

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****The Museum of Modern Art****BIRTH OF MODERN DESIGN EXPLORED IN FIRST SEGMENT OF TWO-PART EXHIBITION*****Modern Living 1*****March 16-August 22, 2000****Second Floor**

After the devastation of World War I, a new ideal of domestic order manifested itself in the architecture and design of the 1920s and 1930s--one of utility, efficiency, and simplicity. Organized by Matilda McQuaid, Associate Curator, and Christopher Mount, Assistant Curator, both of the Department of Architecture and Design, *Modern Living 1* examines the emergence of this new domestic ideal through the major design movements of the period. The exhibition is on view from March 16 through August 22 as part of *Making Choices*, the second cycle of MoMA2000.

Presenting some 100 design objects, architectural drawings and models, *Modern Living 1* illustrates how architects and designers of the 1920s and 1930s developed new ideals--stressing utility, simplicity, and the moral responsibility of the designer--and established a basis for all modern design that followed.

Crucial design movements of this period--Dutch de Stijl, Russian Constructivism, and the German Bauhaus--sought to impose order and reason on an otherwise chaotic world through the use of primary colors, simple shapes, and intersecting planes and right angles, in works such as Gerrit Rietveld's prototype for Red and Blue Chair (1923) and Anni Albers's design for a tablecloth (1930). Architectural models for Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye (1929-31) and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Resor House (1938) express the corresponding pared-down aesthetic of clean lines and rectilinear shapes in domestic architecture. Such commonplace objects as Marianne Brandt's boldly geometric Teapot (1924) show the extent of the connection between a home's architecture and the household utensils and furnishings that filled it.

Designers such as Nikolai Suetin, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Eileen Gray created work that addressed more significant issues than simple utility. Their designs were deeply intertwined with social and political events and represented an opinionated and visionary view of domestic life. For example, Suetin simply applied Constructivist decorations to existing household objects, such as his Teacup and Saucer (1923), ensuring that they expressed the new mind-set and visual vocabulary of the years after the Russian revolution. Despite the ideological populism of these movements, few objects were manufactured on a large scale. The exhibition *Modern Living 2*, opening April 30 (media preview Wednesday, April 26), will examine how the forms and ideas that emerged during this period were realized in the consumer market after World War II.

**SPONSORSHIP**

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