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ORGANIC DESIGN IN HOME FURNISHINGS—148—24 September to 9 November 1941

- Copy of Industrial design brochure
Copy (and photocopy) of brochure for Latin American Competition
Photograph of Antonin Raymond print
Photograph of Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen
- Correspondence between Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. and Alfred Barr and others regarding exhibition:
Undated but response to 12 May 1941 letter—Kaufmann to Noyes
12 May 1941—Noyes to Kaufmann
29 March 1941—Kaufmann to Noyes
13 March 1941—Noyes to Kaufmann
Telegram 17 July 1940—Noyes to Kaufmann
Copy of 5 March 1940 letter—Nelson Rockefeller from Kauffman with proposal
Undated handwritten note—Kaufmann to Elliot Noyes
25 January 1940—Kaufmann to Barr
- Correspondence between Edgar Wormley and Elloit Noyes regarding application
7 October 1940—Noyes to Wormley
3 October 1940—Wormley to Noyes
- Undated personal letter of thanks to Elliot and Molly Noyes from Lily and Eero Saarinen
- Correspondence between Maxine Livingston (Family Home editor, the Parents' Magazine) and Elloit Noyes regarding stories on the competition
10 October 1940—Noyes to Livingston
9 October 1940—Livingston to Noyes
- Correspondence between Leslie Cheek, Jr (Dir. The Baltimore Museum of Art) and Elliot Noyes regarding visit and lecture about Organic design
7 May 1942—Noyes to Cheek
6 May 1942—Cheek to Noyes with article regarding organic design vs. classic design
undated telegram—Noyes to Cheek
20 April 1942—Cheek to Noyes
16 March 1942—Cheek to Noyes
13 March 1942—Noyes to Cheek
12 March 1942—Cheek to Noyes
19 August 1941—Cheek to Noyes
9 October 1940—Cheek to Noyes
- Correspondence between Joseph P. Kasper (Executive VP Macy's) and Elliot Noyes regarding why Macy's was not selected to be apart of the show
30 October 1940—Noyes to Kasper
26 October 1940—Kasper to Noyes
- Letter to Elliot Noyes from Antonin Raymond regarding problems with manufacturing his winning fabric design—10 February 1941
- Correspondence between Marcel Breuer and Elliot Noyes regarding catalog and invites
15 October 1941—Noyes to Breuer
9 October 1941—Noyes (assistant) to Breuer
30 September 1941—Breuer to Noyes
24 July 1940—Noyes to Breuer
15 July 1940—Noyes to Breuer
- Internal Memo's regarding competition brochures, etc.

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17 November 1941 letter with referred to article to Miss. Hawes of PM from Sarah Newmeyer (publicity director) about the lack to acknowledgment in said article

Correspondence regarding furniture made by Ficks Reed Company and what to do with it after the show

4 March 1941—Kaufman to Robert Ficks
29 November 1941—Reed to Noyes
27 November 1941—Reed to Noyes

Correspondence between Noyes and Barr about purchasing items from the show

16 August 1941—Barr to Noyes
12 August 1941—Noyes to Barr

28 September 1940 Letter to Noyes from E. McKnight Kauffer about cover of brochure

29 October 1941 letter to Noyes from Cold Spring Bleachery regarding invitation to see show

Several documents about damage and insurance claims on some of the items

In-house registrarial documents regarding insurance

List: Organic Design Furniture Purchased by Museum of Modern Art Staff—June, 1942

List: Organic Design Furniture Purchased by Museum of Modern Art—June, 1942

Other ephemera: photograph requisition forms, exhibition record sheet, etc.

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PRINTS - by Antonin Raymond of New Hope, Pennsylvania

Duplicate

ORGANIC DESIGN
in Home Furnishings
Sept. 24, 1941-Nov. 9, 1941
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 St., New York

(2) *(D)*

3 13/16"

3377

no crop marks

5 2/8"

(5)

Photographed for The Museum of Modern Art by Soichi Sunami. If reproduced, credit must be given The Museum of Modern Art.

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for a super-colossal party... luncheons, cocktail parties, and what not. As you can see, this is only the beginning!

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Winners in Museum of Modern Art
Design Competition for Home Furnishings

CHARLES O. EAMES and EERO SAARINEN
of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

1st prize winners in Category A -
Seating for a living room
and in
Category B - other furniture for a
living room

ORGANIC DESIGN
in Home Furnishings
Sept. 24, 1941-Nov. 9, 1941
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 St., New York

for a super-colossal publicity blowout on the whole thing with
luncheons, cocktail parties, and what not. As you can see, this is
only the beginning!

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May 12, 1941

Dear Edgar,

What a lovely postcard!

B.K.F. never wrote me and Mauricio Brandt ignored their instructions completely - (to show me their chair.) I have since then been over to see it at Pascoe's. He is producing and selling it, and it really is very interesting. I forget just what he charges, but it is high, as usual. There are details unsolved - the leather has to be backed with canvas as Pascoe does it, and this is not too pleasant. He plans to make it also in just canvas, but I haven't seen one yet.

We chug along fairly well with the furniture, I think. I came to a crisis at one point where I felt myself being softened up for an announcement that the Saarinen chairs were impossible. To forestall this, I had a talk with papa Hirschmann who put on a little pressure and we charge on as before. The first moulds of wood are already made and will come out really swell, I think. I visited the Hakelite Plant, and it really is an exciting place.

We had a meeting at Marshall Field's during the May market to look over the first samples of furniture. It went well, in general, but there are some cries of dismay on size and a few other points. The Saarinen stuff has come out looking very small as individual units, but I feel that they are right when group as they are intended to be. Stonorov's things are so far in knotty pine and I think they look elegant, but your store is now wondering about the pine. Just one big happy family! Craig and Hatfield are an error, I'm afraid. They have batted out some awfully crumbly stuff which I am going to have to squash. Mrs. Raymond has the stores so mad that they won't talk to her, but everyone loves Marli Ehrman who has done some of the dandiest fabrics in modern history. We are doing a lot of barbecue equipment with Weese and Baldwin who are nice little boys and very good designers, I think. Picklepuss Paul Posser of Heywood's requires a month's worth of prodding and pleading before he can take a step forward, and there isn't anything much accomplished that couldn't have been done by mid March.

In the meantime many Museums have turned down the simultaneous exhibition, but a few thing it is possible. I have just taken on a new assistant who will help me at layout of the exhibition here and for the traveling shows. We are off to Heywood's again this week to see about their stuff. And Bloomingdale's is taking a deep breath for a super-colossal publicity blowout on the whole thing with luncheons, cocktail parties, and what not. As you can see, this is only the beginning!

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MMA gen Kaufmann O'D

Dear El: thanks for your deluxe letter, it was elegantly thorough. I'm especially happy the Saarinen production crisis is passed: I was sure it couldn't be skipped, and honestly, this may be possibly selfish of me, the rest of your and Sylvia's mighty labours didn't give me much ^{deep} concern. Since the simultaneous openings have dwindled, nature must take its (all too financial) course. I have bespoke the Downus beds again, and think some decision will come out of it. They are alternating between hectic dashes and frozen "living statue" attitudes just now, the results of an ardent life photographer.

If such unworthy sloths, ^{as myself} may venture to criticize, ^{the completeness of your news,} how is Molly & the chamaco; and your fine staff? Did you get an earlier card recommending some wonderful all-plastic 25¢ eye shades ^(for driving). Beauties. (Plastic is labeled Sumite) Anyway, multiple thanks. Things are elegiac here.

Edgar

Any wonderful plans a-boiling?

unofficial
don't quote me!

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KAUFMANN DEPARTMENT STORES
INCORPORATED
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

March 29, 1941

Mr. Eliot Noyes
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, New York

Dear Eliot:

I was sorry to miss you in New York but glad to hear from Elodie and Silvia that things were going ahead. I guess the travelling exhibit outlook isn't really too bright but I still think it is fundamentally important and provides one of the best methods for establishing the department in a favorable light in individual communities. A local and evident tie-up between industry and art will serve much more effectively than such a connection centered in an unfamiliar institution in New York City. Nevertheless, almost everything involved seems to be slightly rigged against it. I don't know whether it can be worked out practically or not.

I am sending your form letter up to Mr. Wolf who will handle the publicity angle in our store and I imagine that he in turn will talk to O'Connor who is in charge of the Museum in St. Gaudens' absence. I understand that Mr. St. Gaudens is busily engaged not only in camouflaging artists for the army but also in writing a book on American Art and War. I suppose this can be understood in reference to Sherman's famous remark.

I talked to your girls about the lighting problem and asked them not to wait until your return since I felt and expressed to them that your supervision of the designs was just as effective, just as available even if the other people involved had already started discussions on new entries. Although I didn't say it to them I felt that we were selecting designers rather than items and that as the jury had already established Pfisterer there was no danger in the stores and manufacturers discussing other ideas as long as you retained your full right of suggestion and veto at any time. I hope you won't feel that I was being forward in suggesting a little more speed in your absence but knowing about the slowness of our manufacturers, I felt it was the right thing to do. Please be sure that the last idea I had was in any way to diminish the Museum's authority or to interfere with your office routine.

