

ANTIQUES

*****And The Arts Weekly

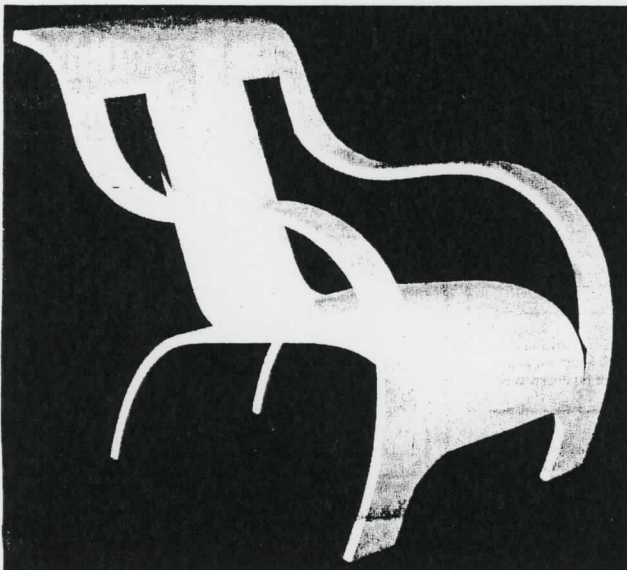
***** February 3, 1995



Newsstand Rate \$1.00
Outside CT \$1.25

Published by The Bee Publishing Co. Inc., Newtown, Connecticut

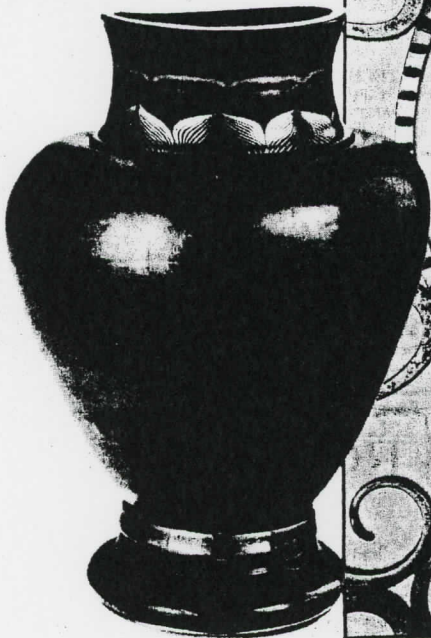
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Armchair, circa 1934, Gerald Summers. Manufactured by Makers of Simple Furniture, London. Laminated birch. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

Detail of wrought iron gates by Edgar Brandt, circa 1926. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

Tell el-Amarna vase with separate foot, circa 1900, Tiffany Studios. Blown glass. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.



Crosscurrents of Modernism

NEW YORK CITY - More than 80 masterpieces of late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century decorative arts from the Sydney and Frances Lewis Collection of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts are on exhibition at The Bard Graduate Center through February 26.

Furniture, ceramics, silver, glass, book bindings, and jewelry by such distinguished architects and designers of

the period as Emile Galle, Eileen Gray, Louis Comfort Tiffany, Josef Hoffmann, Hector Guimard, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, and Frank Lloyd Wright are featured.

The objects in the exhibition are critical documents of modernism by some of the most significant figures of the era who broke with conven-

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Crosscurrents of Modernism

(Continued from page one)

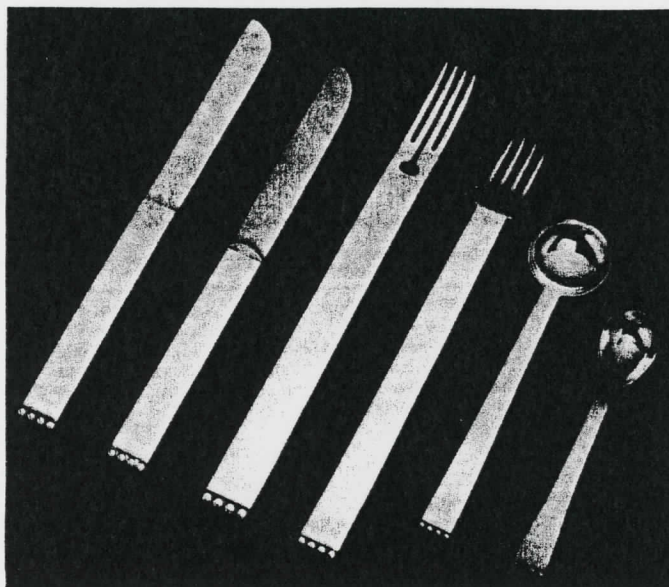
tion and helped to define the complex and shifting parameters of the avant garde in the decorative arts. These individuals introduced a wide array of aesthetic expressions, some of which were based on indigenous concepts of historical precedents. Others generated ideas based on models borrowed from other cultures, often alien to their own. The use of new materials, technologies, and production methods also had a liberating effect on many modernists who rebelled against the dull uniformity of taste that characterized products of the Industrial Revolution.

