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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
 11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK
 TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"COMMAND PERFORMANCE" FOR POTS AND PANS, ASH TRAYS, LAMPS,
 WASTE BASKETS, BROOMS AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS AT
 MUSEUM OF MODERN ART. FOURTH ANNUAL USEFUL OBJECTS
 EXHIBITION OPENS DECEMBER 3.

For three years the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, has held an annual exhibition of well-designed useful objects available in retail stores. This year it was at first decided not to repeat this type of exhibition but so many inquiries and requests came in that to meet public demand a new show has been assembled by the Museum's Department of Industrial Design under the direction of Eliot Noyes. This exhibition of Useful Objects Under \$10.00 will open to the public Wednesday, December 3, and will remain on view through Sunday, January 4. Concurrently the Museum will show two other small exhibitions--one of silk screen prints priced from \$2.50 to \$10.00 each, and one of American Photographs at \$10.00 each by nine well-known photographers. Arrangements may be made through the Museum to purchase either the prints or the photographs.

Approximately 250 objects of wood, metal, plastics, glass and many other materials will be shown in the Useful Objects exhibition. The objects range in price from a nickel to \$10.00 and in size from a cubic centimeter beaker tinier than a thimble--the smallest of a set of measuring units in chemical glass--to a floor lamp. A folder listing every object with its price, its manufacturer, designer and retailer, will be sold for ten cents to visitors coming to the exhibition. At previous exhibitions of this kind many people have used this folder as a Christmas list.

The exhibition this year includes a small section demonstrating the elements of good design and suggesting criteria which the spectator himself may apply in judging the design of other objects. A large placard will be hung above a display of four objects taken from the exhibition. On the placard the four elements of design will be given as:

respect for function
 " " material
 " " method of production or manufacture
 the contemporary sense of beauty with which the
 first three elements are combined.

The four objects shown under the placard will be chosen to illustrate the fact that in any one object the four of the design elements may not be completely balanced. Each of these objects will be used as an example to illustrate how the controlling element may be material, function, production method, or the designer's personal handling of form. It is hoped that this concrete presentation of abstract design principles will act as a guide to the public for its future selection of useful objects, thereby creating a demand which will tend to increase the number and general availability of well-designed objects.

In selecting pieces for this year's show, material shortages were noticed to a large extent. The objects of metal and plastic in the show, while still available, may soon be dropped from production because of these priority difficulties. In some cases the chemical glassware shown in the exhibition might replace objects of other materials which are affected by priorities.

One of the features of this year's exhibition is a number of objects in chemical glass. This glass, capable of holding very hot liquids, is clear and thin and is very inexpensive, most of the items costing between 17 and 38 cents, although a few are higher priced. The glass, of standardized functional design, is cast in exceedingly graceful shapes. All the chemical glass shown is manufactured by the Corning Glass Company and is retailed by chemical supply outlets. Although not intended for domestic use, many of these items are extremely suitable for various household needs. For example, the Erlenmeyer flasks would serve as water pitchers, cream pitchers, vinegar jars, etc. The delicate volumetric flask would be a handsome liqueur decanter. The crystallizing dish makes a good-looking finger bowl, and the Petri dish is a fine ashtray. Other flasks with reed-wrapped necks could be used for hot coffee.

In addition to the chemical glass, the Museum will show about forty items in commercial glass such as picture frames, glasses, jars, decanters, Christmas tree ornaments, cigarette boxes and ashtrays, inkwells, vases, plates and reading lenses. Useful objects in Pyrex glass will also be shown.

Metal is a third group represented. In this category are items such as stainless steel pitchers, chromium poultry shears, a silver paper clip and a silver pill box, enameled compacts, pewter salt and

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pepper shakers and a metal and wood butter curler. Many tools, because of the simplicity and beauty of their functional design, are included among these are hammers, pliers, hoes, a hand saw, a crate opener and a pair of grass shears. Also shown are a number of kitchen utensils such as a vegetable peeler and bean slicer, knives, a meat tenderizer, stainless steel canisters, a ham rack, and the like.

In the plastics section are items ranging from gaily colored children's blocks to a cookie cutter. Traditional Christmas tree ornaments also appear this year in plastics. The ones shown are retailed in Woolworth's, Kress and Kresge. Among the items in transparent lucite are toast covers, salt and pepper shakers, men's and women's hair brushes, a clock and rectangular bowls. Plates and cups are again shown in unbreakable beetleware. Other items of interest are a whisk broom of pliofilm fibre, a transparent plastic waste basket, a plastic dog leash known as a Leash-o-matic and a combined broom and dust pan called a Panobroom. The dust pan when not in use fits over the broom at the base of the handle.

A child's small chair designed by the Finnish architect, Alvar Aalto, and manufactured in this country is shown in the section devoted to wood. Simple objects depending on the natural beauty of the wood as well as on their functional design include a pair of sandwich tongs of wild cherry, a bleached oak salad plate, a walnut tray, a magnolia wood humidor, etc. In this section is also shown a neat and compact fitted shoe shine box from Saks Fifth Avenue.

In the pottery and china group are one-handle baking dishes and casseroles similar to those once imported from France but in this case made in Redwing, Minnesota. Plates and pitchers in this section are retailed in the five-and-ten cent store, America House and Lewis and Conger, as well as in department stores.

Among many interesting and unrelated objects also shown are asbestos barbecue gloves, a sheepskin rug, bamboo window shades retailing at 32 cents a square foot, and gay red, yellow and green Mexican table mats from Bundles for Britain.