

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
December 1991

LIGHTING FROM THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES

Through March 29, 1992

Approximately twenty lamps from The Museum of Modern Art's design collection are on view through March 29, 1992, in **LIGHTING FROM THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES**. The exhibition, organized by Anne Dixon, study center supervisor, Department of Architecture and Design, exemplifies the wide variety of stylistic directions taken during a period of shifting design standards as well as of social and cultural change.

During the nineteen sixties and seventies, in response to a younger, more affluent consumer, lighting designers incorporated into their work new design values, such as informality, wit, and fashion. And as designers began to challenge the prevailing functionalism of the Modern Movement, in which lighting had been reduced to its most basic elements of bulb, wire, rod, and base, they shifted the emphasis to more extrinsic components, such as the fixture's casing and shade. As a result, lighting designers began to experiment with myriad and new materials to create more sculptural, sensual forms.

The works in the exhibition attest to the multiformity of lamp design during this period. Included are: Gruppo Architetti Urbanisti Città Nuova's flowing, translucent "Nesso" table lamp (1964) of molded plastic; Achille Castiglioni's "Taraxacum" Hanging Lamp (1960), a cocoon-like fixture consisting of sprayed synthetic fiber over a wire armature; Frans van

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Nieuwenborg's "Delight" Lamp (1978), a bare bulb draped with fire-resistant fiberglass cloth; a bamboo, metal, and silk "Akari" lamp (c. 1977) by Isamu Noguchi, who, among others, extolled the virtues of crafts as an assertion of anti-industrial individuality.

Many of the lamps in the exhibition are from Italy, which, thanks to the small-craft-based nature of its factories, was able to control production quality and to be responsive to designers. As a result, Italy became a vanguard of design in an increasingly international market.

In the eighties, a new, somewhat spare aesthetic evolved in response to the widespread use of the small halogen bulb, which was introduced around 1970. **LIGHTING FROM THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES**, which is on view in the Architecture and Design galleries on the Museum's fourth floor, looks at the bold colors, grand scale, and diversity of expression of an important era in the history of lighting design.

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No. 90

For further information or photographic materials, contact Trudy Rosato, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9757.