I hope you and Mollie had a perfectly fine vacation and I'm sorry that I won't see you now until July or so unless something simply stupendous

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KAUFMANN DEPARTMENT STORES
INCORPORATED
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr. Eliot Noyes

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March 29, 1941

happens to the competition program in which case I would rush back home to save baby. As soon as I know where I'm going to stay, I'll let you know.

Best regards.

Yours,



EKJ:EM

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Kaufmann

March 13, 1941

Mr. Edgar Kaufmann
Kaufmann Department Stores
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Dear Edgar:

Elodie and I have been hard at work on arrangements for simultaneous exhibitions on the competition, and I am enclosing a copy of the letter which we plan to send out. Greenlee wants to send a progress report to the stores before we send out this letter, and we are going to have a discussion of it on Monday when Sylvia gets back.

Thanks for the letter from Philipp in Nicaragua. He is the man whose letter about tiger skins, rifle butts, etc. I showed you when you were here. We finally got his stuff about the first of March, and I have written to him to calm him down. Nothing very sensational about it unless you want some nice skins.

Things seem to be building up, so that I'm not going to go to Sun Valley but hope to snatch a week in New Hampshire anyway.

Regards,

EFN:as
Encls.

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Charge to the account of _____

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
DOMESTIC	CABLE
TELEGRAM	ORDINARY
DAY LETTER	URGENT RATE
SERIAL	DEFERRED
NIGHT LETTER	NIGHT LETTER
SPECIAL SERVICE	SHIP RADIOGRAM

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

WESTERN UNION

1206-B

R. B. WHITE
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

\$
CHECK
ACCOUNTING INFORMATION
TIME FILED

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

Edgar Kaufmann Jr.
Kaufmann Dept. Stores
Pittsburgh, Penna.

July 17, 1940

Pan American competition beginning to seem feasible after some interviews here. Have tentatively arranged to visit Breuer over twenty-seventh. Planning to explore South America at the Fair this weekend. How about coming here Friday as planned and vacationing in picturesque little New York till we go to Cambridge. Regards.

Eliot

JR

the educational and you, unending on you, to work extra and 800. Do ask me again! of special occasion, me you enough, even give 2 mention names? sent to me. (I hear we saw my uncle (Madison) 23 years, 2 check office -

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COPY

EDGAR KAUFMANN JR

My dear Mr. Noyes: I had no thought that the educational and highly pleasurable duties of juring with you, lunching on you, and being pted by you, could ever lead to such extra and extra-acceptable emoluments as no. 13800. Do ask me again! Honestly, as you know, it was a very special occasion, from every viewpoint, and I can't thank you enough, even without this last.

Re statement: why not give all prize & mention names? Otherwise it looks like an A-1 statement to me. (I hear we missed a delicious 1/2 of The Thief. And my uncle (Madison) thinks of disinking me.

regards chez vous, & chez office -

Σ.

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COPY

KAUFMANN DEPARTMENT STORES

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

March 5, 1940

My dear Mr. Rockefeller:

Some weeks ago I was forced to break an appointment with you because of the grippe. I had hoped to tell you about a plan we had at the store for a furniture design competition, in which we hoped the Museum would cooperate.

Since then I have heard that the Industrial Design Department at the Museum is to take more concrete form in the near future. Therefore, while including the original outline of this program, the whole could be recast to leave the Museum a more active role.

If now or later it is possible for a similar plan to be put into operation, we would be very happy to hear from you, and of course, more than willing to listen to changes or alternate proposals.

In closing, let me assure you once more of our very active desire to cooperate in the work of the Industrial Design Department and to encourage it in any way that we can as an active business organization.

Very truly yours,

Edgar Kaufmann, Jr.

Mr. Nelson Rockefeller
Museum of Modern Art
11 W. 53rd Street
New York, New York

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3/5/40

PLAN

The Museum invites three designers practicing in America to enter a competition for furnishing a complete living unit, except the technical installations, bath, kitchen and heat. Participants would be guided by a program drawn up by the Museum in which they would be asked to present their own completely unhampered ideas about appropriate designs for living in America. Perhaps some attention could be drawn to fields of American life that have already found fairly clear expression - such as the ordinary bath and kitchen, the automobile, etc.

At the same time, Kaufmann Department Stores would supply the designers with plans of the available area on our furniture floor. With some limitations on expenditures, designers would be free to create their own background.

Designers accepting the invitation would be asked to find manufacturers small or large to produce their designs. Different designers usually have different resources in these matters, and each room in the house of itself depends on a variety of manufacturers. Therefore, the financial burden on any one manufacturer would be small enough to tempt him to participate. Particularly in furniture, every manufacturer makes a number of models each year that are not placed in the production line. One more of these with possibilities of the very best publicity, and even an off chance of a usable design might be quite tempting, particularly after the manufacturing world had been properly prepared by publicity in trade journals.

If the designers find it impossible to locate a manufacturer, these trade journals or our store might be able to help them, although we are not anxious to stress this.

Besides contributing the floor space and local publicity, Kaufmanns would be responsible for building backgrounds, covering floors and executing window treatments.

Meanwhile, the Museum would be asked to select a jury to decide which of the exhibits is best.

As the program would have its greatest value over a period of several years, the designers competing the previous year might form part of the following jury. This would help build up the public acceptance of the important names in American home design just as now in ready-to-wear.

After the prize had been awarded in the form of some token, the store would like to buy the prize objects from the manufacturer, and present them to the Museum, which would of course be left entirely free to do with them as it saw fit.

You can see from this plan that no one involved has a particularly large financial outlay. Even in the matter of personal exertion, the heaviest burden falls on the designer, and of course, he is the one who will benefit most directly.

I hope it is clear that we believe the only basis for this competition should be good design, completely divorced from immediate sales possibilities.

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Postpone decision -

A.

KAUFMANN DEPARTMENT STORES
INCORPORATED
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Industrial Art.

January 25, 1940

*hold for new
appointee*

Dear Alfred:

You asked for our written ideas about a yearly competition to establish a quality and originality incentive in furniture design. We think such an exhibit, presented by a store, and with the proper prestige ~~and~~ auspices, would help the manufacture and purchase of better furniture.

The success of this plan would depend upon the cooperation of an institution such as the Museum of Modern Art, a group of designers, a group of manufacturers, and ourselves.

If we may assume for a moment the cooperation of the Museum of Modern Art, the exhibit would start with an invitation on your part extended to possibly three designers practicing in America at the present time. Each of them would be asked to design facilities for general living, eating and sleeping, as well as the usual accompanying storage pieces. To guide them in this activity, they would have a program of general directions which would have to be drawn up by the Museum and which we would like to see express as clearly as possible the desire to find an appropriate way of living for the American public. Perhaps some attention should be drawn to those fields of design where an American approach to life has already achieved fairly clear expression, such as the ordinary bath and kitchen.

Another limiting factor for the designers would be the area available in our store. They would be free to design their own background, with certain basic limitations of floor area and height, and not too elaborate a construction program.

Moreover, having summarized their ideas on paper, it would be part of the cooperation of the designers to find manufacturers willing to produce their concepts in actual furniture. Since different designers have leads to different manufacturers, and since each room is usually the product of quite a few different manufacturing companies, the financial burden on any one manufacturer would be rather small.

In furniture particularly, every manufacturer makes some samples every year which are not put into the production line. To make one more of these with the assurance of national attention and a possibility of a new saleable idea is something enough manufacturers

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KAUFMANN DEPARTMENT STORES
INCORPORATED
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

A. J. Barr, Jr.

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January 25, 1940

would be willing to do, especially if their minds had been properly prepared by advance publicity in trade journals.

If the designers need help, it is possible that interested trade journals and our own store may be able to introduce them to the right people, although we prefer not to assume too much of this burden.

Besides contributing the floor space and the local publicity, we would be responsible for building the backgrounds of the rooms and supplying the floor coverings and window treatments.

After the rooms have been opened to public inspection, the Museum would select a jury to decide which of the possible nine rooms is the best. Perhaps judgment ought to be restricted to individual pieces, although I think rooms better. One of our thoughts was that this jury be partly composed of the previous year's competitors along with other interested people, thus building up the general public acceptance and personal moral responsibility of the leading designers in the country.

Since some definite prize seems necessary besides the general publicity value which should be considerable, the store would further take on itself to purchase the prize winning piece or pieces from the manufacturer at cost, and present them to the Museum. What the Museum would have to do with these pieces would be entirely up to you. We would be willing to award a medal too.

As you see in ^{this} form of the plan, no single factor has a predominantly large financial outlay. Even in the matter of personal exertion, the designer is the one on whom the burden falls; and since he is the one who would in the long run get the most direct personal profit from the total venture, this seems fair enough.

