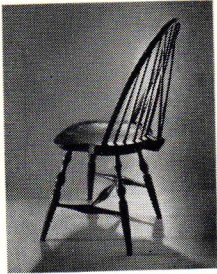




EVERYDAY ART QUARTERLY
A GUIDE TO WELL DESIGNED PRODUCTS

No. 15 / 25c
SUMMER 1950

WALKER ART CENTER • MINNEAPOLIS



on the cover

Many products have continued in use
over a long period of time.
Among these — shown on the cover and above —
is a Windsor chair made in Rhode Island
nearly two hundred years ago.
The problems it solved so well
still seem to us pivotal ones
in defining the requirements of a good chair.

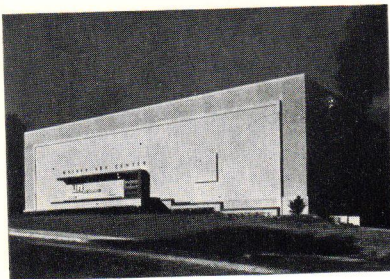
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in the Fall issue:

THE TRADITION IN GOOD DESIGN:
1940 to 1950



THE WALKER ART CENTER

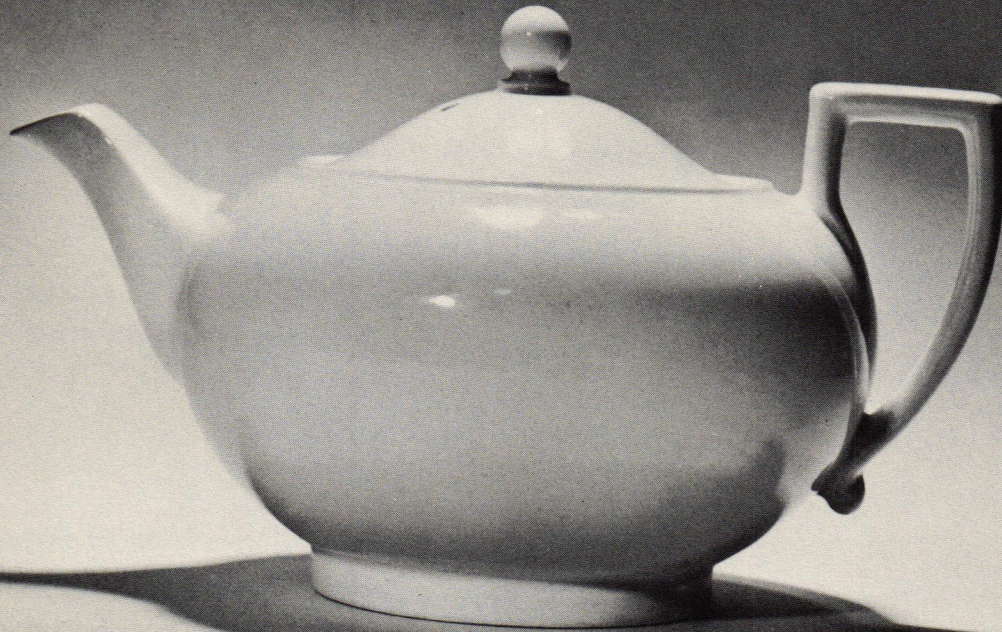
is a progressive
museum of the arts.

The objective of the Center is to give men, women and children an opportunity to know, enjoy and use the arts, to clarify the relationship of all art to contemporary life, to be useful by reporting, explaining, teaching the value of art to those who need or want this knowledge, to share with the schools and libraries in broadening the cultural opportunities in America.

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to 1940:

the tradition in good design

The teapot shown above was designed by Josiah Wedgwood in 1765. It functions well, and its simplicity of form is compatible with today's esthetic. The Windsor chair on the front cover was in existence nearly three hundred years ago. Both of these products have been in continuous production and public demand since they were first designed, and are excellent examples of the good design in our past. The standards by which they were designed, whether they were consciously stated or not, were fundamentally the same as those which guide our twentieth century designers to their best results. Looking at them in perspective, we can see that they contribute to the forming of a tradition in good design, leading directly and continuously to our own times.

This is the first of two issues devoted to The Tradition in Good Design. Based on two related exhibitions in the Everyday Art Gallery, this issue covers the period to 1940; the next issue will cover the period from 1940 to 1950. Special emphasis on the past decade is not arbitrary; in the last ten years, there has appeared an abundance of products that are a synthesis of our vast technological advances and adhere to the principles of good design.

THE GOOD DESIGN which forms our tradition is not surface ornament. More than skin deep, it is broad in meaning, complex, penetrating. Problems of use, construction, and human requirements are uppermost. What task is an object designed to fulfill? With what materials and tools and processes can the object best be created? How can it be formed so as to please the eye and the sense of touch, as well as the mind? These questions — and the manner in which they have been answered in our past, together with some of the major implications — are outlined here, and developed in greater detail on the following pages.

1 *there are basic design considerations and disciplines which remain constant.*

The use of an object determines its basic form.

The material and the technique of fabrication affect the form.

The visual quality of the form satisfies sensuous and psychological needs.

2 *man has always solved the problem of design in terms of the foregoing basic considerations.*

Nevertheless — the needs, resources, and tastes unique to each culture tend to mark the objects created as belonging to their particular time and place.

3 *in the design process, there is a continuing interplay between the past and the present.*

When their function and method of manufacture remain essentially the same, objects produced today are similar to those of the past.

When there arise new esthetic, economic, and other social attitudes toward function, material, or process of manufacture — then basically new designs may develop.

4 *recognition of quality is the key problem of contemporary design.*

With few exceptions —

greater refinement in function, form, and craftsmanship are necessary in order to achieve maturity in the design development of recent decades.