

**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**  
11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

No. 51  
For Release  
June 6, 1959

Introduction to Twentieth Century Design from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, by Arthur Drexler and Greta Daniel. 99 pages, 133 illustrations. Published by the Museum of Modern Art. Distributed by Doubleday. Price: \$2.95

---

A selection of the most beautiful useful objects of the past 60 years, acquired for the Museum of Modern Art Design Collection, will be published on June 6.

Introduction to Twentieth Century Design from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, contains 133 photos of objects chosen from some 850 in the unique Collection, including furniture, fabrics, glass and silver, machine tools and electronic equipment. The accompanying text, by Arthur Drexler and Greta Daniel, describes the design evolution since 1900 of the things we use and live with.

"Two criteria apply in forming the Museum's Design Collection," writes Mr. Drexler, Director of the Department of Architecture and Design: quality and historical significance. An object is chosen for its quality because it is thought to achieve, or to have originated, those formal ideals of beauty which have become the major stylistic concepts of our time. Significance is a more flexible evaluation. It applies to objects not necessarily works of art but which nevertheless have contributed importantly to the development of design."

Three 19th Century chairs illustrate the opening section of the book, "New Techniques: Thonet Bentwood Furniture." Art Nouveau (1893-1910), the first movement to break with the 19th century custom of imitating past styles, is then considered. Wedgwood, Baccarat and Hoffmann, illustrated under "Classical Form Restated," are followed by asymmetric, rectangular forms of the Dutch de Stijl group (1917-1928); geometric designs of the German Bauhaus (1919-1933); propellers, laboratory ware and a ball bearing under "Machine Art;" and contemporary chairs by Eames, Saarinen, Breuer, Wegner and others. Also included are sections on lighting, kitchenware, home appliances, tableware, handcrafts and Matisse chasubles.

The book concludes with a look at the future, illustrated with an IBM electronic control panel and other examples of "The New Machine Art": "Since the end of World War II electronics has altered our conception of how things need to be shaped in order to work, and of how they may be related to each other....The practical effect of these ideas [on design] is not yet apparent, but we may reasonably expect that they will in time produce a new attitude toward form."

Mr. Drexler, who has organized many exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, is the author of The Architecture of Japan and co-author with Henry-Russell Hitchcock of Built in U.S.A.: Post-War Architecture. Greta Daniel is Associate Curator of Design at the Museum. She is the author of Useful Objects Today.

---

Review copies and photos are available from Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, Circle 5-8900