



September 2006

Preview Celebration of *Modernism: A Century of Style and Design* on Thursday, November 16, at the Park Avenue Armory to Benefit Brooklyn Museum

Major Design Awards to Steelcase, Tobias Wong, and Paul F. Walter to Precede Preview

The preview celebration of the twenty-first annual *Modernism: A Century of Style and Design*, the annual fine and decorative arts exposition produced by Sanford L. Smith & Associates, will take place Thursday, November 16, 2006, from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Park Avenue Armory, 67th Street and Park Avenue, Manhattan. Collectors, connoisseurs, and celebrities will be among the first to consider the offerings of sixty-five international dealers specializing in such late nineteenth- and twentieth-century design movements as Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts, Wiener Werkstätte, Memphis, Bauhaus, and the 1950s to 1990.

The preview of *Modernism* will be preceded by an awards ceremony at 5 p.m. honoring the office furniture manufacturing company Steelcase, which will receive the Brooklyn Museum/*Modernism* Lifetime Achievement Award. Tobias Wong is slated to receive the Brooklyn Museum/*Modernism* Young Designer Award, and Paul F. Walter will be presented with the Brooklyn Museum/*Modernism* Distinguished Collector Award. Brooklyn Museum Director Arnold L. Lehman will present the awards.

Steelcase was founded in 1912 as The Metal Office Furniture Company in Grand Rapids, Michigan, receiving its first patent in 1914 for the innovative Victor fireproof steel wastebasket. Other groundbreaking creations followed, including oval-shaped desks designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for the renowned S. C. Johnson and Company building and Mobiles®, the first systems furniture. More recently Steelcase has introduced such products as the revolutionary Leap® chair; Pathways®, a portfolio of products that integrate furniture, work tools, and interior architecture; and the award-winning Think® chair, which addresses the need for mid-priced ergonomic seating.

Originally from Vancouver, Canada, Tobias Wong came to New York to study sculpture at The Cooper Union School of Art. His primary interest is work that crosses the boundaries between media, art, and design. As conceptual Director at Totem, Wong oversaw a wide range of projects that addressed consumerism and its visual language in a way that earned him the label of the design world's "merry prankster." He calls his own work "paraconceptual," a term that reflects its position somewhere between conceptual art and an object that has both aesthetic qualities and the ability to be consumed. Examples include a crystal chandelier dipped in rubber and a bulletproof rose broach.

Brooklyn Museum

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Paul F. Walter, a collector of great breadth and vision, is active in many fields. He has a particular interest in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Indian photography and related items. His holdings range from ancient Kushan sculpture, to photo albums that belonged to the Raj, to postcards of the Indian subcontinent. Walter has given approximately one thousand gifts to the Brooklyn Museum and its Decorative Arts Department. These gifts, which reflect his interest in both American and English progressive design from the late nineteenth century forward, include more than four hundred objects by the great mid-twentieth century American designer Russell Wright.

In a new development this year, several Museum trustees and special friends of the Museum will host small private dinners in their homes immediately following the *Modernism* preview. Invitations to these exclusive dinners are available to upper-level ticket holders.

Tickets to the preview range from \$150 to \$10,000 and are available through the Museum's Special Events Office at (718) 501-6423. Tickets at the \$250 level and up include admission to the awards ceremony. Proceeds from the preview, which includes a full cocktail reception, benefit the decorative arts collection and related activities at the Brooklyn Museum. Sanford L. Smith's *Modernism: A Century of Style and Design* will be open to the public November 17 through 20.

The Benefit Preview of *Modernism* is sponsored by Richard Meier On Prospect Park, an SDS Procida/Gordon Group Holdings Development.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:

Contribution \$8; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$4. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.