

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
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LATIN AMERICAN SECTION IN ORGANIC DESIGN EXHIBITION
OPENING SEPTEMBER 24 AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Designs by five prize winners from Mexico and South America will be included in the exhibition of Organic Design in Home Furnishings opening at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, on September 24. The section comprises finished samples and designs from a special division of the Competition for designers in the other American Republics. The winners, who received a round trip ticket to New York and a \$1000 cash award enabling them to visit stores and manufacturing plants and to study ways of utilizing the products of their countries for North American use, are: Julio Villalobos, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Bernardo Rudofsky, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Xavier Guerrero, Mexico, D.F.; Roman Fresnedo, Montevideo, Uruguay; and the firm of Domus of Mexico City. This firm comprises Michael Van Beuren, Klaus Grabe and Morley Webb.

From the Latin American designs samples have been made utilizing, wherever possible, materials imported from the designers' own country. Some of these designs will be available in New York upon special order and in some instances possibly with substituted materials because of transportation difficulties due to the war. Imported materials include fibers from Mexico, knitted fabrics from Brazil, cactus wood from Argentina and skins from Uruguay. A few finished pieces were brought from Argentina and Mexico City.

In all, about twenty-five examples of furniture by these designers have been prepared for the exhibition. They include a group of peasant furniture of pine with webbing of ixtle, by Guerrero; an adjustable chair of primavera wood and woven mecate tape by Domus of Mexico City; tubular steel chairs with native skins and leather by Fresnedo; a reclining chair of cactus wood strips with shade of junco-- a pithy reed with natural insulating properties-- by Villalobos; and wood and metal furniture by Rudofsky which incorporates many fabrics knitted and woven of Brazilian fibers such as jute, caroa, and canhamo.

Julio Villalobos, designer of an unusual reclining chair, was born in Argentina and graduated from the School of Architecture of the

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University of Buenos Aires in 1930. He is now Head of the Architectural Office in the Ministry of Public Works, directing the design of large water works. He is also the inventor of a blind with vertical giratory leaves which has been used extensively in important buildings in his own country.

Roman Fresnedo, a native of Uruguay, received his early education in Paraguay and later was graduated from the School of Architecture of Montevideo where he won the gold medal of the Ministry of Public Education. He has received numerous awards in competitions for hospitals and courthouses, as well as for street and grandstand designs. In 1937 he travelled in Europe. At present, Dr. Fresnedo is a Professor at the School of Architecture in Montevideo and Architect for the Electrical Plant, Montevideo. His work includes both industrial and domestic architecture.

Simple sturdy peasant furniture was designed by Xavier Guerrero, the son of a Mexican decorator. At the age of twelve he began making line drawings for architects but, unable to afford architectural training, turned to painting. As a mural painter he was instrumental in restoring the process of fresco painting and has done many frescoes in Mexico City. In 1923 he organized and brought to the United States the exhibition of the popular arts of Mexico. Mr. Guerrero is under contract to do the fresco and furniture designs for the Tourist Center of Mexico City now under construction. He has long been interested in applying native Mexican materials to contemporary designs for modern living.

A fourth winner, Dr. Bernard Rudofsky, has worked in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo in recent years. This Austrian-born designer has travelled extensively, studying primitive architecture and archeology, especially in Greece and Italy. He has worked as a decorator, painter, movie and stage designer, assistant editor and ghost-architect. The Museum's Competition is the first he has ever entered in his own name as a designer.

The firm of Domus in Mexico City has been active for three years designing and manufacturing furniture for distribution in Mexico. It was therefore possible in this case to import completed pieces from the prize-winning designs.

The Competition, as these samples and designs show, has brought to the fore Latin-American designers of ability who have utilized purely native materials and have developed methods of construction applicable to the making of furniture for contemporary American requirements. In addition, a further step has been taken toward the closer relation of art and industry between the American republics.