

The Museum of Modern Art

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NEWLY ACQUIRED DESIGN OBJECTS ON EXHIBIT AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

A selection of objects focusing on work by craftsmen acquired during the last year for The Museum of Modern Art's Design Collection will be on view in a special exhibition through January 11, selected and installed by Arthur Drexler, Director of the Museum's Department of Architecture and Design.

In the exhibition wall label Mr. Drexler points out that the selection does not reflect the Design Collection's main concern for industrially produced artifacts, but rather some exceptionally interesting work by craftsmen, and represents only a small part of the approximately 56 objects added to the Museum's Design Collection last year. This is exclusive of Tiffany and other Art Nouveau material in the Joseph H. Heil Bequest which supplemented his gift of Tiffany glass and other objects in 1960.

The largest object is a wrought-iron grille by Antoni Gaudí made to protect street-level windows at the Casa Milà, the famous Barcelona apartment house he designed in 1905-07. (When the street-level spaces were converted to shops, some of the grilles were removed.) Composed of twisted metal ribbons, the window grilles are less spectacular than iron work for the balconies, says Mr. Drexler, but they suggest "seaweed in an Art Nouveau style more vigorous than its French or Belgian counterparts." It is the gift of H. H. Hecht in honor of George B. Hess and Alice Hess Lowenthal.

Small intimate objects on view range from a delicate wine glass designed by the German, Karl Koeping, at the turn of the century to porcelain designed by the English artist Mary Rogers in 1975. A turn-of-the-century lamp by Louis Majorelle with a glass shade designed and produced by Daum Frères anticipates a motif favored by Dali and Tanguy. It is shown with the "Golgotha"

(more)

chair of molded fiberglass cloth and resin designed in 1974 by the Italian Gaetano Pesce. A handblown yellow glass vase, designed and produced in 1945 by the Italian, Fulvio Bianconi, is also displayed in the exhibition.

Art Nouveau pieces also include two Tiffany objects: a favrile "Cypriot" vase, designed about 1915, and a bronze candlestick, designed about 1910, both part of the Joseph H. Heil Bequest.

Of the "contemplative and fragile English ceramics," Mr. Drexler says, "these works allude to delicate natural forms with a craftsmanship that seems to whisper." They include a curved cup form of unglazed bone china and a hand-polished bone china bowl with yellow and green spots designed by Jacqueline Poncelet, a clay form designed by Deirdre Burnett, and two porcelain objects by Mary Rogers. They were acquired with the Estée and Joseph Lauder Design Fund, as was a porcelain vase, composed with strips, hand assembled on a wooden mold and oven baked, designed by the Italian Enzo Mari, and the "Golgotha" chair.

The graphic work in the show is a poster from the M.T.A. series, "Visit the N.Y. Aquarium" for which Michael P. Bosniak was Design Director; Howard York, Art Director and Designer; and Russ Kinne, Photographer.

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