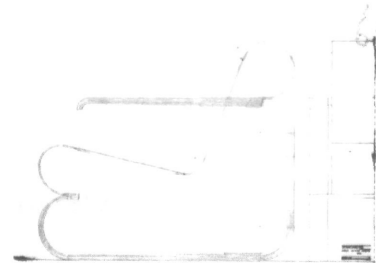


ALVAR AALTO: FURNITURE AND GLASS

September 27–November 27, 1984

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
No. 19

August, 1984

MAJOR EXHIBITION OF DESIGN WORK BY ALVAR AALTO
TO OPEN SEPTEMBER 27 AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Alvar Aalto's innovative contributions to 20th century design will be the subject of a major exhibition opening on September 27 at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City. ALVAR AALTO: FURNITURE AND GLASS will examine the Finnish architect/designer's industrial design work in depth, and will be the first exhibition ever to present the full range of his furniture. On view will be examples of Aalto's short-lived experiments with tubular steel in the late 1920s and his subsequent groundbreaking explorations of bent wood techniques through his mature furniture pieces of the 1950s.

J. Stewart Johnson, Curator of Design in the Museum's Department of Architecture and Design, is directing the exhibition. ALVAR AALTO: FURNITURE AND GLASS was organized with generous grants from the Finnish Society of Crafts and Design and the Finnish Ministry of Education; Artek; and ICF, Inc.

The exhibition will include approximately 35 pieces of furniture, some 35 examples of glass, as well as furniture components and sculptural reliefs. Also on display will be a number of Aalto's evocative rough sketches of ideas for glass and furniture, several finished drawings, and photographic panels showing the furniture as it originally appeared in a variety of

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interior settings and international expositions. A short film on the manufacture of the furniture in Finland has been made especially for the exhibition and will be shown in the gallery as well.

The show will be installed in the International Council Galleries located on the ground floor of The Museum of Modern Art's highly acclaimed new West Wing. It is the fourth in a series on the work of seminal 20th century architect/designers. Charles Eames, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Marcel Breuer have already been represented.

As a furniture designer, Alvar Aalto (1898-1976) is best known for the imagination and skill with which he used bent wood, and, in a larger sense, for his humanization of modernist aesthetics through the substitution of wood for the tubular steel that became the hallmark of furniture designed by such contemporaries as Breuer, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier. The glass exhibited will include examples of Aalto's famous 1937 free-form vases and bowls which were such radical departures from the streamline styles prevalent at the time. Also on view will be earlier and less well known, mass-produced, dinner and kitchen glassware he designed with his late first wife Aino. The exhibition will be arranged to call attention to the essential forms Aalto created and to demonstrate how his particular philosophy, use of natural shapes and materials, and rich sense of color and texture, were integrated into a body of work that became enormously influential and served to make him the foremost exponent of modern Scandinavian design.

An extended brochure will accompany the exhibition. It will include an illustrated critical introduction to the show written by Mr. Johnson and a checklist of objects. Mr. Johnson will also chair a day-long symposium on Aalto's career and international stature on Friday, October 26,

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at the Institute for International Education, 809 United Nations Plaza. The interior at the Institute is the only one in New York to have been designed by Aalto. The symposium program will include lectures by author and critic Stuart Wrede; Alvar Aalto Foundation President Goran Schildt; and Christopher Wilk, author of Marcel Breuer: Furniture and Interiors. An informal discussion between Edgar J. Kaufmann, Jr. and Harmon Goldstone, both of whom were instrumental in introducing and popularizing Aalto's furniture in the United States, will follow the lectures. The program will conclude with a panel discussion involving all of the symposium participants as well as Paul David Pearson, author of Alvar Aalto and The International Style.

Four special tours of the exhibition with Mr. Johnson have been planned. They are scheduled for 3 p.m. on Tuesdays, October 2, 9, 16, and 23. For further information on both the symposium and the tours please contact the Museum's Education Department at 708-9795.

After closing at The Museum of Modern Art on November 27, ALVAR AALTO: FURNITURE AND GLASS will travel to: Mary and Leigh Block Gallery, Evanston, Illinois, January 25 - March 24, 1985; Akron Art Museum, Akron, Ohio, August 25 - October 6, 1985; Musee des Arts Decoratifs, Montreal, Quebec, November 11 - January 6, 1986; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, March 7 - April 18, 1986; and The Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia, June 19 - August 17, 1986. A foreign tour of the show is also being planned and final destinations and dates will be forthcoming.

For further information, contact Luisa Kreisberg, Director, or Patrick Milliman, Press Officer, Department of Public Information, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019....(212) 708-9750.