Naturally there are a number of variations possible in such a program, and we would be very glad to discuss any of them with you if you felt that the Museum would be interested in participating.

Perhaps two other points should be made before closing:

First, that we are entirely of the opinion that the program given the designers should in no way suggest that the furniture

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PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

A. J. Barr, Jr.

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January 25, 1940

be designed with commercial possibilities in mind; in fact quite the contrary, they should feel free to follow their own best thinking.

Second, that the value of such a program would consist largely in a number of repetitions. If entered into, it should last five years with an option to renew.

Please let me know what you think of it and whether there is any chance of your cooperating with us.

yours truly
Edgar

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EDWARD J. WORMLEY
DESIGNER

1638 MERCHANDISE MART - CHICAGO

October 3, 1940

OD
Wormley

October 7, 1940

Mr. Elliott F. Noyes, Director
Department of Industrial Design
Mr. Edward J. Wormley
1638 Merchandise Mart
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Wormley:

We are sending you and Graves programs and entry blanks for the Competition under separate cover.

In answer to your question, the details of manufacturing are being handled by the stores who are working with us in this project. We could not select Dunbar to manufacture your designs should you or Graves win a prize. I'm afraid that if you enter this Competition you must do it as an extra curricula activity. I hope that you will find a way of working things out in any case.

I hope to see you again here or there sometime soon.

Sincerely,

Eliot F. Noyes

EFN:as

Sincerely yours,

Edward J. Wormley

W:gb

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EDWARD J WORMLEY
DESIGNER

1638 MERCHANDISE MART - CHICAGO

October 3, 1940

Mr. Elliott F. Noyes, Director
Department of Industrial Design
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Noyes:

I was glad to read in RETAILING this week the fruition of your design competition plan. I presume your swing around the country with Edgar this summer contributed a lot of information you would need to work the thing out.

I wish you would send two application blanks for the competition to me, one for myself and one for a designer in my office, Mr. George Graves. I won't be able to submit any past performance, of course, because it has all been manufactured by Dunbar and the designs actually belong to Dunbar. I ask you this, however: In the event that Mr. Graves or I submit something which meets the approval of the jury, could Dunbar be selected to manufacture the things we produce? It would be a little awkward in my own case I know were my design to be submitted or assigned to a manufacturer other than Dunbar, particularly if the firm is in direct competition with us.

We sincerely hope that the results of your competition will have a marked effect on modern taste in this country.

Sincerely yours,

Edward J. Wormley

EJW:gb

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L I L I A N S W A N N S A A R I N E N

OP

Dear Eliot + Molly,
 Better late than never
 to tell you what you already
 know. Its about your fine
 show — + what a swell
 time you gave a bump of
 little country bunchkins.

Our weeks in N.Y. will last
 us for months, + whenever
 we feel low — need a vacation
 — need stimulation — are lousy-
 lazy-bored + bloated — we
 will remember it + light
 up again.

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you had so much to do
 + to worry about them - +
 we hope things have been going
 well since. E got his first
 (+ last?!) check for \$5.8 just
 the other day!

Please both come + visit
 us soon, + talk to the students
 here like you did last year -

Warmest thanks
 Liz + Enzo S.

P'll tell you what I thought of
 David Smith + Jacometti next visit

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OD

THE PARENTS' MAGAZINE

ON REARING CHILDREN - CHILDREN GO TO COLLEGE - FAMILY HOME - EARLY CHILDHOOD - EARLY EDUCATION

October 10, 1940

Miss Maxine Livingston
Family Home Editor
The Parents' Magazine
52 Vanderbilt Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Miss Livingston:

Thank you for your letter of October 8th.

I am very glad that you are interested in our competitions, and I am sending you a program so that you may see what the requirements are and what we hope to get. I think perhaps that it will make a very good story for you when the designs go into production.

Yours very sincerely,

Eliot F. Noyes

Margaret Livingston
MARGARET LIVINGSTON
FAMILY HOME EDITOR

EFN:as

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the
**PARENTS'
MAGAZINE**

PUBLISHED BY THE PARENTS' INSTITUTE, INC.
52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York

ON REARING CHILDREN FROM CRIB TO COLLEGE • FAMILY HOME • FAMILY FASHIONS • FAMILY FUN

October 9th, 1940

Mr Elliot F Noyes
Director Department of Industrial Design
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, N Y

Dear Mr Noyes:

I am terribly interested in the two design competitions for home furnishings which the Museum of Modern Art is sponsoring.

While I know that it is still some time off before the competition closes, I do nevertheless want to register an interest at this time as it is possible we may be able to make some sort of a story out of the competition after the designs are actually in the process of manufacture.

Sincerely yours

Maxine Livingston
Maxine Livingston
FAMILY HOME EDITOR

ML:T

Dictated but not read

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THE PARENTS' MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED BY THE PARENTS' INSTITUTE, INC.

PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER
GEORGE J. HECHT

EDITOR
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ce Organic Design

(Best)

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK · BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

May 6, 1942.

May 7, 1942

Dear Eliot:

Let me thank you again for so generously coming to
Leslie Cheek, Jr., Director
The Baltimore Museum of Art
Wyman Park
Baltimore, Maryland
and giving us that interesting talk on
design. Everyone enjoyed your remarks tre-
mendously, and I am only sorry that so few Baltimoreans
were present.

Dear Leslie: At your convenience, if you will give me an estimate
of the expenses entailed in coming to Baltimore, the
Thanks for the amusing clipping.

We had a really swell time with you and Mary Tyler in Baltimore.
Let me congratulate you again on the extremely ingenious installation of the
show. I couldn't have been more pleased. Sunday, April 20th, which we

As to our expenses, I don't quite know how to figure them, but
taking 200 miles down and 200 miles back at 5¢ a mile (like a good traveling
salesman for Organic Design), plus a variety of toll bridges and ferries, it
seems that a check for \$25.00 would cover everything very nicely if that's
all right. Please remember us to the charming Wally.

Many thanks again for your hospitality. Hope we see you both soon.

Sincerely,
Leslie
Leslie Cheek, Jr.
Director

LCJ:rs

Mr. Eliot Noyes, Director
Department of Industrial Design,
Museum of Modern Art,
New York, N.Y. Eliot F. Noyes

EFN:as

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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK · BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

May 6, 1942.

Dear Eliot:

Let me thank you again for so generously coming to the Museum and giving us that interesting talk on Organic Design. Everyone enjoyed your remarks tremendously, and I am only sorry that so few Baltimoreans were present.

At your convenience, if you will give me an estimate of the expenses entailed in coming to Baltimore, the Museum will send its check.

I am enclosing an amusing editorial which appeared in the EVENING SUN. There was also a review by the local art critic on the SUN of Sunday, April 26th, which no doubt your clipping bureau has already secured. The reviewer, of course, is extremely conservative and has never been particularly sympathetic with our work, so do not be too disheartened by his condemning words.

Please remember me to the charming Molly.

Sincerely yours,



Leslie Cheek, Jr.
Director

LCJr:e

Mr. Eliot Noyes, Director,
Department of Industrial Design,
Museum of Modern Art,
New York, N.Y.

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Back To Fundamentals

Form-fitting furniture, about which we warned our readers some months ago when it was on display in New York, has now reached Baltimore, and anyone wishing to see what it is like may go to Mr. Leslie Cheek's emporium at Homewood and have a look. The idea is that a chair, by being molded to an average human backside, will be the ultimate in human comfort.

We don't know as to that. Our bets are still on that good old eyesore, the Morris chair—if the desideratum, as former Senator William Cabell Bruce might say, be anatomical felicity.

To begin with, a chair molded to receive a certain fundamental shape may not lend itself readily to changes in sitting posture. From bolt upright the sitter may change to a slouch. Rare, indeed, are those sitters (maiden aunts excepted) who can maintain the same position for long. People like to scrounge around in a chair, and that sort of thing is exactly what William Morris' invention accommodates. His chair, totally unaesthetic in appearance, is the ultimate accommodation for young or old, lean or fat, adjustable to all moods and positions.

The new chairs now being shown at the museum may indeed be of the glass of fashion and the mold of form; but consider: the human form is not static; it changes. The chair into which your svelte youth fits may be less comfortable in your fleshy forties and a rack of torture in your old age. But a Morris chair is solid comfort, from the cradle to the grave.

OF MODERN ART

WESTERN UNION

1206-B

Balt.

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TIME FILED

NEWSCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

WANT A REPLY?
"Answer by WESTERN UNION"
or similar phrases may be
included without charge.

G. WILL ARRIVE BY 4:00

EL

Baltimore Museum

you and Elodie can help us out with the rope for
ling of the pavilions, as well as with an amazing
piece of sculpture for the center of the show.

Let us know if there are any people to whom you would like
invitations sent.

