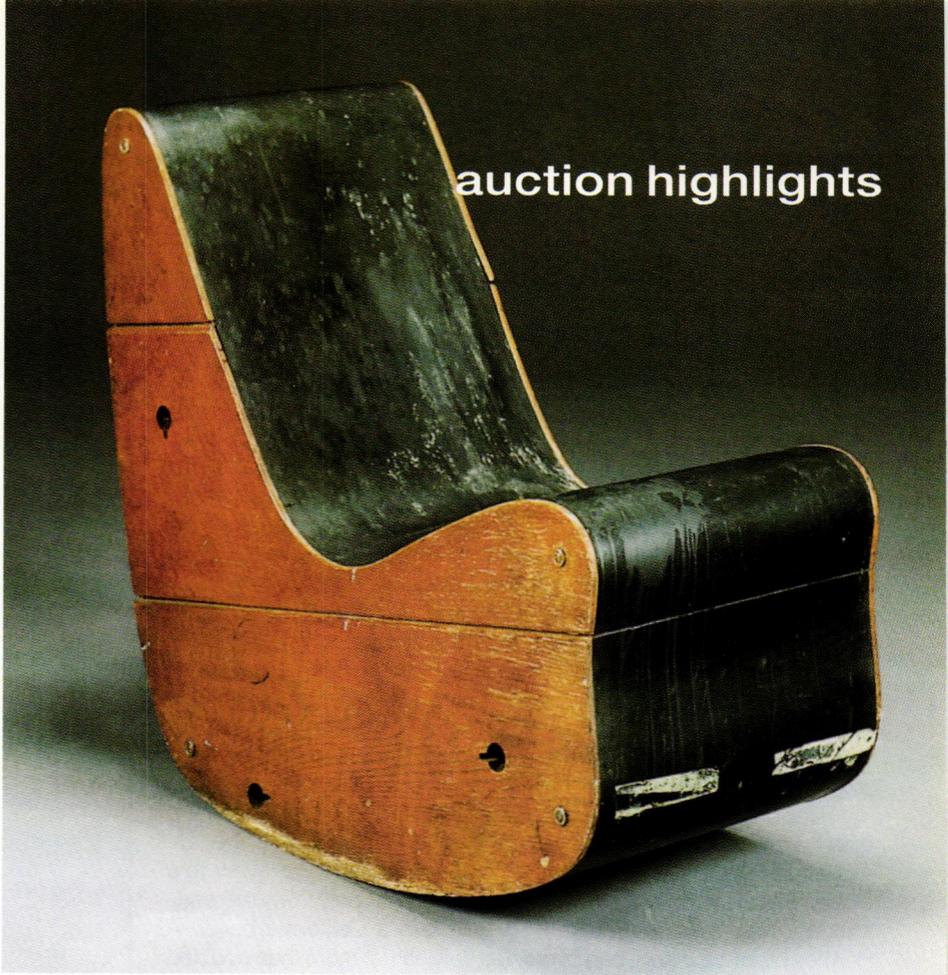
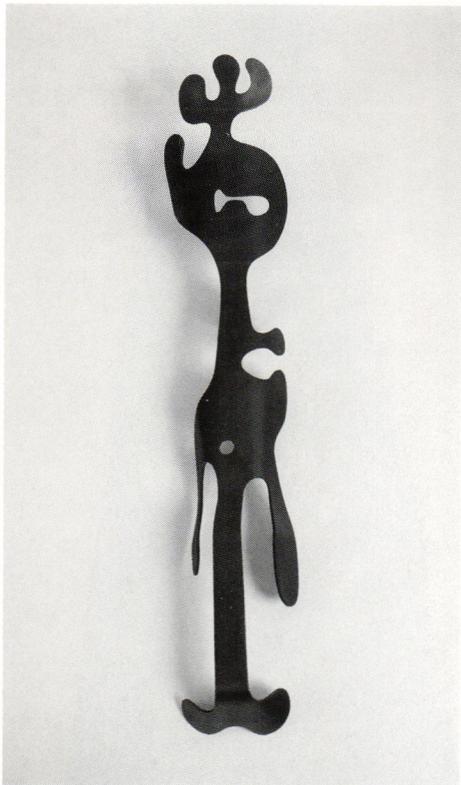
child's chair sold for \$16,500.

Be sure to join us for the future.

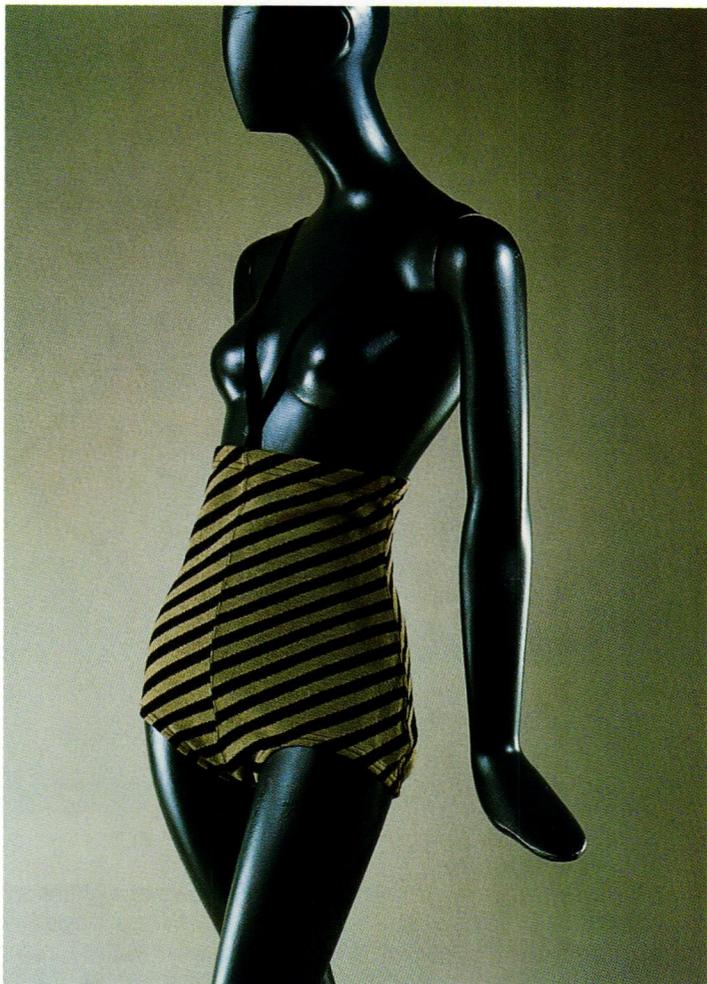
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record breakers

A new world record price for post-war design was set when a Ray Eames splint sculpture sold for \$143,000 at Treadway/Toomey

William Doyle's Couture and Textiles

Cyber and live bidders alike competed for top designer wear at William Doyle Galleries' spring offering of Couture and Textiles on May 12th. Evening wear and designer handbags were the top sellers at Doyle's second auction offered online in conjunction with Amazon.com and LiveBid.com.

A bidding war between two buyers resulted in a high price for the top seller, a 1930s Chanel evening dress made of black tulle. Decorated on the skirt and bodice with an Art Deco fountain design fashioned from black sequins, this early Chanel confection achieved \$18,400, far over its presale estimate of \$1,000-1,500. An opulent beaded jacket circa 1974 by Yves Saint Laurent featuring a v-necked cardigan shape with an intricate cable knit pattern wrought in silver-toned sequins, beads, and metallic thread brought \$8,050 from a New York bidder. Another strong seller was a regal evening ensemble by Valentino circa 1967 comprising an ivory floor-length evening dress and matching coat with white mink collar and trim. Additionally embroidered on the bodice of the dress and all over the coat with gold beads and rhinestones worked in an intricate paisley pattern, this extraordinary ensemble sold for \$6,037.50. Also by Valentino, a painted evening gown circa 1967 of ivory silk decorated with a hand-painted design of coral branches was purchased by the designer for \$3,450. Among the more unusual evening wear was an exuberant >

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Rudi Gernreich black and brown striped topless bathing suit, c.1967, \$2,070 at William Doyle Galleries; Ray Eames splint sculpture, c.1943, \$143,000 at Treadway/Toomey; Ash and linoleum rocking chair by Frederick Kiesler, c.1942, \$51,750 at Christie's East

TOP: The top lot of William Doyle Galleries' Couture and Textiles sale, this 1930s Chanel evening gown of black tulle with sequins achieved \$18,400; At Doyle's 20th Century Design sale. **BOTTOM:** Robert Indiana's One Indiana Square, c.1970, realized \$55,200

ostrich feather coat by Norell dated 1960. The knee-length coat sewn all over with rows of coral red ostrich feathers yielded \$4,025 from a Michigan buyer.

The first successful internet bid of the day was for a pair of Norell silver beaded evening pants from the late 1960s. The ivory silk flared pants embroidered all over with silver bugle beads arranged horizontally sold for \$1,265. A Giorgio di Sant Angelo *Hippie de Luxe* ensemble comprising a sarong skirt, wrap bodice, and cape of fine silk velvet tie-dyed in vibrant rainbow colors and trimmed with bead fringe sailed over its presale estimate at \$2,990.

An interesting piece of fashion history had a strong presence in this sale, the Rudi Gernreich topless bathing suit. Several examples of this wool knit suit which raised many eyebrows in the late 1960s were offered, including a black and brown striped example, which sold to a New York buyer for \$2,070.

Designer handbags also commanded strong prices, including many items by Hermès. A black crocodile *Kelly* bag from the late 1960s with gilt-metal fittings and a crocodile covered lock went to a bidder from Kentucky for \$6,325. Another *Kelly* bag from the early 1960s in tan crocodile yielded \$5,175 from a California buyer. A Hermès black *Mou Kelly* bag of grained soft leather more than doubled its presale estimate at \$4,600.

Treadway/Toomey 20th Century

Like the stock market, 20th century objects continue to attract record prices from collectors, dealers, and institutions. The May 23rd five-session sale of 20th Century Art & Design held by the John Toomey and Don Treadway Galleries once again spurred enthusiastic bidding from floor, phone, and absentee buyers. The first session featured an exceptional selection of Arts & Crafts furniture and decorative objects resulting in numerous auction records being set. One of the top sellers of this sale was a rare Gustav Stickley bookcase which brought a record price of \$60,500. This same piece was sold by Treadway for \$20,900 in May of 1992, showing the recent surge in prices and interest for Arts & Crafts furniture.

The second session of the sale was an important Eames auction featuring many rare and unusual pieces. Record prices were set on nearly all Eames furniture forms: from the *Surfboard Table* at \$9,900, to a *Child's Chair* from 1945 which brought \$16,500. An *ESU* sold for a record \$27,900, and a molded plywood dining chair from 1950 sold for \$38,500. A group of three envelopes with elaborate decorations by Ray Eames sold for \$4,400. The auction culminated with the sale of the unique splint sculpture by Ray Eames. Created in 1943, the splint sculpture hung in the Eames office until it was given to Parke Meek by Ray Eames. It sold for a record price of \$143,000, a world record not only for Eames furniture but for all post-war design.

The fourth session of the day was Modern Design. Record prices were also the rule of the day in this session. The top lot was a fine Wendell Castle music stand from 1972 which sold for \$49,500 to a phone bidder. The work of George Nakashima was also eagerly sought after. A fine *Conoid* bench sold for \$18,700 while a desk from the 1960s brought \$14,300. A two-door cabinet went for \$11,000.

Good examples of post-war design attracted the most attention: an Isamu Noguchi rocking stool from the 1950s sold for \$10,450, a table lamp made by the New York firm Heifetz reached \$8,250, and a cardboard chair from 1972 designed by Frank Gehry brought \$4,125.



Doyle's 20th Century

Competitive bidding by a standing room only crowd brought strong prices for Modern and Contemporary paintings at William Doyle Galleries' auction of 20th Century Art and Design on June 7th. Topping the sale was an oil on canvas collage, *Givre et Memoire*, by > 116

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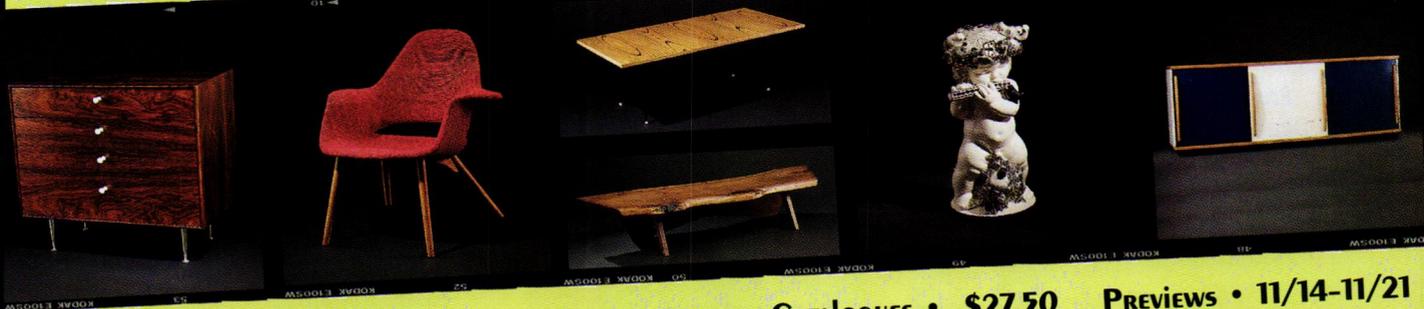
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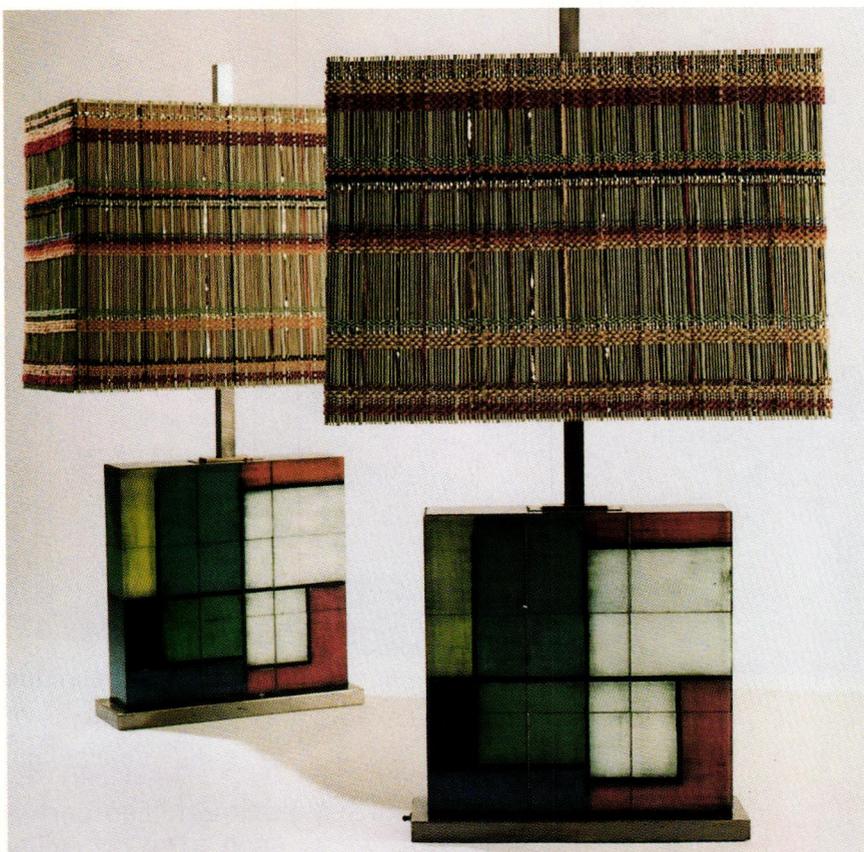


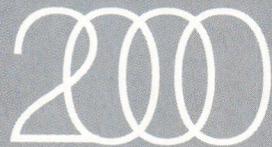
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2000

We are not at the end but at the beginning of an epoch ...
We have science, we have technology, we have
industrialization. All are accepted as part of a progressive
existence, the question is how to guide them in a
direction that is beneficial to all of us.

Mies van der Rohe

modernism at the millennium

Text by Judith B. Gura

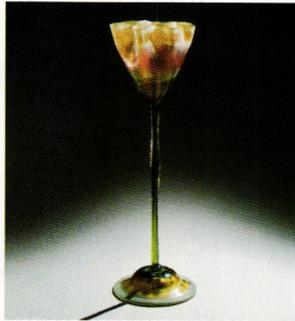
Summing up a century is a daunting task, more often done in catchy phrases than substantive description. Charles Dickens' comment on another era, "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times," could be said of this one as well. And British historian Eric Hobsbawm, halfway through its final decade, had already labeled the 20th century "the age of extremes." Indeed it has been.

In the century just ending, almost every forward step was countered with a backward one: international alliances with horrific wars; population explosion with genocide; scientific breakthroughs with environmental destruction. Some advances were unqualified: man extended his life-span, founded a global economy, and ventured into space. In the universe of design, the 20th century was the first in which no single school of aesthetic thought dominated - an achievement that may prove as influential as any of its time. This tolerance of pluralism nurtured two contrasting strains of design and designers. There were, on the one hand, those who relied on historicist tradition; on the other, those who forged new paths to express a modern aesthetic. The first created works of lasting value in perpetuating tradition, the others conceived innovative objects that became iconic symbols of their age.

As the millennium approaches, it seems appropriate to review the most noteworthy developments that marked this century of design, to consider those that have had the greatest influence, and to speculate on what 2001 and its successors may bring. In summarizing the past 100 years, this review will focus on the movements, designers, and designs that have charted the course of modernism in Europe and America. While objects and designers have gone in and out of fashion, these landmark styles have, almost consistently, captured the interest of curators and historians, and through them, dealers and collectors. In the past decade, a small number have driven the marketplace, generated exhibitions, garnered media coverage, and fueled collecting trends. Herewith, a much-condensed, and necessarily incomplete, retelling of their histories, from just before the turn of the century to the present time, a state-of-the-styles report seasoned with expert opinions and prognostications, and some evaluations of where the marketplace of 20th century design has been, and where it may be going.

Caveat for readers: This report is an amalgam of observation, research, interviews, and straightforward reporting of actual sales and events. To shed light on the whys and wherefores, dealers and auction specialists around the country have provided comments on their particular areas of the market. With so many designers and product areas to cover, some have necessarily escaped mention. With such a diversity of opinion from which to draw, there may be omissions, hasty judgments, and controversial commentary. Any attempt to paint so broad a canvas in so limited a framework must, in the end, be less than perfect.

1892

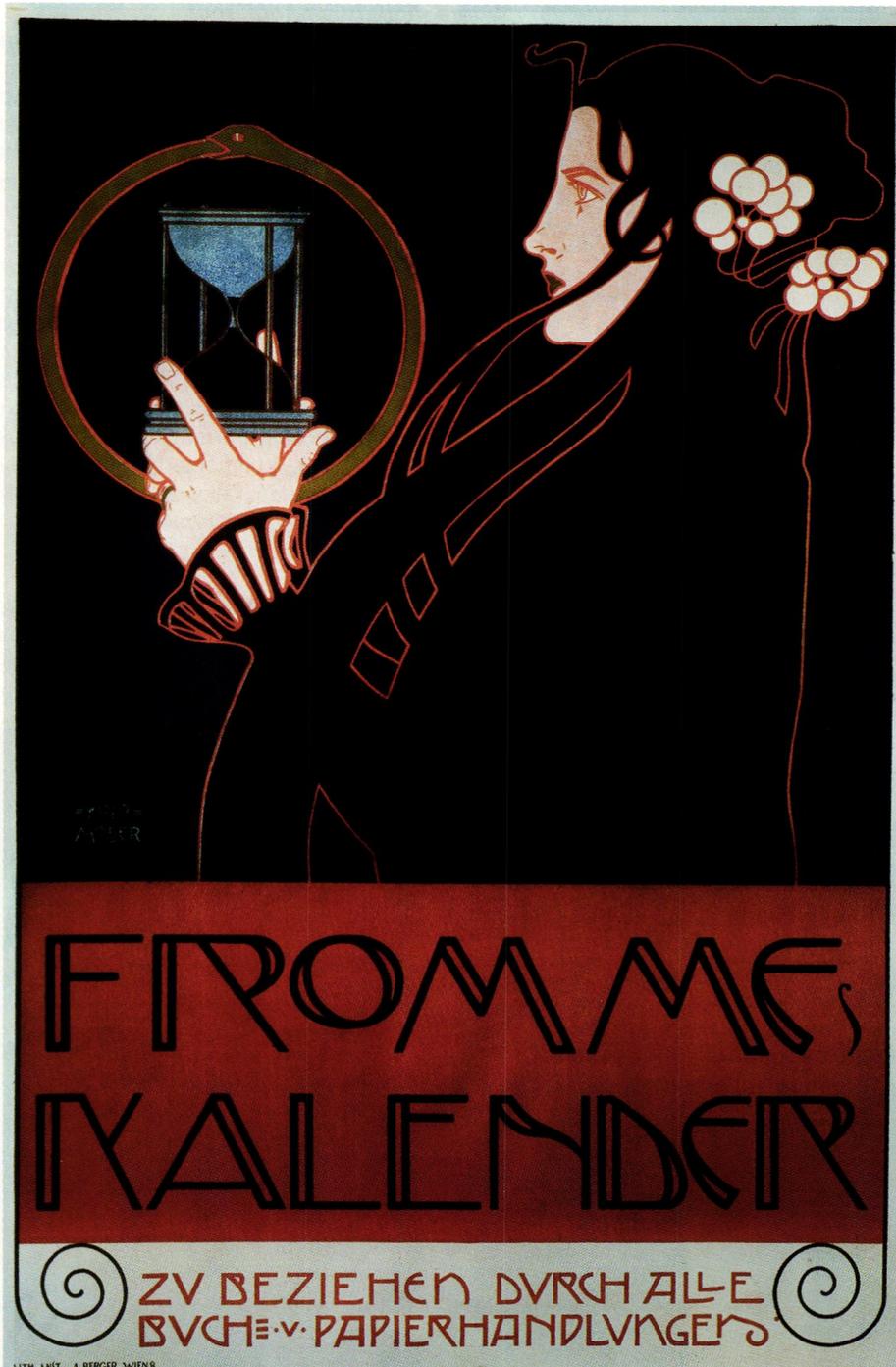


Tiffany Glass & Decorating Co. established

1893



Frank Lloyd Wright's first commission, Winslow House, Oak Park, IL



Frommes Kalender
color lithograph, gold-bronze dusting process,
by Koloman Moser and Albert Berger, 1899

LITH. ANST. - A. BERGER WIEN 8.

1898



Gustave Stickley opens furniture company

1899



South Kensington Museum is renamed the Victoria & Albert Museum, London

1899

Josef Maria Olbrich,
Secession
Gallery,
Vienna



ABOVE: Wärndorfer teapot,
Wiener Werkstätte, by
Josef Hoffmann, 1904.
RIGHT: Brooch of 18K gold,
diamonds, and carved
ivory, Wiener Werkstätte,
by Josef Hoffmann, 1913.
OPPOSITE PAGE: Zebra
glass vase with silver-
plated brass mounts by
Koloman Moser, E.
Bakalowits & Sohne, and
Joh. Lötzwitwe, 1905

Where modernism took root

The seeds of 20th century modernism were sown in the 19th, when the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London's Crystal Palace became a catalyst for design reform movements that swept across England, most of Europe, and later America. The cataclysm of the Industrial Revolution had wrought havoc with design, and the reformers sought to stem the tide of grotesque objects and bad taste by developing an aesthetic appropriate to the new age. From their efforts grew two divergent strains, Arts & Crafts and Art Nouveau, both rooted in the ideal of rejecting historicism and unnecessary ornament, and reviving honesty of materials and the hand of the craftsman.

The search for a new aesthetic led designers in several countries to develop their own distinct expressions, each of which included elements of what we generally think of as modernism - that is, design that does not rely on traditional forms, and that takes into account new technology and materials not available in previous times. Each of these centers contributed in different ways to modernism in architecture and the decorative arts, and each of them gave birth to designers whose work is highly valued today.

Art Nouveau

This style, which developed primarily in Belgium, France, Austria, and Germany, was a short-lived movement with considerable influence. Its architecture and objects were most notable for their undulating curves, naturalistic ornament, and a dynamic feeling of move-



1900



Louis Sullivan, Carson Pirie Scott building, Chicago, IL

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1901

First publication of *The Craftsman*

1902



Frank Lloyd Wright, Larkin Building, Buffalo

COURTESY THE FLW FOUNDATION, SCOTTSDALE, AZ

1902

International Exposition of Decorative Arts, Turin, Italy

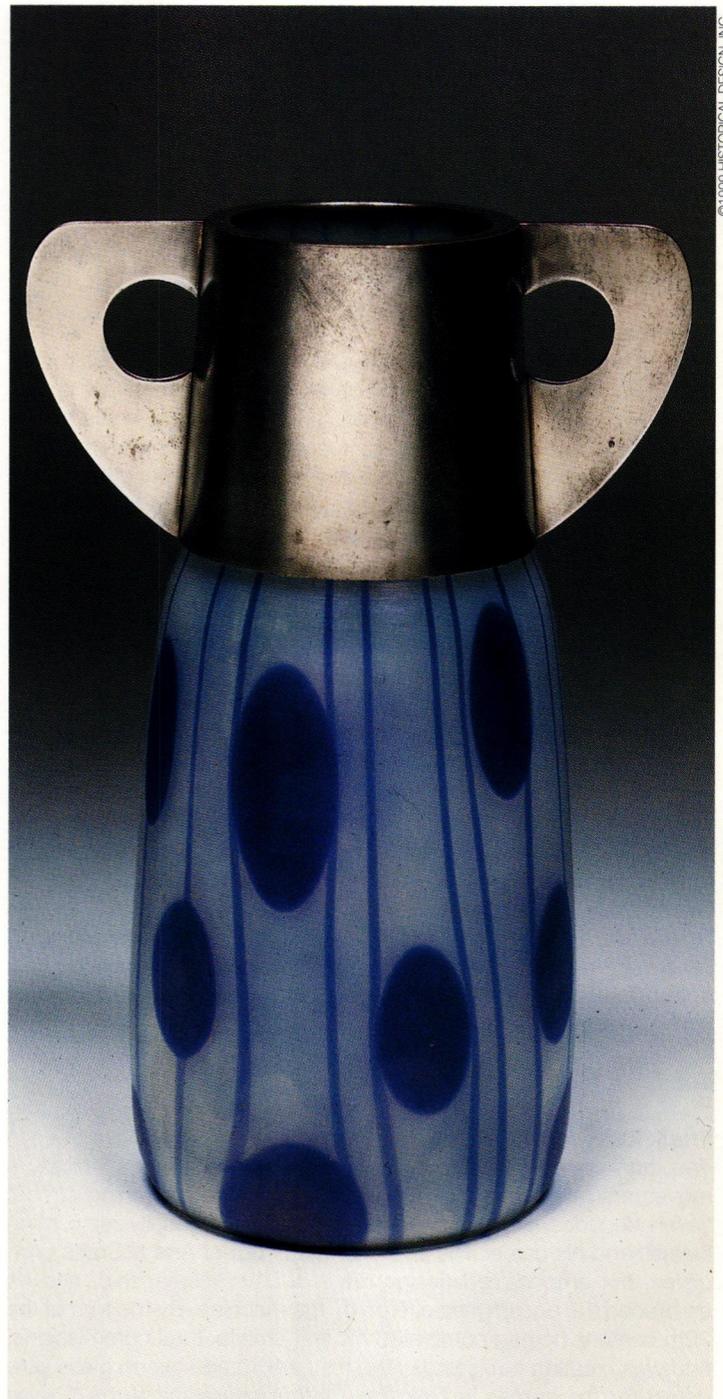
1903

Founding of Wiener Werkstätte, Vienna

ment, though its execution varied in each country. Despite the elaborateness that makes it often appear more traditional than modern, it was the first style whose designs were not historically-based: the silhouettes, however, reflected Louis XV styles. Art Nouveau in Belgium and France brought forth such innovative talents as Victor Horta, Henri van de Velde, Hector Guimard, Louis Majorelle, Emile Gallé, and René Lalique. Most of the major practitioners of the style sold their products through Siegfried Bing's shop in Paris, "Maison de l'Art Nouveau," from which the movement drew its name. Off in Spain, Antonio Gaudi practiced his own individual variation of Art Nouveau design, creating furniture that shared an aesthetic with his Northern contemporaries, and swirling forms of architecture embellished with colorful mosaics that resembles nothing else, before or since. In Germany, the style developed as Jugendstil, in England it was practiced primarily through Liberty of London, and in Italy it became Le Stile Liberté, which largely took its cue from the English genre. In America, its influence was very brief and very particular: it inspired Maxfield Parrish, Louis La Farge, and the extraordinary output of Louis Comfort Tiffany, whose several ventures made his name synonymous with an entire era of decorative glass. The movement, however, began to stagger under the weight of its excesses, and after its apogee at the 1900 "Exposition Universelle" in Paris, it would rapidly fade, to be supplanted by the simplicity that distinguished the modernist movements of the new century. Also linked to the Art Nouveau movement is the Italian designer Carlo Bugatti, most likely for lack of anywhere else to place him. Bugatti furniture is instantly recognizable and impossible to categorize. His eccentric style, practiced in Milan and then in Paris, absorbed Japanese, Islamic, and medieval influences, and used such diverse materials as parchment panels, brass ornament, bone, ivory and mixed wood inlays, and silk and leather fringes. His "Snail Room" at the first "Exposition Internationale d'Art Decoration Moderna" in Turin 1902, and the *Cobra* chairs designed for it, are seen in countless compendia of design history.

The Glasgow style

Also considered a variation of Art Nouveau, but fitting into a category of his own, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his colleagues in the quartet known as the "Glasgow Four" operated independently and idiosyncratically in Scotland, an area not generally considered a center of design innovation. In a relatively short career, architect Mackintosh, his wife Margaret Macdonald, her sister Frances, and Frances' husband Henry McNair, produced interiors, furnishings, and graphics that are in many ways a bridge between Art Nouveau and the more clearly geometric aesthetic of other early modern movements. The tearooms Mackintosh designed for Miss Cranston, his most celebrated client, brought a new type of public gathering-place to industrial Glasgow, and are perhaps the most complete presentation of the distinctive style. Mackintosh furniture is notable for its linearity of form, its striking black or white finishes, its use of geometric orna-



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1903



Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Hill House

© ERIC THORP/IN THE GLASGOW PICTURE LIBRARY

1904

Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis, MO

1905



Josef Hoffmann, Palais Stoclet, Brussels

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1906

Casa Mila, Barcelona, by Antonio Gaudi

ment, and the contrast of Art Nouveau decorative motifs. Invited to exhibit by the Vienna Secession in 1900, and later drawing attention and acclaim in the important Turin exhibitions of 1902 and 1904, Mackintosh and his associates conceived dramatic interiors that were acclaimed by the Austrian modernists, though he was largely unappreciated in England. When antipathy towards his Austrian and German associations led to his exile from Scotland, Mackintosh faded into obscurity, but was rediscovered later in the century, and today his contributions are recognized by historians and curators as important elements in the development of modernism.

American Arts & Crafts

Though beginning as an outgrowth of the 19th century English movement, Arts & Crafts design took on its own life in the New World. Gustave Stickley, its most celebrated practitioner, achieved success with craftsman-like designs that stressed honesty of materials and finishes, at prices that ordinary people could afford. His publication, *The Craftsman*, and the Craftsman Homes for which building plans were available for sale, helped to spread and popularize the Arts & Crafts style, which was also called Mission (originally a derogatory term, referring to its resemblance to the Mexican-émigré missions in California). Stickley's many competitors, including his own brothers, Harvey Ellis (who briefly worked for Gustave), the Limbert Brothers, and others produced furnishings in a similar style, as did societies like the Roycrofters. In Pasadena, California, brothers Charles Sumner and Henry Mather Greene built distinctive homes with overhung roofs and flowing interiors, and filled them with furnishings and accessories that are an elegant refinement of the style. The Arts & Crafts movement also brought distinctive lamps by Dirk van Erp, some metalwork, but most significant, a cornucopia of ceramics from a number of manufacturers, each with its own distinctive designs. Decorative and affordable, these objects were made in factories like Rookwood and Roseville, and potteries like Grueby, Newcomb and Teco, and the individualist George Ohr. Arts & Crafts flourished until about the time of World War I, after which it was relegated to attics and garages until its revival several decades later.

