

Streamlining design alters America's look

Two new exhibits at Henry Ford Museum, "Streamlining America" and "Yesterday's Tomorrows," present interesting perspectives on 20th century design and technology.

The four-part "Streamlining" follows this sleek look concept from the dream through the merchandizing of articles with the new look — cars, clocks, toasters, kitchen utensils, refrigerators, jewelry and furniture.

The concept, defined as "any shape or contour designed to offer minimum resistance to fluid or air flow," probably germinated with the rebellion against the elaborate design of the late Victorian period and the Art Deco movement. Middle America became aware of it with the introduction of cars in the mid 30s such as the 1934 Chrysler Air-flow and the popular 1936 Lincoln Zephyr.

DESIGN THAT had once been straight and angular had reduced volume and curved lines. Alfred Sloan of General Motors developed the concept of planned obsolescence and model changes created the public's desire to be up-to-date and in-tune with the times.

The works of the outstanding industrial designers of the period, Raymond Loewy, Norman Bel Geddes, Henry Dreyfuss and Walter Dorwin Teague, are highlighted. The effect of all of this on American lifestyle is illustrated in the full size, complete 1940s kitchen and a 1950s living room.

"Yesterday's Tomorrow," a traveling Smithsonian Institution exhibition, highlights what visionaries thought life today would be like from Buck Rogers to Buckminster Fuller. Some of these plans, drawings and models are amusing; others are surprisingly prophetic.

Planners and designers such as Fuller, Frank Lloyd Wright, Bel Geddes, Paul Laszlo and George Klock are represented by original drawings and models.

"Streamlining America" will be at the museum until January 1988 and "Yesterday's Tomorrows" continues through December. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week.

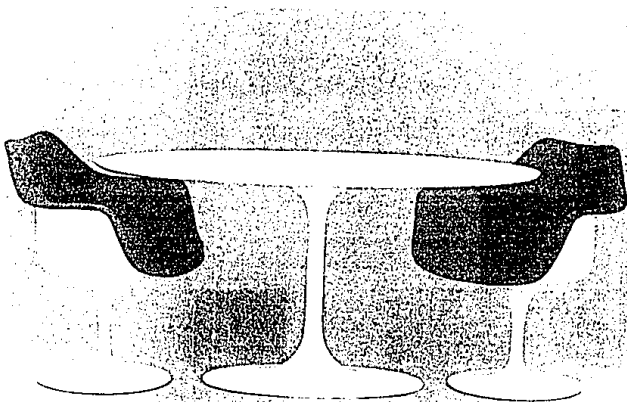
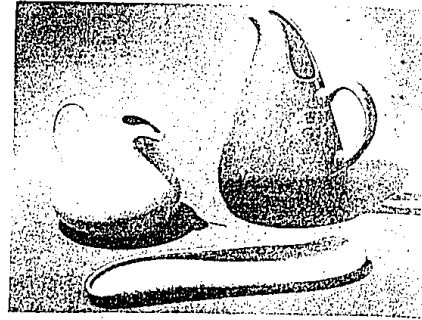


Table and chairs are part of the 1955-57 pedestal group designed by Eero Saarinen. The group was the last furniture designed by Saarinen for Knoll Associates Inc. A unity of line and form is achieved in this series, where the furniture basics seem to rise and flow into upper sections of the pieces.



Two pitchers and colander dish are from designer Russel Wright's "American Modern" line of dinnerware, produced 1939-58 at the Steubenville Pottery Co.

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