Ultimately over the course of decades, a wide array of modernist expressions emerged throughout Europe and the United States. From the rectilinear forms of Arts and Crafts work produced in England and the United

States, to the undulant lines of Continental Art Nouveau pieces, the diversity of pre-World War I modernism is revealed by objects in this exhibition.

The luxurious elegance of French Art Moderne pieces of the 1920s contrasts with the abstract designs of Suprematist artists working in Russia. Rarely seen work by such noted figures as Peter Behrens (1868-1940) and Richard Riemerschmid (1868-1957) of Germany, Gerald Summers (1899-1967) of Great Britain, and Jean-Michel Frank (1895-1941) of France are also included to reflect the wide range of designs produced in this period.

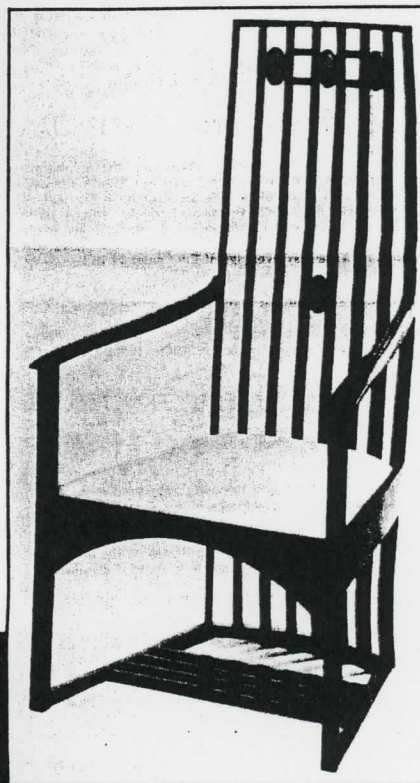
Work produced in England and America under the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement includes a 1904 armchair by the Scottish architect / designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928) made for Hous'hill, the



Selections From Lewis Collection

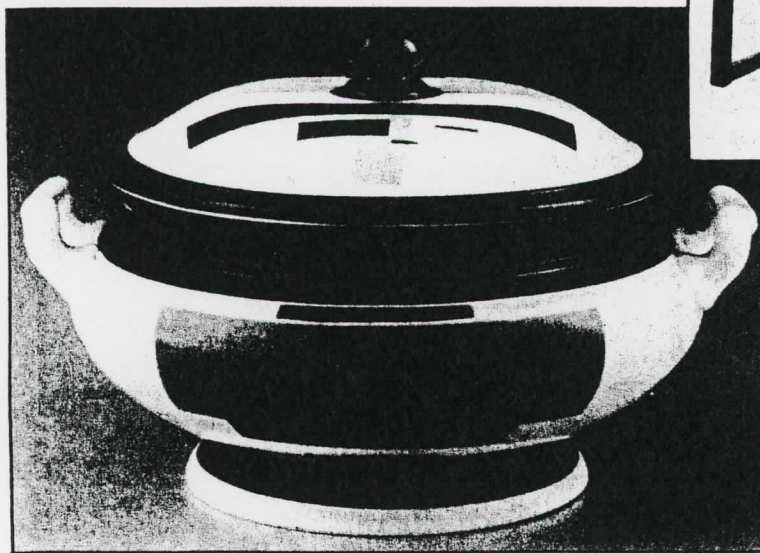
Most of the objects in the exhibition were collected by Sydney and Frances Lewis, founders of Best Products Company in Richmond, Va. Frederick R. Brandt, curator of Twentieth Century art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, was their private curator in the assembly of this collection, donated to the museum in 1985.

Bard Graduate Center



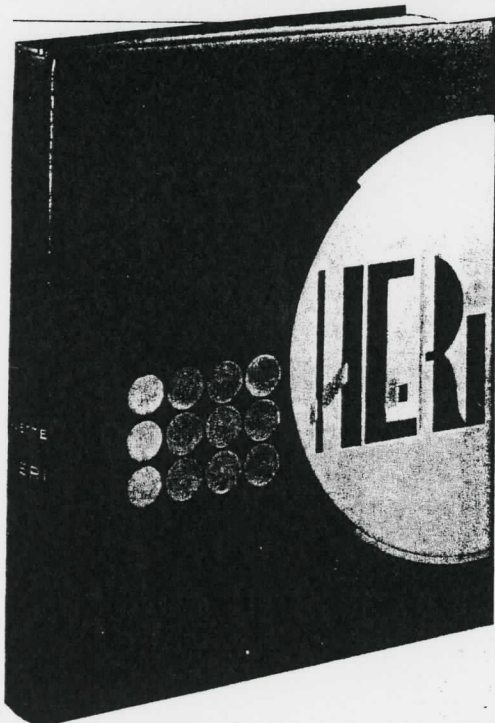
A place setting of sterling silver, 1904, by Josef Hoffmann. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

Armchair, circa 1904, by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Stained wood, glass, upholstery. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.