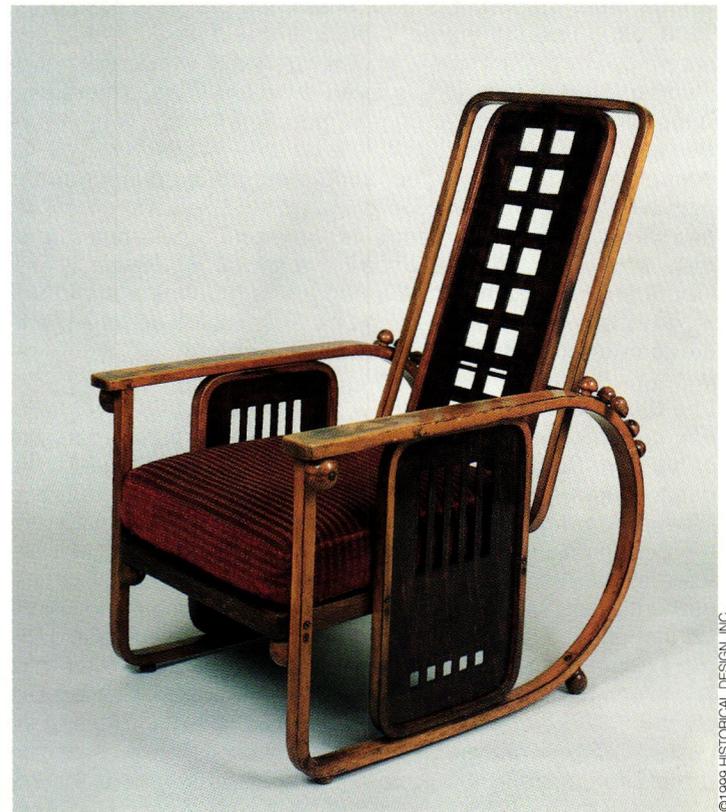
The Early Modern Movements

Frank Lloyd Wright

The man considered the first American modernist was virtually a movement in himself. In an extraordinary career spanning almost seven decades, he followed his own path, continually reinventing himself and his career. His approach grew out of Arts & Crafts principles, but emphasized design rather than craftsmanship, and he embraced the possibilities offered by the machine. By the turn of the 20th century, he had completed his first architectural commissions, and was creating furnishings (and his celebrated stained glass windows) for the homes in Oak Park, Ill that characterize the "Prairie



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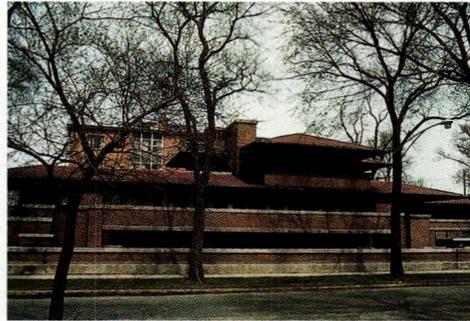
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1907



Greene & Greene, Blacker House, Pasadena, CA

1910



Frank Lloyd Wright, Robie House, Chicago, IL

1913

Armory Show brings modern art to New York

Style." Published in the time he fled to Europe in the wake of scandal, the 1911 *Wasmuth Portfolio* made an international audience (though not many Americans) aware of his work. After his return home, he built the first *Taliesin*, attracting students and acolytes. His milestone designs included cement-block buildings in California that adopted elements of Mayan style, *Fallingwater*, the 1935 home that revived his flagging career, and the Guggenheim Museum in New York, employing an entirely new organic aesthetic. Objects designed by Wright, conceived specifically for each home as part of a total unit, included furniture, rugs, lighting and stained-glass windows with bold geometrics. A figure of controversy during his lifetime, pushed into the background by European modernism, he is now recognized as one of the greatest masters of his time.

Wiener Werkstätte

Secessionist movements and a number of artist-and-designer groups marked the efforts of rebels in Austria and Germany to break away from the establishment and forge new directions. They developed their own workshops or designed for manufacturers, and staged exhibitions to present their designs in an appropriately modern context. The best known of these was the Vienna Secession, founded in the final years of the 19th century, whose most famous names are Josef Hoffmann, Kolomon Moser, Josef Maria Olbrich, and Gustav Klimt. The Wiener Werkstätte, founded by Hoffman and Moser in 1902, produced metalwork, furniture, ceramics, textiles and leather, and designed glass, the most distinctive of which was for the firm of J. & L. Lobmeyr, for which Hoffman became design director. The Werkstätte also opened retail shops, to sell their products to the general public, including several in Austria and outlets in Switzerland, Berlin, and even (in 1922) New York, but the products were too costly to gain wide distribution. The *Palais Stoclet*, built between 1905 and 1911 in Brussels, was Hoffmann's most celebrated building and a showcase for Werkstätte furnishings. Among the most familiar, and most admired, designs of the Werkstätte and its designers are Hoffmann's innovative and widely imitated bentwood seating for J. & J. Kohn; the immediately-identifiable openwork silver and silverplate pieces by Hoffmann and Moser; and glass by Hoffman, Otto Prutscher, and Dagobert Peche. Werkstätte designers also created jewelry of bold modern design, and a variety of accessories - in the early part of the century, it was customary for an artist to work in many media, a carryover from the previous century that declined with the later move towards specialization. Another influential name in Austria, though more for his writings than his designs, was the architect and industrial designer Adolf Loos, whose widely-published essay *Ornament and Crime* (1908) is still quoted as a dictum of the modernist aesthetic.

German Modernism

The forms most closely associated with 20th century modernism -



OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: Palais Stoclet, Brussels, Belgium, by Josef Hoffmann, 1905.

BOTTOM: *Sitzmaschine* reclining armchair by Josef Hoffmann, 1905. ABOVE:

Red-Blue chair by Gerrit Rietveld, 1917. The design is a three-dimensional realization of the philosophy of the De Stijl movement

CASSINA

1916

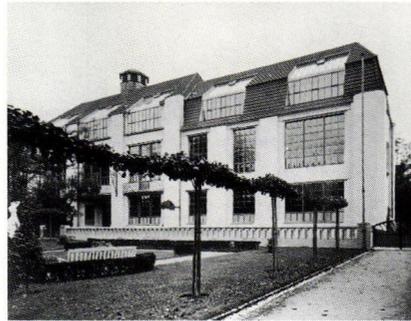
First publication of *De Stijl* in the Netherlands

1917



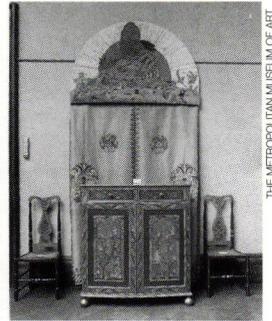
Gerrit Rietveld, *Red-Blue* chair

1919



Bauhaus established in Weimar, Germany under Walter Gropius

1920



"American Industrial Art" exhibition at Metropolitan Museum of Art



THIS PAGE TOP: Barcelona chairs designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in 1929 for the Barcelona Pavilion.
BOTTOM: Marianne Brandt, Bauhaus, tea infuser, 1924.
OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: The German pavilion by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe at the Barcelona Exhibition of 1929 is one of the best-known examples of International Style modern architecture.
BOTTOM: *Kubus* pressed glass refrigerator storage containers by Wilhelm Wagenfeld, 1938

for it must be remembered that even Baroque and Rococo design were, in their time, considered modern - emerged earliest in Germany. By the turn of the century there were *Sezessions* in Weimar (antecedent of the Bauhaus) and Munich, the artist's colony at Darmstadt, and the Deutsche Werkstätten. In 1907 the Deutscher Werkbund joined artists, designers, educators and manufacturers in an effort to reconcile design standards with the realities of production to improve the quality of objects in the marketplace ... a truly revolutionary idea, and one that was not to be achieved for several decades, and then in other countries.

Furniture and decorative objects by Olbrich (who had been invited to Darmstadt to head the colony and worked thereafter in Germany), Bruno Paul, Richard Riemerschmid, and Peter Behrens (considered the first real practitioner of industrial design, and who employed both Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe), have made their way into the history books, and into prominent museum collections. The German exhibition at the "Louisiana Purchase Exposition" in St. Louis in 1904 was widely celebrated, and German design gained prominence through the numerous Werkbund exhibitions, which attracted and influenced designers and architects all over Europe. These, and the exhibitions of the Munich Werkstätten, spurred the efforts of other nations (most notably the competitive French) to explore a suitable modern aesthetic. These exemplary accomplishments were hampered by anti-German feelings after World War I (the reason for Germany's exclusion from the Paris Exposition of 1925), just



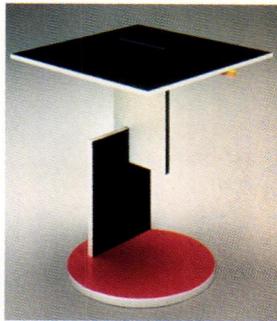
1922



Hood and Howell, Tribune Tower, Chicago, IL

HEDRICH-BLESSING, HEITR 7/2644,
CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

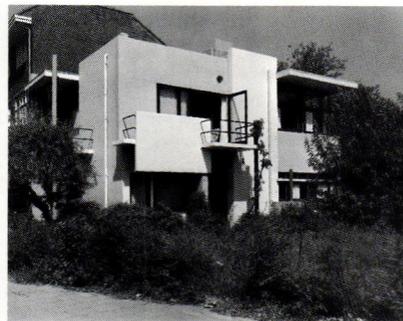
1923



Gerrit Rietveld, End table

CASSINA

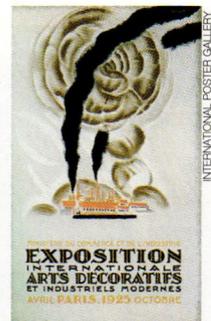
1924



Gerrit Rietveld, Schröder House, Utrecht, Netherlands

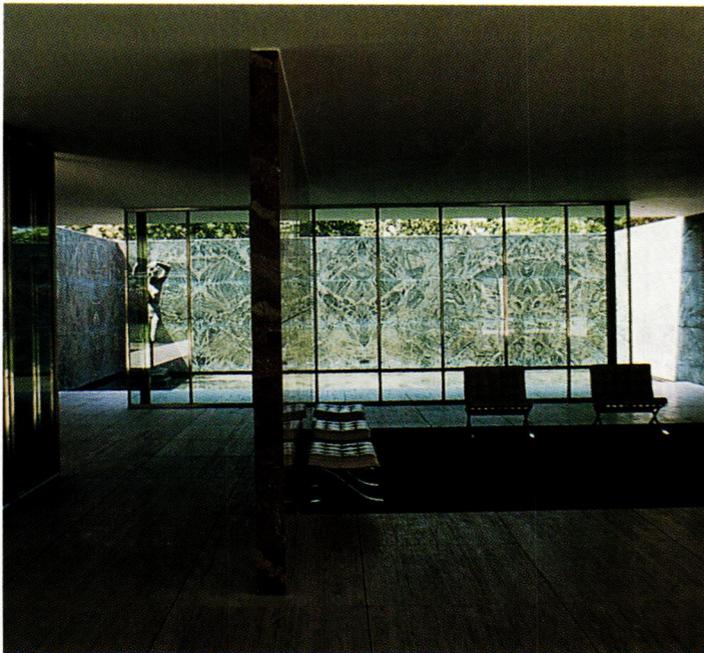
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1925



Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, Paris

INTERNATIONAL POSTER GALLERY



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(1917) is a definitive statement of the style; graphic designer Theo van Doesburg; and architect Jacobus Johannes Oud.

In Russia, the Constructivist movement arose after the 1917 Russian Revolution, seeking a modern means of expression to signify the break with the old political order. These architects created buildings (few of which were actually built) that resembled abstract paintings, and graphic design that shared an aesthetic with De Stijl and the Bauhaus. Constructivist ceramic designs, though relatively few, are boldly colorful and strikingly geometric. The most familiar of the early Russian modernists were Vladimir Tatlin, Konstantin Melnikov, Aleksandr Rodchenko, El Lissitzky (who became associated with De Stijl), and Kazimir Malevich.

The Major Movements of 20th Century Design

The Bauhaus

Probably the most far-reaching developments in the course of 20th century modernism began after Walter Gropius came to Weimar, Germany in 1919, succeeding Henry van de Velde as head of a school that he renamed *Das Staatliche Bauhaus*, and restructured with new teaching methods and the desire to elevate crafts to the level of fine arts. At the Bauhaus, art was seen as part of the industrial process, and in its studios, some of the most brilliant talents of the period

as the later achievements of Bauhaus designers were undercut by the international rejection of anything emanating from the country that gave birth to National Socialism. Although some of the most innovative designs of this century originated in Germany, the influence of the early German modernists was not as widespread as it might have been, and the impact of the later ones was, if not prevented, at least substantially delayed.

Other Modern Movements

Other centers of early modernism emerged in the early decades of the century. In Italy, the short-lived Futurist movement heralded by Filippo Marinetti's 1909 manifesto, celebrated technology and challenged the anti-machine pronouncements of the Arts & Crafts reformers inspired by John Ruskin and William Morris. The unbuilt architecture of Antonio Sant'Elia and the decorative arts of Fortunato Depero were pre-visions of modernism that celebrated the cacophony of the industrial age.

De Stijl, the Netherlands avant-garde organization, was composed of artists, architects, and designers, and took its name from the publication of 1916. Its leaders sought to reject natural forms and create a purely nonrepresentational form of design. Inspired by the patterns and primary colors of Cubism, in particular the work of Piet Mondrian, they created visually striking architecture and graphic design, and a limited but influential group of objects. The best known members of the group are Gerrit Rietveld, whose *Red-Blue* chair



BRUCE WHITE/THE MITCHELL WOLFSON, JR. COLLECTION, THE WOLFSONMAN-FUJ, MIAMI BEACH, FL

1925



Bauhaus moves to Dessau, Germany

BAUHAUS-ARCHIVE, BERLIN

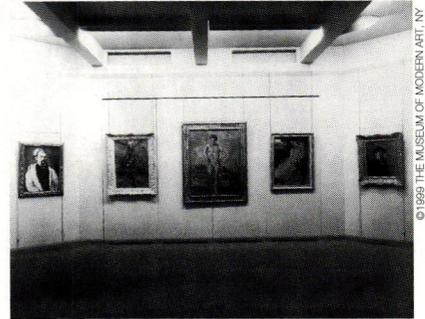
1925



Marcel Breuer, *Wassily* - Sessel B3 chair

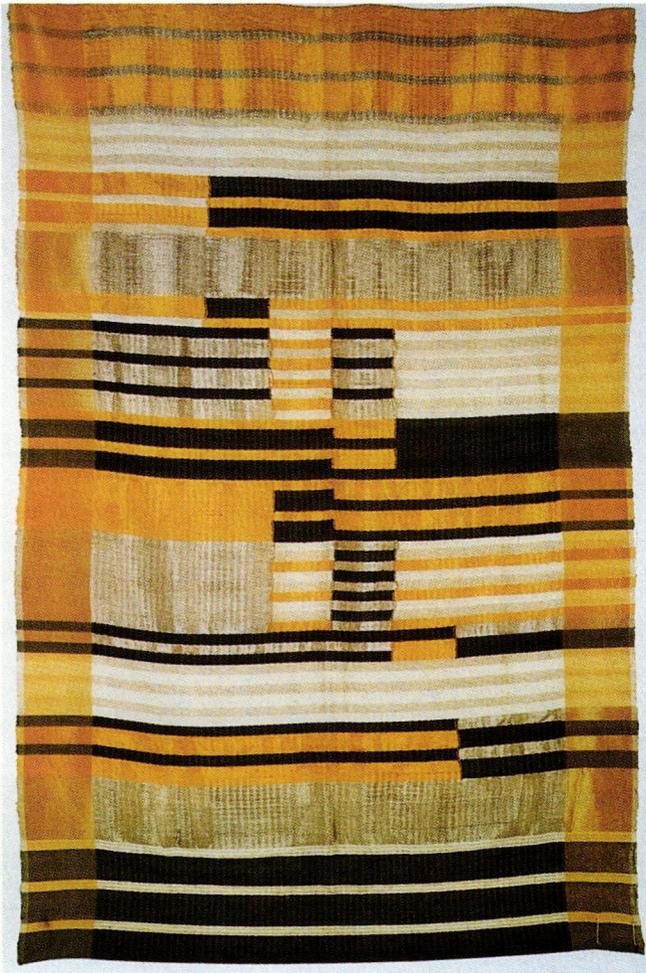
G. LEPKOWSKI, BAUHAUS-ARCHIVE, BERLIN

1929



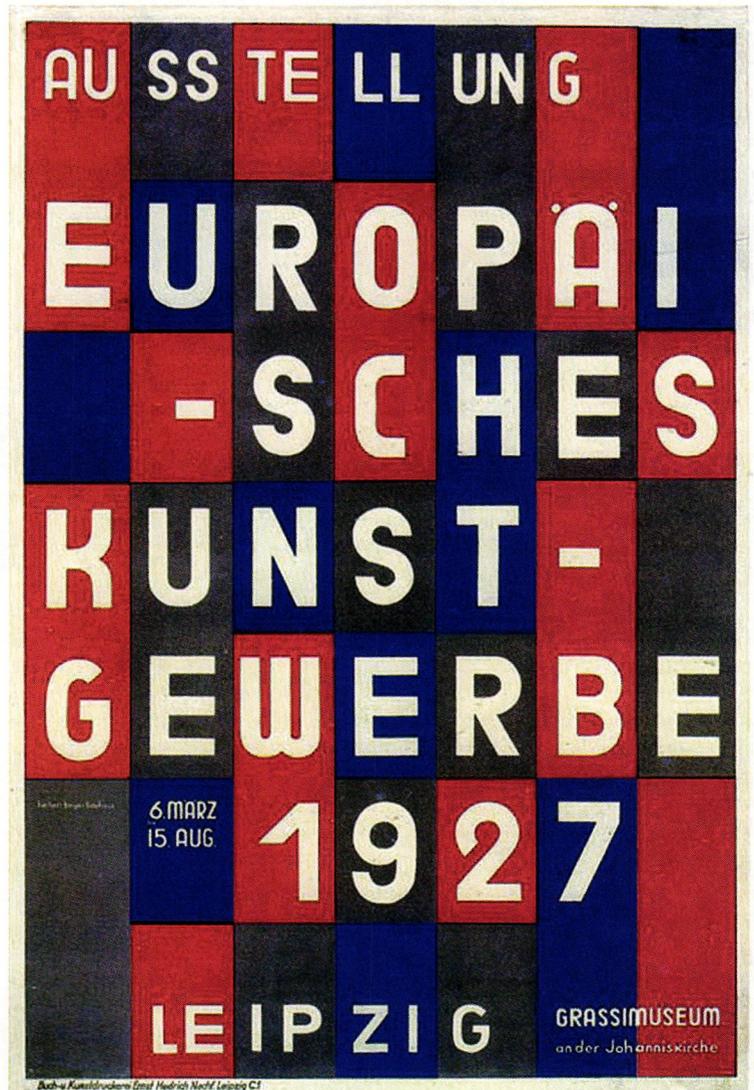
MoMA opens in New York. Installation view of the exhibition "Cezanne, Gauguin, Seurat, Van Gogh"

©1999 THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NY



THE JOSEF AND ANNI ALBERS FOUNDATION

THIS PAGE ABOVE: Anni Albers *Wallhanging*, 1925. RIGHT: *Europäisches Kunstgewerbe* color lithograph poster by Herbert Bayer, 1927, executed for the Exhibition of European Arts and Crafts, Leipzig, 1927. OPPOSITE PAGE LEFT: Edgar Brandt firescreen, *Les Pins*, c.1925. RIGHT: Laliq *Hesperides* frosted glass lemonade set



Buch- & Kunstdruckerei Ernst Heinrich Necht/Leipzig CT

INTERNATIONAL POSTER GALLERY

1929



Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye, Poissy, France

1929



Mies van der Rohe, German Pavilion at Barcelona Fair

1930



Mies van der Rohe, Tugendhat House, Brno, Czechoslovakia

sought to develop products that could be mass-produced at affordable prices. The faculty included artists Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Josef Albers, and textile designer Anni Albers. Johannes Itten directed the foundation course that would later become the accepted model for design education. Among the illustrious talents associated with the Bauhaus were Laszlo Moholy-Nagy (who later directed the New Bauhaus in Chicago), Marcel Breuer (who joined the faculty after training there), Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, graphic designer Herbert Bayer, and industrial designers Wilhelm Wagenfeld and Marianne Brandt.

The Bauhaus developed the concept of functionalist design, in which art combined with engineering and crafts, and encouraged the use of industrial components and new materials. The prototypes developed in the various Bauhaus studios were the first steps towards modern industrial objects, though most of them were too costly to be mass-produced. In its brief and conflict-ridden life, the Bauhaus was also enormously influential in graphic and textile design, and its vision of architecture provided the seeds that would develop



PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY



SOTHEBY'S, NY

into the International Style. Most notably, it was the emigration of Bauhaus designers in the shadow of the Nazis (who closed it in 1933, eight years after it had relocated to Dessau) that accelerated the later emergence of modernism in America. (Interestingly, though the Museum of Modern Art staged a Bauhaus exhibition in 1938, its first exhibition of Mies van der Rohe work was not until 1947). In addition to Moholy-Nagy, Josef and Anni Albers (at Black Mountain College and later Yale), Walter Gropius (at Harvard), Mies van der Rohe (at Illinois Institute of Technology), and Marcel Breuer (first with Gropius and then practicing on his own), trained a new generation of modern architects and designers and influenced countless others who followed. Bauhaus designs included furniture, particularly chairs of steel and metal tubing, that are among the most familiar and most frequently copied modern objects. Its precedent-rejecting "form is function" design aesthetic became the dominant strain of modernism in the 20th century.

Not affiliated with the Bauhaus, but independently pursuing a compatible aesthetic, was French architect Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret). Ignored by the establishment, and reviled for his avant-garde *Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau* at the 1925 Paris Exposition, he created iconic architecture and landmark furniture of tubular-steel in collaboration with his cousin Pierre Jeanneret and Charlotte Perriand. Corbusier, of course, became one of the leading lights of the International Style, and his work was exhibited in America at the Museum of Modern Art in 1935, earlier than that of the Bauhaus.

Art Deco

Contrary to the Bauhaus approach, French modernism incorporated a historicist tradition into the second most influential and enduring

1930



©BERNHARD FRIEDRICH, BAUHAUS-ARCHIV, BERLIN

Mies van der Rohe, *Tugendhat* chair

1931



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William Van Allen, Chrysler Building, NY

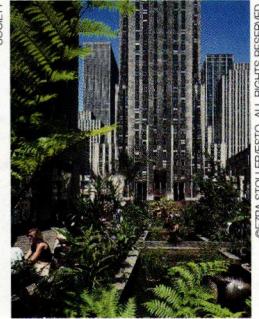
1933



©PAULMAN & PERRY, ICH-06231, THE CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"Century of Progress" exhibition, Avenue of the Flags, Chicago, IL

1933



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Rockefeller Center, NY

style of the century...the style that was later labeled Art Deco. Drawing on influences that included Leon Bakst's exotic designs for the Ballets Russes, the Fauves, and Cubism, and later the 1922 opening of King Tut's tomb and the electric "jazz age," it began to develop in the early years of the century as a reaction to the excesses of Art Nouveau. In exhibitions by the *Société des Artistes Décorateurs*, the *Salon d'Automne* and other design societies, designers sought a distinctively French expression of modernism, and to recapture the style leadership that Paris had maintained for several centuries only to cede to Britain after the Industrial Revolution. The French were loath to relinquish their love of luxury goods, or their heritage of labor-intensive production. In what they called *Le Stile Moderne*, they avoided specific historic references, but drew on the silhouettes, the love of exotic materials, and the cabinetry skills that had distinguished the best of *ancien régime* design. They worked for fashionable patrons such as couturiers Jeanne Lanvin and Jacques Doucet, but their costly wares were beyond reach of the general public. Still, the work of Paris' custom specialists, decorating firms, and design studios affiliated with the leading department stores returned French design to center stage. In the flattering light of the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris, furniture and interiors by such as Louis Süe and André Mare, André Groult, Pierre Chareau, and most notably, Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann, as well as the specialized work of Edgar Brandt and Jean Dunand, were showcased to international acclaim. From that platform, *Le Stile Moderne* influenced other European countries and, most significantly, spread to America, to lay the groundwork for America's move into modern design.

The *Union des Artistes Modernes* of 1930, including René Herbst, Francis Jourdain and Robert Mallet-Stevens, lobbied for more modern expressions, and individualists Eileen Gray and Jean-Michel Frank moved in new directions. Continuing the evolution, French designers like Jean Prouvé, Jean Royère, and Jacques Adnet moved into the middle years of the century with work that merged a more contemporary aesthetic with characteristically Gallic flair - designs that are becoming increasingly important in the current marketplace.

By the mid-1930s, notwithstanding their success at the 1925 Exposition, many of the old-style French design firms had closed, and the elegant interiors they had created were relegated to public-image showcases like the great ocean liners and later, in America, the grand movie palaces.

The new French style traveled across the Atlantic when selections from the Paris exposition traveled to America in 1926, for exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and eight other venues. In 1927 and 1928, department store shows at Macy's and Lord & Taylor showed French furnishings and promoted the concept of modernism to consumers. Other retail exhibitions followed, awakening interest in the style and spurring efforts by American designers to find their own modern aesthetic. American Art Deco reinterpreted

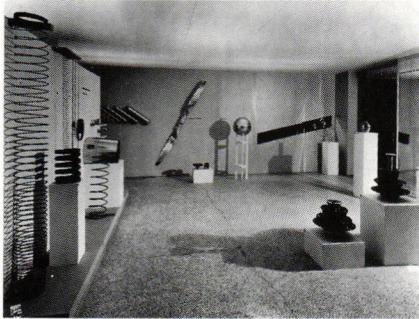


SOTHEBY'S, NY



SOTHEBY'S, NY

1934



"Machine Art" exhibition at MoMA, NY

MURIS BROTHER, COURTESY MOMA, NY

1935



Normandie ocean liner debuts

COURTESY CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF ART

1937



Frank Lloyd Wright, *Fallingwater*, Bear Run, PA

COURTESY THE HEW FOUNDATION, SCOTTSDALE, AZ

the French form, adding distinctive motifs that included zig-zags, sunbursts, and machine-age symbols. Its most striking incarnations were architectural, in structures like the Chrysler Building, Rockefeller Center, Miami Beach hotels, and public spaces like the fantasy movie palaces of the 1930s. Furniture designer Paul Frankl made skyscraper-shape pieces that echoed architecture. Donald Deskey and Gilbert Rohde designed furniture with elegant surfaces clearly influenced by France, but they, and contemporaries like Kem Weber, also worked with steel and tubular metal. Art Deco segued into "Streamline Style," a variation, mostly in accessories and decorative objects, whose speed-inspired aesthetic suggested the glamour of the automobile and the airplane. Manufacturers found that people would buy more products if they were attractively designed, and the new profession of industrial designer was created. The most celebrated of the new practitioners, many of whom came from advertising or theater design (their function was, after all, as display as design), included Deskey, Norman Bel Geddes, Walter Dorwin Teague, and Raymond Loewy. They, and others, designed a variety of mass-produced objects that Americans admired, and took into their homes. Unfortunately, a host of poorly-designed kitsch helped send Art Deco into decline, though it was preserved in the glamorous interiors of Hollywood films.

Mid-Century American Design

The years after World War II brought an outpouring of design innovation, as new materials and technology, and the country's emergence to international leadership, provided the impetus for American designers to forge their own path to modernism. Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, and others nurtured at the seminal Cranbrook Academy under Saarinen's father Eliel; George Nelson and his associates; and individualists like Russel Wright, Isamu Noguchi and Eva Zeisel were just the first wave of talent in a group that later included Harry Bertola and others. Most of the innovators designed for Knoll Associates and Herman Miller, the two companies mainly responsible for spearheading the production of modern furniture for a broad marketplace. MoMA's seminal 1934 "Machine Art" exhibit, the "Organic Design" competition of 1940, the Eames exhibit of 1946 (the first one-man design show), and exhibitions of European modernism contributed to the growing public interest in modern design, and the "Good Design" exhibitions organized with The Merchandise Mart in 1950-1955 helped convince manufacturers that it could be profitable.

Two decades after the Museum of Modern Art's 1932 exhibition introduced what came to be called International Style architecture, glass-walled skyscrapers had begun to dot the landscape - making modernism the chosen corporate style. Much of the new furniture that went into these interiors was geometric, and often severe, but an alternate vocabulary of organic forms emerged from experiments with new materials such as molded plywood and a variety of plas-



INTERNATIONAL POSTER GALLERY

THIS PAGE ABOVE: *Normandie* poster by Adolphe Mouron Cassandre, 1935. OPPOSITE

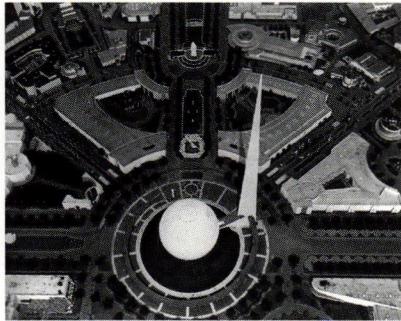
PAGE TOP: Albert Cheuret bronze and alabaster *Cactus* chandelier.

BOTTOM: Carved rosewood upholstered side chairs by Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann, model *Cuillernic*, c.1925

1937

Bauhaus designers emigrate to the United States

1939



Aerial view of the 1939 New York World's Fair, looking down on the Trylon and Perisphere

© THE MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1941



"Organic Design in Home Furnishings" competition at MoMA, NY

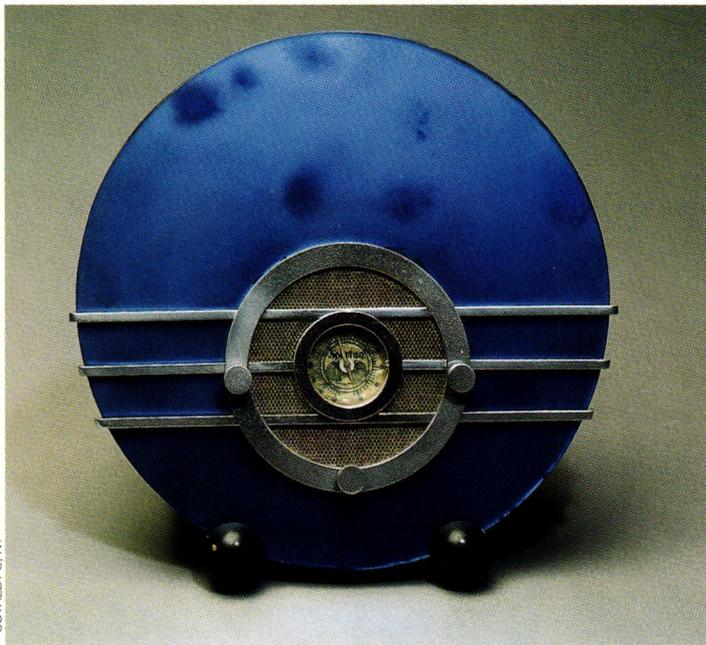
© 1980 THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NY

1942



Charles and Ray Eames develop plywood leg splints for US Navy

PHILIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY



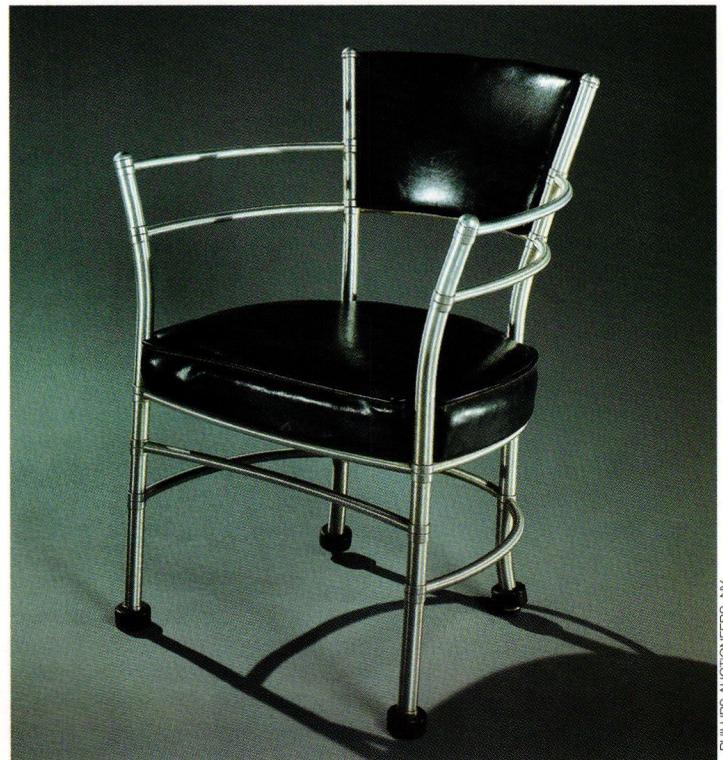
SOTHEBY'S, NY

THIS PAGE LEFT: Walter Dorwin Teague *Spartan* radio, c.1936. BELOW: Armchair by Warren McArthur. OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: Dresser by Donald Deskey, 1931-35. BOTTOM: *Empire* cocktail shaker manufactured by the Revere Copper & Brass Co., Rome, NY, 1938

tics, producing a strain of modernism that related to nature and to human forms. Ornament was absent from furniture, though color and texture was provided through textiles by designers like Jack Lenor Larsen, Dorothy Liebes, and others; by original lighting and accessories; and an explosion of popular-priced ceramics and serving ware, often in complementary organic shapes. The media, important tastemakers to the post-war middle class, came down squarely in favor of the new American style, particularly embracing "middle-range" designers like Edward Wormley and T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings, who offered a less extreme form of modern that helped the avant-garde aesthetic gain acceptance. Designers like Paul McCobb turned out more affordable interpretations, and popular-priced "contemporary" variations furnished interiors in the burgeoning suburbs that were transforming the urban environment. Though the reigning majority of Americans held to their Colonial roots, modernism was anointed as the fashionable new style of the time. (Isolated examples in other countries - Max Bill at the *Hochschule für Gestaltung* in Ulm, Germany, Ernest Race in England, and the French modernists - moved in progressive directions, but in this period, America set new standards for design.)

