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WOLFSONIAN
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**'MODERNISM IN AMERICAN SILVER: 20th-CENTURY DESIGN'
ON VIEW NOVEMBER 10, 2006-MARCH 25, 2007 AT THE WOLFSONIAN**



Miami Beach, FL (June 2006) —The Wolfsonian presents *Modernism in American Silver: 20th-Century Design*, a groundbreaking exhibition that explores the aesthetic richness and cultural significance of modern silver design in America between 1925 and 2000. The exhibition features more than two hundred magnificent works that explore the development of the American silver industry's creative forays into modernist design. It charts the stylistic design history of modern American production silver while exploring the economic and cultural factors that influenced silver design, manufacture, and marketing across more than seven decades. The exhibition was organized by The Dallas Museum of Art and co-curated by Kevin W. Tucker, The Margot B. Perot Curator of Decorative Arts and Design of the Dallas Museum of Art, who also serves as the DMA project director; and by independent scholar Jewel Stern and Charles L. Venable, deputy director for collections and programs at the Cleveland Museum of Art. The exhibition will be on view at The Wolfsonian from November 10, 2006, through March 25, 2007.

The exhibition includes the works of widely recognized designers such as Eliel Saarinen, Robert Venturi, Michael Graves, Elsa Peretti, and Richard Meier, and also will offer important revelations concerning the role of designers such as John Prip, Robert J. King, John Van Koert, Donald H. Colflesh and Tommi Parzinger, and a host of individuals seldom recognized by the general public.

"This exhibition is a natural fit with the Wolfsonian's mission to offer insights about design's active role in shaping human experience," notes Marianne Lamonaca, chief curator and associate director of curatorial affairs and education. "Showcasing important examples of American design from the 1920s to today, its focus on one industry allows visitors to explore how designers and manufacturers adapted their designs to suit changing social, economic, and cultural currents. Then, as now, the growing awareness of style among consumers determined how a company could market its products."

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The first half of the show focuses on themes that relate to The Wolfsonian's collection of objects dating from before the Second World War, including Art Moderne and the avant-garde, the machine age, and modern classicism. The second half continues with themes such as free form and the 1950s, the space age, and architects and fashion designers.

Jewel Stern, co-curator of the exhibition, is well known as an independent scholar based in Miami Beach, as well as an important collector of American silver. During the past two decades she has performed extensive research on the history of twentieth-century silver design, amassing an archive unlike any other in the field. Her scholarly research has informed her collecting to the extent that the recently acquired Jewel Stern American Silver Collection at the Dallas Museum of Art is not only of exceptional aesthetic quality but contains examples by virtually every important silver designer working in this period, as well as every significant object form. Stern, a Florida native, has served as a decorative arts consultant for The Wolfsonian Foundation. Reflecting on the importance of the exhibition, she observes that "these objects not only have intrinsic beauty, but they also represent the transformation of culture throughout the twentieth century."

One object on exhibit with a special connection to South Florida is the K. K. Culver Trophy, designed by the influential American industrial designer Viktor Schreckengost in 1938. This trophy was presented to the winner of the Miami All-American Air Maneuvers air race for female pilots, a fifty-mile-long competition that took place at Glenn Curtiss Field (now Amelia Earhart Park). The silver-plated bronze trophy, produced by the Bronze Division of Gorham, features a soaring female representing the spirit of flight. The trophy, owned by museum founder and collector Mitchell Wolfson Jr., has been acclaimed as "one of the finest examples of twentieth-century modern presentation silver, [embodying] streamlining in a symbolic culmination of the aesthetic thrust of the decade," according to Jewel Stern in the exhibition catalogue *Modernism in American Silver: 20th-Century Design*.

The exhibition will feature the sculpture with two design drawings, a recently promised gift to The Wolfsonian from Virgene and Viktor Schreckengost. One of the proposal drawings depicts the goddess-like figure holding a gold-plated monoplane in her outstretched arms. The plane was presented to Edna Kidd, the first and only winner of the race. The event was discontinued after 1939, apparently due to the breakout of the Second World War.

Modernism in American Silver: 20th-Century Design was organized by the Dallas Museum of Art. The exhibition is supported by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Exhibition support was provided by the Judith and Richard Bressler/The Bressler Foundation, Ajax Foundation, and General Mills Foundation. Publication of the exhibition catalogue *Modernism in American Silver: 20th Century Design* was underwritten by the Tiffany & Co. Foundation. The catalogue, authored by Jewel Stern, and edited by Tucker and Venable, is published by Yale University Press in association with the Dallas Museum of Art. The exhibition's presentation at The Wolfsonian is supported by the J.S. Philanthropic Foundation, John C. Waddell, Funding Arts Network, and Tiffany & Co.

About The Wolfsonian–Florida International University

The Wolfsonian is a museum, library, and research center that uses objects to illustrate the persuasive power of art and design, to explore what it means to be modern, and to tell the story of social, historical, and technological changes that have transformed our world. The collections comprise approximately 120,000 objects from the period of 1885 to 1945—the height of the Industrial Revolution to the end of the Second World War—in a variety of media including furniture; industrial-design objects; works in glass, ceramics, and metal; rare books; periodicals; ephemera; works on paper; paintings; textiles; and medals.

The Wolfsonian is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, Fla. Admission is \$7 adults; \$5 seniors, students, and children six-12; free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, children under six, and Miami Beach residents with ID. The museum is open Monday, Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday from noon-6pm; Thursday and Friday from noon-9pm; and is closed on Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at www.wolfsonian.org.

The Wolfsonian receives ongoing support from the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts; Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council; Crispin Porter + Bogusky; Continental Airlines, the preferred airline of The Wolfsonian; the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation; and Karla Conceptual Event Experience.