Sincerely,

Leslie
Leslie Cheek, Jr.
Director

LCJr:e

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Charge to the account of

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\$ *Balt.*

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
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DAY LETTER	URGENT RATE
SERIAL	DEFERRED
OVERNIGHT TELEGRAM	NIGHT LETTER
SPECIAL SERVICE	SWIP RADIOGRAM

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

WESTERN UNION

1206-B

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A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

WANT A REPLY?
"Answer by WESTERN UNION"
or similar phrases may be
included without charge.

LESLIE CHEEK JR., DIRECTOR
THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

DRIVING DOWN FRIDAY MORNING. WILL ARRIVE BY 4:00

EL

Chg to
E.F. Noyes:
(lecture at Baltimore Museum)

I hope you and Elodie can help us out with the rope for the ceiling of the pavilions, as well as with an amazing piece of sculpture for the center of the show.

Let us know if there are any people to whom you would like invitations sent.

Sincerely,
Leslie
Leslie Check, Jr.
Director

LCJr:e

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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

April 20, 1942

Mr. Eliot Noyes, Director,
Department of Industrial Design,
Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street,
New York, N.Y.

Dear El:

The fatal day is approaching and we are looking forward greatly to your arrival in Baltimore.

Our Publicity Department has asked me if it would be possible for you to arrive at the Museum somewhere around 4 o'clock Friday? The Sunpapers here have an excellent reporter who occasionally interviews prominent people, and he called up this morning to ask if you might be available for such an occasion. Let me know if you can come down this early. It might also be good, since you could thereby see our projectionist and give him any particular instructions.

Mary Tyler is all blushes about her letter to your wife. However, this is just what she deserves for writing such a very gushy note.

I hope you and Elodie can help us out with the rope for the ceiling of the pavilions, as well as with an amazing piece of sculpture for the center of the show.

Let us know if there are any people to whom you would like invitations sent.

Sincerely,

Leslie

Leslie Cheek, Jr.
Director

LCJr:e

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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

March 16, 1942

Dear El:

Whenever we get to do things far in advance it usually turns out that the date agreed upon is not so hot. I am glad, however, that you are not going to back out about April 24th. Such a speech will not be difficult for you and you can use the journey out of town as appropriate relaxation from your labors in the "Wartime Housing" show.

Thank you for the very brief biographical outline. Cannot you supply us with some human interest, however? What is your favorite butterfly - which side do you sleep on most at night - or better still, have you not committed some atrocity which we might tie in with our campaign here at the Museum?

We are looking forward to receiving the glossy photographs from your Publicity Department and are sorry that you have no cuts which we might borrow for our NEWS.

About your lecture, I think the usual period of one hour is most appropriate. You can certainly have two projectors, but I must warn you that we have but one screen. This is necessary in that we use a Translux system of projection, and Translux screens are so expensive that we can afford only one. We are equipped to project both standard and 2 x 2 slides, as well as 16 and 35 mm. movies, sound or silent. Our auditorium holds 460 persons, is quite new, and very good looking, considering that John Russell Pope did it. I imagine that our audience that night will consist of not more than 200, as publicity for art events is increasingly hard to get in war-torn Baltimore.

I believe that the audience would be interested in the philosophy of modern furniture, with the handling and results of the competition thrown in merely to illustrate your points. I regard this exhibition and your lecture really as educational, although we shall both have to exert every effort to cover up this fact, since the public hates to be educated except by sugar coated methods. So few people these days have ever had the opportunity to think about the meaning of furniture in their lives, and to reason out the fact that 18th century furniture is perhaps not nearly good enough for a fine 20th century world.

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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Page 2 - Mr. Noyes

We shall be delighted to provide all of your traveling expenses and greatly appreciate your generous consent to give the lecture for us free of charge.

Sincerely,

Leslie Cheek, Jr.

Leslie Cheek, Jr.
Director

LCJr:e

Mr. Eliot F. Noyes, Director,
Department of Industrial Design,
The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street,
New York, N.Y.

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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

March 12, 1942

Mr. Eliot F. Noyes, Director,
Department of Industrial Design,
Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street,
New York, N.Y.

Dear El:

The night of the 24th of April is drawing near and I come as the clap of doom to remind you of your promise to come to Baltimore and give an illustrated lecture on the purpose and results of your famous Furniture Competition. We are getting the entire exhibition through Elodie and want to make a gala and important opening for this event. I suggest that you and Molly plan to come down on some train in the early afternoon of the 24th allowing plenty of time to see our slide operator and to change for dinner which will be at 6:30 p.m. - black tie. Your lecture will be at 8:30, and the address of our apartment is 3908 N. Charles Street where, of course, we are expecting you to spend the night.

Our little NEWS will go to press soon with an article about this coming exhibition. I wonder if you have anywhere about your Museum a cut or two which might fit our NEWS and thus save us something. The type width of our publication is 4 inches, so any cut having to do with the furniture exhibition which is this width or narrower would be most appropriate. If there are several we would like all of them, as we can doubtless get local magazines to use the extra ones. If, however, you have no cuts we shall be required to have one made. Therefore, please send us as soon as possible a selection of glossy photographs suitable for this purpose. We will choose the best one and return the remaining photographs to you at once. Any we keep, of course, we shall be delighted to pay for.

sent
3/12/42
C/E.

We would like to know a little bit more about you for our NEWS and for the buildup before your lecture in the local press. Will you, therefore, without fail send us a short biography and other human interest details which will help distinguish you from the usual dry art lecturer. I know a few of the latter but I want to be sure that what we say is true. We go to press soon, so do not delay.

Sincerely,

Leslie Cheek, Jr.
Director

LCJr:e

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THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART
WYMAN PARK · BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

August 19
1941

Dear El,

Thank you for your letter, and the good news that we have finally gotten the Baltimore dealer for your Competition Furniture. This is quite a victory, for Baltimore is notoriously suspicious of all things modern.

I am really sad about the prices, and I know you are, too - for half of your whole idea was to make such good furniture available. Everyone with \$90.00 has long since been able to get a pretty good modern chair. I suppose you have exerted all pressure you can to get the prices down - even subsidy for the first months by some of your plush trustees (who, I have found, are plush because they know how to keep their money!)

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I fear that \$50.00 per mill will eliminate our hope to include some of your pieces in the new members lounge; and I suppose there is no way that, for the publicity value + appropriateness, you could get a fellow museum a special price? Too bad.

Our show of the Competition opens April 24th & goes to May 17th. I hope that you can let us have a lot of the furniture, for we shall try to make a big thing of it. Please.

Also, won't you and your wife set aside Friday, April 24th, for a visit to us in our Balbinos home, for the opening, a gala dinner, & overnight? And would you be willing to give a little illustrated talk to our members on the Competition, its results, & your hopes, etc, etc? It would help the cause.

rest of letter personal - filed ID pastecover - Check

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*Return to
Mr. Noyes
B*

March 13, 1942

Leslie Cheek, Jr., Director
The Baltimore Museum of Art
Wyman Park
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Leslie:

You certainly are a clap of doom. We are opening our Wartime Housing show here on Tuesday, the 21st, but by the 24th I should be able to be up for short periods and take a little nourishment.

I am enclosing a brief biographical outline which we worked up for a similar lecture in Worcester. I think it probably contains everything you need to know. As to cuts for your NEWS, I don't believe we have any cuts ourselves. I am asking the Publicity Department to send you some appropriate material from which you can have cuts made. These photographs are free.

I would like to know some more about the lecture. How long do you expect me to talk? Could I have two lanterns? How large an audience is there likely to be, and what kind of people will be in it? Are you more interested in the philosophy of modern furniture or in specific discussion of the handling and results of the competition? There is so much territory to cover that it might help if you have a preference for emphasis. Either way of course we would discuss the competition furniture pretty much. Any other general dope you have will be useful.

Regards,

Eliot F. Noyes

EFN:as
Encls.

P. S. What with the way the Federal Government hacks away at incomes, may I count on traveling expenses?

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about good and bad objects.
All objects were lent to the
Museum by Baltimore stores.
We did not, however, give the
name of objects or the stores -
merely stating that all could
be bought in the city. We
have so far received not a
single word of criticism for
our plain talk about bad
design. In fact, the stores are
all for us - and want another
such show!

glass, china, radios, or whatnot, we are very eager and willing to do so.

I would like very much to have luncheon with you whenever you
wish, and to talk over the modern movement and what we might be able to do
together. Would you telephone me when you find it convenient and we can
make arrangements.

Yours very sincerely,

Eliot F. Hayes

Check

October 9
1940

Dear El.

I, too, am sorry we got to
see so little of each other while
I was working at the Museum.
Had I known there was no
real work, I should certainly
have dugged your foot steps.
Be sure to let me know if you
ever come near Baltimore.