Scandinavian Modern

A harmony of compatible voices rather than an *a capella* solo, Scandinavian design represents a consensus of individual countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and the less-design-active Iceland),

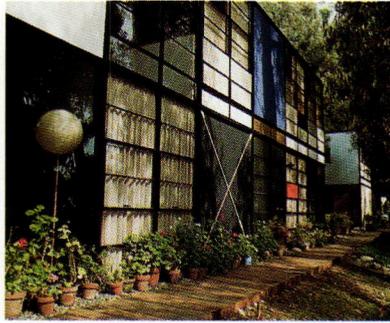


PHILIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY

1947

Christian Dior launches "New Look"

1949



Eames House, Pacific Palisades, CA

SHELLEY MILLS. © 1999 EAMES OFFICE. WWW.EAMESOFFICE.COM

1950



First "Good Design" exhibition at MoMA, NY

© 1999 THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NY

Their approach to modernism was the first to reconcile craftsmanship with machine technology, and is distinguished by a love of natural materials. Drawing international attention at the Paris Exposition in 1900, when Finland launched its search for national identity, the Scandinavians moved quickly into modernism. In Finland, Eliel Saarinen and his partners melded folk tradition with modern, and Alvar Aalto broke new ground in architecture and laminated plywood, as Bruno Mathsson did related design in Sweden. Scandinavia's first international acclaim came not from the democratic designs they espoused, but with luxury goods - Orrefors' achievements in glass (from Simon Gate, Edwin Hald, and later Vicke Lindstrand, Gunnar Nylund and others, lauded in the Paris exhibitions of 1925 and 1937), Denmark's Georg Jensen silver, and Royal Copenhagen's celebrated (though scarcely modern) dinnerware. Kaj Fisker's modern pavilion in Paris in 1925, and later Gunnar Asplund's functionalist statement at the 1930 Stockholm Fair, maintained a high profile for the Scandinavian peninsula, whose separation from Europe largely spared it the damages of war and gave it a head start on resuming innovations afterward.

At mid-century, evolving from the seminal work of Kaare Klint, Denmark's mid-century design took center stage at the *Triennale* exhibitions in Milan, and opened new markets abroad, notably in America. Major players included stars Hans Wegner and Finn Juhl, as well as Ole Wanscher and Borge Mogensen. In Sweden, Kaj Frank created fresh and distinctive furniture, textiles, and tablewares, and designers at Gustavsberg and Rohrstrand produced work that is only now gaining attention. Finland's most notable mid-century modernists were Tapio Wirkkala (whose wood and glass objects captivated American tastemakers) and Timo Sarpaneva, and its second-generation furniture designers included Eero Arnio, whose unmistakable plastic shapes were a leap into the future. Scandinavian textiles, rya rugs, and household accessories created a fever of enthusiasm for Danish Modern that broadened to Scandinavian Modern, and waned (particularly in America) when iconoclastic Italian design made the consistency of the Nordic approach seem complacent. As the century recedes into history, the enduring quality of Scandinavian design is becoming recognized.

Italian Modern Design

The seeds of Italy's mid-century explosion of design innovation were sown by the work of Gio Ponti, whose ceramics, furniture, and architecture, and his more influential positions as editor of the design magazine *Domus* (from 1928) and prime mover of the *Triennale* (first in Monza, then Milan). The greatest Italian accomplishments, however, came after World War II, in the explorations of young designers and risk-taking manufacturers, supported by a government seeking to get the country back on its feet. Willing to work with whatever was available, they designed in plastics and metal, producing striking, often whimsical designs in furniture and accessories that defied de-

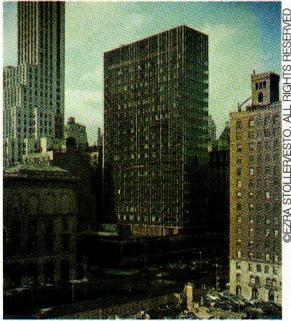


BRUCE WHITE/THE MITCHELL WOLFSON, JR. COLLECTION, THE WOLFSONIAN-FIU, FL



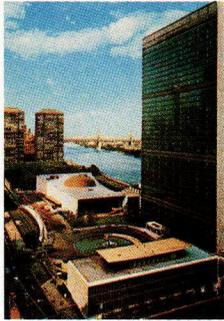
COLLECTION OF STEVEN VISAKAY

1952



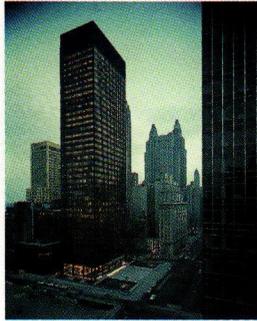
Gordon Bunshaft, Lever House, NY

1953



United Nations building completed, NY

1954



Mies van der Rohe with Philip Johnson, Seagram Building, construction begins, NY

1956



Frank Lloyd Wright, Guggenheim Museum, construction begins, NY

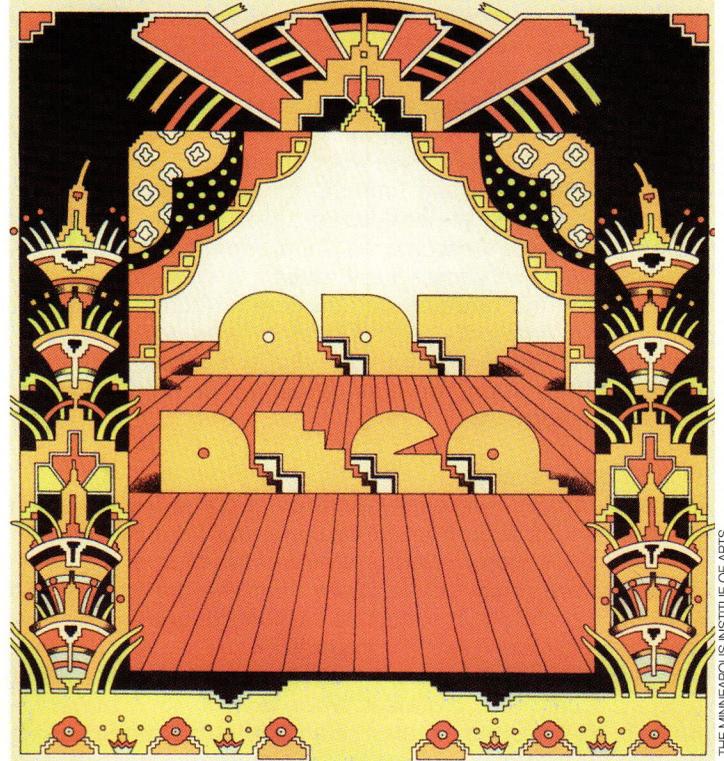
THIS PAGE TOP: Rockefeller Center, NY, designed in 1931 by Raymond Hood. BOTTOM: Exhibition catalog for The Minneapolis Institute of Arts' Art Deco exhibition, held in 1971. OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: Bubble lamps by George Nelson; American Modern pitcher by Russel Wright; Eames DCM chair



scription and riveted media attention...especially in trend-seeking America. (Exceptions to the mass-production rule, Carlo Mollino and Piero Fornasetti turned out more specialized and highly regarded work). In the next two decades, designers and architects like Joe Colombo, Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglione, Mario Bellini, Marco Zanuso, Carlo Scarpa, Gae Aulenti, Gaetano Pesce and others became fashion-star famous. MoMA staged "Italy at Work" in 1956, giving Americans their first exposure to the Italian revolution. Like the Scandinavians, Italians did not limit themselves to any one medium, and their fresh ideas were accepted and marketed by manufacturers like Kartell, Artemide, Cassina, and others. Equally important, Italian designers gave birth to revolutionary new concepts in lighting, and their achievements in this area remain unsurpassed. In the glassware factories of Murano, where a tradition of craftsmanship had been maintained for several centuries, designers created studio and production pieces that set a new standard of modernism in glass, their quantity and explosive color eclipsing, at least for a time, the more sedate Scandinavian designs. In tableware and accessories as well, Italian design became a *sui generis* statement of style, placing decorative arts firmly on a par with ready-to-wear fashion. Though losing its edge in the second generation, Italian modern design remains a defining element of the century.

The Sixties and Seventies

The next two decades saw the erosion of physical and intellectual barriers in product design, as its practitioners, speaking in a universal language, ventured into uncharted waters. For the first time in



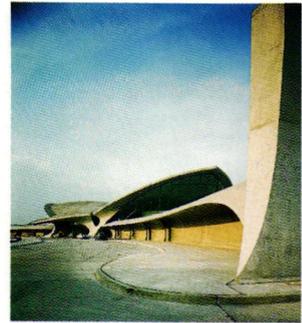
1956



SALVATORE LICHTA

Gio Ponti, Pirelli Tower, Milan

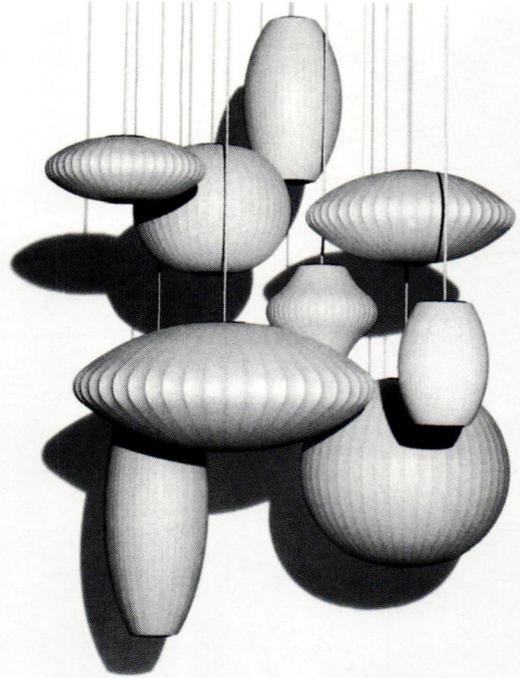
1962



CEZIA STOLLEVISIO. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Eero Saarinen, TWA Terminal, NY

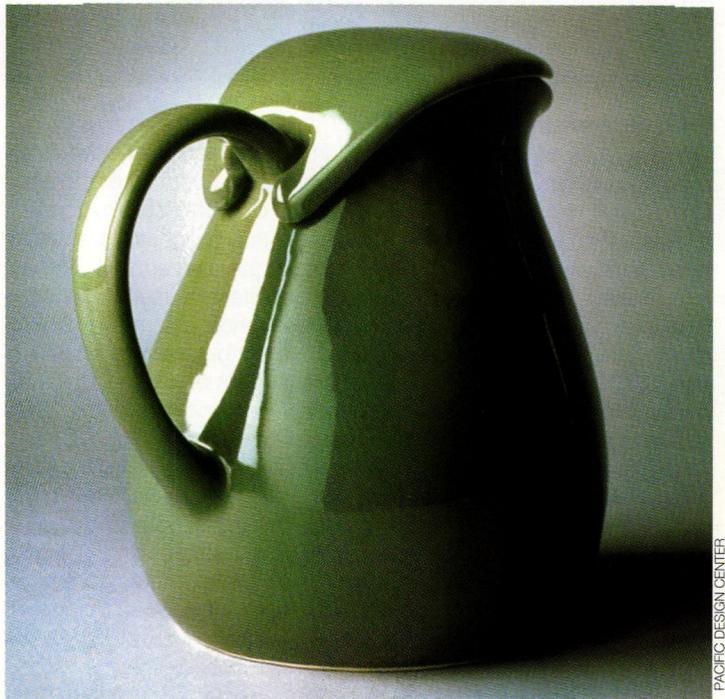
history, design was not only experimental but fun. Propelled by the revolution in popular culture, designers in several countries created objects that were fresh and fanciful, many of them using plastic as the material of choice. Furnishings had a look-at-me air, with curvy shapes and vivid colors that proclaimed a space-age sensibility. The 1960s produced lava lamps and blow-up furniture, but also a number of more sophisticated and more enduring designs from such as Warren Platner in America, Robin Day in reinvigorated Britain, and Dieter Rams in Germany. Arne Jacobsen and Verner Panton were second-generation Danish modernists who moved smoothly into new materials without losing the appeal of humanist design, while Eero Aarnio's unmistakable plastic shapes from Finland were a leap into the future. Italian designers continued their star-quality accomplishments, with Joe Colombo and others mentioned previously, and MoMA's "The New Italian Landscape" exhibition of 1972 highlighted their unique futurist aesthetic. Concurrent with the Italians, French designers Pierre Paulin and Olivier Morgue worked with new shapes and materials, but until Philippe Starck, no modern French designer gained international renown. The influence of Op and Pop Art appeared in uninhibited but short-lived designs for textiles and wallcoverings, and lively shapes and colors brought new interest to tablewares and accessories. Several decades later, the best designs of the 1960s and '70s are increasingly respected, and even the less worthy are drawing interest, if only as documents of a unique period.



HERMAN MILLER



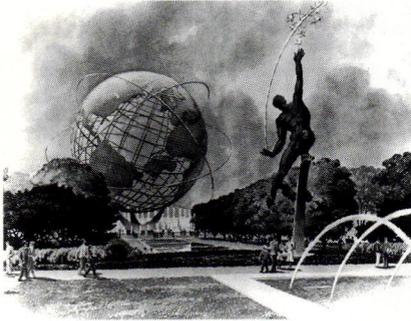
BONHAMS, LONDON



PACIFIC DESIGN CENTER

1964

1964



Main Mall, 1964-65 New York World's Fair



Robert Venturi, Vanna Venturi House, Chestnut Hill, PA

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK. GIFT OF THE NYWF. 1964-65 COOP.

ROLIN R. LAFRANCE, VENTURI, SCOTT BROWN AND ASSOCIATES



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THIS PAGE TOP: Philip Johnson's Glass House, 1949, in New Canaan, CT, is a nearly pure example of the International Style. BOTTOM: Dining table and six *Conoid* chairs by George Nakashima. OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: *Triad* and *Royal Chenille* textiles by Jack Lenor Larsen; Margaret De Patta brooch, c.1950; Isamu Noguchi dining table, model no. 311

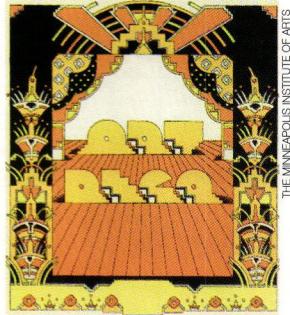
Post-Modernism

Generated by avant-garde thinkers in America and Italy, the Post-modern movement was a reaction against the austerity of modernism. Robert Venturi's 1966 *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* set off an intellectual storm of thought that sought to re-examine rather than reject historicism, and incorporate elements of the past into modern design. Post-modernism manifested itself most strikingly in architecture that translated classic arches, columns and pediments into the modern aesthetic, and used bold combinations of offbeat color in buildings that ranged from sublimely charming to embarrassingly foolish. The most influential Post-modern architecture in America has been by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, Arquitectonica, Frank Gehry, Michael Graves, and style-shifting influential Philip Johnson. In terms of furnishings, however, Post-modernism began in Italy, first with groups like Archizoom and then in 1981 with Memphis, spearheaded by Ettore Sottsass and including Michele de Lucchi, Matteo Thun, and Aldo Cibec. Memphis, electrifying visitors to the *Salone dei Mobili* in Milan, introduced tongue-in-cheek satirizations of mid-century design, with crayon-bright colors, laminated surfaces and little concern for function (or comfort). Memphis was a short-lived but influential venture that shook up the de-



SOTHEBY'S NY

1971



"Art Deco" exhibition, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts

1977

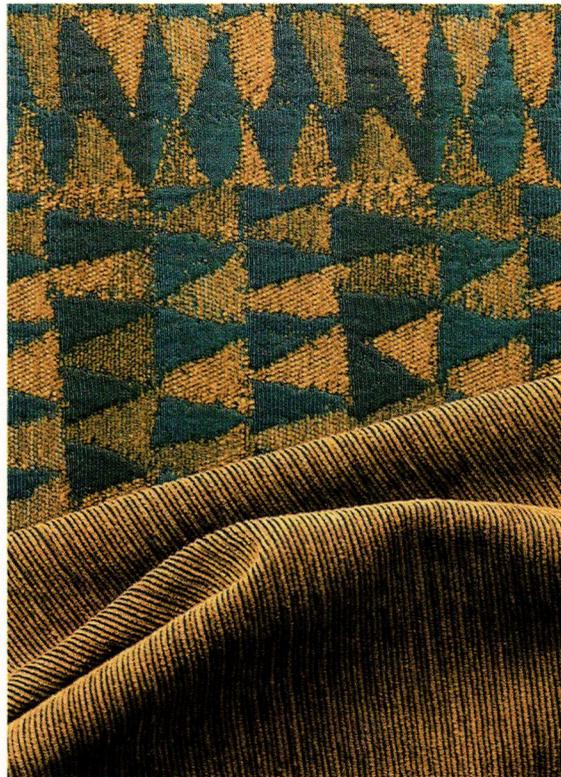
Centre Pompidou, Paris, by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers

sign community, and its products were scooped up for museums and private collectors, giving it broader influence than its founders may have envisioned. The Memphis look was transposed into striking glass and ceramics, which in turn inspired experiments by designers in other countries. Architects like Venturi, Gehry, and Graves designed conversation-piece Post-modern furniture exploring new ideas, though some seemed as much for publicity value as for practical use, and Philippe Starck gave personality to furniture. Post-modernism has moved into the mainstream, in mass-produced objects from teapots and dinnerware to (most recently) popular-priced housewares - a probable indicator of its impending demise as a design aesthetic.

The Current Climate

No longer defined by single-country trends, design has become an international commodity, as instant communication facilitates the transmission of ideas from across a nation to across the world. Japanese architects and designers have transformed the perception of that country's products from copycat trivia to wittily original; countries like Switzerland, Spain, and Brazil contributed to the modernist aesthetic; and architecture moved from deconstructivism to minimalism with attending changes in the objects designed to furnish it. And period design, as might be expected, has been recycled in new incarnations.

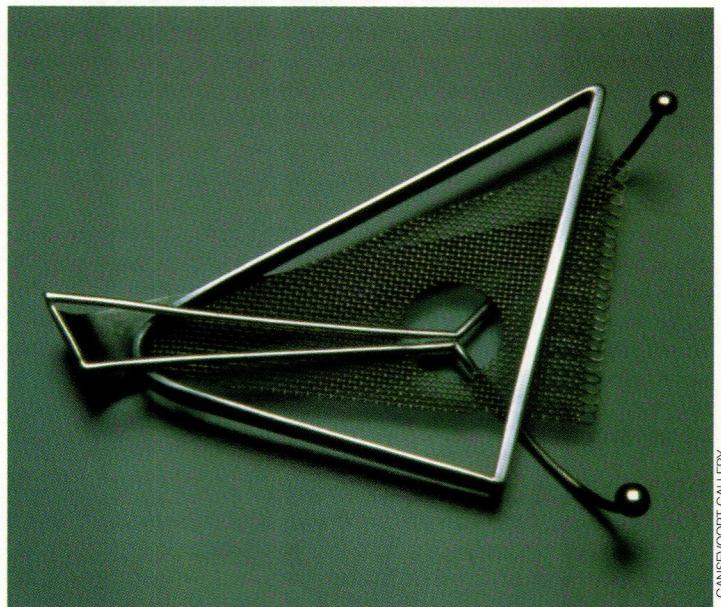
The word that best describes design today is diversity. No single aesthetic leads the pack, although one version or another of modernism and descendants of 18th century styles seem the most preva-



LARSEN DESIGN STUDIO, NY



DAVID FRAGO AUCTIONS



GANSEVOORT GALLERY

1978

High Tech book names the industrial aesthetic

1981

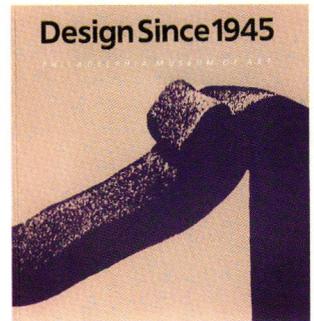


Memphis debuts at Milan *Salone di Mobili*

1982

"Scandinavian Modern Design, 1880-1980" Cooper-Hewitt Museum, NY

1983



"Design Since 1945" exhibition, Philadelphia Museum of Art

lent. However, where functionalism once dictated modern design, it is now fashion that sets the stage - and the idea of design is often as important as (and sometimes more important than) design itself. Thus, the prevailing winds are continually shifting, without a clear direction to suggest where design is going as the millennium approaches...to a renewed modern aesthetic, or to something altogether different.

As far as revivals of 20th century styles go, however, those of the immediate post-war era are clearly leading the pack. When the most avant-garde interiors are furnished with pieces that Charles Eames, Arne Jacobsen and Eero Aarnio designed more than four decades ago, and when Robert Stern, new dean of the Yale School of Architecture, furnishes his design-statement loft with mid-century icons, then modernism has clearly gone mainstream. Fifties props are showing up in TV commercials and futuristic films. Unfortunately, such popular acceptance may presage a pendulum swing as the century turns, but which direction it will move in is, at this point, still unclear. As show sponsor Sandy Smith notes with a touch of cynicism, "Dealers locate under-recognized designers and architects, warehouse it, promote it, magazines write about it, and it becomes the latest trend."

Summing Up

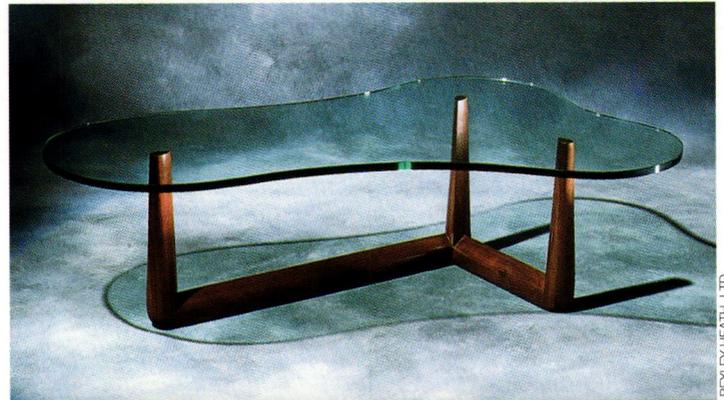
This has indeed been a "Century of Progress," as it was prematurely (or presciently) labeled in the not-so-progressive Chicago fair of 1933. Designers have shown an open-minded attitude towards new technology and new materials, bringing past and present into equilibrium and producing designs that were a true reflection of their time.

With this outpouring of achievement came a significant shift in design leadership, as America nurtured its first generation of design innovators. Italy exhibited an explosion of ingenuity, France created a luxury strain of modernism, and Germany incubated the dominant modernist aesthetic. It was altogether an extraordinary era: as Peter Loughery of LA Modern Auctions comments, "Museums are going to look back at the 20th century and see it was the most important one since the beginning of time."

At the turn of the last century, the dawn of the millennium coincided with the search for a new aesthetic. Lacing dynastic shifts to mark new periods, a change of dates was an impetus to change ideas as well. Will this be true of 2000? It's too soon to tell, but it would seem likely. In this post-industrial, post-atomic age, the electronic revolution may transform our environment and displace the social structure as radically as any political revolution of the preceding centuries.

Tips on Collecting 20th Century Design

Modern design, for much of the century, was contemporary rather than collectible. It was not until past the midway point that museums, dealers and collectors began to realize that it wouldn't be around forever, and should be treated with the respect of a future antique.



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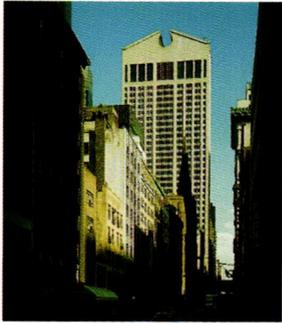


PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY



GALLERIE DE BEYRE

1984



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Philip Johnson, AT&T Building, NY

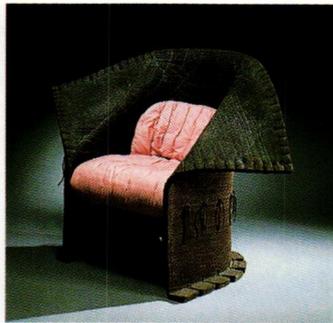
1985



PASCHALL/TAYLOR

Michael Graves & Associates, Humana Building, Louisville, KY

1986



PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY

Gaetano Pesce / Feltri chair prototype I

1988



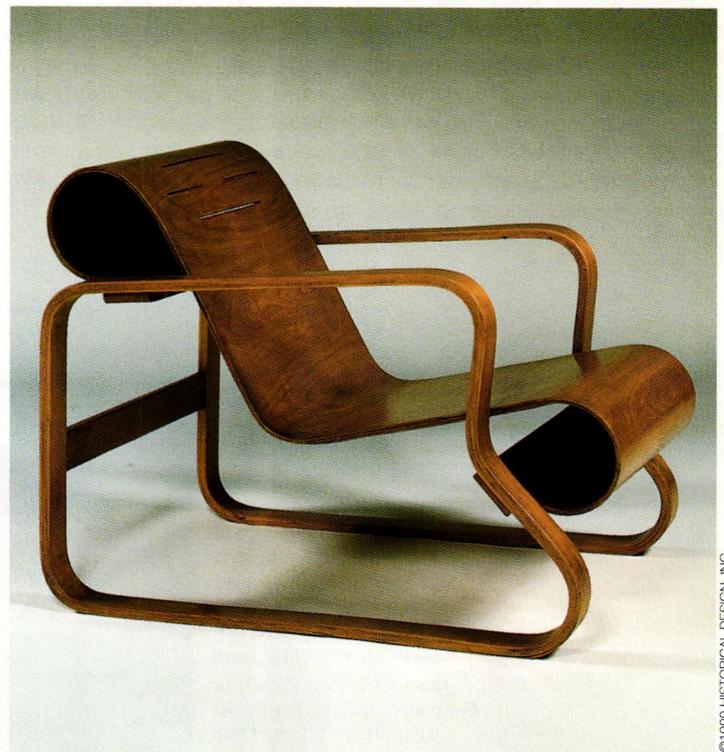
©PETER APPROVISTO. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Rem Koolhaas, Netherlands Dance Theater, The Hague, Netherlands

OPPOSITE PAGE FROM TOP: Biomorphic coffee table by T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings; Rare *Tete-a-Tete* settee designed by Andre Arbus for the French Pavilion at the *Exposition Universelle Internationale de Bruxelles*, 1958; Jacques Adnet sideboard, c.1945. THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: Tapio Wirkkala leaf platter and small bowl of laminated birch, c.1950; Alvar Aalto *Paimio* lounge chair of steambent birch wood, c.1931-33; *Savoy* vase by Alvar Aalto, 1936

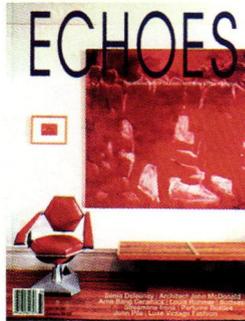


PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY



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1992



Echoes magazine publishes first issue as *The Echoes Report*

1993



"Design 1935-1965: What Modern Was" exhibition, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, October 15, 1993-January 9, 1999. Exhibit and tour organized by the Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts

The Museum of Modern Art, opening the Philip Goodwin Galleries in the mid-sixties, gave it credibility and encouraged me-too acquisitions (most with an homage-to-the-Bauhaus approach) by other institutions. Equally important influences were the early dealers: Alan Moss in Art Deco, Barry Friedman nurturing collectors of early European design, and Mark McDonald spearheading interest in mid-century Americans. Beginning in 1985, Sandy Smith's Modernism show helped legitimize the field, which has grown steadily in the ensuing years.

As opposed to objects of the pre-industrial age, 20th century works of decorative art (with some significant exceptions) were made in quantity - not necessarily enough for everybody to own, but not everybody would like to. However, there are enough of them, at prices realistic enough so that not only museum curators and the super-rich can think of acquiring them.

Although Victorian design got a boost from *The Age of Innocence*, such trendy arbiters of taste as *Wallpaper*, *Elle Décor*, and *Metropolitan Home* have fueled interest in vintage furniture (ie, 20th century objects) among many who would not otherwise have noticed it. This has cluttered the market with indiscriminating buyers seeking the latest fashion, gobbling up anything with a familiar name, sometimes at inflated prices. Many others simply admire the objects, and are buying them neither as connoisseurs or investors, but to furnish their homes. Both of these groups are very different from the serious collectors of fine modern design, who know what they're looking for, what it should look like, and what to pay for it. And there are more of the latter. "Before it was about nostalgia; now it's about design," says Rik Gallagher of New York's 280 Modern. As a result, not only more buyers, but more dealers (sometimes with sparse knowledge and little experience) are coming into the field. As Ric



FLOS



THIS PAGE TOP: *Arco* floor lamp designed by Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni, 1962. BOTTOM: Carlo Mollino table for Apelli & Varesion, c.1949. OPPOSITE PAGE LEFT: Joe Columbo plastic and foam *Tube Chair*. RIGHT: 12 *Eva* plates by Piero Fornasetti illustrating a figure of Eve

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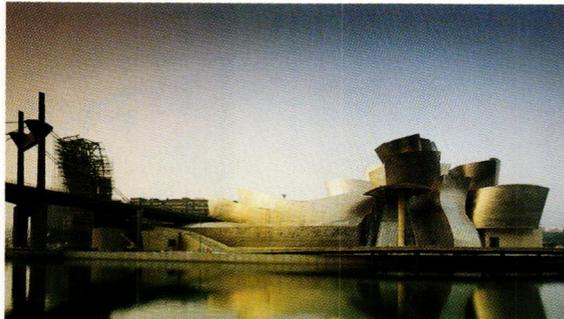
1996



TIM HURSELEY

Michael Graves, Denver Central Library, Denver, CO

1997



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Frank Gehry, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

1998



©L. PAUL GETTY TRUST PHOTO: SCOTT FRANCESCHETTO

Richard Meier, Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA

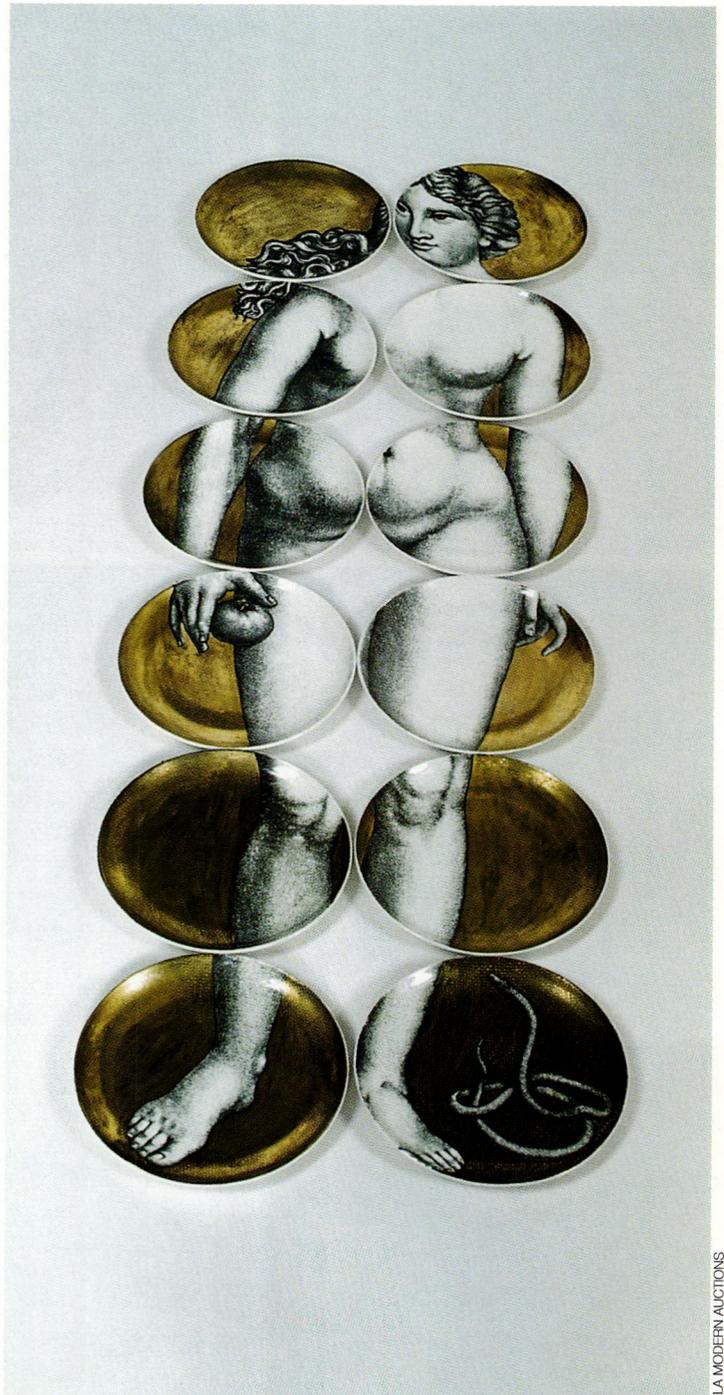
Emmet of Modernism Gallery says, "Being a 20th century dealer is like running a restaurant, or a gas station. Everyone thinks they can do it."

For the most part, 20th century design is still a good buy. But this situation may not last for long. As Mark McDonald of Gansevoort Gallery points out, "People are beginning to think it makes sense to pay serious money for 20th century design." In the closing years of the century, the market is being evaluated, and objects from its first decades are entering the realm of antiques. "Museums are realizing that the century is over," Peter Loughery of LA Modern Auctions observes, "and they still don't have anything from the best periods. They're driving the prices up...there are simply more people out there looking." At Modern One in Los Angeles, Benjamin Storck says, "The market is stronger than it's ever been...I see every aspect of 20th century design growing." Nancy McClelland, international head of Christie's 20th Century Decorative Arts Department, agrees: "We are at the apex of our 10-year market cycle, and I think it will hold through the turn of the century."

