

**ANNUAL REINSTALLATION OF MoMA'S ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN GALLERIES
FEATURES A SELECTION OF BOLD DESIGNS FROM THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTION**

Rough Cut: Design Takes a Sharp Edge

The Philip Johnson Architecture and Design Galleries

November 26, 2008—Ongoing

NEW YORK, November 26, 2008—The Museum of Modern Art presents ***Rough Cut: Design Takes a Sharp Edge***, an installation in The Philip Johnson Architecture and Design Galleries on the third floor that showcases 98 objects in the Museum's collection whose impact is due not to their graceful formal qualities but to their designers' radical engagement with meaning and emotion. The selection of works range from striking posters to chairs, and from videos to vehicles designed for harsh terrains and unforgiving circumstances. The exhibition is organized by Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, and Patricia Juncosa Vecchierini, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Architecture and Design, The Museum of Modern Art, and opens to the public on November 26, 2008.

According to the curators: "Good design is not always pretty, but when it is good, it is undeniably powerful, meaningful, and beautiful. It is a common mistake to equate design with decoration and embellishment, but design is not simply a matter of giving a pleasing form to a functional object."

Some of the objects in the exhibition bare it all, dispensing with surface treatments to expose the processes of their creation, like Nendo's Cabbage Chair (2007). Others, such as Konstantin Grcic's MYTO chair (2007), which is compact, stackable, suitable for in and outdoor use, and entirely recyclable, distill design down to its strongest expression while pushing materials to the limit. Some of these objects are blunt and unadorned because they must be easy to use in an emergency, for instance, the Lifestat Emergency Pocket Airway (1970) by Ronald J. French. Others defy authority and challenge reality, conveying a view of the world that, although positive and hopeful, may at first be disquieting, as seen in The Priscila Huggable Atomic Mushroom (2004) by Dunne and Raby. Some objects are outright aggressive, even brutal; for example, those whose job is to deliver a loud and clear message with urgency, such as the Guardian Angel Handbag (2002), designed by Carolien Vlieger and Hein van Dam, which features the outline of a knife on the outside of the bag, creating a three-dimensional illusion that a knife is actually being carried in the bag, with the intent to make the wearer feel secure against thieves. In graphic design, toughness can be a manifestation of the idea the designer wishes to communicate, as in the poster Racism (1993) by James Victore, a response to the riots between Hasidic Jews and African Americans in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, in summer 1993. Through this straightforward depiction of the word racism eating itself, the designer brings attention to its destructive essence.

Design can express values that go well beyond form and function. Some objects are designed to provoke strong emotions, such as Matthias Megyeri's Sweet Dreams Security series (2003-04), which includes iron railings with bunny rabbits for posts, and Hill Jephson Robb's Cries and Whispers cocoon (2003), a womblike structure made of felt that is intended to restore a child's feeling of security. Others, including Noam Toran's video *Desire Management* (2004-06), formulate human needs and aspirations for the future, while the Architecture and Justice from the Million Dollar Blocks project (2006), recently seen in the exhibition *Design and the Elastic Mind*, exists to denounce the world's stark realities. Installed near the elevators are timely examples of past and present "protest by design," including recorded performances by Ant Farm and Graffiti Research Lab.

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For downloadable high-resolution images, please register at www.moma.org/press.

2008 Holiday Hours:

- December 24: 10:30 to 3:00 (Christmas Eve)
- December 25: Museum closed (Christmas Day)
- December 26: 9:30 to 8:00 (Target Free Friday Night 4-8 p.m.)
- December 27-January 1: 9:30 to 6:30
- January 2: 9:30 to 8:00 (Target Free Friday Night 4-8 p.m.)
- January 3-5: 9:30 to 6:30

MoMA Monday Nights:

MoMA will remain open until 8:45 p.m. on selected Mondays, giving visitors extended hours to view special exhibitions and the museum's collection. The evenings will include entertainment and a cash bar. Regular admission applies. The museum will stay open from 10:30 to 8:45 on the following Mondays:

- December 8, 2008
- January 12, 2009
- February 9, 2009
- March 9, 2009
- April 6, 2009
- May 4, 2009
- June 8, 2009

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

Hours: Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Closed Tuesday

Museum Admission: \$20 adults; \$16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$12 full-time students with current I.D. Free for children 16 and under. Free for members.
Admission includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs.
Free admission during Target Free Friday Nights 4:00-8:00 p.m.

The public may call 212/708-9400 for detailed Museum information. Visit us on the Web at www.moma.org.