

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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PRESS PREVIEW: TUESDAY,
APRIL 17, 2-5 P.M.

FOR WEDNESDAY RELEASE

JAPANESE HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS TO BE EXHIBITED AT MUSEUM

Well designed, inexpensive household objects being made by hand in Japan today will be exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, from April 18 through June 17 on the first floor. Between 50 and 60 pieces of pottery, basketware, lacquer pieces and mounting designed for everyday use will be shown including: bowls, casseroles, pitchers, vases, tea cups, plates, jugs, flower holders, lacquered plates and containers.

The pottery comes from small factories, where it is either thrown by hand or made in molds, or from the workshops of individual potters. A group of white glazed vases are by the contemporary artist Kazuo Yagi, whose design has been influenced by Klee, Miro and Picasso. While his technique is traditional, his shapes present a fresh departure in Japanese art and are his own invention. Although the objects in the exhibition are not on the U.S. market now, it is hoped that some of them will become available here.

The purpose of the exhibition is to show that our present-day concept of good modern design - directness, simplicity, beauty of form, and integrity in the use of materials - is found in a centuries-old culture where no division exists between great and minor arts, and where good design is a timeless quality, a tradition sustained even in the work of artisans.

The material in the exhibition was collected in Japan by the architect Antonin Raymond and his wife Noemi Raymond, who lived and worked there for many years. The objects were not made for export but for everyday use in Japan.

"These artisans who work skilfully and sensitively are in danger of losing their market and their long tradition," says Greta Daniel, Assistant Curator of Design, who installed the exhibition. Due to the increasing number of cheaply made, mass-produced objects in Japan and the mounting demands of the West for cheap replicas of Western designs, their own skill might become a lost art. It is hoped that a Western market can be created for these subtle and beautiful objects of truly Eastern design which will enrich our own living surroundings. Moreover, such a market would at the same time help to preserve a worthwhile tradition and culture in another country."