Except for Art Deco, where Paris is still setting the top prices, Americans are the biggest buyers, and New York seems to be lead-

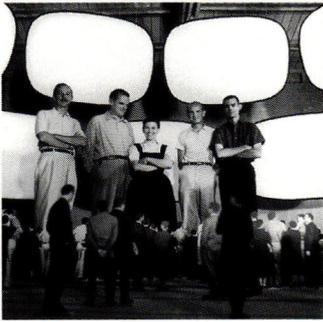


PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY



LA MODERN AUCTIONS

1998



"The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention" exhibition opens, Design Museum, London, England

1999



World-record price (post-war design) Ray Eames splint sculpture, \$143,000

1999

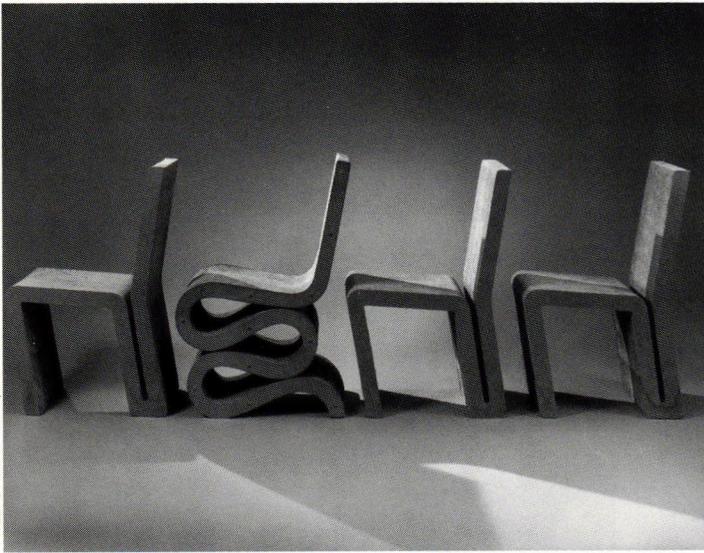


Norwest Collection of Modernist Design donated to The Minneapolis Institute of Arts

1999

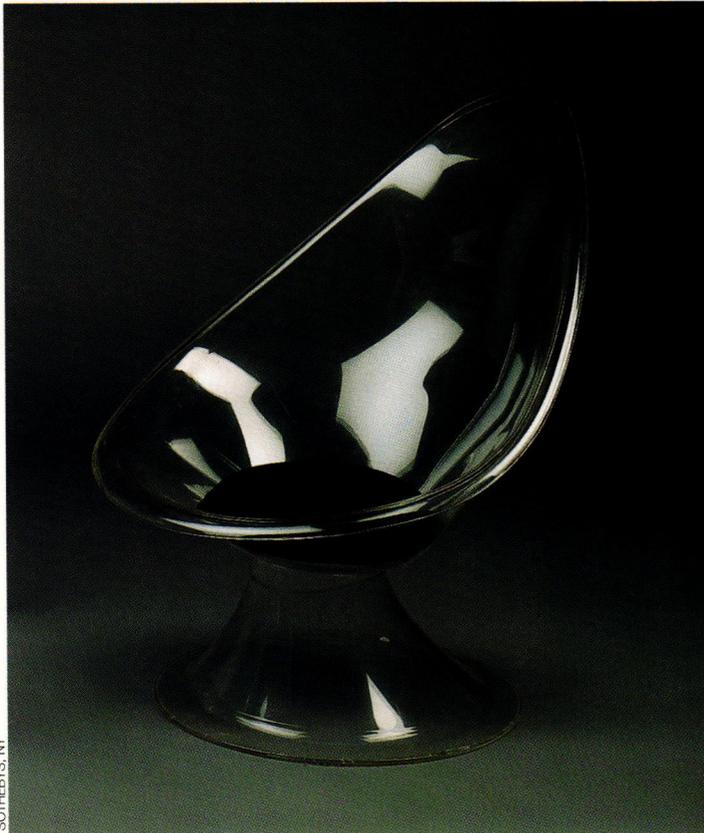


Major new modernism shows added - Gramercy Park, Chicago, and the Houghtons' 20th Century

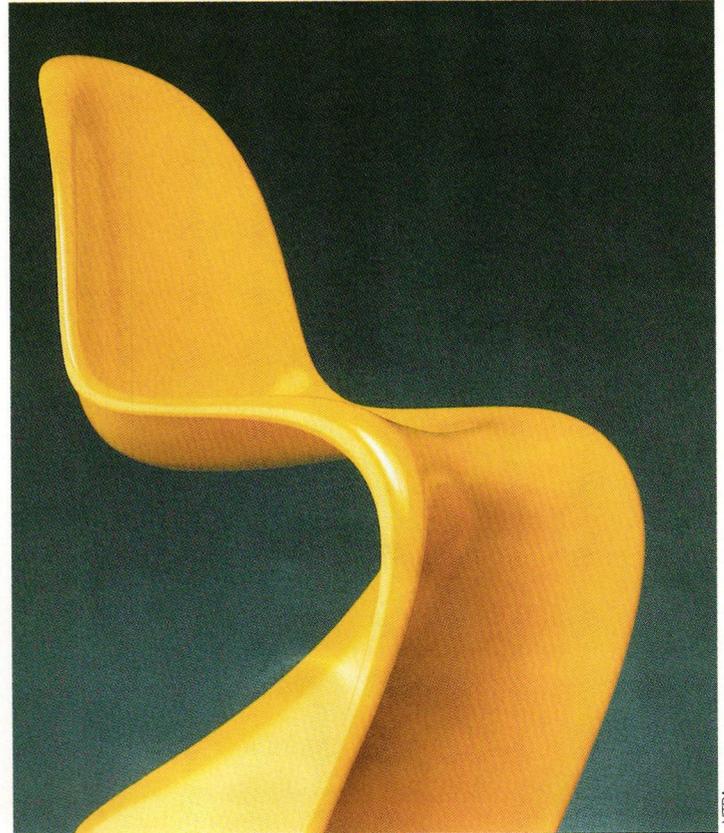


PHILLIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY

THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Frank Gehry's *Easy Edges* corrugated cardboard chairs; Panton chair by Verner Panton, 1967; Erwine and Estelle Laverne *Lily* chair from the *Invisible Series*, 1957. OPPOSITE PAGE LEFT: *Egizia* vase by Ettore Sottsass for Rosenthal. RIGHT: *Queen Anne* chair by Robert Venturi, c.1979-84

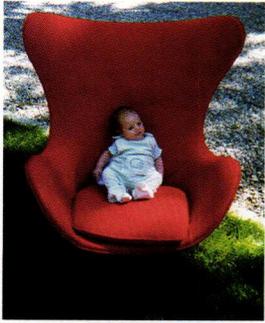


SOTTHEBYS, NY



VITPA

1999



Madison Gray Cheverie added to Deco Echoes' staff

ing the market and setting the prices. The finest objects seem to sell wherever they are, to a clientele that's becoming increasingly selective. At Sotheby's Chicago, Marcus Tremonto says, "Within each movement there were a small group of designers who did low production and private commissions. They are the ones commanding big prices. The rare and avant-garde are what people are going after."

With the marketplace growing more competitive, and the objects scarce, anyone interested in the design of this century would be wise to focus on a specialty, educate themselves, and seek the advice of knowledgeable dealers or design authorities, to make sure their investment (not in terms of escalating price, but in terms of quality of design and execution) is a wise one. "Being able to discern between good, better, and best is really what the art world is all about" notes Denis Galion of Historical Design.

What Next?

Expect attention to focus on the later and the lesser known...in unexplored niches and smaller producers of this country. Greg Kuharic of Sotheby's is convinced that, "The truly strong market for the future

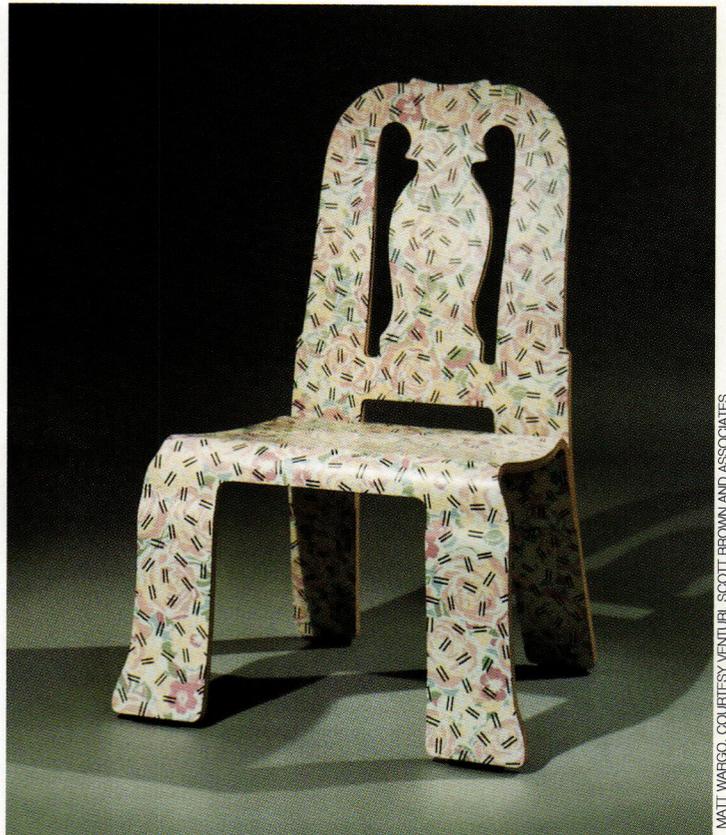
21st century

will be studio works of art, contemporary glass and ceramics...there are people out there willing to support this market at a very high level." Modern communications being what they are, few 20th century designers toiled in complete obscurity, but many working for manufacturers were not given adequate credit. As furnishings from the past several decades begin to recycle from their original owners, however, the spotlight will fall in new directions - including lucite furniture, and '70s and '80s American design. Dealers also tell us to look for California pottery and Japanese ceramics, "West German kitsch," design from under-explored European countries like Poland and Hungary, and rattan and wicker. There are also little-known designers in all the currently hot periods. Rik Gallagher of 280 Modern asserts, "There are plenty of noteworthy designers out there still not getting enough attention." Richard Wright agrees, "There will be a next thing...there are things just waiting to be discovered." ■

Judith Gura, a specialist in 20th century design, is an assistant professor at Pratt Institute, and conducts lecture programs at The Bard Graduate Center. She writes frequently about design and furnishings, and is working on an upcoming exhibition at The Brooklyn Museum.



PHILIPS AUCTIONEERS, NY



MATT WARGO, COURTESY VENTURI, SCOTT BROWN AND ASSOCIATES



RIGHT: William Kesling, circa 1950. It has taken 60 years for Kesling's Streamline Moderne to ride the crest of the current architectural restoration wave breaking into the 21st century. BELOW: Ulm House, Amesbury Street, 1937, with a glass brick cylinder enclosing the staircase. OPPOSITE PAGE: The living room of the Rivero House overlooks Sunset Boulevard through the steel sash windows supported by vertical steel tubes which were Kesling's invention. The room is furnished with a *Flagline* rope chair by Hans Wegner, a side table by Alvar Aalto, a McArthur chair, and an Eames folding screen





Photographs by David Sadofski and Julius Shulman

Text by Ginger Mero

William Kesling, rogue architect of streamline moderne

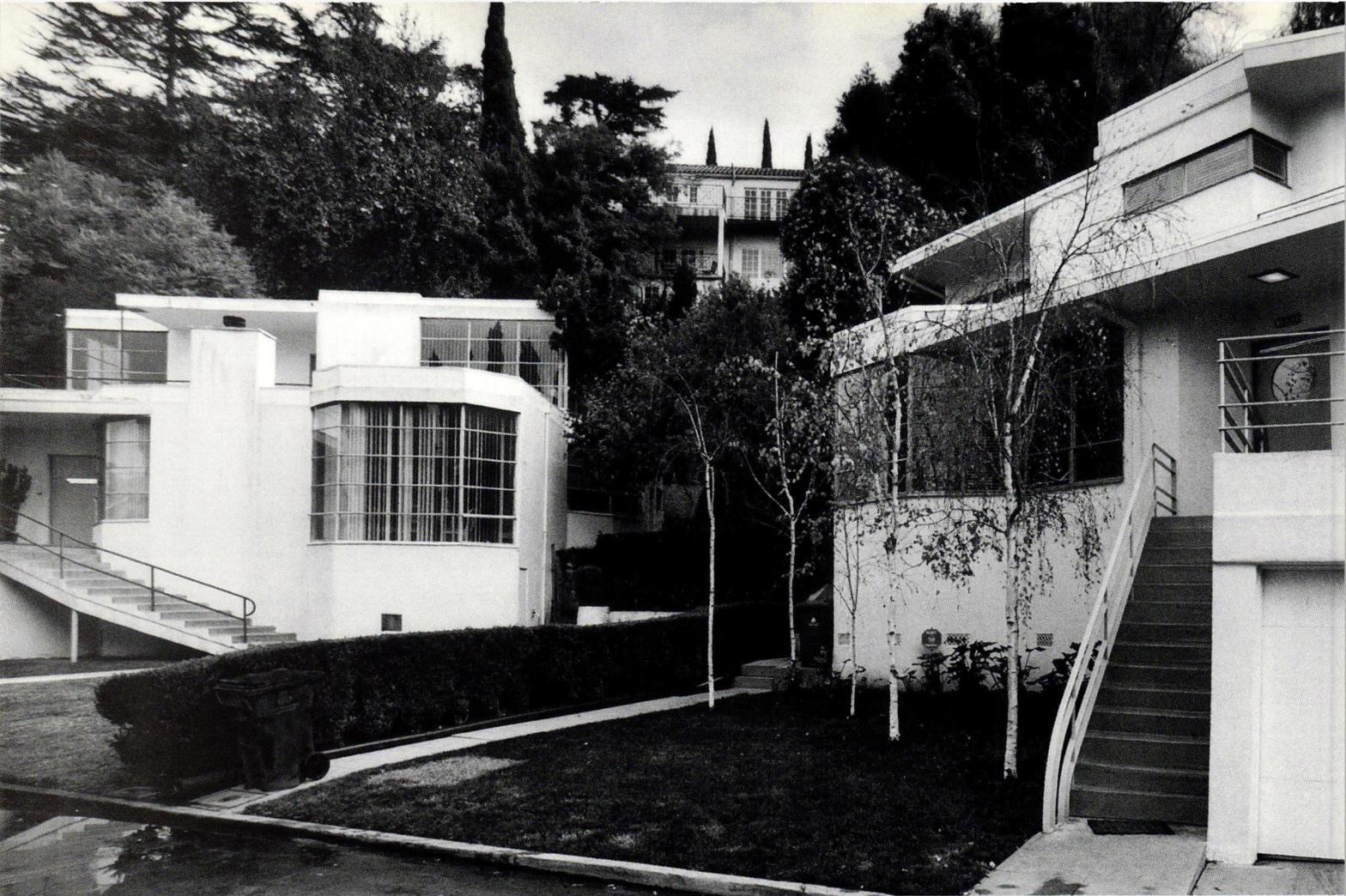
There is a heartening trend towards the historic restoration of Thirties Modernist homes in Los Angeles by young professionals who were not even born when the homes were originally built. In the Fifties, they would have bought a tract house. In the Sixties and Seventies, they might have joined a commune. In the Eighties, they would have built their own homes, but the Nineties finds these dedicated preservationists pouring over photographs from vintage architectural magazines, bent on restoring old ruins to their original splendor. Many of the landmark houses were designed by pillars of American Modernism like Rudolph Schindler, Richard Neutra, Lloyd Wright, J.R. Davidson, and Raphael Soriano. Over the years, they have either been regrettably altered or left to deteriorate. Recently this trend has been reversed. A dozen single dwelling houses and duplexes in the Streamline Moderne style have been restored in West Hollywood and Silver Lake. They were the work of a little known artist-builder: William P. Kesling.

If William Kesling were still on the planet, he would be celebrating the hundredth anniversary of his birth in October, 1999. William Who? Neither his name nor his work were included in the 1965 *Guide to Architecture in Southern California*, by historians David Gebhard and Robert Winter. Kesling has been identified variously as Schindler's draughtsman or contractor. (For most of his buildings, Schindler acted

as his own contractor.) There is evidence of Schindler's influence in the built-ins, clerestory windows, and flowing floor plans of Kesling's houses, but he had a Streamline Moderne style of his own.

Who was this mystery man whose intense building activity of 35 Los Angeles homes between 1934 and 1937 culminated in an indictment for forgery of false labor and material claims? As a result of an investigation by the police, Kesling, along with his wife Ehrma (who was his secretary and bookkeeper) were involved in a building scandal which was headlined in the *Los Angeles Daily News*, December, 1936. Twenty-two home builders were allegedly swindled: "...left high and dry with their homes unfinished and building funds exhausted. Kesling arranged loans for prospective home builders and named trustees to handle the bulding funds. As the buildings progressed, he issued false labor claims against the trustees, received checks to cover the claims, and forged endorsements of the checks." Kesling pled guilty to only one of the eight counts against him. He and his wife were jailed under \$1,500 bail. William Kesling, sporting an Errol Flynn mustache in the newspaper photograph, was a shady character. Or was he? Clue: *The Los Angeles Daily News* of the Thirties was a scandal sheet which featured crime and corruption, bearing no resemblance to the present *Los Angeles Daily News*.

From the court records of Kesling's arraignment we have the

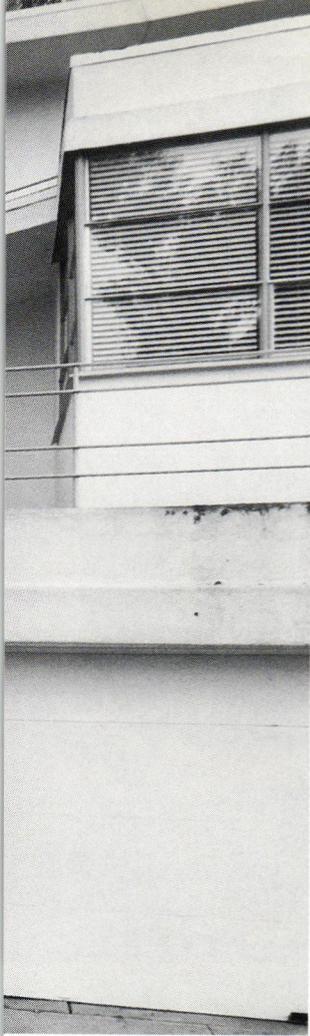


recorded history of his life. He was born in Brenham, Texas on October 18, 1899. His parents were German-born; his father was a butcher. The family moved to Calexico, California in 1916. In 1920, William moved to L.A. where he worked his way up from carpenter's helper to carpenter boss. In 1923, he began contracting carpenter labor, then branched out into general contracting. In 1926 he married Ehrma Williams. He was building at the height of the Great Depression, yet he testified in 1936 that he somehow managed to erect: "over 450 homes, stores, and apartments in L.A. and the vicinity. While I have never made a fortune, I have made a fair living."

The 1920s were a time of extraordinary growth in Southern California. Extravagant mansions were built in the Spanish Colonial style. Motion picture theaters were Hollywood versions of French Art Deco or Egyptian temples. Frank Lloyd Wright explored Pre-Columbian motifs in his Hollyhock House. Wright sent Schindler to Los Angeles from Chicago (where he worked for Wright) in 1920 to act as supervising architect for his Hollyhock House and adjacent buildings. The Lovell Houses by Schindler (1927) and Neutra (1929) were radically different from Wright's Mayan temples. Kesling, as contractor and budding builder, absorbed these disparate influences while forming his own modern style.

Following the 1929 stock market crash, sprawling Mediterranean villas with pools in luxuriant acreage were no longer viable. Size was scaled down. Maids' rooms became spare rooms. Compact two bedroom homes with flat roofs cascading down narrow slopes were constructed with the cheapest materials possible. Insulated attics, as well as cellars and expensive excavation, were eliminated. "The builders of machines are teaching the architects," wrote Sheldon Cheney in *New World Architecture*, 1930. Streamline Moderne, which borrowed its style from the nautical curves, smoke stacks, and metal pipe railings of the luxury ocean liners, was eminently adapt-





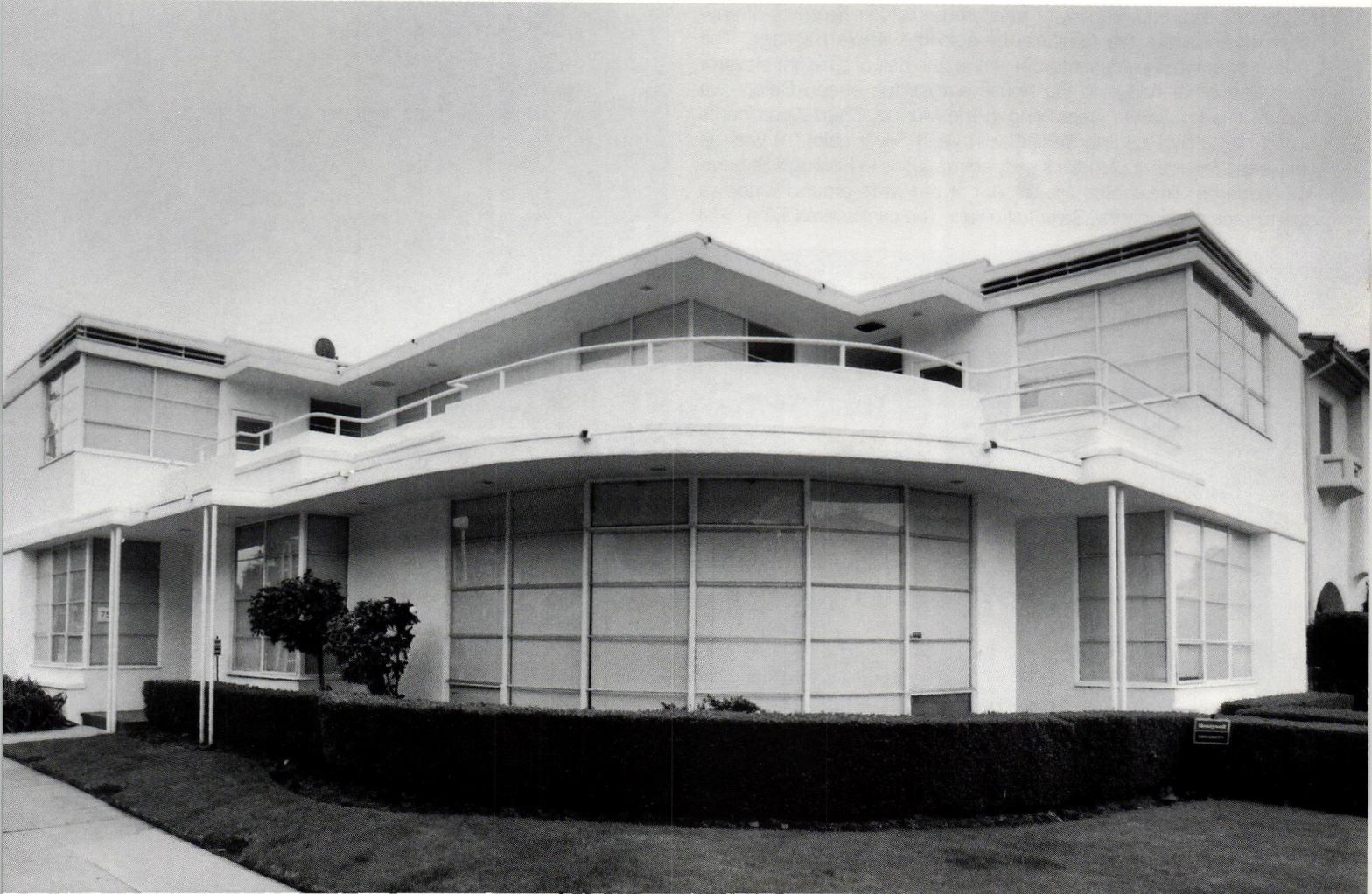
OPPOSITE PAGE TOP: The restored "Twin Houses" on Easterly Terrace, Silver Lake, 1937. BOTTOM: Interior staircase with chrome banister and "fireman's pole" in the "South Twin" Skinner House (on right in photo). Chair by Paul Frankl. THIS PAGE: The Wallace Beery apartment duplex, West Hollywood, 1936. An excellent example of Streamline Moderne Nautical.

able to these restrictions. The interiors of Thirties homes resembled minimalist ship's cabins with laminated wood paneling and built-in furniture, galley-kitchens, and porthole windows and doors. These wood frame and stucco structures set among the palms could only have happened in Southern California.

Julius Shulman, noted architectural photographer, recalls: "My personal contact with Kesling was minimal, but when I photographed his houses, he mentioned that he had worked as a contractor on a number of Schindler's projects." Kesling's 1964 resume states that he was Schindler's draughtsman, around 1928. Kesling optimistically opened his own office, Kesling Modern Structures, and built his "first Modern House, (commonly called modernistic)" at Easterly Terrace in Silver Lake in 1935. Kesling showed his model house to prospective customers, selling future houses on speculation.

According to his court testimony, Kesling's house was built at the cost of \$2.24 per square foot. "This house attracted so much attention, that without much effort, I signed contracts to erect 35 houses of similar design for \$2.60 to \$3.00 per square foot. This showed a nice margin of profit over the cost of the original structure. However, I soon found I had made a very bad mistake. The general construction of these houses was completely new to the mechanics and subcontractors. The fact that I had 35 contracts meant that I could not supervise them all personally, so I tried to secure a superintendant with knowledge of this construction. I soon found that this was impossible, as people with a thorough knowledge were limited to a few architects, college professors, and their students. I tried numerous superintendants, and found it necessary to continually change workmen. With the large number of houses going, it was impossible for me to supervise each personally. With prices continually rising, the profit was fast being eaten up, due to this unescapable inefficiency."

Kesling, like Schindler and Neutra, chose the bucolic area in

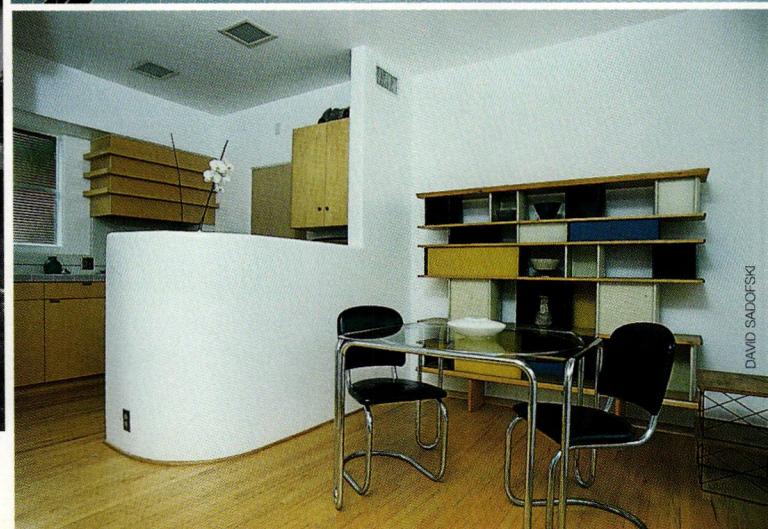
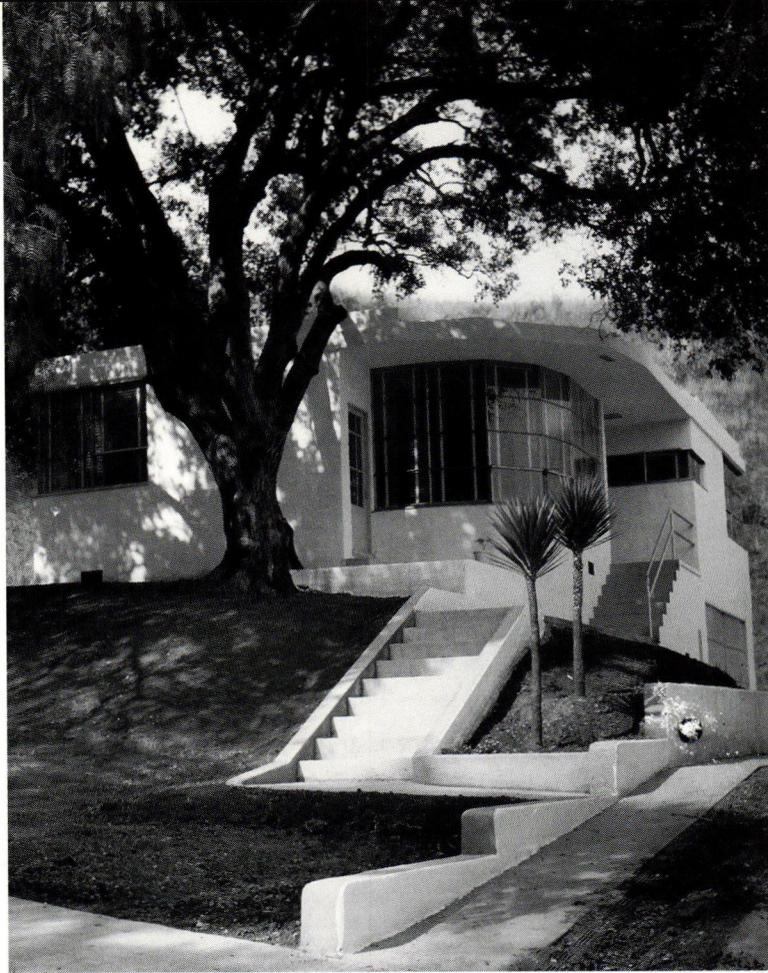


east Los Angeles for its hilly terrain which provided views of Silver Lake (which is actually a large reservoir) and offered close proximity to downtown L.A. and Hollywood studios. Hillside lots cost only \$200 because of the demanding construction sites. Between 1935 and 1937 when he was indicted for fraud, Kesling constructed 15 houses and duplexes in the Silver Lake hills. A dozen others sprouted up in West Hollywood, advertised as "scintillating modern structures." Tinsel Town responded when Wallace Beery, the highest paid movie star of the Thirties, bought a Kesling house and duplex. Less well-known actors followed his lead. In reaction to the faux Tudor and Norman styles, Streamline Moderne appealed to the adventurous.

Today in these still picturesque hills, gentrified Kesling houses stand out. The steel sash corner windows (3' by 18") supported by vertical steel tubes were Kesling's invention and are immediately recognizable. Curving corners, pipe railings, front doors pierced by port-holes or small rectangular glass windows, and recessed lights were also Kesling trademarks. Kesling's building permits listed him as contractor, but no certified architects or licensed engineers were indicated. Different design elements cropped up in each house, defining his architectural learning curve. Kesling's interior floor plans were inventive, including "inglenook" alcoves with fireplaces, built-in wood sofas and book shelves. The bathrooms were tiled sea green and black, with recessed lighting and sunken baths.

In 1996, Luis Hoyos and Ivan Rukavina bought Kesling's first model "Modernistic House" built on a steep slope. Luis is an architect, so he was undaunted by the poor condition of the 60-year old house. "It was two years after the earthquake, and the house wasn't bolted, so there were large cracks everywhere. The windows with the steel pipes were a good idea, but the frames superimposed on top were not structurally fit, so most of the glass windows had to be replaced. Kesling was a very clever marketer. His office was downstairs, the family lived upstairs. When showing the house, in addition to the built-ins, he filled it with furniture by Barker Brothers. If anybody asked about the furniture, he sold the whole package. The pocket door which slides into the wall is one half of a freight elevator door. The other half is in the house across the street. Before we bought this house we were living in the Manola Court Apartments built in 1928 by Rudolph Schindler in West Silver Lake." It was an easy transition from Schindler's early abstractions to Kesling's Streamline Moderne. The rooms are small, but the wrap-around windows and terrace overlook the Silver Lake Hills. The cantilevered living >94

JULIUS SHULMAN





DAVID SADOFSKI

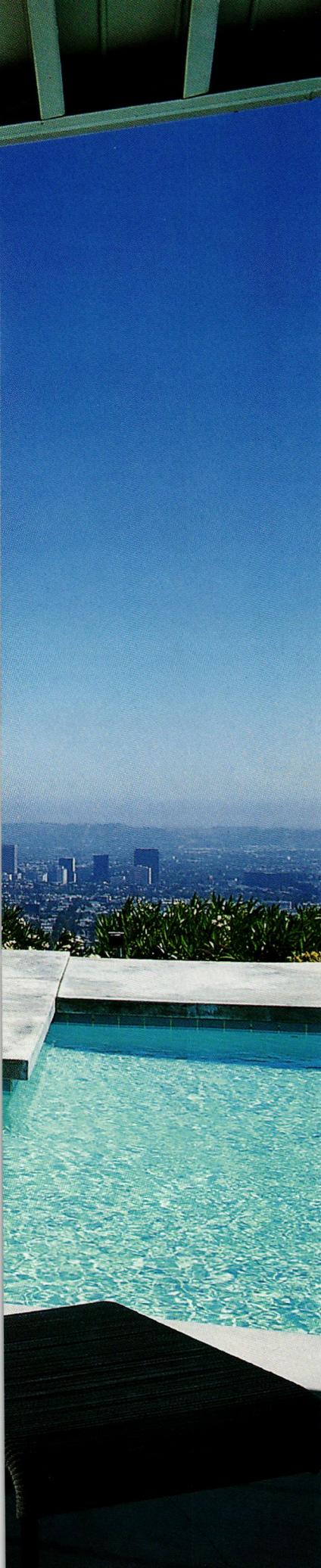


JULIUS SHULMAN

OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Wallace Beery House, 1936, Martell Avenue, West Hollywood, with Streamline Moderne portico entrance gates; Studio City House, Broadlawn Drive, 1935; Moderne bathroom of Rivero House with bronze and ebony statue by Lambert-Rucki and sink by Henry Dreyfuss; Dining room of Rivero House with *La Maison de Mexique bibliothèque* by Charlotte Perriand, tables and chairs by Gilbert Rohde and Eames. Kitchen with curving Kesling wall and wood cabinets. THIS PAGE TOP: Living room and dining room of the model house with built-in sofa and shelves and Le Corbusier furniture. BOTTOM: Rear elevation of Kesling's model "Modernistic" house, 1915 Easterly Terrace, Silver Lake, 1935.