We did not have any
a agreement with local stores

B A L T I M O R E M A R Y L A N D

ELF

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I have not had time to tell you what a really splendid idea I think your competition for industrial design can be. When are you staging your exhibition of the results in New York? Could Baltimore have the show immediately after? Are there to be any Baltimore designers entered? If not, do you want me to speak to the Director of the Maryland Institute to get some of his students interested? How much will the show cost us? These questions are far in advance, but it is necessary for us to plan that way - so try to answer them, please.

Best of luck always -

Leslie —

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OD

R. H. Macy & Co. Macy

New York, October 30, 1940

October 30, 1940

Mr. Joseph P. Kasper
Executive Vice President
R. H. Macy & Company Inc.
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Kasper:

The Industrial Design project which we are conducting at the present time is an arrangement with some twenty or thirty stores, one in each large city. It would not be possible for more than one store in each city to have it, for the same reasons that you are the only store in New York which features the American Way.

In this case, the project developed after we had been approached by the stores, who had something in mind. We are not tied to any store or group of stores except as we undertake a project of this sort with them from time to time. Our aim in this department is to use what influence we can to assist contemporary design in a sound direction. If you, at Macy's, have in mind a way in which we could work with you on a design project, the way is perfectly clear for a discussion of the possibilities.

You will understand that as our aim is better design of industrially produced objects, we cannot work with any single store or any single manufacturer for his commercial advantage. We hope to work with stores, manufacturers, consumers, and designers collectively as much as possible, and we are not going to become associated permanently with any one group of any of these.

The purpose of this present competition is to uncover some designers who will be able to produce a really good contemporary line of furniture, -- something which is generally lacking at the present time in the large stores of the country. We are undertaking this because, in general, the stores and manufacturers have not yet succeeded in developing such a line on their own. I am well aware of the complex reasons for this situation, and we want to do anything we can to correct it. The same condition prevails in the design of a majority of the things sold at this time, and if we can work with stores and manufacturers in the improvement of American glass, china, radios, or whatnot, we are very eager and willing to do so.

I would like very much to have luncheon with you whenever you wish, and to talk over the modern movement and what we might be able to do together. Would you telephone me when you find it convenient and we can make arrangements.

Yours very sincerely,

ELF

Eliot F. Noyes

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Cable Address
VASCOBINI, NEW YORK

EXECUTIVE OFFICES OF

R. H. Macy & Co.
Inc.

New York October 26, 1940

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLY TO EXECUTIVE OFFICES

Mr. Eliot F. Noyes, Director
Department of Industrial Design
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53 Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Noyes:

I was rather surprised when talking to your secretary yesterday about the Industrial Design Competition which the Museum of Modern Art is conducting, to learn that the entire project had been tied up with a single store for New York City. In view of this, I would gather that should one of our own designers enter this competition and be fortunate enough to win a prize, his designs would be exploited by this one store, which is naturally a competitor of ours. Am I correct in this assumption?

The fact that a department store has already been selected upsets me because we did not know that you planned such arrangements and, therefore, did not have an opportunity to be considered. You may not know but our organization has been one of the leaders in promoting and developing modern furnishings of all kinds, dating back to the original Arts and Industries show which we put on in 1927. I believe I can say without being accused of egotism, that our Forward House has a splendid reputation for its leadership in the whole modern movement.

I would appreciate it very much if you would take the time to have luncheon with me at your convenience, here at the store, so that I can give you an idea of what we are doing and have some time to chat about the modern movement generally.

Cordially yours,

Joseph P. Kasper
Joseph P. Kasper
Executive Vice President

jpk:lf

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ANTONIN RAYMOND ARCHITECT

NEW YORK 132 EAST 58TH STREET PL. 8. 1118
NEW HOPE PENNSYLVANIA NEW HOPE 667
TOKYO SEISHOKWAN GINZA 4 CHOME
EDWIN HARRIS JR
EARL STRUNK
JUNZO YOSHIMURA

February 10, 1941

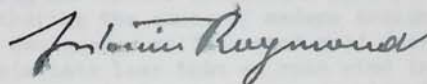
Dear Mr. Noyes:

I believe that Ed Shreuers reported to you concerning the meeting of the manufacturers with Mrs. Raymond and himself.re the printed fabrics. I regret that I could not possibly be present.

It appears that they could not get anywhere as the manufacturers took a decidedly negative attitude toward the problem, as though they had been dragged in, in spite of themselves, into this affair. They themselves may not have been conscious of this fact, but there is no doubt about it that nothing can be made a success without some degree of interest and enthusiasm. Because of this I have written the enclosed, which I am submitting to you, thinking that perhaps it may help in getting things accomplished. Should you think it helpful I would send one such letter to each member of the committee.

I am,

Yours sincerely,



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ANTONIN RAYMOND ARCHITECT

NEW YORK 132 EAST 58TH STREET PL. 8-1118
NEW HOPE PENNSYLVANIA NEW HOPE 667
TOKYO SEISHOKWAN GINZA 4 CHOME

EDWIN HARRIS JR
EARL STRUNK
JUNZO YOSHIMURA

Before any further discussion of the designs for production of printed fabrics takes place I would like to make certain statements which, I believe would assure our understanding and help us to settle the matter.

I would therefore be pleased if the individual members of the Industrial committee would read the following: ---

We, as designers, entered the competition because it was organized by the Museum of Modern Art and because the jury was outstandingly "modern" in sympathies. It meant to us that an important and disinterested effort was being made by a group of people to further the cause of modern architecture. We were so fortunate as to get the first prize which signified to us that the designs we had made were in the right direction -- were chosen in fact because we were outstandingly right in our understanding of the problem.

"The Museum has received assurances that the pieces selected through this competition will be produced and sold throughout the country." A group of industrialists therefore, are ready to collaborate in the manufacture of our designs. By collaboration we understand that they, on their side are willing to venture -- to risk time and money in putting on the market something new to the public, and perhaps to themselves, with the idea of furthering the cause of modern design. In this collaboration if we, as the designers, collaborated good designs, we cannot expect from the industrialists less than an open mind in trying to understand the problem of modern design in modern architecture and a willingness to put every effort in the intelligent producing and publicizing of these designs.

It is very evident that these designs cannot be popularized by being sold with the old stock across the counter. The only way in which they will have an appeal will be by being presented with the modern furniture and interiors for which they were designed and as something new and exciting. Dull and uninstructed salesmen will surely not put them over. We therefore count on your full and enthusiastic collaboration.

We are willing to prepare six of the designs for production, each in three color schemes. Each design will be accompanied by a sketch in color showing its potential use in a modern apartment.

Twenty-five years of practical experience in modern architecture with interiors both costly and inexpensive, has acquainted us fully with the knowledge of fabrics for use in modern architecture.

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*Organic Des
Breuer*

October 15, 1941

Mr. Marcel Breuer
1430 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Mr. Breuer:

Unfortunately, this department has been allotted only a limited number of complimentary catalogues on Organic Design for distribution to the winning designers, the jury, etc. Any additional copies must be obtained from the Publications Department at a cost of \$1.00 a copy. These must be prepaid also, so if you will forward \$1.00 to the Publications Department, they will forward a copy of the catalogue to you immediately.

When El left for his vacation, he was going to New Hampshire by way of Boston, and I thought he had a catalogue for you. If you haven't seen El and he hasn't given you the catalogue, can't you please let us know, and we will forward one to you post haste.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Alice S. Carson
Alice S. Carson
Assistant to Mr. Hoyt

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MARCEL BREUER, ARCHITECT

1450 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
TELEPHONE 452-5000

October 9, 1941

October 9, 1941

Mr. Marcel Breuer
1450 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, Mass.

RECEIVED
OCT 10 1941

Dear Lajko:

I have been checking up with the Secretary of the Museum about your address, and something must have gone wrong with that famous Cambridge post office because you and Connie were sent, not only an invitation to the opening, but one to the bouffet supper given by the Trustees before the opening. It is a crime you didn't receive them if you could have come. I know El had hoped that you might be here.

When El left for his vacation, he was going to New Hampshire by way of Boston, and I thought he had a catalogue with him to give to you. If you haven't seen El and he hasn't given you the catalogues, won't you please let us know, and we will forward them to you post haste.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Alice M. Carson
Assistant to Mr. Noyes

AMC:as

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MARCEL BREUER, ARCHITECT

1430 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
TELEPHONE KIRKLAND 0672

September 30, 1941

Mr. Eliot F. Noyes, Director
Department of Industrial Design
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York City

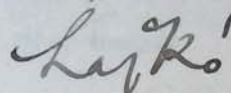
Dear Eliot:

I hear from other people that you have already had your exhibition opening etc., and I have also had a quick glance at the catalogue. I would like to have one or two copies of this and I wonder if you could send them to me.

I hope the exhibition is a great success!

Best regards to you and to Molly,

Yours,



(Marcel Breuer)

MB:clb

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OD

July 15, 1940

July 24, 1940

Dear Lajko:

Mr. Marcel Breuer
Woods End Road
Lincoln, Mass.

