

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TEACHING PORTFOLIO NO. 4: USEFUL OBJECTS TODAY, by Greta Daniel. 16 page illustrated booklet, plus 40 gravure plates. Published by the Museum of Modern Art. Distributed by Simon and Schuster. \$2.95.

USEFUL OBJECTS TODAY, a portfolio of 40 photographs of such varied things as saucepans, mother-of-pearl stamp boxes, crystal champagne glasses and inexpensive Japanese baskets, pigskin attaché cases, screw drivers and pliers, lamps and clocks will be published by the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York on January 1. A 16-page introductory text by Greta Daniel, Assistant Curator of Design, accompanies the portfolio. Each picture is printed on stiff 8 1/2 by 11" paper so that they can be displayed individually on shelves or hung on walls in classrooms or for home display. This is the fourth in a series of teaching portfolios published by the Museum and distributed by Simon and Schuster. It sells for \$2.95.

The 16-page introductory text, bound as a separate pamphlet, traces the history of the design of our useful objects and points out changes in their appearance brought about by the industrial revolution. Attempts in the 19th century to imitate craft-techniques by machines, and the 20th century acceptance of machine techniques, is clearly described and illustrated. The importance of function and material, flexibility of use and ease of handling which characterizes good modern design is discussed. The new role of the craftsman is outlined, and the responsibility of the manufacturer, the artist and the customer in the production, distribution and acceptance of good modern objects of daily use are stressed.

"The objects shown in this portfolio are made to serve us," Miss Daniel says in her introduction. "They reveal our spirit and the quality of our civilization. Their beauty is the total of many components: shape, proportion, texture, and color. The perfection and refinement they show, and the stimulation they provide, are the direct expression of a way of thinking as new in its interpretation of the world of today as it is old in its return to the basic elements of good design."

Objects from more than 12 countries are shown in the portfolio, including Mexican earthenware, French porcelain dinnerware, stainless steel knives and forks from Sweden, hand-wrought silver pepper and salt shakers and mass-produced plastic tumblers from the United States, crystal bowls and plates from Austria, Italian glass, a silver ice bucket from Denmark, woodenware from the United States and

more...

Finland, Swiss watches, German scissors, an Italian typewriter, and a radio and an electric fan manufactured here.

Among the well-known designers whose work is included are Edith Heath, Hermann Gretch, the Sitterles, Josef Hoffmann, Tapio Wirkkala, the Natzlers, James Prestini, Isamu Noguchi, Henry Dreyfuss, and D. L. McFarland. Design and typography of USEFUL OBJECTS TODAY are by Noel Martin.

Other teaching portfolios in the Museum series are: MODERN SCULPTURE, 1947; TEXTURE AND PATTERN, 1948; and MODERN ART OLD AND NEW, 1950.

Photographs and review copies available from Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York City.