THIS PAGE: Case Study #22 as it appears today. OPPOSITE PAGE: Case Study #22 as photographed by Julius Shulman, 1960, showing the original carport door



case 22 in 2000

In 1960 the house everyone said couldn't be built cantilevered defiantly out over the Hollywood Hills. In the year 2000, the Case #22 house by Pierre Koenig FAIA will be classified as a Historical Cultural Monument

Text by Ginger Moro

Photographs by David Glomb and Julius Shulman





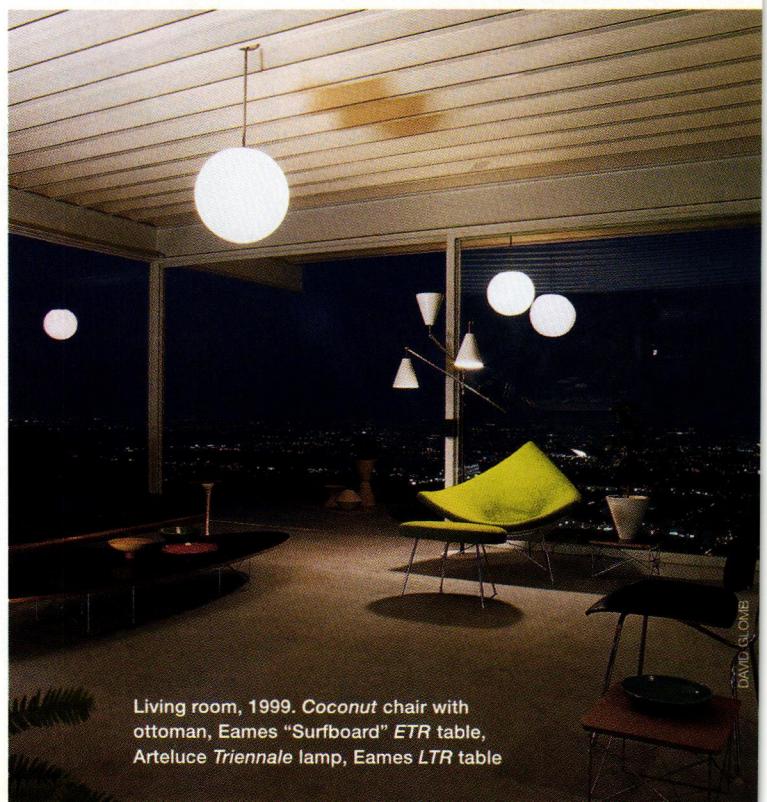
Living room view over Hollywood, circa 1960, with furniture by Van Kepple-Green

JULIUS SHULMAN

In 1960, a dramatic steel-frame and glass house was cantilevered out over the Hollywood Hills. The owners had been warned that the site was a challenge, and the house unbuildable. In the year 2000, this landmark by Pierre Koenig FAIA will be classified as a Historical Cultural Monument. Created on the cusp of the Sixties, between the conventional and the far-out, this is the story of its conception and construction.

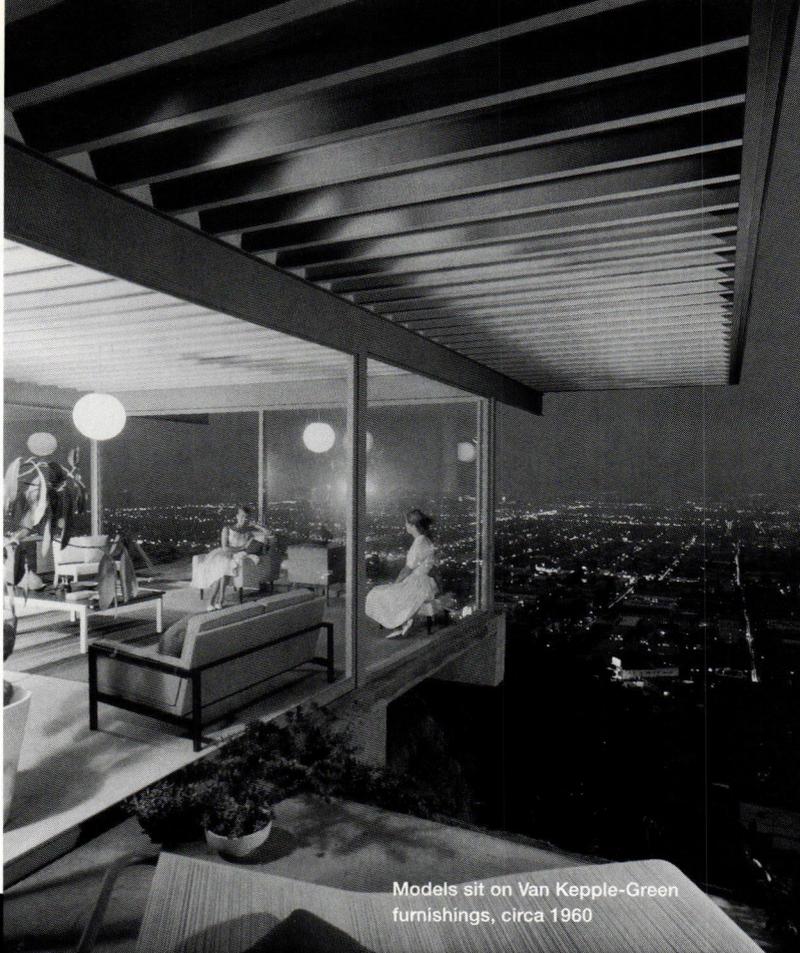
C.H. (Buck) Stahl, the owner of Case Study House #22, is no stranger to the pioneering spirit. When he was 15, he was hired to letter the planes at the Lambert Municipal Airport in St. Louis, Missouri, his home town. One of the planes he carefully painted bore the legend, "The Spirit of Saint Louis." The year was 1927, and the pilot, Charles Lindbergh, is remembered for his historic trans-Atlantic flight to Le Bourget, France. "Lindbergh was a nice, unassuming young man. His plane was so loaded with fuel he almost didn't get her off the ground," Buck remembers. Stahl moved to Los Angeles in 1935, where he worked first as a commercial artist then as a purchasing agent for Hughes Aircraft.

Buck Stahl and his wife, Carlotta, lived near a vacant lot perched precariously on a cliff overlooking the L.A. basin. Carlotta Stahl remembers: "It was 1954, and we were newlyweds dreaming of a place to build our future home. For a long time we called it "our lot," all 5,500 square feet of it. When we finally made the commitment, it



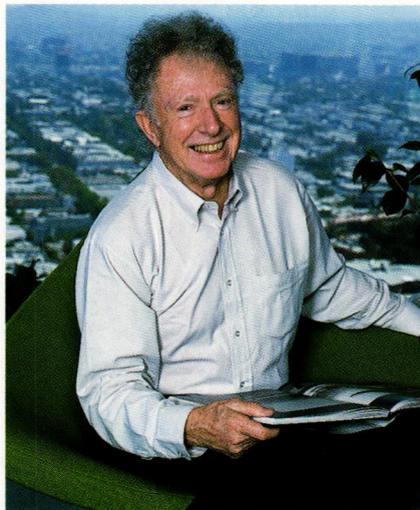
Living room, 1999. Coconut chair with ottoman, Eames "Surfboard" ETR table, Arteluce Triennale lamp, Eames LTR table

DAVID GLONER



Models sit on Van Kepple-Green furnishings, circa 1960

BELOW: Case Study House #22
architect Pierre Koenig, FAIA

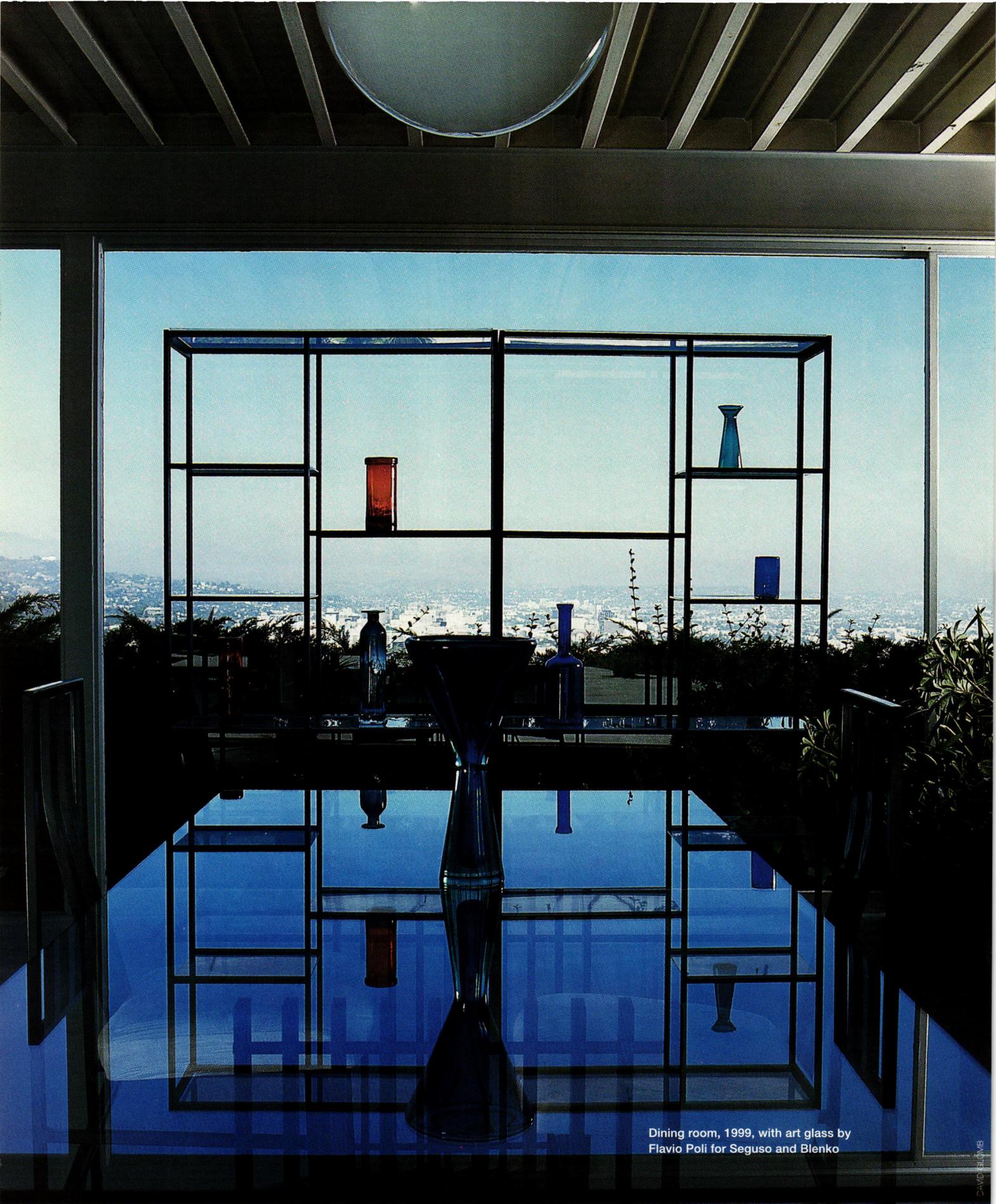


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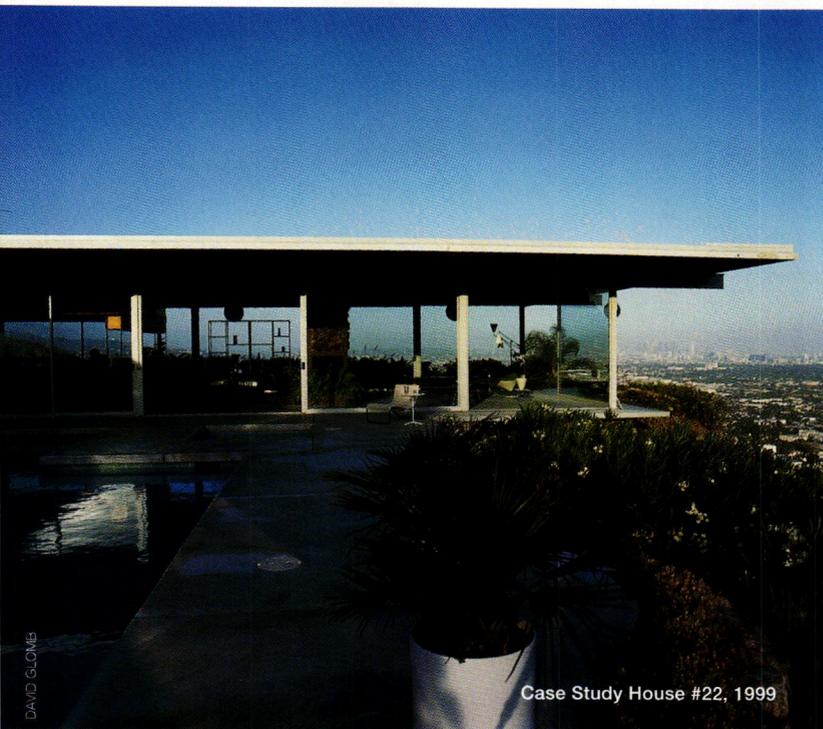
View to the south and the sea, 1999. The catwalk was added to facilitate window washing. Lounge chair by Van Kepple-Green

DAVID GLOMB



Dining room, 1999, with art glass by
Flavio Poli for Seguso and Blenko

DAVID BLOMB

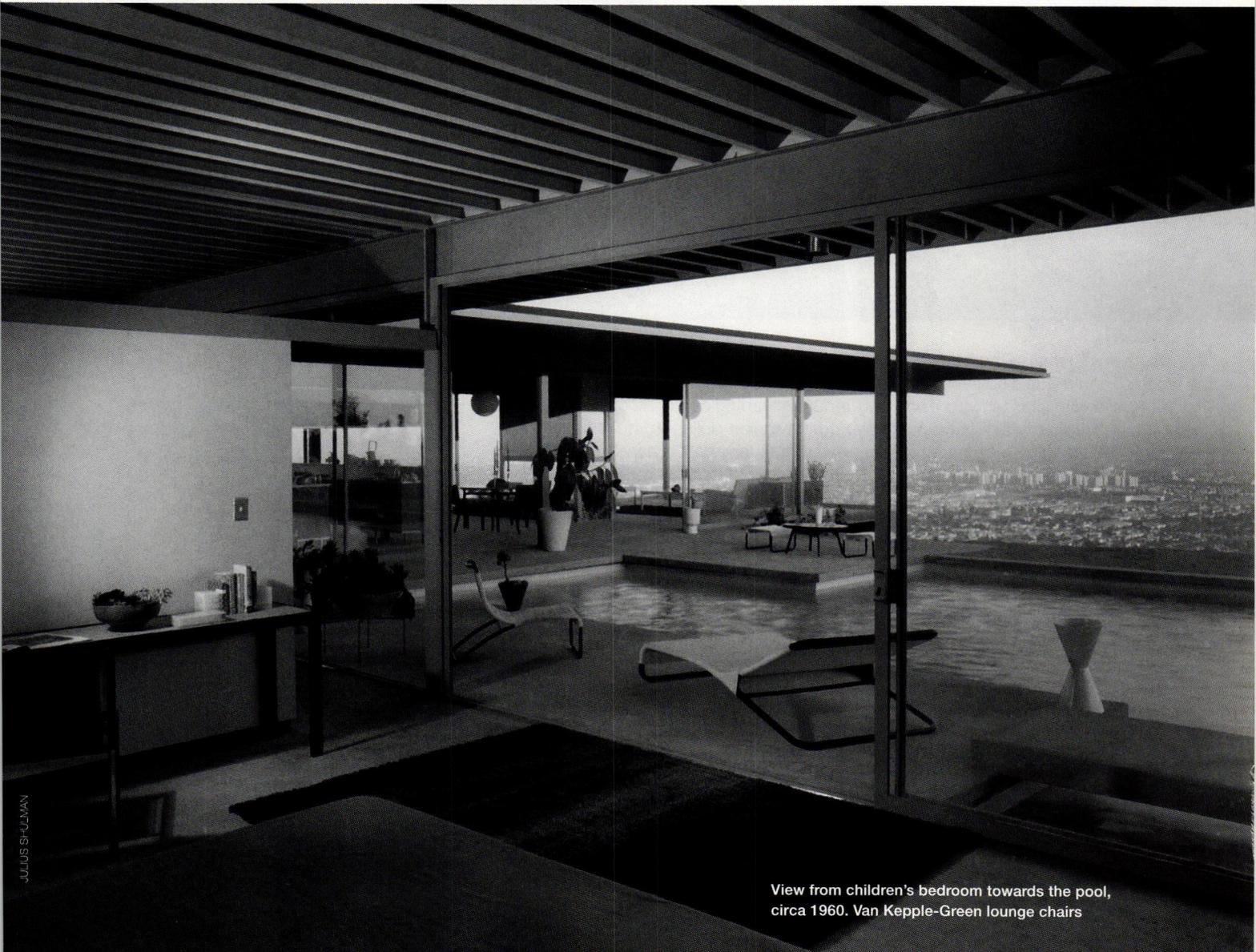


Case Study House #22, 1999

took us four years to pay off the \$13,500. That was the price of a three bedroom house in those days." Their search began for an architect whose glass house would both encompass the 270-degree panoramic view from the Santa Monica mountains to the sea, and be a work of art on its own.

The Stahls interviewed six architects, all of whom said that the two bedroom house would require a sheer wall, which was true for conventional houses. "What the Stahls wanted was unconventional columns of glass," explains Pierre Koenig, the architect who was finally chosen. The couple had seen articles in the *Pictorial Living* section of the *Los Angeles Examiner*. "The Pioneering Urge in Action" (February 26, 1953) featured photographs of a steel and glass house by USC architectural student Koenig. In 1950, Pierre had built his 10-foot module house using standard length steel parts for \$7,000, not counting the value of his labor. A 1956 article by Esther McCoy described Koenig's house built for a young Glendale couple for less than \$12,000. The ceiling was an exposed fluted decking of steel. Steel beams spanning wide spaces supported floor-to-ceiling glass windows and sliding glass doors. The outside was invited in instead of closed out. Pierre Koenig said then: "Steel is more in keeping with our modern way of life. The arc welder is the new craftsman of the age."

In 1959, the Stahls commissioned Koenig to build their



View from children's bedroom towards the pool, circa 1960. Van Kepple-Green lounge chairs



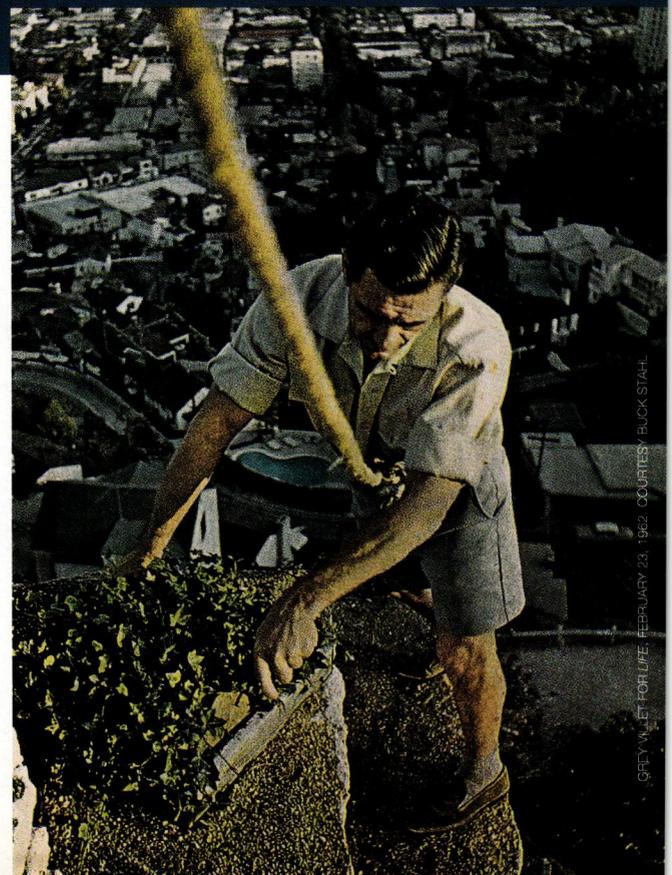
Kitchen, 1999. Dropped ceiling with new paneling and wood slats

eagle's nest with the limited budget of \$35,000. Buck Stahl knew exactly what he wanted, and made a scale model to show the young architect. "I envisioned a glass house with a butterfly roof and a waterfall cascading down the cliff" said Buck. Pierre's comment: "That would have cost a million dollars to build (\$10 million today). So I slowly began chipping away at their original demands. First, the butterfly roof went, then the waterfall. Buck wanted stone somewhere in the plan, so I compromised and put it in the base of the fireplace."

Then there was the problem of obtaining loans for the project. "We hired Pierre to build the house and to deal with City Hall," admits Carlotta. Pierre called every loan company in town. "No one would loan on flat roof housing or hillside sites. Finally, in desperation, I found the Broadway Savings & Loan. The Board of Directors included black architect, Paul Williams, whose modern houses I knew were flat-roofed. A deal was made. In the end, we only went \$100 over budget. Buck was furious. But considering that my whole fee was \$1,000, I don't think that was so bad!"

Pierre Koenig and the Stahls were pioneers together. Koenig had designed his first steel frame house when he was 25. His Case Study House #21 for John Entenza's *Art & Architecture* project was completed in 1958. (It was recently restored to its original state by the owner and architect.) The Case Studies (published between 1945 and 1960) were intended to be post-war prototypes for affordable middle class housing, using new materials. Publisher Entenza was a man of high standards. When he saw Koenig's plans for the Stahl House,

RIGHT: Buck Stahl landscaping his Case Study House, 1,000 feet above Los Angeles



it was designated Case Study #22. It turned out to be a one-of-a-kind project rather than a replicable design. Because the house was to be featured in the magazine, Koenig got discount deals from building material companies who welcomed the free publicity.

Koenig's design of prefabricated steel frames built on separate concrete caissons was regarded with suspicion by the building establishment. Carlotta recalls: "The framing inspector came up to the lot and said, 'My God, I've never seen anything like that before. I have to get my boss up here!' They were really spooked." Pierre added: "We had a building permit, so they had to accept it. William Porush was the engineer - the only steel frame pioneer working at the time. You can imagine the logistics of getting 70-foot steel girders up that narrow, winding road! We got the frame up in one day. The inspector didn't like the sunken tub and shower either, but when he came up to pass on it, he just shrugged and said, 'Oh well, Koenig's going to do whatever he wants, anyway.' He was right!"

Pierre wryly notes: "An architect has to be a diplomat, psychiatrist, and financier, as well as engineer and draughtsman. You have to know how to talk to couples, for whom house building is a very stressful time. A lot of couples get divorced over it." For Case Study #22, he had three clients: Buck and Carlotta Stahl, and John Entenza, who expected photographs of the completed house for *Art & Architecture* within the year. "Everything had to be done, fast, fast!" exclaims Koenig.

The house was rushed to completion for what was to become one of the most highly published architectural photos of the century by Julius Shulman (*Arts & Architecture*, June, 1960). It almost didn't happen. Van Keppel-Green agreed to loan the contemporary furniture for the living-dining area and the two bedrooms. "The delivery boy loaded the furniture in his van and took off to visit his parents in Kansas. I called him and said he'd better drive day and night to get back here in time for the deadline, or else!" Pierre recalls. The >102



"I find it gratifying that the schools of architecture are finally realizing the historical significance of American Modernism" - Julius Shulman

DAVID G. LOVIE



the staying power of steel

After a post-war building boom, North Palm Springs suffered a period of decline. Today, the area's modern steel-framed homes are being faithfully restored by their new owners

Text by Tony Merchell. Photographs by David Glomb

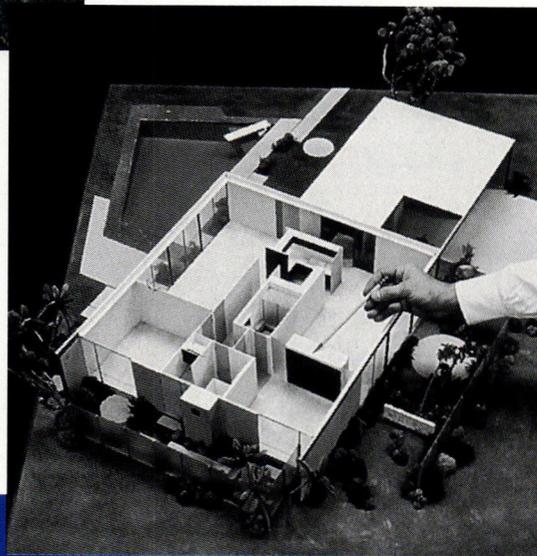


OPPOSITE PAGE: Steel Development House owners Jim Isermann (in white) and David Blomster. THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The 1,400-square foot prefabricated steel house took only three days to assemble on site. The spider-leg post in front is a reference to the work of Neutra, whom Wexler admired; A scale model shows the central utility core which housed the kitchen and bathrooms. The other walls could be rearranged as desired providing maximum flexibility; The large span of sliding glass doors merges indoor and outdoor living, allowing a striking view of the pool

There is a wealth of modern architecture to be found in Palm Springs, California. This comes as no surprise given that the popularity of this town in the post-war period coincided with the rise of modernism in California. Throughout the 1950s, modernism was the vernacular for all building types: commercial, institutional, and residential. It was so pervasive that every illustrated *Yellow Pages* advertisement for a realtor featured a line drawing of a modern building.

Besides the custom architectural house, Palm Springs also has a large number of modern tract houses. Over 2,400 of these houses and condominiums were built by the Palm Springs equivalent to Eichler - the George Alexander Company. By the early 1960s, George and son Robert would become the largest tract developers in the Coachella Valley.

Alexander homes tended to have dramatic roof structures: some-



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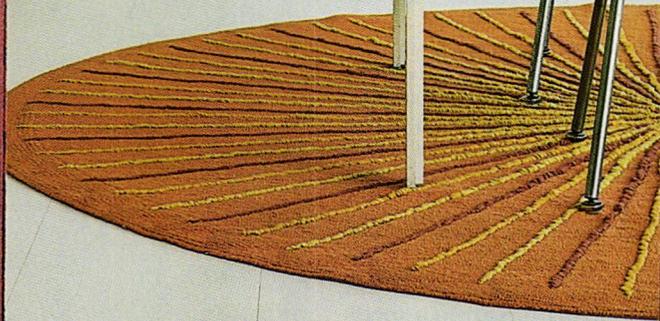
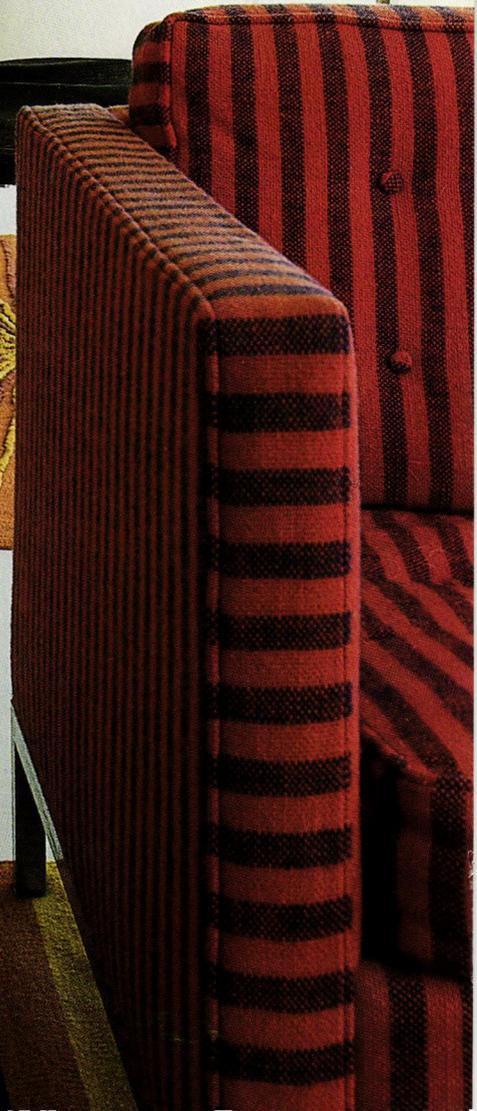
THIS PAGE TOP: In the living room, Isermann's two *Untitled Flower Paintings*, 1985, hang above a sofa, coffee table, and end table - all by Florence Knoll. The rug is a prototype of a design by Isermann. BOTTOM: The master bedroom displays a table, chairs, rug, and ceiling lamp by Verner Pantan. The table and chairs are from his *1-2-3 System Furniture* designed in 1973 for Fritz Hansen. Herman Miller *LTR* table at bedside. OPPOSITE PAGE: On the wall a geometrical piece by Isermann, *Shag Painting*, 1990, *Untitled* is formed of two halves - a carpet, hand-hooked by the artist, against a glossy surface of a painting - creating a dichotomy of textures. 72 chairs by Eero Saarinen.

times flat, sometimes low A-frames, and occasionally butterfly in shape. Large expanses of glass opened up the interiors to the exterior. Generally conventional construction techniques were used: wood studs and stucco exterior walls were the norm.

An exception to these conventional houses is a cluster of pre-fabricated steel houses at the north end of town. These novel homes were designed by Architect Donald Wexler, A.I.A. and his partner Ric Harrison in 1961. By the late 1950s, Wexler developed an expertise in the use of light gauge steel in construction. This technique was primarily used in commercial structures, as well as in institutional buildings such as various additions to the Palm Springs High School, the Cahuilla Elementary School, the Cathedral City Elementary School, and the Nellie Coffman Junior High School.

Through his research with U.S. Steel, Wexler became interested







THIS PAGE ABOVE AND OPPOSITE PAGE: In the formal dining room, two black *Cone* chairs, one *Heart* chair, and rug, all by Verner Pantan. The dining table is a Knoll conference table flanked by Saarinen 71 and 72 chairs. A Raymond Loewy *DR 2000* cabinet acts as a sideboard. The large photograph is *Self Portrait* by Pae White, which is laminated to thick plexiglass. THIS PAGE RIGHT: Two Bertioia stools sidle up to the bar

in using light gauge steel in the construction of single family residences. U.S. Steel commissioned Wexler to work with Bernard Perlin of Calcor Manufacturing to develop an all-steel home system. Wexler then interested the George Alexander Company in building a subdivision of several hundred steel houses in North Palm Springs, across from the Racquet Club.

Calcor would produce a variety of standardized parts made of 16 and 20 gauge galvanized steel sheet. Prefabricated walls, some as large as 37' 7" long by 9' high, were factory built to a 1/16" tolerance. Walls were fabricated out of 16" wide C-sections, 3" thick.

Construction was simple. First, the concrete slab was poured using a precision steel template form. This accurately dimensioned the slab and precisely located the anchor bolts. Once the slab cured, trucks would deliver the prefabricated central utility core and wall sections. A four-man crew and a rig operator erected the core and all exterior walls in four hours. Walls are first bolted to the slab, then to each other. A socket wrench was the only tool necessary.

Once the walls were up and plumb, then the crew would install the 20 gauge galvanized roof structure. The spans of roof can be as long as 59 feet, making longitudinal splices unnecessary. In continu-



ation of the Alexanders' interest in architectural drama, some roofs were flat, some were folded plate.

Aluminum foil-backed gypsum board was bonded to the inner surface of the exterior walls. Then glass fiber insulation was bonded to the gypsum board. After the building was closed in, plumbing and wiring was run in the walls. The interior was then covered with conventional gypsum board drywall. Plaster or wood paneling could also be used. It was estimated that this structure yielded the insulation equivalence of a 12-inch masonry wall.

Floor plans were simple, open, and modular. The central utility core runs down the center of the house. The factory built module (32'-4" x 9'-3" x 9' tall) contains the kitchen and bathroom elements. In the ceiling is a large raceway where utilities and air conditioning ducts could be run. To the front of the house is the living room and master bedroom. To the rear is either two bedrooms and a dining room, or one bedroom and a family room. All rooms open out to patios via large sliding glass doors.

The houses went together perfectly, and the George Alexander Company stated that "they would never build a wood house again." Unfortunately, that was not to be. As the models were completed, Calcor sold to Rheemetal, and the new owners increased prices so

much that steel became uncompetitive with wood. Only seven model homes would be completed.

North Palm Springs would decline, as would these homes. Luckily, being of steel, they did not deteriorate, as had the more conventional houses nearby. Although modified, these houses remained structurally sound. Some eight years ago, magazine editor Jim Moore purchased one of these homes and began a restoration project. Over time others would buy the remaining model homes, and one-by-one they are being restored.

The Moore house is a stark view of modernism. Sparsely furnished, white furniture against white walls, set off with touches of color. This is the only model that has terrazzo floors. The floor-to-ceiling glass offers a fine view of the pool.

At the end of the block, owners Jim Isermann and David Blomster have restored their house to its former grandeur. The building was stripped of finishes, down to the galvanized steel. It is now a pure white structure balanced by yellow painted concrete block walls. The white surfaces offer a fine backdrop for the presentation of both the owners' furnishings and artwork.

Jim Isermann's work is brightly colored, a contrast between high and low art, between fine art and craft. A geometrical piece > 106



William Kesling

(continued from page 78) room sofa and walls around the fireplace are paneled with mahogany veneer and Tipu wood from the South Pacific. Refined cork is laminated on furniture surfaces. "We're going to keep the bedroom add-on at street level, as well as the front patio."

Luis and Ivan also own a Kesling triplex down the hill which has recently been restored as a rental property. We descended two flights of steep steps down public passageways which are reminiscent of Tuscan hill towns. (People actually walk in Silver Lake. What a concept!) Rendall Place is a narrow street like a London mews, with apartments built over garages. This 1936 building has the signature Kesling windows. The original owner of 1621 Rendall Place, Mattie Evans, was a witness in the Kesling case. In January, 1937, she testified on his behalf. Luis' observation on Kesling's troubles: "Cross-financing is not unusual with contractors and architects. It's the currency of the profession then and now."