Dear Lajko:

Edgar and I are flying to Boston Friday night.

As Molly is going to be there too, we're all going to stay at the Weed's in Brookline. We'll call you Friday night to make plans for seeing the "Professor Patch" in Lincoln, and for talking over some other things.

Yours,

Mr. Breuer
EFN:MP
Woods End Road
Lincoln, Mass.

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date March 19, 1941

To: Miss West

Re: Competition entries to be
wrapped for mailing

From: Miss Sewall

July 15, 1940

Dear Lajko:

I have just come back from a mad trip around the continent with Edgar Kaufmann Jr. We have been doing some ground-work for the competition which I am going to hold in the fall for furniture, textiles, glassware, ceramics, lighting, and so forth. We have seen pretty thoroughly what is going on, and now I am about to write up a preliminary program. I'd like very much to get some advice from Gropius and you, and Edgar and I have in mind to come to Cambridge for the weekend. He would like to see some of the houses and we could all talk about the competition a little. If you are all going to be there, we will fly up Friday night and come back to New York on Sunday. We might even stay in Lincoln if there should be room and if it is convenient. If not, it would be simple to stay in Brookline of course.

Could you let me know if you are going to be on hand? Then I can get in touch with Junior and we will make some definite plans.

Regards to Connie,

Mr. Marcel Breuer
Woods End Road
Lincoln, Mass.

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date ~~October 30, 1941~~

To: Mr. Baxter

Re: ~~Messenger to CBS~~

From: Mr. Noyes (per Sewall)

Can Bill send one of the boys over to CBS, 15 Vanderbilt Ave. with a list immediately. This is needed urgently, in connection with the television program tomorrow night, and should be sent within an hour.

G.S.S.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

To: Miss East
From: Mr. Noyes

A group of buyers from the ...
Competition are going to ...
stock in the morning,

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Open

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date March 19, 1941

To: Miss West

Re: Competition entries to be wrapped for mailing

From: Miss Sewall

We have about twenty-four competition entries which have not as yet been picked up at the front desk, and as people have stopped coming for them, we have decided to mail them. Will it be possible for Bill to get these mailed before the end of this week?

A.S.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

To: Miss West
From: Miss Sewall
By: Mr. Hayes

a group of buyers from the stores and
competition are going to meet at
eleven in the morning, in the hallway

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date November 15, 1940

To: Miss West
From: Miss Sewall

Re: Stock sent to Center
Service to be used for
Comp. Bulletin mailing

We have sent 7000^{2nd} sheets of 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ mimeograph paper to Center Services to be used for printing the Competition Bulletin. They will use 1000 sheets with the Museum's letterhead which they already have at Center Services. Any of the second sheets which are not used will be returned to the Museum.

CC: Mr. Barr

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date: ~~September 3, 1940~~

To: Mr. Abbott

Re: ~~House Furnishings~~

From: Mr. Noyes

~~Competition~~

Here is the complete Competition program. I want you and Alfred both to look it over and then I want to have it go to Hirschmann at Bloomingdales. It should be made an addition to the contract between Bloomingdale and us. Please look particularly at Page 6 under awards. It is our duty, of course, to protect the designers completely. I think that item 3 under awards will cover the situation, even if the whole thing stops after the competition, but perhaps we need to add a note to the effect that the stores will pay these advance royalties or prizes. The South American program starts on Page 8 and the awards there are on Page 9. The program, as approved by you, Alfred and Bloomingdale must be ready for release by the end of this week.

CC: Mr. Barr

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OD PH

... Your efforts to make the readers think about the furniture and modern
... it is all to the good, but they cut out of the most important part
... to such understanding; i.e., the exhibition at the Museum? November 17, 1941.

... Because the antecedents of such design are very important, we
... tried to show briefly the origin of the design philosophy, the direction in
... along to the whole modern movement in design. This is nothing complicated or

Dear Miss Hawes:

... I need my words to explain it. The word "modern" doesn't
... it represents in furniture design what you do in house
... design.

I enclose a copy of my letter to Miss Ashton of PH, who
sent us a tear sheet of your article of October 26 with the request that
we post it on our Bulletin Board and have reprints made of it. We are
still puzzled by the slant you took in your article, which ignored the
Museum's part in the project. It must have been obvious to you that the
design progress represented could not have come from Bloomingdale's alone.

For your information, I will say without going into de-
tail that Bloomingdale's approached us with the request that we help them
find some new designers of modern furniture. We were delighted with this
desire on the part of a retailer to put good furniture on the market, but
we insisted that the new designers be found through a competition. We
were also the ones to insist that other leading stores throughout the
country be drawn into the project.

It has been a matter of amazement to us at the Museum
that you of all persons and all newspapers, should have concentrated on
Bloomingdale's excellent exhibition--necessarily designed to sell the
furniture--and have completely ignored the Museum's exhibition which was
designed for the very purpose of explaining the idea of the project and
the reasons behind modern furniture design. The other New York papers,
all of which depend upon and must therefore reluctantly cater at times
to big advertisers, concentrated on the manifest purpose of the Museum's
exhibition which was to give the public some understanding of the under-
lying principles back of the furniture. In other words, the Museum tried
to sell the idea of modern furniture to the public, leaving it to Blooming-
dale's to sell the actual pieces.

But the other New York newspapers are not blessed either
with a writer such as you or with freedom from advertisers such as is your
great privilege, to go analytically into the non-commercial aspects of
furniture design as you are able to do. Yours was the one newspaper and
you were the one writer who not only could have seen clearly what we were
trying to do but--of even greater importance--had the special talent to
project your understanding to your readers.

If a museum such as ours--which earnestly and continually
tries to improve public taste by appealing to the public's own good sense--
cannot rely upon you to further the gospel of good taste through an under-
standing of the principles of design, it is indeed regrettable. You know
far better than we do how impossible it is for a writer on household sub-
jects in any other newspaper to escape the continuous and merciless press-
ure of advertisers. You are a free woman.

You have done a wonderful job in writing up the furniture

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Miss Hawes

-2-

Nov. 17, 1941.

itself. Your efforts to make the readers think about the furniture and understand it are all to the good, but why omit one of the most important guides to such understanding; i.e., the exhibition at the Museum?

Because the antecedents of such design are very important, we tried to show briefly the origin of the design philosophy, the direction it gives to the whole modern movement in design. This is nothing complicated or obscure, and doesn't need big words to explain it. The word organic needn't trouble you so. It represents in furniture design much what you do in dress design.

If the design background is grasped, there are still many other factors influencing design—some of which you ask the spectator to wonder about. We explained many of those here. In our exhibition we showed why chair design strives for lighter construction and how the material affects this. We showed the various unit systems developed up to the present and analyzed the three which are used by designers in this project. You yourself could have found here why one set of cases is 18" deep—NOT because the designer uses a portfolio, as you stated in your article. You might have found good and helpful our idea of inviting spectators to rearrange the unit cases themselves so they might find out concretely their advantages and limitations.

Since all this is very obvious, we feel that you must have had some specific reason for your handling of the story. While we look to PM as the most progressive paper in New York and as a crusader in most fields, we are much disappointed that it does not take a strong contemporary stand on design. The one exception has been your own interesting and progressive approach. Since your article of October 26 was primarily educational, we would appreciate knowing your reason for ignoring the sincere educational effort which was our exhibition.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Newmeyer
Publicity Director

Miss Elizabeth Hawes
PM
27 Sixth Avenue
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Encl.
SN:lf

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1941, 12.
SHIPPING NEWS

*What the New Organic
Design Is All About*



One of the new "Organic" pieces. Note the new line in the design of the legs. The chair is natural birch; upholstery is two box pillows. \$59.50 at Bloomingdale's.

A great deal can be said (a lot is) about the new "Organic Design" furniture at Bloomingdale's.

In case you're confused, this new furniture is an attempt to create a new and different line, using such departures as triangular forms, wedge-shape sofa and bed legs, and curled-up table edges.

The presentation and content is more than just casually interesting. It reflects a great deal of planning and talent, widely-publicized by the deft hand of explorative, trend-minded Ira Hirschmann, Bloomingdale's promotion head.

However, the merchandise is high in price, unless it is because so much thinking had to be paid for, and because the manufacture has not yet reached mass production. It is difficult to see why such very simple pieces command such prices. Some of the chests and book shelf arrangements look easy enough to copy at a hobby bench, and no doubt will be.

The various combinations of wood and hemp, leather and metal, are worth noting, and the color schemes and fabrics can be easily adapted for everyday use.

Some of the pieces are structurally questionable. The scale of several of the chairs looks somewhat fragile, and the desk pieces look unbalanced.—S. M.

Mr. Robert Ficks Jr.
Ficks Reed Co.
424 Findlay Street
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Mr. Ficks:

I have not answer of my facts. Nevertheless, Noyes, who has returned from Strawbridge to Gimbels September 23, 1941. Commence since we have retained only of August 2, 1940, February

I hope that this difficulty. If you can thi know.

