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The concept of Saarinen's tea service is remarkably sophisticated, relying for its effect on the pure geometries of the modernists. A pioneer of industrial design, the designer used this tea service in his own house.

Prototype Tea Service, ca. 1933–35

Eiel Saarinen (American, born Finland, 1873–1950), Designer; Manufacturer: International Silver Company, Wilcox Silver Plate Company Division (Meriden, Connecticut)

Electroplated nickel silver, brass, and Bakelite; Tea Urn, 1a–c: H. 14 1/2, D. 7 3/4 in. (36.8 x 19.7 cm) Tray, 2: Diam. 17 1/2 in. (44.5 cm) Creamer, 3: H. 3, W. 6, D. 3 7/8 in. (7.6 x 15.2 x 9.8 cm) Sugar Bowl, 4a,b: H. 6 3/4, W. 6, D. 3 7/8 in. (17.1 x 15.2 x 9.8 cm) Large Tray, 5: Diam. 20 1/4 in. (51.4 cm)

Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Saarinen Swanson and John C. Waddell Gifts, and Gift of Susan Dwight Bliss, by exchange, 1999 (1999.27.1a–c-5)

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