Two Kesling houses, (dubbed "The Twins") were built asymmetrically next to each other on lots across the street from the original model house on Easterly Terrace. These were the subject of a 1973 *Los Angeles Times* article by John Pastier on patching up the past. The south building (the Skinner House) had been bought by architecture historians, Kyle and Nancy Smith, in the first of a wave of Kesling restorations. The Smiths plastered, restored, and refurbished with authentic Art Deco pieces. Pastier wrote: "Like nearly all individual one-piece-at-a-time restorations, this one has been a manic-depressive succession of crises and solutions - an act of blind faith sustained by the Smith's nostalgic ties to a decade in which they never lived. The house next door, unfortunately, is disintegrating as quickly as the Smith's is improving. It's riddled with termites and dry rot. Windows are broken and a leaking roof has allowed the winter rains to saturate the interior ceilings and walls." Apparently this was a rental property which the landlord neglected. That was 26 years ago. Today, the siblings enjoy full restoration status, with the north building having been rescued from the ravages of the elements.

The present owners bought the Skinner House at 1530 Easterly from the Smiths in 1991. This two story house must have been commissioned in 1936, because it's more elaborate than other Kesling houses. It's also one of the largest, at 2,053 square feet. The front door is a sliding pocket door, though the porthole window is new. The staircase has a dramatic Art Deco chrome-plated banister which had to be re-chromed all in one piece by the Smiths. (Not only would this be prohibitively expensive today, but the EPA would not allow the disposal of such a large tub of toxic material.) Next to the staircase is a lone chrome pole - a fireman's pole leading nowhere. The owners think that "it's probably structural, so we haven't removed it." The built-in living room sofa with shelves is surrounded by banded wood panels and cork laminated built-ins. "We were going to tear out the low-cost wood panels and put in more exotic wood paneling, but we decided to leave the original two-tone panel around the sofa and fireplace as it was. We found a Frank Lloyd Wright 1939 coffee table to go with the Paul Frankl armchairs. We've had great fun living here, stumbling onto a very expensive new hobby for both of us." The recessed lighting has posed a problem... "We have to climb up, unscrew the steel frames, hold the glass panel and screw the new light bulbs in." The tripartite living room window is original to this house. "The twin house across the way had the same fenestration, but Kesling neglected to put in a foundation, so the whole thing started sinking. When we moved in, they were putting in a foundation to support it." This is one of the few Kesling houses built up, not down slope. An add-on family room opens out to a patio and terraces which have been landscaped with giant bamboos.

Up the hill from this three house Kesling cluster is another house built in 1936, on Silverwood Terrace. The owner, a Los Angeles attorney, is fortunate to have an architect mother. "We made some changes, substituting a window for the second front door which served the maid's room. We built an office off the garage which can

be reached from the living room by an interior metal staircase. The living/dining room is an open plan, and there's an inglenook alcove probably intended for a fireplace which never got built." In the downstairs bedroom, there are long vertical windows which must be cranked open. From the balcony there's a splendid view across the hills. A Julius Shulman vintage photo shows a completed Kesling house which was built up the hill on Effie Street, while the Silverwood house was in construction. Above the two Keslings is a typical Twenties stucco home, neatly illustrating the progression from Spanish Colonial to Streamline Moderne in a decade. All three houses have been faithfully kept up.

Nearby, two Kesling houses were built side by side. One is barely recognizable behind a facade of "Chinese Modern" scrolls. It has an indoor pool (added later) and has been drastically altered. Calhoun Chappell bought his Kesling next door in 1994. It had already been restored. It has the open plan living room, inglenook fireplace with aluminum tiles, and original wood floors. "The only major change made was to open up the space around the staircase which was a solid wall before. This enhanced the interior." Roll-up screens over the sash windows are another unusual Kesling detail. The balcony has a view of the shimmering Silver Lake beyond a garden planted with giant birds of paradise and banana trees. You could be in the tropics. There's a private patio behind walls of bamboo. The chimney is shaped like a miniature ship's smoke stack, but the bougainvillea obscures the nautical front facade.

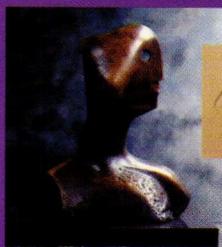
Wallace Beery was the popular star of Thirties hits *The Champ*, *Dinner at Eight* with Jean Harlow, and *Grand Hotel* with Garbo and Joan Crawford. He owned a big house in Beverly Hills where he lived with his family. In 1936, Beery commissioned a small three bedroom white stucco house from Kesling on Martell Street to be close to the Hollywood studios. The portico entrance gates set on steel pipes are Streamline Moderne with rounded corners and horizontal lines, mixing the nautical with the impact of a Hollywood marquee. (These were inspired by the 1935 Pan Pacific Auditorium and Texaco gas stations.)

The Beery House was a shock to the neighbors, snug in their adobe haciendas. Maddie and David Sadofski, proprietors of the Modernist store, Thanks for the Memories, on Melrose Avenue, restored the house. "Streamline Moderne is just like a big Thirties sculpture, so those Fifties floor to ceiling gold-veined mirrors, shag carpet, and wagon wheel chandelier we found there had to go!" laughs Maddie. David adds: "Wallace Beery paid \$5,000 for special detailing. He could afford it. Jean Harlow was getting \$80 a week, while Beery was paid \$8,000 for *Dinner at Eight*. This house was originally built in the middle of avocado fields. Kesling repeated the pergola at the patio door - I think its purpose was not so much a dramatic entrance as a shade-producing device." The sun comes streaming into the clerestory windows which were a Schindlerian touch. Beery was a party animal. "The back yard was the scene of many Hollywood weddings and barbecues. The locals tell us there was a pretty blonde in residence here much of the time." A vintage picture on the wall shows Wallace Beery the pilot, dashing in his new plane.

In 1936, Beery commissioned a duplex nearby for investment property. Robert Derrah's Streamline Moderne "Crossroads of the World" and Coca Cola Bottling Plant were built at the same time, possibly inspiring this most nautical of Kesling houses complete with a curving stern and a squared off bow. The captain of this ship, Bernard Zimmerman FAIA, has faithfully restored it. "This building was painted green when I bought it. I painted it white, and resurfaced the deck which had dry rot. Some details like the door locks and the roll up screens can't be replaced. I marvel at Kesling's ingenuity. He installed the recessed lighting so that the same corner light economically illuminates the living room interior as well as the exterior entrance porch. Kesling was a master of space and siting. If he built these houses today, he'd be called avant-garde!" exclaims Zimmerman. All day long passing cars u-turn to admire Kesling's work. >97

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11.30am **Adventures in Wood:** John Makepeace, Designer, furniture maker.
2.30pm **Festival of Britain:** Matthew Denney, Lecturer at Southampton Institute
4.30pm **The Fabulous '50's:** Madeleine Marsh, Author and Journalist

Thursday

11.30am **Clarice Cliff:** Len Griffin, Chairman of the Clarice Cliff Collectors Club
2.00pm **Underground Art:** Jeremy Rewse Davies, Design Director London Transport 1988-99
5.00pm **Clarice Cliff:** Len Griffin, Chairman of the Clarice Cliff Collectors Club

Friday

11.30am **20th Century Book Illustrators:** Chris Beetles, Chris Beetles Ltd
2.30pm **Cartier 1900-1939, Jeweller of Genius:** Judy Rudoe, British Museum
6.30pm **Decorative Arts, From Art Nouveau to Modernism:** Victor Arwas, Author

Saturday

11.30am **Moorcroft Past and Present:** John Moorcroft, Moorcroft Collectors Club
2.30pm **Collecting Post War Design:** Paul Atterbury, Author

Sunday

11.30am **Architecture of the 20th Century:** Ken Powell, 20th Century Society
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William Kesling

(continued from page 94) Julius Shulman, who has photographed both Schindler and Kesling houses, believes that: "Kesling has become important historically because he marked the transition from Art Deco Streamline Moderne to Schindler's modern style." Schindler and Kesling had one thing in common. Their work was not taken seriously at first by the architectural establishment because they acted as their own contractors. This was not the conventional road for professional architects. "Kesling was a builder, not an architect," opined Shulman. Schindler, of course, was a licensed architect trained in Vienna, and Chicago with Frank Lloyd Wright. He was an artist who was concerned with the exploration of space relationships. Kesling was entirely self-taught in the Silver Lake Hills; so there the similarity ends. Zimmerman explains: Kesling was always looking how to get a clean look inexpensively. He paid attention and had good taste."

Hollywood sybarites sipped martinis at the Sunset Strip Trocadero in the Thirties. It was a short drive up the hill for actor Julian Rivero to his Kesling home, which has been restored by architectural historians. "We knew it was up here, but we couldn't find it because it was disguised behind an oriental facade with red lacquer gates. Three marble and brick fireplaces had to be demolished because they wrecked the original Moderne lines of the house. We entirely refinished the exterior and interior which we stripped to the bone. We restored the ribbed glass in the windows and resurfaced the wood floors and cabinets." The present owners have furnished the house with mid-century furniture icons by Charlotte Perriand, Warren McArthur, Alvar Aalto, Hans Wegner, and Charles Eames. A superb French Art Deco bronze and ebony statue by Lambert-Rucki adds a touch of class to the bathroom.

Another hideaway for actors was built by Kesling near Universal Studios on Broadlawn Drive. Writer Dean England bought his house a year and a half ago, and lived there while restoring it. "The previous owner had transformed it into a California ranch house. The walls were lined with pecky cedar. I took that down and replastered. Paranoid actors had lived here before who kept floodlights on all night. I restored the original recessed lighting in the "eyebrows" extending over the doors which shield you from sun and rain. I discovered the pocket door hidden in the wall when I replaced the front door. Prior to this I had no interest in architecture, but I started knocking on doors in Silver Lake because Kesling's contractor address was written on the building permit. I wanted to know who the architect was."

So did Patrick Pascal, who is currently researching a book on Kesling. Pascal was a business major at USC when he rented the Kesling house on Lowry Street in 1981. Two years later he bought and restored it, dumping the corrugated fiberglass awnings and cinder blocks dividing the garden. "The house was built in 1935 and sat empty until it was finally sold in 1937 to a Dr. Johnstone. People didn't like a house that looked like a Sunbeam Mixmaster on their street. It was too 'socialist' for them." (Modern art, architecture, and radical politics were all regarded with suspicion.) Patrick and his wife, Julie, have furnished the house with cork tables by Paul Frankl and colorful California pottery. "While restoring this house I searched out other Kesling houses and information about the architect." Around the corner he discovered the Ulm House with a curving staircase sheathed in glass bricks. This house was misattributed to Milton Black in the 1994 *Los Angeles Architectural Guide*, by Gebhard and Winter, who made up for their earlier 1965 Guide omission by listing five restored houses by Kesling.

Pascal unearthed the *Daily News* article as well as the court records of the indictment and grand jury trial of William Kesling and his wife on forgery charges. Did the architect of 33 Streamline Moderne houses serve time in San Quentin Penitentiary as ordered by the judge in 1937? Pascal answers: "The trial records and probation reports clearly showed that the actual charges were nothing like the crimes alleged by the police. That 'twenty-two home builders were left high and dry' by Kesling was an outrageous charge. The

seven indictments filed against the Keslings amounted to less than \$125, and two of those indictments involved a client who testified in Kesling's behalf. The probation officer's report to the judge suggests a crime that amounted to a poor business man using unethical tactics to keep his head above water. It would be a shame if this Depression-era episode overshadowed an otherwise noteworthy career."

A disgruntled client blew the whistle on Kesling, resorting in turn to unethical practices to get the Keslings arrested, thereby compounding a felony. Kesling's court testimony fingered Mr. and Mrs. William Green, for whom he had erected a building on Riverside Drive in the San Fernando Valley. "They were the most unreasonable people I ever worked for. Mrs. Green was a former employee of either the Police Department or the District Attorney's office. They were the instigators of an ambiguous plot."

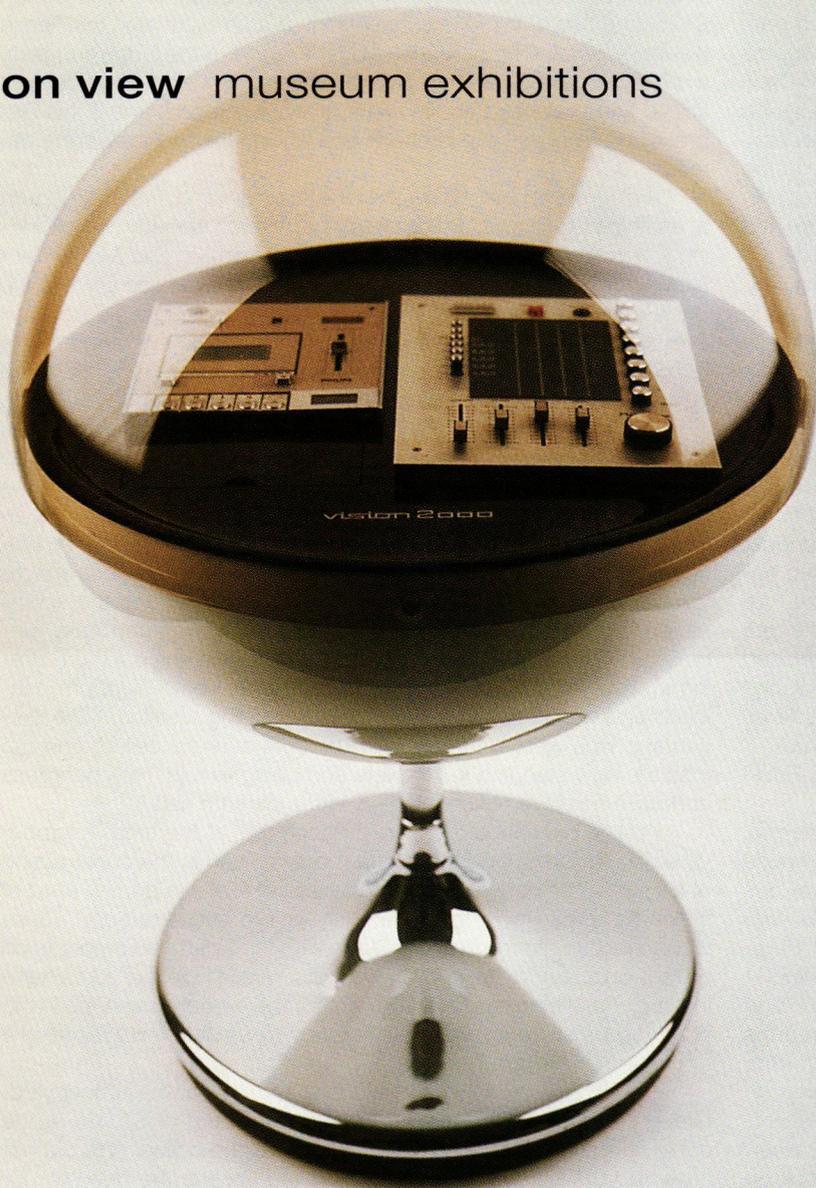
Kesling's cash flow problems surfaced when escalating prices surpassed those estimated on his original building sheets, eating up all his profits. Working 15 hours a day, he completed all but 15 of the projected jobs. Kesling secured the services of a Construction Loan Service which took over the uncompleted jobs as his agents. All balances from new contracts accepted on a percentage basis were turned over to the Loan Service to reimburse any jobs they completed for Kesling. Green complained of poor lumber, and leaky windows; these bills Kesling paid. More money was going out then coming in. Green complained to Kesling's clients, some of whom panicked and pulled out of their contracts. Kesling testified: "The percentage jobs were returned, and the contracts cancelled, and the jobs are now standing incomplete and going to ruin. I am penniless and have borrowed everything my wife's parents had."

Kesling described the building contracts at the time: A lumber yard usually furnished 50% of the material used in the construction of a house. The house owners paid Kesling funds, a portion or all of which he turned over to the lumber yard to secure credit. "These were paid back to me in accordance with the estimated amounts on the set-up sheet for the sub-contractors. We felt we had a free hand in using these funds as long as it was for the purpose intended in the contract. Day laborers were paid money by us before we received it from the lumber yard."

Finding a discrepancy in the check amounts at the lumber yard, Green came to Kesling and demanded payment of \$1,000 so he could finish his own house, or he would call the police. "We did not have \$1,000, so Mrs. Kesling offered the Greens the deed to our office (as a bond) to prove we would cooperate and complete the house." It was understood that the Greens would not denounce them to the police. Instead, they took the deed and went to the police, anyway. Several Kesling clients testified in his defense that his difficulties were the result of advancing prices of materials and labor. Why did he not list Schindler as a business reference? According to architecture students who worked in Schindler's King's Road house in the '70s, Pauline Schindler mentioned that Kesling and her husband had shared an office and joint bank account at one time. Kesling had abused the cash withdrawal privileges, and the two men parted company. If this were the case, Schindler's testimony would not have been in Kesling's favor. Patrick Pascal could find no financial records to prove or disprove the Schindler-Kesling connection in the Schindler archives in Santa Barbara.

"Kesling copped a plea, pleading guilty to one of the felony forgery counts with the understanding that his wife was to be exonerated," explains Patrick. The judge sentenced Kesling to San Quentin, then suspended execution of the sentence, granting him a two year probation, during which time he could not work as a contractor. For two years he was a salesman for the steel sash windows he had invented. In February, 1939, his rehabilitation completed, his case was dismissed. Fledgling Kesling houses are sprinkled around L.A., but since they were completed in 1937, after his arrest, and the contractors were not faithful to his designs, they are barely

on view museum exhibitions



LEFT: *Vision 2000* Hi-fi set (Stereoanlage) by Thilo Oerke, Germany, 1971. Part of the exhibition "Vision 2000" at POPDOM. ABOVE: Shirtwaist dress by Mainbocher, worn by Katharine Cornell in *The Prescott Proposals*, 1953. Part of the exhibition "Fashion On Stage" at MCNY

Looking Back to the Future

The exhibition "Vision 2000" at the Museum for Design of the Sixties and Seventies in Cologne takes a closer look at the futuristic designs from design's most recent history.

The belief in progress in combination with the possibilities offered by technological inventions in the field of new materials were the most important influences on the design of the Sixties and Seventies. A selection of 100 industrial products are shown in the exhibition, including Sony's *Sputnik* globe radio, the *Apollo* television, and the Hi-fi set *Vision 2000* by Thilo Oerke. Obvious among the examples shown is the tendency towards geometrical forms, especially the globe, which reflects the influence of the space program - a source of inspiration for many designers.

An impressive inclusion at the exhibition is the perspex armchair *Apollo 12* by Danilo Silvestrin which, when closed, assumes the shape of a spaceship. Also presented are original drawings from the end of the Sixties by Luigi Colani which depict his living tower-houses with their globe-shaped bath and kitchen modules. Another Colani design is the *Globe-Kitchen* by Poggenpohl which was first presented to the public at the Cologne Furniture Fair of 1970.

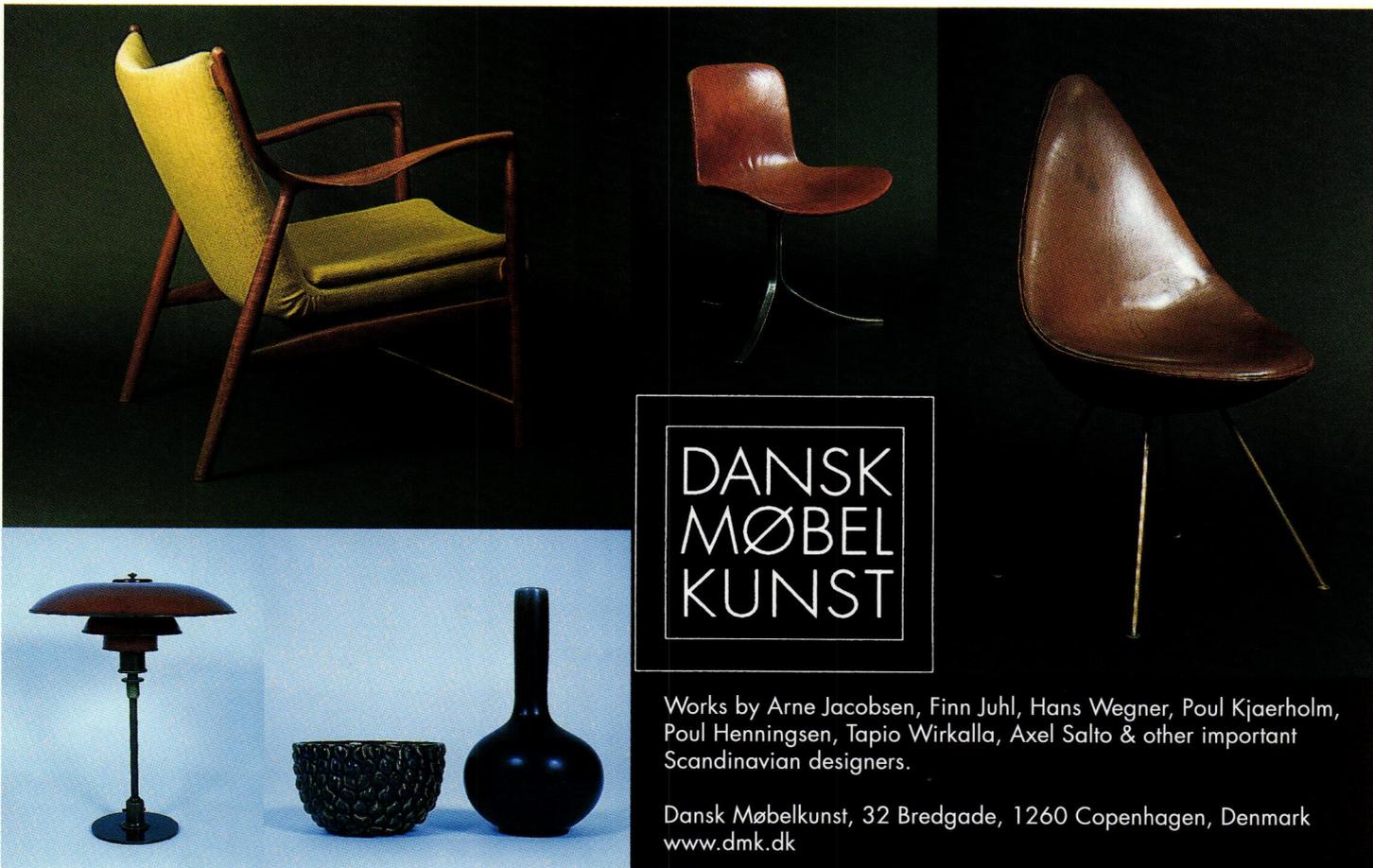
The connection between technological innovation through new

materials and an individual's freedom of creativity is realized through the *Living Tower* or *Pantower* by Danish designer Verner Panton. Panton, one of the most important designers of his time, is represented in the exhibition by some of his most influential designs, including the *Panton Chair* and a pendant lamp consisting of hundreds of plastic bulbs.

Vision 2000 runs through December 30, 1999. The Museum for Design of the Sixties and Seventies is located in Cologne. For further information call 02 21/9 12 54 24.

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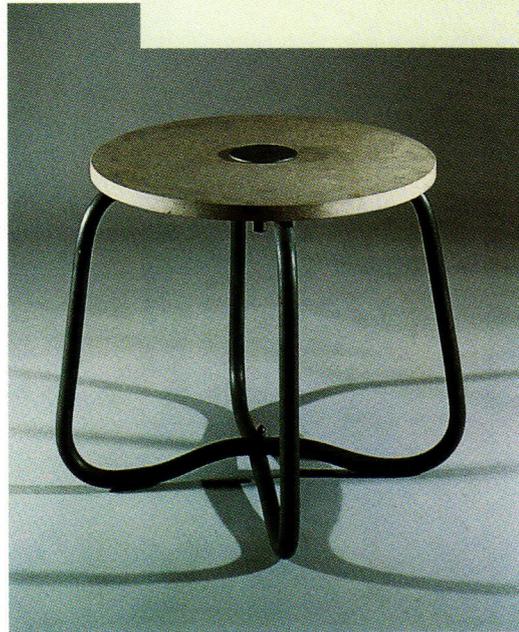
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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Pitcher and cups by Paul Schreckengost, c.1938, part of the exhibition "The Clay Vessel" at the Denver Art Museum; Glassworks by Maurice Marinot, from the exhibition "Infinite Obsessions" at Barry Friedman Ltd.; *Tension Rod Table*, 1993 by E. Weinberger and S. Schmidt, part of the exhibition "Euclidean Gestures" at Barry Friedman Ltd.; Guéridon by René Herbst, 1936, part of the exhibition "La Maison de René Herbst" at Galerie de Beyrie

designs, including pieces by Chanel, Valentino, Mainbocher, and Hatti Carnegie. Using mirrors, door frames, and windows, the exhibition is designed to evoke the atmosphere of a Broadway production. Each costume is displayed on a platform as though waiting to make a grand entrance or exit.

The years framed by 1910-1955 represent a golden age in theatrical couture, a period when characters and costumes in Broadway comedies and dramas provided a springboard for contemporary fashion trend-setting. This exhibition unites 25 original garments by couture designers from the Museum of the City of New York's Costume Collection with vintage photographs and ephemera from The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. The exhibition includes original images by White Studio and Vandamm Studio, as well as magazine and newspaper articles - such as Vogue's column "Seen On the Stage" - manuscripts, and letters written by actresses emphasizing the remarkable influence Broadway stars had on the fashion consumer.

"Fashion on Stage" remains on view through February 27, 2000. For further information call (212) 534-1672.

Infinite Obsessions: Maurice Marinot and Michael Glancy
Opening November 4th at the Barry Friedman Ltd. gallery is an exhibi-

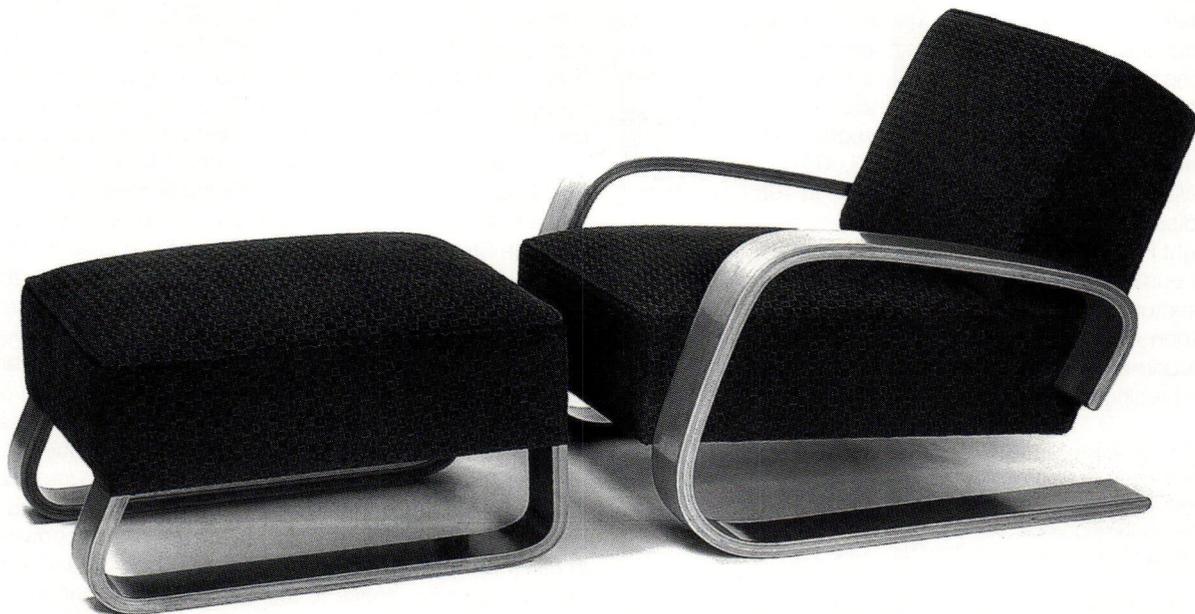
tion which correlates rare works by the seminal French studio glass artist Maurice Marinot with new works by contemporary artist Michael Glancy. Considered by both scholars and artists to be one of the most innovative and influential glass artists of the 20th century, Maurice Marinot inspired many artists, among them Michael Glancy. Deep and intricately carved surfaces decorated with oxides, metal inclusions, and naturally formed air bubbles create a jewel-like effect in both Marinot's and Glancy's glassworks.

This exhibition marks the first American showing of glass by Marinot since 1932. In addition to exceptional works on loan from major museums and private collections, many pieces will be available for sale. A fully illustrated catalog with an essay by glass scholar Dan Klein will accompany the exhibition. "Infinite Obsessions" remains on view through January 8, 2000. For further information call (212) 794-8950.

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Vases by Schneider "Le Verre Francais".

William Kesling

(continued from page 97) recognizable.

Kesling designed housing for the Navy during the war, after which he resurfaced in La Jolla, the upscale resort town near San Diego. Streamline Moderne was a thing of the past, but he moved with the market. His late '40s designs were conservative wood and brick houses with trellises and patios; one was photographed by Shulman for *Life*. Kesling's comet had burned out; a row of beach houses gained the pejorative nickname "Kesling's Kozy Kowsheds." Pascal reports that Kesling's 1964 résumé, which made no mention of his arrest and probation, stated that he had built 3,000 houses in his 30-year career. William P. Kesling died in San Diego in 1983, a victim of Alzheimer's disease.

What might Kesling have accomplished if his career hadn't been nipped in the bud? Patrick Pascal believes that: "For Schindler and Neutra, architecture was a cause. For Kesling, it was a profession." First vilified, then resuscitated, it would take 60 years for Kesling's Streamline Moderne to ride the crest of the current architectural restoration wave breaking into the 21st century. ■

The author wishes to thank all the Kesling owners, named and anonymous, who shared their homes and restoration war stories. Special thanks to Patrick Pascal for his generous research contributions, and to photographer, Julius Shulman, whose upcoming book, *Abandoned Files* will include many lesser known photographs of the architects of the Thirties and Forties.

Ginger Moro is the author of *European Designer Jewelry*, and is a frequent contributor to *Echoes*.

Case 22

(continued from page 87) furniture arrived in time but did not survive the shoot. "We wanted a steel house, but not steel furniture," Buck declared firmly. Carlotta confesses: "We were country bumpkins as far as interior design was concerned. We were overcome by the choices, absolutely clueless. Now when we think of decorating with furniture of the period, we can't afford the prices!"

Before Koenig began construction on the house, Buck Stahl had added six feet to his property with a concrete terraced promontory. "I flattened the land by dragging a heavy load behind my Cadillac convertible," explains Buck. A February, 1962 *Life* magazine article documented the migratory flight of Angelinos to their new nests in the Hollywood Hills. Buck is pictured as a fearless gardener landscaping his promontory with ivy - 1,000 feet above Los Angeles, with a 160-foot drop to the next level. "The photographer, Grey Villet, suggested that Buck wear a safety line to make it look more dangerous," laughed Carlotta. "Actually, he never wore a safety line. Neither did our children, who would take picnic safaris down the slope." The Stahls liked living on the edge.

Over the years, the Stahls made several changes to the interior design of the house; much of which will revert back to the architect's original conception, according to Carlotta. (Buck is not so sure.) After 25 years, they replaced the prefab Phillipine mahogany kitchen cabinetry with lighter wood paneling and installed wood slats in place of the aluminum strips in the kitchen glass ceiling. "This is before they consulted me on changes to the house," explains Pierre. Buck installed Palos Verdes fieldstones in the fireplace hood and stack, replacing the original fireproof cement boards set in steel. "We used this fireplace a lot," said Carlotta, "especially during the holidays with the children, who have now grown up. It's very festive with the city lights twinkling below. We added concrete blocks and a door to the carport entrance to the house (originally only four feet high) because after returning from trips, we found broken toys on the bottom of the pool left by neighborhood children." A jacuzzi was installed in 1984. Buck designed alternating wood and mirror vertical panels in the master bedroom which will eventually be restored to Koenig's original plan. There's no room in this minimalist masterpiece for clutter, (Mrs. Koenig's gift of homemade jam was quickly whisked out of

sight) or art - "The city is our art."

When asked how the eight by ten-foot steel-framed glass windows have held up against Mother Nature, Buck remembers a frightening wind storm which hit Los Angeles in 1982. "I think it originated in Japan and gathered steam across the Pacific. I was in the kitchen with my son when it blew in one window and blew out another. We were terrified. My son asked, 'What should we do, Dad?' I said, 'Pray!'" "Sometimes, in a high wind, our guests are alarmed by the noise the windows make. They bell out about three inches, then snap back with a bang. In the 1994 quake we only lost one window and some glass shelves," recalls Carlotta. "The steel frames are earthquake resistant," claims Koenig. "All the homes around mine in Brentwood suffered damage in the quake. My steel house survived intact."

The Stahl House has also survived the onslaught of movie companies using the dramatic site for location shoots. "For the 1998 film, *Why do Fools Fall in Love?*, starring Halle Berry, they trashed the house. They cleaned it up, but it was still a shock to see it. For the Lou Diamond film, *(First Power, 1989)* the director removed the drapes that had been up in the living room for ten years. The company offered to reinstall them, but we decided we liked the glass house better as Pierre had intended it. We're eager to see the Sci-fi film, *13th Floor* for the shot of a hovering helicopter peering into our living room window!" Just then, as if on cue, a helicopter swooped by the *Echoes* photographic crew noshing by the pool. "From how many houses in L.A. can you actually look down on a helicopter?" asked Koenig. "We also rent the space to fashion shoots; the models pose on the catwalk which we added to facilitate window washing. Location rentals help pay for restoration," smiles Carlotta.