EKjr:as

942

CINCINNATI OHIO - 424 FINDLAY ST
NEW YORK CITY - 325 MADISON AVE.

September 25, 1941.

wanted to be quite sure
less and a talk with Mr.
owing; that the switch
g of the Museum show on
not be forwarded to you
me on preliminary memoranda
h 25, 1941 and August 2, 1941.

you straighten out your
can help you, please let us

of the pieces, so
ive you release

rest in these

very truly,

THE COMPANY

Bob

FURNITURE OF ROMANCE

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March 4, 1942

Mr. Robert Ficks Jr.
Ficks Reed Co.
424 Findlay Street
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Mr. Ficks:

I have not answered your request sooner because I wanted to be quite sure of my facts. Nevertheless, despite a search through our files and a talk with Mr. Noyes, who has returned from his trip, I find only the following: that the switch from Strawbridge to Gabels occurred just before the opening of the Museum show on September 23, 1941. Communications in our files, which cannot be forwarded to you since we have retained only one copy, show Strawbridge's name on preliminary memoranda of August 2, 1940, February 3, 1941, February 4, 1941, March 25, 1941 and August 2, 1941.

I hope that this information will suffice to help you straighten out your difficulty. If you can think of any other way in which we can help you, please let us know.

Yours truly,

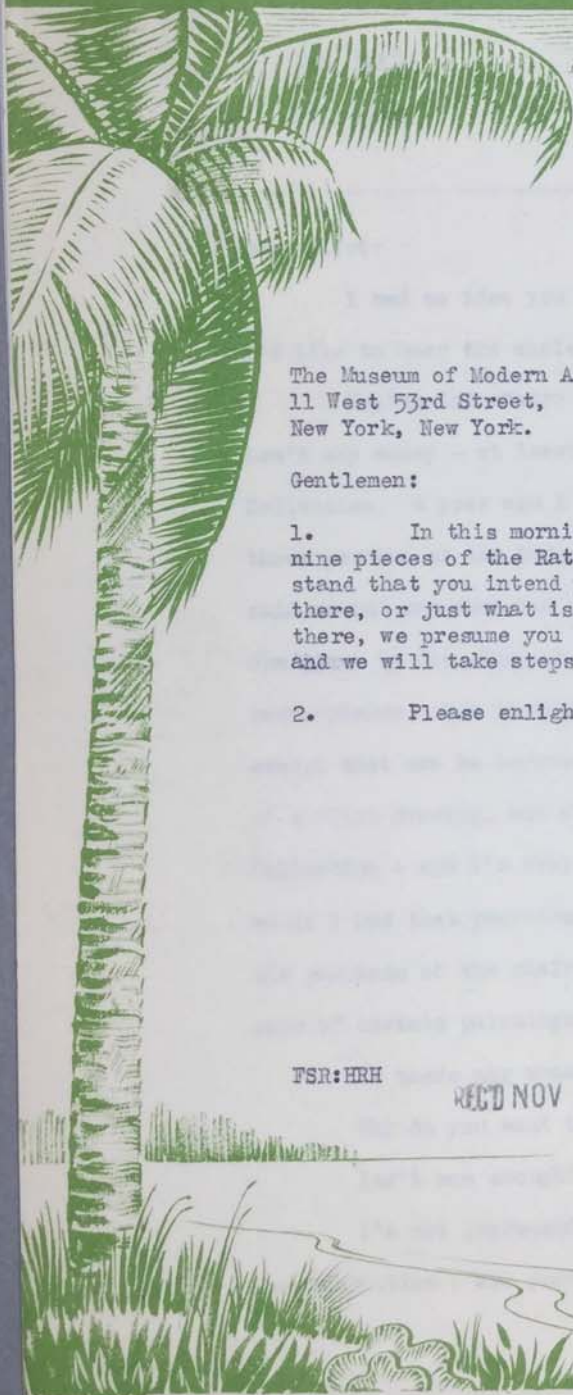
Edgar Kaufmann Jr.

EKjr:as

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FICKS REED CO.



CINCINNATI OHIO - 424 FINDLAY ST.
NEW YORK CITY - 385 MADISON AVE.

Cincinnati, Ohio,
November 27, 1941.

The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street,
New York, New York.

Gentlemen:

Attention Mr. Eliot Noyes

1. In this morning's mail we received an order #16001, covering nine pieces of the Rattan Furniture on display there. Do we understand that you intend purchasing these nine pieces and keeping them there, or just what is this order? If this is an order for the pieces there, we presume you have no use for the other pieces that are left and we will take steps to dispose of them.

2. Please enlighten us about this.

Yours very truly,

FICKS REED COMPANY

FR
President.

FSR:HRH

REC'D NOV 29 1941

FURNITURE OF ROMANCE

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Greensboro, Vt.
August 16, 1941

To: MR. NOYES

Re: Yours of the 12th

From: MR. BARR

Dear Eliot:

I had no idea you were having such a time with the organics.

I'd like to hear the whole story eventually - but meanwhile my sympathy!

Buying the chairs is a problem for the simple reason that there isn't any money - at least none in purchasing funds for the Museum Collection. A year ago I thought we were going to have five or at least three percent of the budget for purchases - but that was an illusion for said amount was absorbed into the general budget. I do have a large sum given by Mrs. Guggenheim for the purchase of one or two expensive masterpieces - but no money for lesser paintings, prints, and/or chairs except what can be borrowed or raised by sales. I do have \$125 from sale of a Bliss drawing, but it has to be reserved for additions to the Bliss Collection - and I'm over \$1000 in debt with no funds in sight. Believe me if I had that percentage of the budget I would be delighted to approve the purchase of the chairs. And it may be possible to find some money by sale of certain paintings but that is uncertain and in any case not immediate.

Is there any money for furnishing the 6th Floor?

Why do you want two each?

Isn't one enough?

I'm not impressed by their "grousing" at supplying us chairs free for exhibition - are you? Most manufacturers would pay for the privilege

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date August 16, 1941

To: MR. NOYES

Re: Yours of August 12th

From: MR. BARR

-2-

and give us the chairs to boot - especially with \$1,000,000 army order in the works.

At least they should let us have the chairs at cost, not at wholesale.

What do you think? Write me frankly.

Best,

Alfred

P.S. If, as you say, these chairs are the first experimental series it seems to me all the more important not to acquire two sets at great expense - but, of course somehow we must acquire one set.

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... dining chairs, four sectional chairs, two arm chairs, and two reclining chairs. Perhaps we would not want as many as six dining chairs in the collection, but I think we would want at least two of them.

August 12, 1941

I am writing to Heywood-Wakefield today, telling them that we need all these pieces for the exhibition, and that I am recommending to the Acquisitions Department that we buy most of them for the permanent collection. I do not know if you think this is a good idea or not, but I will cheer them up.

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr.
Greensboro, Vermont

What do you think about all this?

Dear Alfred:

Yours very sincerely,

After colossal difficulties, obstinacies, and a lot of long distance calls, the Saarinen chairs appear to be going through.

There are a number of problems which there has not been time to solve. For instance, on the arm chair and the reclining chair the curves of the back were so complicated that it was not found possible at this point to get sufficiently finished surfaces to expose the wood. Therefore, fabric has been applied on the backs of all except the little dining chair. All four chairs are incredibly comfortable and terribly exciting. The excitement of sitting in them is not going to be a middle class thrill at this point because the prices are something terrific. I cannot track down the exact reason for it, but the shells as they come from Haskelite (which is doing million dollar orders for the Government on the side) cost a lot more than originally estimated. The application of the upholstery is very expensive as is also the foam rubber. We reached a crisis last week when the wholesale costs on these chairs were finally determined, and the manufacturer wanted to drop the entire project because of it. They are going ahead, however, because Bloomingdale's has agreed to sell these chairs at about a 10% mark up, instead of the usual 100%.

In the mean time we are working on Haskelite, and will work on Heywood's to see if they cannot be brought into a reasonable price range for another season.

Now, we have imposed on the good nature of Heywood-Wakefield to make these chairs when from the very beginning they did not want to. They are grouching a little bit at the prospect of supplying us free for the exhibition. The fourteen chairs which I have asked for, the wholesale value of which adds up to about \$800, is quite a lot of stock for them to lend us for a long time. It seems to me that we are going to want to buy a number of these chairs for the permanent collection in any case, and I would like to recommend that we buy these now at wholesale cost. Specifically, I have asked for six

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11.

dining chairs, four sectional chairs, two arm chairs, and two reclining chairs. Perhaps we would not want as many as six dining chairs in the collection, but I think we would want at least two of everything.

I am writing to Heywood-Wakefield today, telling them that we need all these pieces for the exhibition, and that I am recommending to the Acquisitions Department that we buy most of them for the permanent collection. Whether we do or not, this will cheer them up.

What do you think about all this?