Suprematist soup tureen with cover, 1923, by Ilya Grigorevich Chashnik (1902-1929), for State Porcelain Factory, Leningrad. Painted porcelain. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

Through February 26



home of his most important patron, Miss Cranston; Archibald Knox (1864-1933) is represented in this exhibition by a masterful silver and enamel mirror for Liberty and Company; and Frank Lloyd Wright's (1867-1959) side chair of 1904 from his own residence reflects his concern for structural clarity and the intimate relationship between his furnishings and his rigorous interiors.

Other highlights of the exhibition include a selection of masterpieces from the group of architect / designers working in Vienna at the turn of the century. Otto Wagner (1841-1918), Koloman Moser (1868-1918), and Joseph Maria Olbrich (1867-1908) are richly represented in this show, which also includes a selection of silver by Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956) as well as one of his bentwood chairs from the Purkersdorf Sanatorium.

A particular strength of the collection is its holdings in French Art Deco furnishings, which were called Art Moderne in the 1920s. Masterpieces of the *ensembliers'* art are represented in the luxurious works of individuals such as Clement Mere (born 1870), a Neoclassical desk with trompe l'oeil textile motifs executed in ivory and ebony by Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann (1879-1933); and a magnificent ebony cabinet designed by the architect Louis Sue (1875-1968) and the painter Andre Mare (1887-1932) for the St. Cloud villa of the famous French actress, Jane Renouardt. From the same period is a massive pair of wrought iron gates by Edgar Brandt (1880-1960).

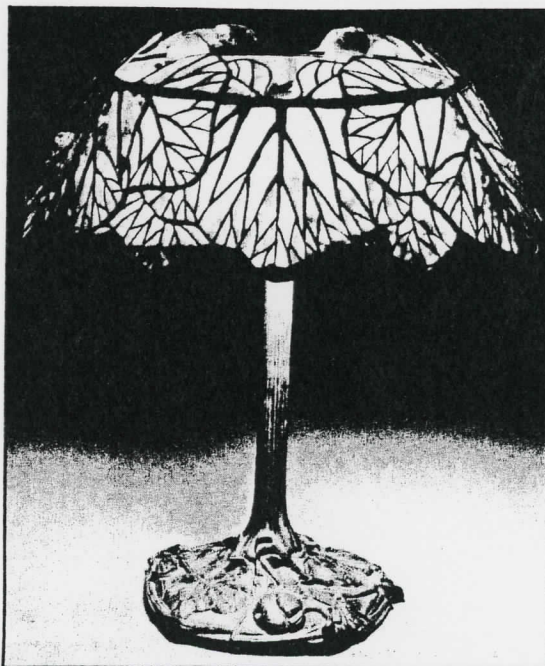
Masterpieces of Art Nouveau and Art Moderne jewelry reveal the stunning contribution that modernism made to the world of the consumer of luxury goods. Rene Lalique (1860-1945) is represented by his early virtuosic jewelry, exquisitely crafted from precious and

nonprecious materials. The brilliance of Parisian jewelry of the 1920s is shown through masterpieces executed by the House of Cartier, Gerard Sandoz (born 1902), Jean Fouquet (born 1899), and Raymond Templier (1891-1968).

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Cheri by Colette, 1929-1931, by Rose Adler and Marcel Vertes. Morocco leather binding, engravings, 48/100. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

founders of Best Products Company, based in Richmond, Va. Frederick R. Brandt, curator of Twentieth-Century Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, was their private curator in the as-

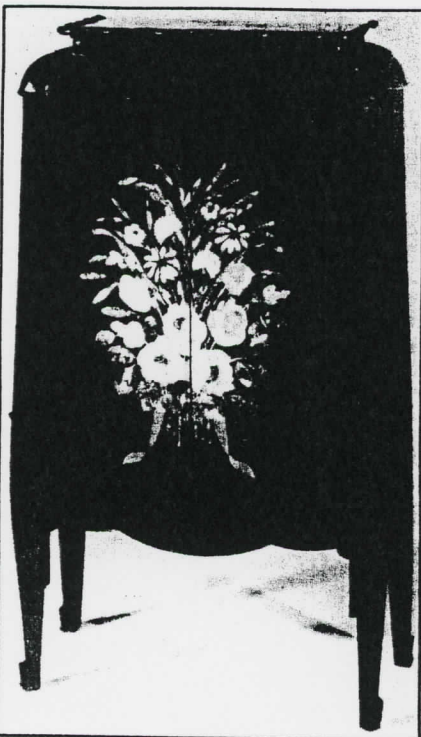


Squash lamp, circa 1906, Tiffany Studios. Leaded glass, blown glass, bronze. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

sembly of this collection, which was donated to the museum in 1985 with an endowment that has enabled the museum to continue to add to its holdings in this area. The collection is recognized as one of the most important of its kind in the United States.

The Gallery at The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, at 18 West 88th Street in Manhattan, is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 11 am-5 pm; Thursday, 11 am-8:30 pm; closed Monday.

Cabinet, 1927, by Louis Sue and Andre Mare (1885-1932). Ebony, oak, mother-of-pearl and silver. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.



Brooch/pendant, circa 1897-1898, Rene Lalique. Gold, enamel, glass, pearl. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