I asked Pierre to what he attributed the recent enthusiastic trend by young professionals and movie producers of restoring modernist homes. (See: the William Kesling article this issue.) "I think people are disappointed in the new architecture of the past few years and are realizing that the old stuff is not as bad as they thought. After the 'Blueprints for Modern Living: History and Legacy of the Case Study Houses' exhibition at the Temporary Contemporary Museum in 1990, there was a tremendous upswing in interest. It's payoff time." Museum walk-in reconstructions of the houses (Case Study #22 was replicated as a night time scene) dramatically summarized the successes and failures of John Entenza's project seen in light of the social and environmental changes. The construction industry failed to recognize that steel could be effectively mass-produced, or that it would be accepted by the public as a viable alternative to wood. Julius Shulman finds it "gratifying that the schools of architecture are finally realizing the historical significance of American Modernism."

"I have been an environmentalist since day one. I was concerned with the sun's natural cooling and heating in all my houses," Pierre explains. (The eight-foot overhang keeps the hot sun out in the summer. In the winter, the Stahls close up the house and let the sun warm it.) "Architects are the last generalists. Everything else now is so specialized. Today, it's all about consumers; architecture is done by consumers, not creators."

Carlotta and Buck Stahl are about to sign the papers making their house a Historical Cultural Monument. "We can change the interiors of the house if we like, but not the exterior." (The Stahls must ask permission for any major changes to Koenig's design.) Their three children, Bruce, Shari, and Mark will be the guardians of the flame. "This will always be the Stahl House." ■

The author is grateful to Carlotta and Buck Stahl, Pierre Koenig, and Julius Shulman for sharing their remarkable experiences. For further reference, see: *Pierre Koenig* by James Steele and David Jenkins; and *Julius Shulman, Architecture and its Photography*. For the Stahl House as film location site, see: *Playing it by Heart* with Sean Connery, and *Marrying Man* with Kim Basinger and Alex Baldwin. *Echoes* would also like to thank David Skelley of Boomerang For Modern for providing many of the furnishings used in this shoot.

Ginger Moro, author of *European Designer Jewelry*, is a frequent contributor to *Echoes* on the decorative arts.

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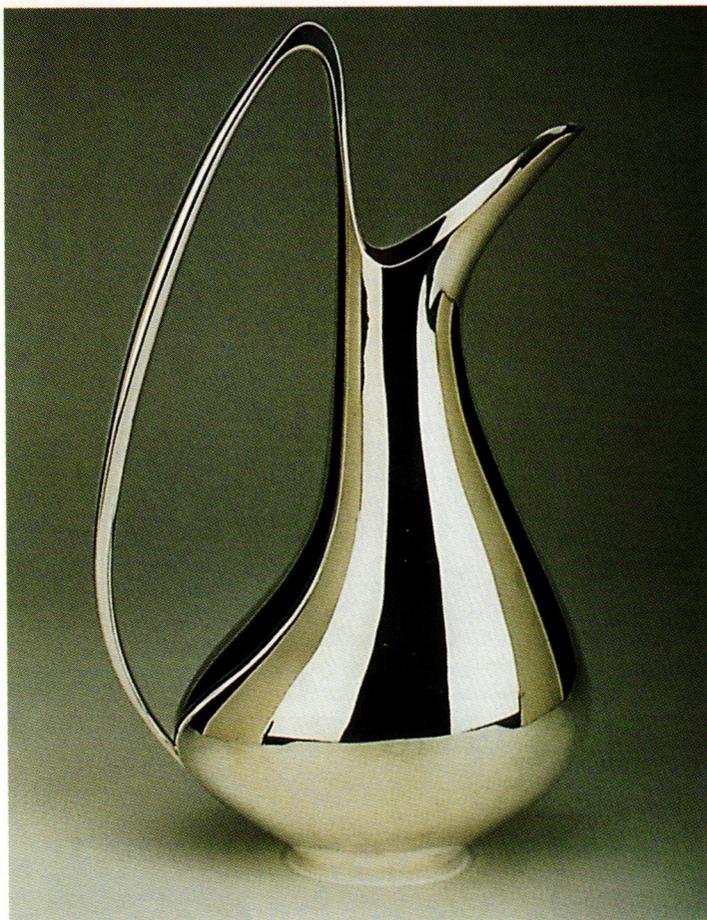
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- 20** Christie's South Kensington's Modern Design auction, London, England (718) 784-1480
- 23-24** Vintage Fashion Expo, Santa Monica, CA (707) 793-0773
- 25** Phillips' 20th Century Art and Design auction, Sydney, Australia (612) 93 26 15 88
- 27-29** Design.y.c Show, New York, NY (800) 950-1314
- 29-31** International Perfume Bottle Assoc. Perfume/Vanity Convention, Show & Sale, Richardson, TX (972) 994-9056
- 30** Flamboro Outdoor Antique Show, Aberfoyle, Canada (905) 685-1225

november

- 4-7** Chicago Design Show, Chicago, IL (312) 527-7600
- 6-7** The Modernism Show: An Exposition & Sale of 20th Century Design, 1890-1960, Winnetka, IL (847) 446-0537

- 7** Phillips Twentieth Century Art & Design auction, Glasgow, Scotland (01) 4 12 21 83 7
- 7-8** Sotheby's 20th Century Sale, Chicago, IL (203) 847-0465
- 11-14** Modernism: A Century of Art & Design Show, NY (212) 777-5218
- 12** Modernism at the Millennium lecture by Molly Seiler and guided tour through the Modernism: A Century of Art & Design Show, New York, NY (212) 501-3023
- 13-14** Triple Pier Show, New York, NY (212) 255-0020
- 16** William Doyle Galleries Couture and Textiles auction, New York, NY (212) 427-2730
- 16-17** Sotheby's Decorative Arts Sale, Toronto, Ontario, Canada (416) 926-1774
- 17** William Doyle Galleries 20th Century Art and Design auction, New York, NY (212) 427-2730
- 20-21** Triple Pier Show, New York, NY (212) 255-0020
- 20-21** David Rago's 20th Century

Modern auction, Lambertville, NJ (609) 397-9374

24-28 20th Century at Olympia Show, London, England (0171) 3 70 88 37

27 Christie's East's Important Design of the 20th Century auction, New York, NY (212) 606-0530

27-29 Dupuis Jewelry auction, Toronto, Ontario, Canada (416) 968-7500

27-Dec 1 The International 20th Century Arts Fair, New York, NY (212) 642-8572

29 Christie's Important 20th Century Decorative Arts auction, New York, NY (212) 546-1000

29 Christie's Tiffany: Innovation in American Design auction, New York, NY (212) 546-1000

december

3-4 Sotheby's Impt. 20th Century Decorative Works of Art auction, New York, NY (203) 847-0465

4-5 Art Deco-60s Sale, San Francisco, CA (650) 599-deco

6 Phillips' Materials and Processes of the 20th Century auction, Bayswater, London, England (0171) 499 1677

7 Phillips' 20th Century Art and Design auction, New York, NY (212) 570-4830

8 Christie's East's 20th Century Decorative Arts auction, New York, NY (212)606-0530

13-14 Butterfield & Butterfield's Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Arts & Crafts auction, Los Angeles, CA (415) 861-7500

19 Private Collections auction, Osprey, FL (941) 966-3255

january

14-16 Art Deco Weekend, Miami Beach, FL (305) 672-2014

15-16 Miami Modernism Show, Miami Beach, FL (248) 334-9660

20-23 The Interior Design Show,

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28-30 Metropolitan's Vintage Fashion & Antique Textile Show, New York, NY (212) 463-0200

ongoing exhibitions

Through December 30 "Vision 2000: Looking Back to the Future" at the Museum for Design of the Sixties and Seventies in Cologne (02) 21 9 12 54 24

Through April 16, 2000 "City Lights: Neon in Vancouver" at the Vancouver Museum in Vancouver, Canada (604) 736-4431

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June 29-November 7 "Moda, an Exhibition" at the Design Exchange in Toronto, Ontario, Canada (416) 216-2160

July 24-October 24 "Frank Lloyd Wright and Colleagues: Indiana Works Exhibition" at the John G. Blank Center for the Arts in Michigan City, IN (219) 874-4900

July 24-February 27, 2000 "Fashion on Stage: Couture for the Broadway Theater, 1910-1955" at The Museum of the City of New York in NY (212) 534-1672

September 3-January 23, 2000 "Vivian Cherry Photographs" at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in Brooklyn, NY (212) 534-1672

September 9-October 31 "New Acquisitions: Masterworks of Poster Design" at the International Poster Gallery in Boston, MA (617) 375-0076

September 11-August 27, 2000 "The Clay Vessel: Modern Ceramics from the Norwest Collection" at the Denver Art Museum in CO (303) 640-4433

September 16-February 13, 2000 "Art in Post-Revolutionary Mex-

ico, 1920-1950" at the Dallas Museum of Art in Dallas, TX (214) 922-1200

September 19-November 28 "Diego Rivera: Art and Revolution" at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in TX (713) 639-7300

September 24-January 30 "About Face: Andy Warhol Portraits" at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, CT (860) 278-2670

September 28-December 31 "Unmistakable Mackie" at the Museum at FIT in New York, NY (212) 217-7642

September 26-February 13, 2000 "The American Century: 1950-2000" at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, NY (212) 570-3600

October 6-November 25 "La Maison de René Herbst" at Galerie de Beyrie in New York, NY (212) 219-9565

October 8-December 24 "Edgar Brandt: Art Deco Ironwork and Photographs from the Atelier" at Moderne Gallery in Philadelphia, PA (215) 923-8536

October 8-January 2, 2000 "Vital Forms: American Art in the Atomic Age, 1940-1960" at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in NY (212) 534-1672

October 8-January 30, 2000 "Jean Royère, décorateur à Paris" at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, France (01) 44 55 57 50

October 12-December 31 "Dazzling by Design: Fashion Jewelry by Kenneth Jay Lane" at the Museum at FIT in New York, NY (212) 217-5800

October 12-January 9, 2000 "The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention" at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in NY (212) 849-8420

October 16-January 23, 2000 "Vision of Paradise, Fred Varley in British Columbia" at the Vancouver Art Gallery in Vancouver, British Columbia (604) 682-4668

October 27-November 18 "Forces of Nature" at Antik in New York, NY (212) 343-0471

November-October 2000 "20th Century Design: Breaking All the Rules" at the Denver Art Museum in Denver, CO (303) 640-4433

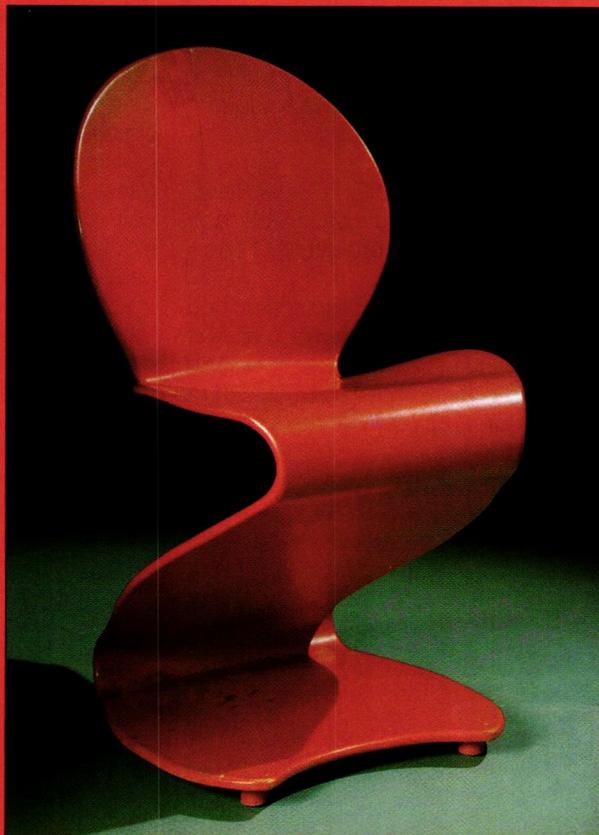
November 1-12 "Retrospective Exhibition of the Work of Eleanor and Foster Beveridge" at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax, Nova Scotia (902) 477-3690

November 4-January 8, 2000 "Infinite Obsessions: Maurice Marinot and Michael Glancy" and "Euclidean Gestures: The Architectural Furniture of E. Weinberger and S. Schmidt" at Barry Friedman Ltd. in New York, NY (212) 794-8950

November 4-February 6, 2000 "Mexican Modern Art: 1900-1950" at the Montreal Museum of Fine Art in Canada (514) 285-1600

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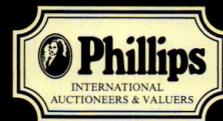
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Staying Power of Steel

(continued from page 93) *Shag Painting, 1990, Untitled* on one wall is formed of two halves, a carpet, hand-hooked by the artist (containing 80,000 pieces of yarn), against a glossy surface of a painting, creating a dichotomy of textures. This piece of a series is significant for being his first discrete art object - previous pieces were installations. Flanking the table are Saarinen's 72 chairs.

Against the other wall are two paintings: *Untitled Flower Paintings, 1985*. These rest above a Florence Knoll sofa, coffee table, and end table. The rug under the coffee table is a prototype of Jim's design.

In the formal dining room there are two black *Cone* chairs, one *Heart* chair, and a rug, all by Verner Panton, 1959. The dining table is a Knoll conference table flanked by Saarinen 71 and 72 chairs. The large photograph is *Self Portrait* by Pae White, which is laminated to thick plexiglass. A Raymond Loewy *DF 2000* cabinet rests against the wall.

The entry presents a Knoll bench, along with a photograph by Uta Barth. The master bedroom displays a table, chairs, rug, and dramatic ceiling hanging lamp by Verner Panton. The table and chairs are from his *1-2-3 System Furniture* designed in 1973 for Fritz Hansen. In addition there are two Herman Miller *LTR* end tables, and three photographs by Richard Hawkins. The sheets are by Vera. Two pieces of art include Isermann's *Weave, 1996*; and Blomster's *Space Boy, 1996*. ■

Isermann's work can be viewed in "Fifteen: Jim Isermann Survey" at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, PA, September 11 - October 31, 1999.

What's Selling Now?

(continued from page 16) have had several London sales and exhibitions, and a new book. In American Deco, radios are hotter. Scott Boyette of Streamlined Decade in Ft. Meyers, FL, reports a 40% rise for pre-war Bakelite models.

Industrial Design

Most see a plateau of activity in this area. "It's out of fashion," says Chicago dealer Richard Wright. "If you believe in it, now is the time to buy." People are apparently not building new collections in this area, and museums already have most of what they need. Change may come when, in the next century, age brings more respect to the objects. Meanwhile, they're staples with 20th century dealers and at modernism shows around the country, even in quality flea markets, but prices seem steady rather than on the rise.

Mid-Century American

In 1997 Richard Wright commented that, "Eames' place in the scheme of 20th century design is very secure." But even he was surprised by the success of the Eames sale this Spring in Chicago. "Prices were even higher than I had dared to hope," he admitted. Eames-mania is what every dealer talks about...the \$143,000 for Ray Eames' leg splint sculpture in Wright's sale, and the \$129,000 for the never-produced *Conversation* armchair at LA Modern Auctions. Anything of this period is hot as well. As Rik Gallagher of 280 Modern says, "1950s used to be the poor cousin, while the 1930s was the good stuff - now it's the other way around." Dealers say people buy it to use: "In that time, designers began making furniture with ergonomic concerns, furniture to live with, not just oversize pieces for castles," says Lin/Weinberg's Larry Weinberg. According to Weinberg and others, good lighting of the period is a sure seller...but hard to find. Moving up are personalized work by Paul Evans, Billy Haines, and Paul Laszlo and decorator furniture by Edward Wormley and Tommi Parzinger (both with reproductions in the works) and Vladimir Kagan (doing his own reproductions). Has fifties fever peaked? Wright says, "Post-war is so hot and so mainstream that it scares me...there's no way

this interest in post-war design can hold, but I believe in the long-term value of the best items. Weinberg agrees: "Magazines are falling over themselves to do a new slant on modernism, and that can't last...but I think it's embedded enough so that it won't disappear." There are still a number of good designers out there, like Harvey Propper and Arthur Elrod, awaiting rediscovery. Idiosyncratic designs by individualists like Paul Evans and the Lavernes are attracting interest. In mass-market American furniture, "Heywood Wakefield is a commodity" says Chris Kennedy of American Decorative Arts in Northampton, MA, and Doug Patterson of Do Wah Diddy in Phoenix calls it "the staple of our business." Early modern dinnerware sells steadily (classic Fiesta, Russel Wright, and moving up is trendy '50s tableware). Ceramic artists like Gertrude and Otto Natzler are getting serious attention. Coming up are '60s and '70s objects, including even pop priced, pop-look accessories.

French Modern Design

"I did an André Arbus exhibition back in 1988," recalls New York dealer Barry Friedman. "We sold well, but nobody knew who he was." Not any longer. 1930s to '50s French design is one of the hot new areas for collectors - industrial-type design by names like Jean Prouvé and Charlotte Perriand and decorator pieces by Arbus, Gilbert Poillerat, and especially Jean Royère are getting hot. After the Royère show at the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs* in Paris this Fall, this should only increase. So far, prices are relatively modest, though some Marc du Plantier items recently brought \$100,000+. Galerie de Beyrie's Catherine de Beyrie thinks it's just the beginning for mid-century French designers. "People are just starting to discover them. In a few years, I think they will be as important as Ruhlmann."

Scandinavian Design

This is another area recently discovered by collectors. Wlodek Malowanczyk of Collage 20th Century Classics in Dallas reports, "Ten years ago I was buying Finn Juhl and Hans Wegner from top dealers in LA. Now they're going crazy for it, especially the big names." It's logical, according to long-time show promoter Sandy Smith. "Now that there's no more Aalto out there, and the Eames prototypes, early Breuer, Mackintosh, and such are in museums, people are interested in mid-century Scandinavian furniture." New categories are gaining interest, particularly Swedish ceramics by artists like Stig Lundberg and Wilhelm Kage. Henning Koppel's 1952 pitcher for Georg Jensen, illustrated in every design book, brought triple the estimate (\$33,000) at Sotheby's London in March. Now that it's almost half-a-century old, even original made-in-Denmark Dansk is surfacing at dealers, along with kitchenware and other Scandinavian everyday items.

Italian Modern

Ponti, Fornasetti, and Mollino have been selling for a while, but the news is in 1960s Italian designs, with names like Bellini, Colombo, Castiglione, Pesce, and furniture in plastic, foam, even blowup, and plastic accessories like early Kartell are being snapped up as well. Prices for the major items still average in the low thousands, but that's due to change, especially as the '60s recede into the past. Italian glass, a hot commodity several years back around the 1997 Corning Museum exhibition, has cooled, with interest shifting from production to studio work. Howard Lockwood, editor of *Vetri: Italian Glass News* says, however, that buyers are selective. "People are just waiting for the good pieces" - like a Bianconi vase for Venini that sold this year in Italy for more than \$100,000.

Postmodernism

The familiar Sottsass bookcases are in virtually every museum collecting the 20th century, but Memphis is generating broader interest. Now that it's coming up on two decades old, Memphis is beginning to show up at auction and on gallery floors. Says Peter Loughery of LA Modern Auctions, "In 1988 I already saw Memphis interest >108

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A vintage-themed advertisement. On the left, a red wooden chest of drawers with four drawers and brass handles. Below it, a woman wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and a colorful swimsuit is seen from the side, holding a large, round, woven basket with a floral pattern. The text "Vintage styles..." is written in a white, cursive font. Below that, "for the home & body." is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there is a logo for "avagabonds" featuring a stylized figure sitting on a chair, with the brand name in a script font. The website "www.avagabondspage.com" and phone number "501.296.9696" are listed at the bottom.

An advertisement for M6 AND CO. The background is a textured, light-colored wall. In the foreground, there are two large, round, striped beach balls. One is in the foreground, and another is slightly behind it. To the right, there are two round ottomans with a similar striped pattern. The text "M6 AND CO" is written in large, orange, stylized letters. Above it, "FURNITURE WITH SOUL" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the contact information "901-452-1810 • FAX: 901-452-3235 • M6ANDCO@AOL.COM" is listed.

What's Selling Now?

(continued from page 106) in the resale market. With the 20th anniversary coming up, I expect a new surge of it." Earlier than Postmodern but equally quirky, Frank Gehry's 1970s *Easy Edges* cheap corrugated cardboard furniture now sells for serious money...a large armchair brought \$7,700 at David Rago's in May.

Jewelry and Watches

Jewelry was an important category in several of the major design movements. Tiffany and Lalique pieces in Art Nouveau, Cartier and Van Cleef in Art Deco were pricey to start, and will continue to be so. Once-affordable Bakelite now commands top prices - a Ripley Collection record-setting *Pumpkin Man* pin went for \$22,000 at Treadway/Toomey. Scandinavian and American mid-century modernists are selling (Tone Vigeland, Margaret de Patta, Art Smith, Ed Wiener, and others are gaining ground, and silver standards like Georg Jensen and Spratling or Pineda from Mexico continue to sell). In a time of automatic timepieces, vintage watches are a specialty area that only stands to move up. A 1951 Rolex brought \$34,500 at Christie's in May, and Vacherin-Constantins bring over \$7,000.

Textiles and Clothing

This area has moved from flea market-retro into serious collecting of couture and innovative fashion, fueled by exhibitions at the high-profile Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as the FIT Gallery, and regular couture auctions at Sotheby's and Doyle's. Metropolitan Art & Antiques has added extra Vintage Fashion & Antique Shows, finding that fashion houses as well as collectors are buying designs for inspiration. And mid-century cashmere sweaters or quality clothing are cheaper than, and just as stylish as, much of what's being produced now. Look for couture to increase in price, and buy-to-wear-now clothing to move into the next decades.

Architectural Drawings and Fragments

With objects becoming increasingly rare, interest has been growing in the preliminaries: models and design and architectural drawings - even those of little-known industrial designers - as documents of history and decorative objects. Many architectural drawings are elegant, but they can be preliminary sketches or even (as in a recent Carlo Scarpa exhibit) almost indecipherable. However, Mies, Kahn, and Wright drawings are selling in the six-figure range, and dealer Max Protetch sells drawings by living architects for up to \$15,000. Not everyone approves. Philip Johnson told *Art & Auction* last year that collecting drawings was "a perfectly ridiculous market activity." Architectural fragments, on the other hand, are drawing new attention. "These are our Stonehenge," asserts Marcus Tremonto of Sotheby's, who sold a set of 1893 elevator grilles by Louis Sullivan (\$50,500) that look as atomic-image as George Nelson's 1949 *Ball* clock. Such objects, beautiful in themselves, are being seen as important documentation of our architectural heritage.

Specialty Categories

Transportation: Automobiles have been the province of specialty collectors for some time, but more recently other vintage items on wheels have joined them, though certainly not at such elevated prices. However, possibly helped by the Guggenheim's attendance-record-setting motorcycle exhibition last year, vintage motorcycles and bicycles are heating up. Christie's International Motor Car sales brought prices of \$926,500 for a 1913 Mercer. Packard's 100th anniversary, and MoMA's show of "Automobiles for the Next Century" may boost interest in even newer cars as an art form.

Toys: This category is growing, as early toys sell for five-figure prices - a *Clown on Globe* cast-iron bank brought \$26,450 at Skinner's in January. Metal soldiers, old games, any moving toys are hot. Look for activity in mid-century toys after an exhibition from the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield, MA (and traveling!) surveying classics like Tinker

Toys, Erector Sets, Matchbox cars, Slinky and even funky Pez dispensers anoints these childhood playthings as exhibit-worthy.

Posters: Fueled by nostalgia, and by the increasingly high prices of contemporary art, posters are a growing market, with soaring sales in all categories - from turn-of-the-century Art Nouveau to Deco, transportation, early advertising (especially French), and theatrical posters. At Sotheby's, a *King Kong* movie poster sold for \$244,500 in April (world record was for *The Mummy*, \$453,500 in 1997). The Vintage Poster Fair (at the Metropolitan Pavilion, NY in April) reported sales of \$2,000,000 total in their 4-per-year events, vs. \$50,000 for the first one in 1989.

Celebrity Objects

As recent auctions have proved, almost anything with a name attached to it will sell, from Mark McIntire's \$3 million baseball to Eric Clapton's \$5,072,350 guitar, to the *Gone With the Wind* Oscar that Michael Jackson bought at Sotheby's for \$1,542,500, and the growing number of auctions of movie and TV costumes and props. A Hollywood sale in Los Angeles in August was staged, appropriately, in a film studio. For star-followers, it's a trend to watch, but it's hard to think of most of these offerings as long-term design investments.

Recent Design

Marcus Tremonto of Sotheby's places his bets on two current names...Marc Newson, a "young genius" furniture designer, and Gaetano Pesce. "I think he's the next one who's going to be untouchable." Prices for art pieces (no longer designated crafts) by such as Sam Maloof, Wendell Castle, and many less-known names are moving up fast, as is Albert Paley metal, and glass by notables Harvey Littleton and Dale Chihuly (a five-part Chihuly wall piece brought \$88,300 at Sotheby's in June). Others like Michael Glancy, Michael Pavlik, and Toots Zynsky in glass; Philip Moulthrop and Virginia Dotson in turned wood; and David Gilhooley and Bennett Bean in ceramics are a few of many garnering collector's interest. ■

Note: All record-setting prices quoted are as of June 1999.

Judith B. Gura, a specialist in 20th century design, is an assistant professor at Pratt Institute, and conducts lecture programs at The Bard Graduate Center. She writes frequently about design and furnishings, and is working on an upcoming exhibition at The Brooklyn Museum.

Modernism, eh?

(continued from page 24) Halifax, Nova Scotia. (902) 477-3690. fsholtz@ns.sympatico.ca

Opening December 16 and continuing through March 12, 2000 exclusively at the Museum of Quebec is "Tissot: The Beauty of Modern Life." A contemporary of Manet and Degas, the turn-of-the-century painter documented upper class life in Paris and London. (418) 646-3330. www.mdq.org

Through November 7th, "Moda," an exhibition (designed by renowned set designer Dante Ferretti) at the Design Exchange traces Krizia's fashions from 1954 to the present. (416) 216-2160. www.designexchange.org

At the auctions

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The catalog cover of what was sadly to become Sotheby's last live auction in Canada featured a 1952 silver tea pot designed by Henning Koppel for renowned Danish silversmiths Georg Jensen, as well as modernist jewelry by Parisian Suzanne Belperron from circa 1940. Both sold over estimate, with the diamond and sapphire-studded platinum and gold bracelet and matching clip/brooches surpassing \$100,000 (compared to a high estimate of \$30,000). Belperron, who favored an almost architectural purity in her designs, was widely collected by Americans, including the Duchess of Windsor. > 112

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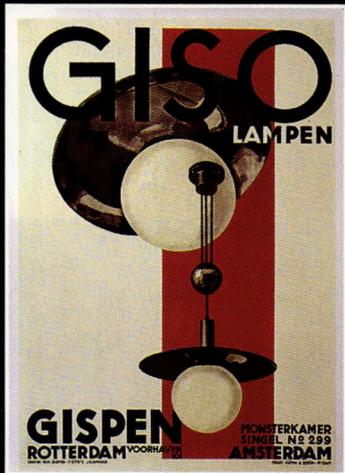


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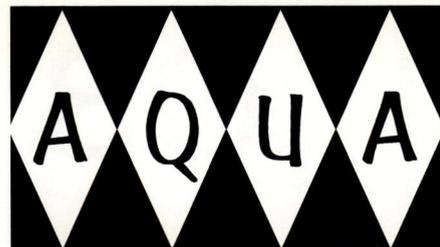
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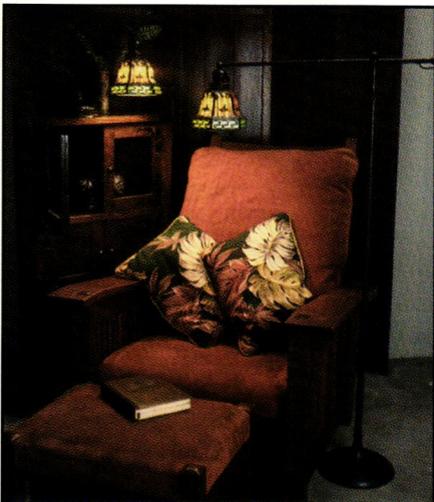
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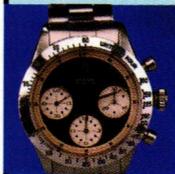


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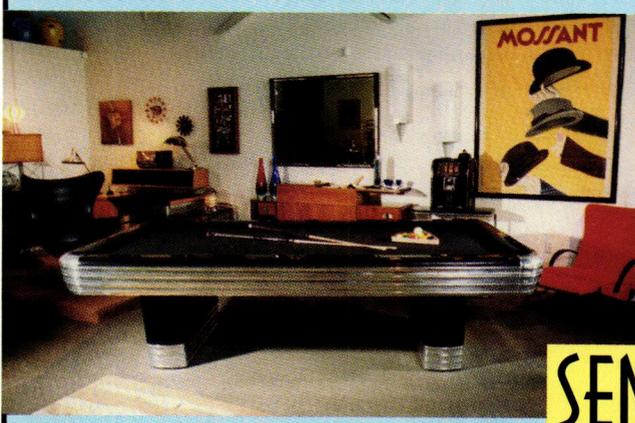
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Modernism, eh?

(continued from page 108) Koppel's four-piece tea and coffee set with matching tray featured stylized pear shapes and futuristic handles (number 1017), and sold for \$63,000. Koppel, who died in 1982, was chosen by Georg Jensen as "designer of the year" for the year 2000.

Sales at Sotheby's were strong, belying the company's decision to market its Canadian accessions via the New York live auctions or through its soon-to-be-formed internet electronic auction. President and Canadian art specialist Christina Orobetz, Pamela Campbell (director, silver and decorative arts), and others will continue to solicit objects from Canadian collectors and conduct research and appraisals from their Toronto headquarters. Other highlights from the final auction included a pair of Jensen silver five-light candelabra (number 474), designed 1945-51 by Johan Rohde (\$57,500 compared to a top estimate of \$35,000); and an early 20th century American silver Art Nouveau pitcher (number 105A) from Reed & Barton, Taunton, Massachusetts (\$4,600). A 1966 Jensen flatware service (number 134) designed by Rigmore Andersen and Annelise Bjorner and estimated at \$12,000 did not sell; nor did a pair of circa 1940 silver pedestal dishes by C.P. Petersen of Montreal, Quebec.

Noteworthy jewelry included a modernist gold and quartz necklace and ring by B. Gabrielsen P., circa 1970 (\$4,312); an Art Deco jadeite, diamond, and sapphire brooch, circa 1925 (\$8,050); and a Cartier coral, diamond, and nephrite Rose brooch at double its estimate (\$12,650). Conversely, a Cartier gold *Panther* bracelet failed to reach its estimate of \$7,000-9,000.

At a recent Waddingtons auction, Georg Jensen modernist items also performed well. A silver and blue enamel suite consisting of a necklace, bracelet, and matching earrings tripled its estimate to reach \$7,000. A turn-of-the-century Daum enameled cameo glass vase achieved \$1,800; while a pate de verre covered box by Henri Berge sold for \$3,000. A Stickley oak-framed settee, with its original label intact, was bid up to \$4,000.

There was more evidence of increasing interest in mid-century Canadian art, along with a corresponding decline in more traditional Canadian landscapes. At Waddingtons, the few contemporary pieces offered all attracted bids, and a characteristic Sorel Etrog bronze figure - one of an addition of seven - sold for \$6,250.

Vintage Pucci, popular elsewhere around the world, didn't attract many buyers at Ritchies. Instead, Nina Ricci gowns and Christian Dior minks ruled the vintage clothing portion of a recent auction. They were followed by more than a dozen pieces of Miriam Haskell costume jewelry, most of which sold in the \$250-500 range. Conversely, a turn-of-the-century Boucheron diamond, gold, and enamel dragonfly brooch failed to reach its estimate of \$2,500. A modest piece of Petersen silver sold within estimate, and a Clarice Cliff *Fantastique* conical sugar sifter (melon pattern from 1930-32) achieved \$575. Ritchies next decorative arts catalog sale is November 22-25, 1999. (416) 364-1864 or (800) 364-3210. ■

Cora Golden is happy to try to answer your questions and share your interest in post-war Canadian design. She may be contacted by calling (416) 928-3502, by fax at (416) 928-1968, or by e-mail at rcgolden@sympatico.ca.

On View 1: Eames Retrospective

(continued from page 43) expressions of their beliefs." They made more than 100 short films on topics ranging from sea creatures to computers to bread. Their masterpiece, *Powers of Ten*, is still being shown all over the world. It was designed to "give you a gut feeling of what exponential growth is," Demetrios says.

Powers of Ten starts with an overhead view of a picnicker in a park. Zooming up, the viewpoint pulls back, covering larger and larger areas until you are looking at the entire Milky Way. Then the viewpoint zooms back in and ends up looking at the atoms inside the picnicker. It's a powerful film with a creative way of examining scale

and the size of the universe.

The exhibit includes an assortment of their films. A seven-minute film they did in 1969 on tops is often shown in science classes. It demonstrates the physics of rotational movement. The script is very simple: no narration - just close-up views of tops being put into motion. It's a science film, but it's also an art film. The motion of the tops, with classical music by noted film composer Elmer Bernstein for background, is mesmerizing. The spinning tops make you feel as if you're in the front row at a ballet.

Their film on bread demonstrates the Eameses' sense of whimsy and humor. It shows the whole process of harvest, baking, carving, and eating. At the end, pigeons fight over scraps of stale bread.