Yours very sincerely,

Eliot F. Noyes

efn:ljs

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4111A per director
Organic Design

Barr

In order to give you an idea of the general organization of the catalog, here is an outline of what goes on for the "Organic Design" pages.

Page 1 Title
 2 Acknowledgments, list of stores, manufacturers, donors, etc.
 3 Table of contents
 4 Story of the competition, winners' names August 19, 1941
 5-8 Outline of the development of modern furniture, with photographs as noted in the text.
 9 Unit furniture, photographs
 10-11 Chairs, various photographs with text showing how the process goes on

Mr. Alfred Barr
Greensboro,
Vermont

Dear Alfred:

As to the chairs, yes, one each is enough, and I think essential. I have not been able to find out about money for furnishing the sixth floor, but I will investigate that possibility. In the case of any other furniture in the project, I am sure that the manufacturers would be glad to present us with whatever we asked for. In the case of these chairs, practically their entire career has been passed in a pulmotor, with extended sessions of artificial respiration on the side. We have had to talk everybody out of giving the whole idea up at least five times, and we have succeeded in doing so only by the skin of our teeth each time. Heywood-Wakefield in particular has been very hard to sell on the idea, and has shown an unusually dull and short-sighted mentality, to my way of thinking. As it stands now, we have persuaded Haskelite to assume the current cost of the cast iron molds, which is something over \$2000.00. This leaves Heywood in a much better position, but they still don't see how they can ever sell these chairs profitably. It is a long story, but I would feel a little cheap to ask for anything but the right to buy them at cost (not wholesale). I will keep working on it.

Now, about the catalog. I have been working hard the last month taking photographs, and have at last completed the dummy on a 48 page booklet, which I want to be a reasonably complete record of the project. There has not been time or money to make it as complete as perhaps it should have been. I had hoped it go into the background of modern furniture at reasonable length. The need for space to show the furniture as produced has crowded my historical section into a few pages. I think that it will be all right this way, illustrated by important pieces of furniture by Morris, Breuer, Aalto, and so forth. I have tried in my article accompanying these photographs to summarize the main stages of development. Anyway, I am enclosing my text and I would appreciate it ever so much if you would go over it with a ruthless eye and make any suggestions, corrections, or deletions you care to.

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In order to give you an idea of the general organization of the catalog, here is an outline of what goes on for the forty-eight pages.

Page	Title
2	Acknowledgements, list of stores, manufacturers, lenders, etc.
3	Table of contents
4	Story of the competition, winners' names
5-8	Outline of the development of modern furniture, with photographs as noted in the text.
9	Unit furniture, photographs
10-11	Chairs, various, photographs with text showing how the lightening process goes on
12-17	Photographs with captions, no text, Saarinen chairs as drawings submitted, plaster models, and finished chairs.
18-21	Units and other pieces by Hatfield and Craig
22-25	Ditto for Stonorov
26-30	Ditto for Saarinen (chairs previously covered)
31-35	Rattan furniture, Anderson and Bellah
34-36	Outdoor furniture, Weese and Baldwin for the
37	Lamps, Pfisterer
38	Leaves and prints
39-44	South American group, with photographs of their submitted drawings. (Their finished results are not yet ready to photograph)
45-48	Bibliography, index of designers, etc.

that inspite of this our cover will add more -
The amount of text which I have worked on and which I am including is that which goes on pages 4 through 11. Everything else will be little more than photographs and captions. The layout seems to me to be quite interesting and should make a nice picture-book anyway.

Monroe has read this over and thinks it is all right. Since I am running true to the Museum's best form, just about a week behind schedule on everything, will you go over this, as soon as possible and get it back to me quickly.

I will send you also five of the six photographs from page 10 and 11. I think you are familiar with almost all the others, and these are the only ones I have duplicates of. These are the numbered copies, so I must have them back. I'm also sending you a few other random pictures for your entertainment.

I plan to mount the monster chair frame with all its stuffing in a special niche, the back walls of which I hope to paper with a Barnum and Bailey poster of Gargantua. (This for the exhibition)

I hope this isn't all too confusing.

Regards,

Ellet F. Noyes

efn:ljs

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DANIE
CONR
CHAR
CLAY
BATE
PHI

OD *Competition*
PLAZA 80735

OR
OLE
OR

FROM E. MCKNIGHT KAUFFER 480 LEXINGTON AVENUE NEW YORK CITY

September 28 1940

Dear Mr Noyes:

Thank you for your letter and for the cheque enclosed. I am sorry that the red hand bumped into racial prejudice but I hope that inspite of this our cover will add something to your campaign.

Please let me have a few copies and with my kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

E. McKnight Kauffman

Mr Eliot F. Noyes,
Museum of Modern Art,
New York City.

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YARDLEY, Pa.

NEW YORK REPRESENTATIVE, 40 WORTH ST.

October 29, 1941.

Mr. Eliot F. Noyes, Director,
The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53d Street,
New York.

Dear Mr. Noyes:

Thanks for your letter of October 15 which has just come to hand on my return from vacation. Don't worry about the failure of your invitation to reach us. I hope to get up to see the exhibition this week sometime as well as the display which I understand Mr. Purlee has arranged at Bloomingdales. Mr. Bates and Mr. McCarty have already seen it and were much impressed with the whole show.

With my kind regards and hoping to see you in the near future, I am

Yours sincerely,

Marshall Cole
Marshall Cole.

C.B.

Dictated by Mr. Cole but
signed in his absence.

OD
JOHN F. M^o CARTY,
VICE-PRES & GEN MGR
JAMES MARSHALL COLE,
VICE-PRES & SALES MGR
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148

EXHIBITION RECORD

Title: Organic design in Home Furnishings

Dates: September 24 - November 9, 1941

Space:

N.Y. Cortlandt 7-4107

JOHN FRANCIS MC CARTY
Harold Van Praag
40 North St.
VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER COLD SPRING BLEACHERY YARDLEY, PA.
TEL 73

Cold Spring Bleachery

DANIEL MOORE BATES

PRESIDENT
COLD SPRING BLEACHERY
YARDLEY, PA.

PACKARD BUILDING
PHILADELPHIA

Publicity (releases, announcements, notices)

Costs

Circulation Record

* Duplicate for Installation Folder

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series Folder:
	MoMA Exhs.	148.8

148

EXHIBITION RECORD

Title: Organic design in Home Furnishings

Dates: September 24 - November 9, 1941

Space:

Director:

Consultant:

Assistant:

Check List of Enclosures:

Layout and panel sketches

* Installation Photographs yes (3, poorly labeled)

* List of Exhibits

Captions (text, type, printer, dimensions)

Installation Notes

Carpentry

Mounting (board, edges, grommets)

Painting (color samples)

Lighting

Curtains

Art Work (title panel)

Publicity (releases, announcements, notices)

Costs

Circulation Record

* Duplicate for Installation Folder

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PHOTOGRAPH REQUISITION

Controlle OD

To PHOTO SALES DEPT.

Date October 29, 1943

From Anne Tredick

Department Industrial Design

For prints for department reference files
AT

PRINTS

NEW PHOTOGRAPHS

Please supply 4 (Quantity)

Please have _____ (Photographer)

glossy x size 8x10

take _____ (Number of shots)

Date of completion RUSH

Date of completion _____

ARTIST or SUBJECT	NEGATIVE NUMBER	QUANTITY
Organic Design Installation	Gottscho 41382 " 41385 " 41387 "	

warded to _____ Amount _____ Date Billed _____

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PHOTOGRAPH REQUISITION

Date November 11/41

To Photograph Clerk Miss Hearn -
 From A. Sewall Department Ind. Design -

Please supply the following glossy prints:

Quantity	Neg. No.	Artist	Title
1	S-3228	<u>all 8410</u>	<u>Saamen</u>
1	S-3223		Saamen draags - photos - Saamen
1	S-3222		Stenover farm - Saamen chairs
1	S-3227		showing (structure)
1	S-3220		
1	S-3422		
1	S-3456		Faz Ind. Design Dept. File
1	S-3437		Chig W. Engame design
1	S-3450		
1	S-3465		
1	S-3464		
1	S-3466		
1	S-3467		
1	S-3460		
		also	3406
			3219
			3221

Signed A. Sewall

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	MoMA Exhs.	148.8

PHOTOGRAPH REQUISITION

AD Paul's

Date

11/11/41

To Photograph Clerk

Mrs. Hearn

From

A. Sewall

Department

Ind. Design -

Please supply the following glossy prints:

Pureo

Quantity	Neg. No.	Artist	Title
	#502	526	525
	501	503	506
	500	499	510
	504	515	511
	530	508	7683
	531	507	533
	534	505	(For Ind. Design Dept.
	535	516	File Chg. Organic
	537	513	Design)
	559	509	
	512	514	
	524	517	
		528	(From Hist. Section)
		529	
		522	
		523	

Signed

A. Sewall