One of their most elaborate films combines toy trains, cars, figures and buildings. This film is like a good novel: even though you know that what you are looking at is not real, the world they created engages your attention.

The exhibit shows not only the Eameses' designs, but also their working methods. This show tries to get inside their heads. There's a revealing quote from Ray: "What works is better than what looks good. The 'looks good' can change but what works, works."

Their design philosophy for consumer products, whether they be houses or furniture, was to aim for reasonable prices and high quality. Their home in Los Angeles is a good representation of their philosophy. The 1949 house was designed with the aid of Eero Saarinen. You'd expect a pair of designers to produce a home that's striking and well-designed. What may surprise you is that the steel-and-glass house was built without any cutting-edge, custom work; everything was done with off-the-shelf components.

One of the major assets the exhibit's organizers had was access to the Library of Congress's one-million-item Eames archive. The Eameses saved anything they thought would be useful in their work. Several displays give a small sample of what they collected: 35,000 slides of anything that caught their eye (art, buildings, industrial equipment, road signs), toys, dolls, anything they got in the mail - from postcards to Christmas cards - that looked interesting. They also took a lot of photos of their own designs. They would photograph furniture in different lighting to see how it looked.

This eclectic collection is reflected in their projects. While their designs are often modern looking, their work incorporated what the exhibit calls "the aesthetic of collage." They combined the old and the new, the traditional and the modern, the handmade and the mass produced. Their interest in all types of design led to a 1958 commission to do a study for the Indian government on preserving and promoting indigenous Indian design.

The Eameses did not just send drawings to a factory. They were directly involved in the manufacturing process. They developed their own tools and methods. For instance, the show notes, they found that plywood tended to splinter when bent into acute shapes. Their solution was to cut slits and holes into the shells.

The Eameses believed that a design should solve a problem. One reason they generally eschewed padded upholstery is that they believed that was avoiding the real problem. Rather than adding padding because the basic chair shape was uncomfortable, they instead shaped materials to make them comfortable.

The exhibit includes a *La Chaise*, a fiberglass-reinforced-plastic lounge chair. This is a modern version of a 1948 design (Vitra has made them since 1990), and visitors can try it out. Many people have bad memories of plastic furniture, having encountered many uncomfortable chairs in malls, schools, restaurants and other settings. But you can see surprised smiles on the faces of visitors who sit in *La Chaise*.

One of the most interesting objects on display is a working replica of a rotating drum the Eameses devised to test the durability of molded-plywood chairs, and to show off their durability to clients. The noisy contraption is a torture chamber for chairs.

They also devised what they called the "Kazam!" machine. >116



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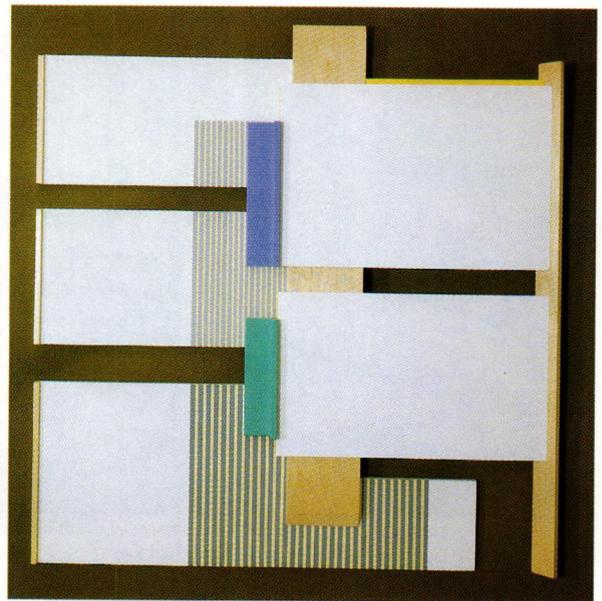
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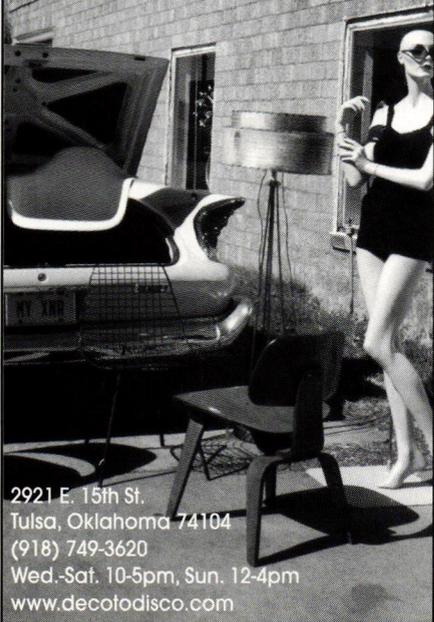
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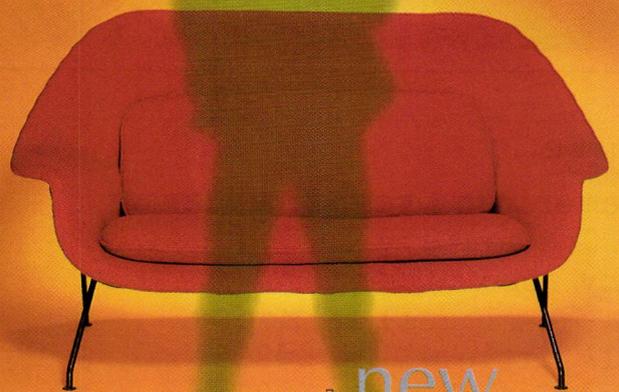
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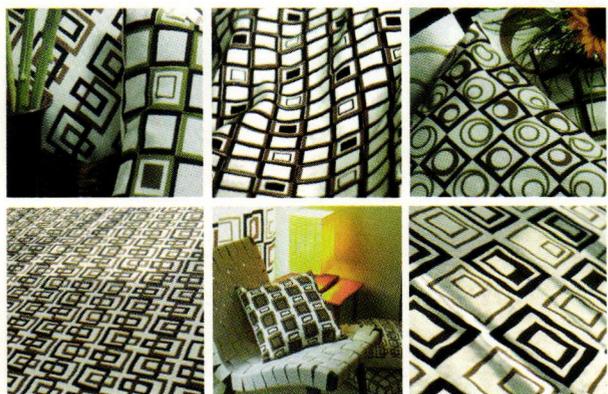


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On View 1: Eames Retrospective

(continued from page 114) Jury-rigged from scrap wood, wire, plaster, and a bicycle pump, this odd-looking machine molded plywood into chairs.

The Eameses often built on what they had done previously. In the early 1940s, they designed and produced molded plywood splints and litters for the U.S. Navy. Examples in the show demonstrate their practical bent. Slots in the splint allowed a leg to be tightly secured by bandages passed through the holes. Ray made some biomorphic sculptures by carving more holes into splints. The techniques and glues they used for the splints were later applied to furniture design.

"The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention" was organized by the Library of Congress in cooperation with the Vitra Design Museum. It will make the following stops: Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, New York, Oct. 12, 1999-Jan. 9, 2000; St. Louis Art Museum, Feb. 19-May 14, 2000; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, June 25-Sept. 11, 2000. The exhibit is accompanied by a catalog. The Library of Congress has put items from the exhibit on its web site at: www.loc.gov/exhibits/eames.

The Eames House, in the Pacific Palisades section of Los Angeles, is open weekends by appointment. Call (310) 459-9663.

The Eames Office has opened a gallery/gift shop at 2665 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA. For information, call (310) 396-5991, or see their web site: www.eamesoffice.com. ■

Jim Sweeney is a freelance writer and editor based in Alexandria, Virginia.

Auction Highlights

(continued from page 46) French artist Jean Dubuffet, c.1956, which achieved \$189,500 from a French bidder. *One Indiana Square* by Robert Indiana, c.1970, was also a strong seller, yielding \$55,200. Louise Bourgeois' bronze sculpture *Point of Contact* highlighted the sculptural pieces in the sale, selling for \$24,150 to a Connecticut bidder. The abstract work *Hangover*, c.1966, by Australian sculptor Clement Meadmore went for \$1,495.

Competition from internet and present bidders drove up the prices for a fine collection of pottery by Polish-born artist Lea Halpern. From her first exhibition at the Hague in 1931, she achieved great success and international renown for her simple forms and complex glazing. *Firmament*, a spherical vase covered in a streaked gray and tan glaze, went to a New York bidder for \$4,600. *Solitude*, an ovoid form covered in a matte gray *craquelé* glaze, yielded \$3,565. A Connecticut bidder purchased the bright orange and brown glazed vase *Gobi Desert* for \$3,450. Covered with a light green *craquelé* glaze, the vase *Sea Nymph* brought \$3,335 from a Canadian buyer.

Among the furniture and decorative offerings, an *Old Point Comfort Sofa* designed by Warren McArthur circa 1935 brought \$13,800 from a Maine bidder, as well as the accompanying armchair, which sold for \$8,050. A New York collector bid successfully at \$6,325 on a whimsical *City of Cards* folding screen designed by Piero Fornasetti circa 1952. Two other Fornasetti screens, *Acrobats* and *Stanza Metaphysica*, each sold for \$4,025. Also from Italy, a burl wood table by Ico and Louisa Parisi garnered \$3,737 from a New York bidder. A set of ten chrome *Brno* chairs designed by Mies van der Rohe in the early 1930s more than doubled the presale estimate at \$4,715. Designed by Hans Wegner, a pair of teak lounge chairs achieved \$3,565.

Christie's East 20th Century

One of the top sellers of Christie's East's 20th Century Decorative Arts sale held June 9th was an ash and linoleum rocking chair designed by Frederick Kiesler, c.1942, which soared past its presale estimate of \$5,000-7,000 to realize \$51,750. Other highlights of the sale included two laminated birch side chairs designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Paul J. Trier House, c.1956, which brought \$7,820 and \$7,475 respectively. A *Lounge* chair by George Nakashima, c.1960, sold for \$4,600; and a walnut floor lamp, also by Nakashima, fetched \$4,370. A pair of sofas by Edward Wormley from the *Today and Tomorrow* collection for Dunbar, garnered \$3,680. Josef Hoffmann's *Sitzmaschine* chair for J&J Kohn, c.1905, sold for \$14,950.

Works by T.H. Robsjohn-Gibbings attracted strong attention from bidders. Two pairs of *Klismos* chairs for Sardis, c.1958, nearly doubled their presale estimate, selling for \$8,050 and \$7,475 respectively. A white lacquered sideboard by Tommi Parzinger with brass strapwork and a black lacquered plinth base realized \$6,325. *Architettura*, a lithographically printed trumeau by Piero Fornasetti, c.1985, yielded \$8,050. This model, which was originally designed in 1952 and discontinued a few years later, was reintroduced in the 1980s in an edition of ten.

Ceramics by Gertrude and Otto Natzler saw strong prices across the board. A monumental bowl with a thick black semi-matte glaze on top of a dark brown underglaze, c.1957, brought \$5,520. A bowl in a charreusse and dark brown high glaze yielded \$1,955, while two ceramic bowls - one in a chocolate brown and purple crystalline glaze, the other in a lavender, cocoa, and ostrich egg semi-matte glaze - sold for \$2,070.

Christie's Cohen sale

Spurred by the highly successful sale of the Maurice and Margo Cohen Collection of Fine Arts in May, collectors bid enthusiastically at the sale of the Cohen's eagerly awaited >120

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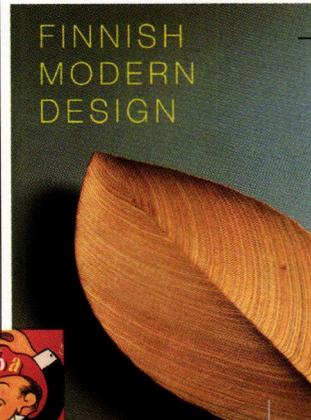
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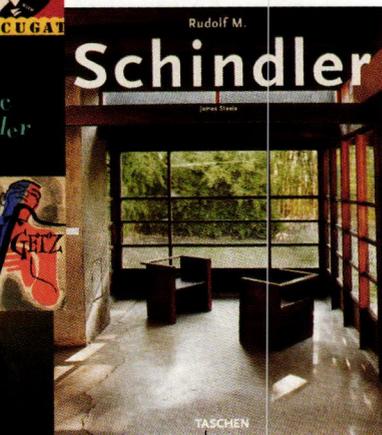
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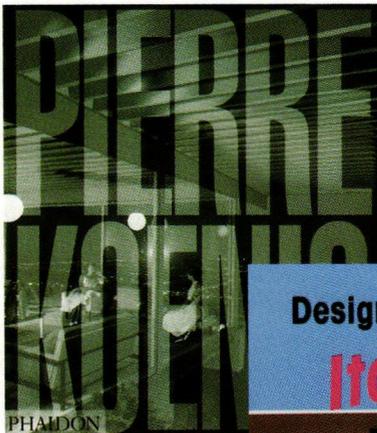
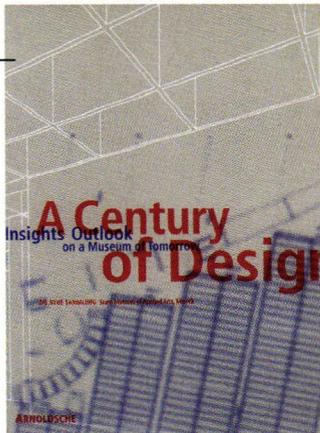
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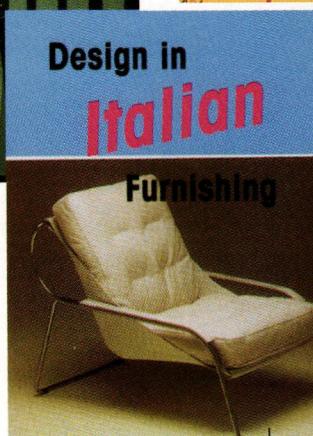
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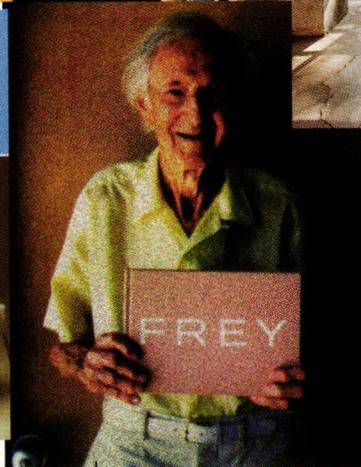
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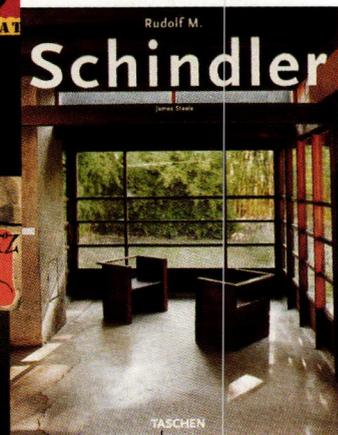
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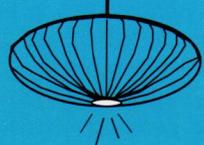


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collection of 20th Century Decorative Arts, held June 11 at Christie's new Rockefeller Center location. "The Cohen's had a superb eye, an innate curiosity and a willingness to seek advice from respected professionals, which influenced the quality of this exceptional collection," said Nancy McClelland, international department head of Christie's 20th Century Decorative Arts, explaining the success of the Cohen sale. "Objects designed by Archibald Knox in the Cohen Collection were the most important pieces in private hands. Not surprisingly, a world auction record was set for one of his designs, an enameled silver cigarette box, 1901, which soared to \$206,000, far above its presale estimate of \$60,000."

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Lars Rachen, Senior Vice President of 20th Century Decorative Arts, added: "The Viennese material was one of the strongest offerings in many years. A shelving unit designed by Otto Wagner fetched \$132,300, and the iconic *Seven-Ball* chair designed by Josef Hoffmann set a world record price at auction of \$75,000, well above the \$32,000 previously achieved in Christie's London May sale "The Chair."

Though not record setting, other top lots of the Cohen sale included an important white painted oak armchair, c.1902, by Charles Rennie Mackintosh which realized \$233,500. A set of eight bentwood side chairs by Josef Hoffmann, c.1904, brought \$156,500. More than tripling its presale estimate, an enameled silver and turquoise flagon by Archibald Knox, c.1901, commanded \$151,000.

The star lot in the morning session of Important 20th Century Decorative Arts, held prior to the Cohen sale, was a fine leaded and plated favrile glass window by Tiffany Studios, c.1905, which sold for \$662,500 setting the second highest price at auction for a Tiffany window. The second highest lot of the sale was also a leaded glass window, by Frank Lloyd Wright, c.1912, which tripled its presale estimate to achieve \$244,500. *Vide-Poche Fuseaux*, an ivory inlaid mahogany cabinet by Ruhlmann, c.1921, brought \$90,500; and a burlwood and shagreen table attributed to Dominique, c.1925, sold for \$68,500 to a private collector.

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Doyle's Belle Époque

A reverse painted *Puffy* lamp by Pairpoint Manufacturing Co. was the top seller at \$32,200 at William Doyle Galleries' Belle Époque auction of 19th and 20th Century Decorative Arts on June 16. Silver achieved strong prices in the sale as well. A Georg Jensen sterling silver tea and coffee service designed by Johan Rohde in 1915 in the *Cosmos* pattern sold for \$21,850. Also by Jensen was a sterling silver flatware service in the *Pyramid* pattern. Designed by Harald Nielsen in 1926, the set comprising dinner, cocktail, and cake forks, teaspoons, soup

spoons, and demitasse spoons, and dinner knives and butter spreaders mostly in sets of 12 yielded \$9,775.

Featured among the wide array of glass vases and other decorative objects by Lalique was the clear and frosted colorless glass vase named *Baies*. Molded with interlacing budding thorny branches and detailed in black enamel, the globe-shaped vase brought \$13,800. Molded with birds amongst thick foliage, the frosted black glass vase *Martin-Pêcheurs* went to a buyer from Virginia for \$12,650. Six bands molded with a stylized geometric motif ring the clear and frosted glass vase entitled *Lagamar*, which sold for \$12,650 as well. *Tête de Paon*, a figural paperweight of a peacock's head with sharply detailed features sold for \$5,750. Molded with mermaids and accented with a blue stain, *Calypso*, a clear and frosted opalescent glass open bowl with a flaring rim went to a buyer from Texas for \$5,175.

Skinner's 20th Century

A nice selection of Gustav Stickley furniture highlighted Skinner's auction of 20th century furniture and decorative arts on June 19. The auction also offered some fine examples of design in art glass and pottery, and decorations from the Arts and Crafts movement through post-war design.

French art glass in the auction achieved strong prices, including a Lalique glass clock that sold above estimate at \$6,900, and two Lalique colorless *Dragonfly* mascots that together sold high at \$4,945. Clarice Cliff selections proved popular with bidders, with a plate decorated in the *Autumn (Balloon Trees)* pattern, c.1932, and a pitcher in the *Alpine* pattern, c.1930, both selling for \$1,725; and a set of two plates - a luncheon in the *Farmhouse* pattern and a butter in the *Sunrise* pattern - realizing \$2,990.

Additional highlights included a suite of bedroom furniture designed by Gilbert Rohde, c.1933, which topped expectations selling at \$4,888; an Eames lounge chair and ottoman, c.1956, brought \$1,265; and four wire chairs by Warren Platner for Knoll realized \$1,840.

On View 2

(continued from page 100) vocabulary of Rietveld, Chareau, Hoffmann, Wright, Breuer, and others, Weinberger and Schmidt's works represent a significant departure, a "new voice" in reestablishing a dialogue at the level of the original masters of the Modernist development. "I have attempted to uncover and explore some of the unpursued possibilities from within the imaginative horizon of their discovery..." explains Weinberger.

Weinberger's vision relies on the collaborative partnership of Scott Schmidt to execute his designs. "These pieces redefine the essentials of sound wood construction - they ruthlessly violate almost every

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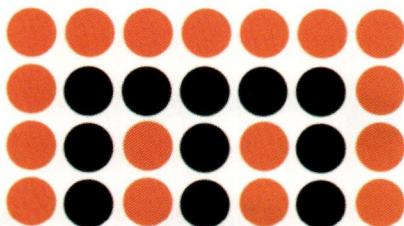
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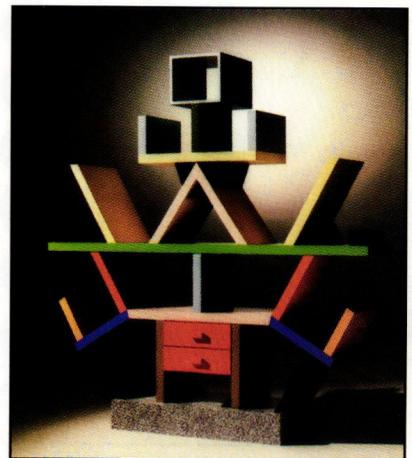
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On View 2

(continued from page 121) principle of established furniture construction, while requiring at the same time the most traditional wood-working skills, pushed to an exquisite degree," says Schmidt. The two met 12 years ago and have evolved a collaborative language that allows them to resolve production issues while preserving their well articulated aesthetic goals. The result is a body of work that at once combines structural novelty and superb craftsmanship.

"Euclidean Gestures" runs from November 4 through January 8, 2000. For further information call (212) 794-8950.

The Clay Vessel

Presenting the last in a three-part series of exhibitions drawn from the modernist design collection of the Norwest Corporation in Minneapolis, the Denver Art Museum presents "The Clay Vessel: Modern Ceramics from the Norwest Collection, 1890-1940" from September 11 through August 27, 2000.

The Norwest ceramics collection is one of the most superlative holdings in the United States. It features some of the most important American and European designers of the 20th century, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Tiffany, Henry van de Velde, Josef Hoffmann, and many others who were the top designers for such leading manufacturers as Rookwood, Limoges, Meissen, Villeroy & Boch, and Rosenthal. Nearly 40 beautiful objects in the exhibition reveal versatility and innovation in artistic style and feature a diverse range of forms including elegant examples of tea services, vases, bowls, pitchers, tureens, and other serving pieces. Many objects were created as one-of-a-kind works, others as limited editions, while still others were mass-produced.

Of the exhibition, R. Craig Miller, Curator of Architecture, Design & Graphics at the Denver Art Museum, states, "We could hardly have found a more spectacular collection to feature. The Norwest Collection truly deserves to be seen and appreciated by a wider audience." For further information on the exhibition call (303) 640-4433.

La Maison de René Herbst

The exhibition currently on view at Galerie de Beyrie features an exceptional group of René Herbst pieces never before shown, showcased in a recreation of the private apartment of the architect-designer as it was at the end of the 1940s.

Located at 4, rue Chateaubriand in Paris' 9th arrondissement, *La Maison de René Herbst* remained intact until his death in 1982. The unique pieces featured in the exhibition were acquired by Galerie de Beyrie in Paris from the estate of René Herbst. During his lifetime, the de Beyries earned René's confidence and maintained a friendly relationship

with him. In 1976 they were the first to show his work in their Paris gallery in an exhibition entitled "Furniture and Architect's Objects from the years 1925."

Prototypes, unique, and rare pieces which are shown in the exhibition include the famous library-daybed created by René Herbst in 1930 for his personal use; his private desk of wild cherry wood and perforated sheet metal, c.1949; the Agha Khan's lamp in chrome metal and frosted glass, 1930; and a chandelier of large plate glass and chrome from Herbst's dining room.

"La Maison de René Herbst" remains on view through November 25, 1999. For further information call (212) 219-9565.

Edgar Brandt

"Edgar Brandt: Art Deco Ironwork and Photographs from the Atelier," the first of its kind exhibition and sale, will be presented at the Moderne Gallery in Pennsylvania in collaboration with Joan Kahr, author of *Edgar Brandt: Master of Art Deco Ironwork*, from October 8 to December 24, 1999. Approximately 35 pieces of Edgar Brandt's exquisitely crafted wrought iron work and nearly 200 vintage photographs from the mastercraftsman's atelier will be on display, showing the wide range of artistry and the tremendous technological achievements of the premier metalsmith of the 20th century.

Edgar Brandt, a consummate artist-blacksmith, combined traditional forging methods with emerging technologies of the Machine Age such as torch welding and power hammers. While aligning art with industrial methods, Brandt produced *objets d'art* and embellished buildings and monuments in the style that today is labeled "Art Deco." Building on the pioneering work of the artist-blacksmith Emile Robert, Brandt became a leading force during a period of great achievement in French decorative arts. He created an entirely new aesthetic for wrought smithing and left behind an impressive number of art historical works.

Objects on display in the exhibition include jewelry, vases, paperweights, mirrors, sculpture, bookends, compotes, firescreens, and a console. Some objects are on loan from private collections and are not for sale; approximately 15 are available for purchase. Prices range from \$2,500 to \$35,000. The photographs on display, and now available for purchase, are from the collection of the author and were gathered by Kahr as part of her research. Many of them are included in her book. They were originally used in the sales portfolio in Brandt's Ferrobrandt atelier and showroom on Park Avenue in New York City. Many are one-of-a-kind commissions, while others are of objects which were to become famous in Brandt's *oeuvre*. For further information call (215) 923-8536. ■



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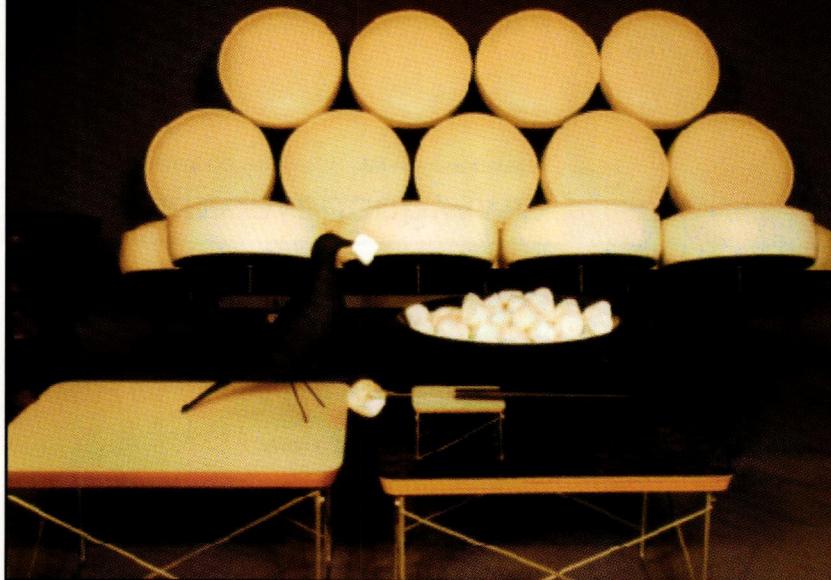


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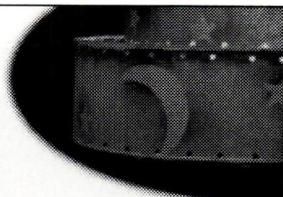
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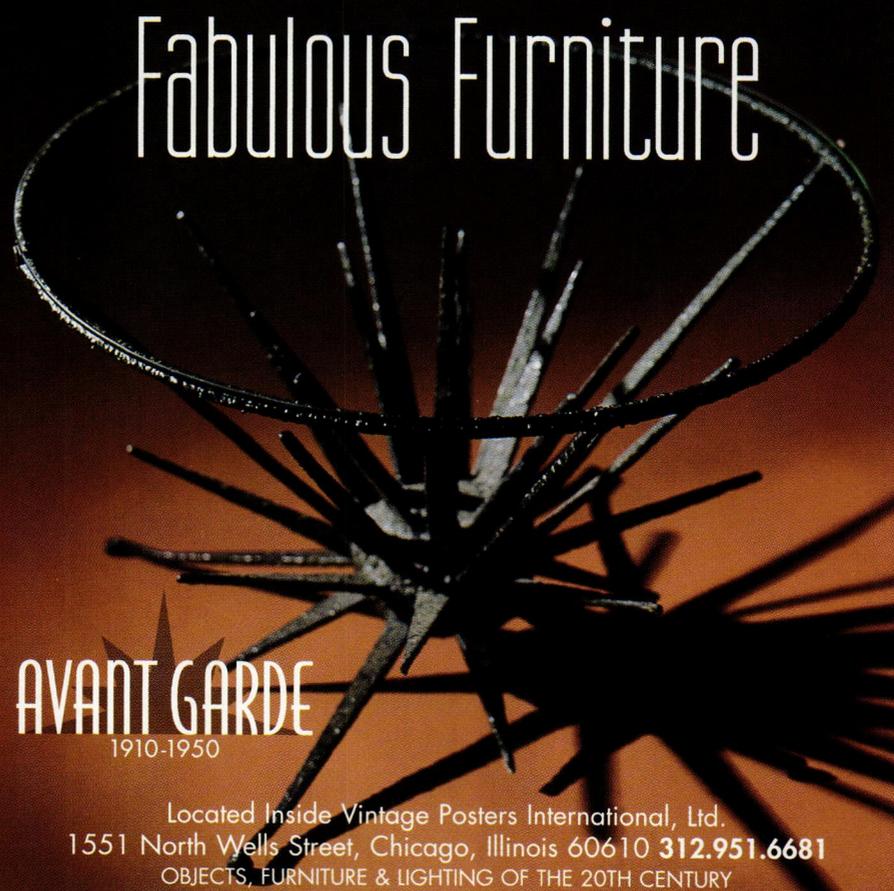
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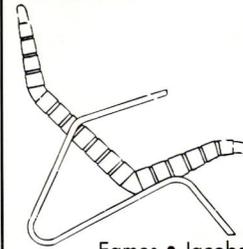
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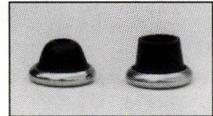
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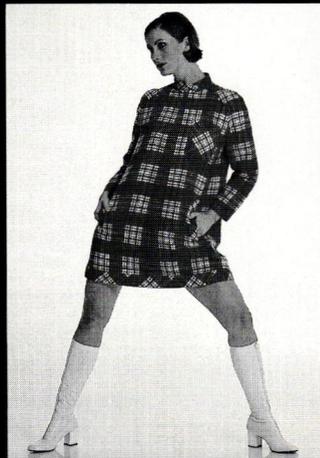
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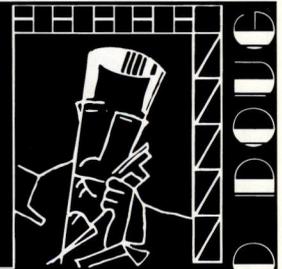
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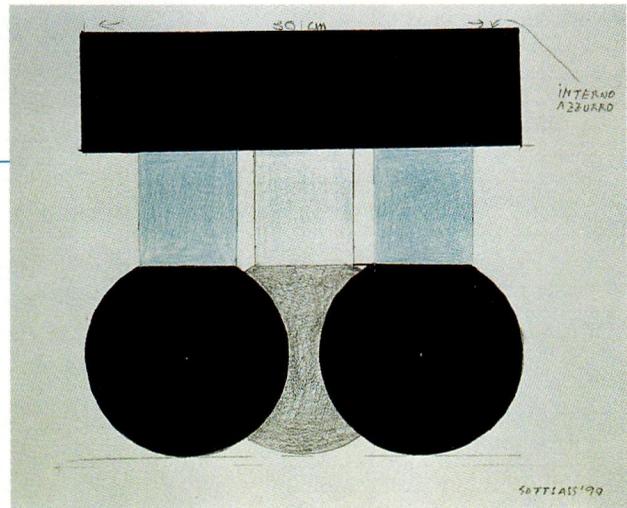
end notes bits of interesting information



Virtual taste

While relaxing on your Eames chaise lounge, sipping a dry one with a twist, be sure to click on www.drymartini.com to see a myriad of wares for the martini connoisseur. Communication designers Liska + Associates Inc., worked with a retailer on this e-commerce site, and kept it simple and intuitive with an emphasis on the products. Items to place in your virtual shopping cart include martini glasses, shakers, accoutrements, incidentals, and branded martini wear. A double click on the merchandise takes you directly to ordering information, ensuring ease and security with the transactions made on the site.

Also from Liska comes the stylish packaging and promotion for Modern Organic Products, Revlon's new hair care line for the modern family. Look for MOP in upscale salons across the country. Liska + Associates New York (212) 627-3200; Liska + Associates Chicago (312) 644-4400. www.liska.com



Ceramic millennium

On July 13th the 8th International Ceramics Symposium, The Ceramic Millennium, opened in Amsterdam. One of the high points of this symposium was the presentation of a special award to 82-year old design legend Ettore Sottsass for nearly 50 years of art and design. Sottsass also created two "Ceramic Millennium" vases for the event (one of which is pictured above) which are being produced by Cor Unum, a progressive Dutch pottery which produces cutting-edge designs.



End of the millennium trumeau

The "End of the Millennium" trumeau, manufactured by Fornasetti, was inspired by the designs of Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti. At the end of the 20th century, the time intervals between style changes have become shorter and shorter; the past is recycled, and the boundaries between the arts break down. Fornasetti has chosen the trumeau to represent continuity, as throughout history we see it change style but essentially keep its characteristic shape. While in the past it was the place for dishes and tableware, today it holds a computer, television, stereo, fax, telephone, and internet hookup. For further information contact Immaginazione S.r.l. in Milano at 02/6592341.

Sayles selected for Library of Congress

Des Moines designer John Sayles' most recent poster for the annual Miami Modernism show has been selected for the Library of Congress' permanent poster collection. Sayles has produced a limited edition poster promoting each show since 1995. The 1999 promotion - Sayles' hand-rendered retro-style illustration of a stylish couple surrounded by '60s artifacts screenprinted in vivid colors on a rich plum-colored paper - is a dynamic addition to the series of now-collectible prints. Sayles Graphic Design (515) 279-2922.

