

FOR THE TABLETOP



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Organized by
The American Craft Museum of the American Craft Council

American Craft Museum
44 West 53rd Street
New York, NY 10019

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Following the New York showing, the exhibition will tour nationally.

This exhibition is made possible through sponsorship by Rosenthal AG and through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

A pantner slices bread for use as plates (trenchers) at a 15th century banquet. German woodcut. Courtesy, Rogers Fund, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.



INTRODUCTION

As part of a series of thematic exhibitions focusing on basic aspects of our environment, this exhibition celebrates the tabletop. In spanning a 2,000-year history of this complex subject, we present a visual panorama of objects related to eating, drinking and the serving of food—from the simplest to the most elaborate, from the unique handmade, to the well-designed, mass-produced and disposable. Our purpose is to give an overview of the subject from the past to the present with the hope that the viewer will leave the exhibition informed and inspired by objects for food.

Emphasis is placed on the 20th century. It is obvious that during this century mass-production has resulted in a greater volume of tableware than ever before. We also note in this period a commitment to new design concepts and inventions that improve the functional aspects of the tabletop. Particularly since World War II there has been an increasing number of new tableware designs created by architects and industrial designers. During this same period, there has been a growth of interest in the handmade: almost in contradiction, the craft movement in the United States has fostered a growing number of potters, metalsmiths and glassmakers, producing limited editions of plates, bowls and drinking vessels of original design. The result is a wide spectrum of choices in tableware for the consumer today. This increased choice is timely in view of the interest in cooking and home entertainment. The tabletop continues a tradition as an important forum for individual expression and human interaction.

Paul J. Smith
Director

It is usual, even trite, to say one is proud and pleased to sponsor an exhibition, but not so in the case of this exhibition and this sponsor. Because the American Craft Museum, in assembling 2,000 years of objects on and around the table, is showing not only an important part of human living but an area where practical and aesthetic functions join. Like any other firm, Rosenthal—now in its one hundred and first year—produces work for its employees and earnings for its owners. Apart from this, we see our main commitment to making a genuine contribution to the human environment. We do this, first by working on products on and around the table with over a hundred leading artists and designers of our time. No imitations have ever retained cultural or even material value. Second, we encourage original designers in other fields of consumer industry with the Rosenthal Studio Prize for product design, now 15 years old, and the Mathildenhöhe Prize for young artists and designers, started this year. And, third, we also work with architects and artists, starting with Walter Gropius and Victor Vasarely, to make our factories and retail shops into a positive environment for employees and customers and a positive addition to the community instead of a blot on the landscape.

So it is only fitting that we should carry this tradition to the United States, where we have many employees and friends.

This exhibition is therefore an inspiration to us as well as an obligation in the one hundred and first year of our company.

Philip Rosenthal
President
Rosenthal AG

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

An exhibition of such size and scope as FOR THE TABLETOP requires a vast amount of research and resources. We are indebted to the many people who assisted us in this endeavor, especially Meryle Evans and Lorna Sass who were responsible for the historical photographic research and the preparation of the text for the catalogue. We are also grateful to Eric Larrabee for his text on the 20th century. We wish to thank the artists, museums, companies and individuals, who lent works for both the New York show and the traveling exhibition, and the many people who assisted us in an advisory capacity, especially Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., Malcolm Knapp, and Mimi Sheraton.

To produce an exhibition, catalogue and installation depends upon extensive financial support. We greatly appreciate the grant of the National Endowment of the Arts and the generous support of Rosenthal AG, a company dedicated to fostering good design and quality objects for the tabletop. It is especially pleasing to see so many forces, including our staff and volunteers, come together to make possible this exhibition.



A dinner in North Africa. From:
*Food and Drink, A Pictorial
Archive from Nineteenth Century
Sources*. Selected by Jim Harter.
Dover Publications, Inc., New
York, 1979.

A Bountiful Table. Illustration by
Domenico Gnoli for *Alberic the
Wise and Other Journeys* by
Norton Juster. Courtesy, The
Sterling Lord Agency.



the tabletop
the earth
the floor
a gold inlayed surface—marble
wood, glass or plastic

a place to be alone
or to share
and exchange
thoughts
problems and fears
happiness

a place to share
in worship
celebration—
marriage, birthday or a reunion

the tabletop
a place for food and drink
for survival
a grand feast
a bowl of rice
a twenty-course meal
a cup of tea or a martini

the tabletop
a place of the moment
a place tomorrow

a place permanent
a place portable

the tabletop
a place to honor

A GLANCE AT SOME TABLETOPS OF THE PAST

People the world over must eat to survive. And in all cultures we find the act of eating and the tabletop at the center of important events—weddings, funerals, christenings, religious ceremonies, seasonal celebrations and social gatherings of every size and description.

Our dining habits are as diverse as the languages we speak. Some people use chopsticks, others forks, and still others only their hands. Some eat from coconut shells, others from plates of the finest porcelain; some sit on chairs, others kneel or sit cross-legged on cushions, depending on the custom of the society. Since the dawn of civilization, the tabletop has reflected the culture of which it is a part.

EARLIEST TABLETOPS

Man's earliest meals were strictly hand to mouth—eating berries from a bush, pulling wild onions from the earth, gathering nuts. His first tabletop was the ground and, after cooking was discovered, food was eaten straight from the communal pot. The earliest utensils consisted of found objects—shells for spoons and bowls, leaves for plates. Gradually more permanent tableware evolved as people began to weave baskets, shape clay into bowls, and carve simple utensils of wood.

THE ANCIENT WORLD

By about the 7th century B.C., the peoples of Assyria, Babylonia, Sumer and Persia reclined on couches while eating, taking food from low tray tables. They fashioned plates and serving pieces of precious metals and feasted on meals containing up to 100 courses.

While evidence for the tabletops of these early civilizations is somewhat scanty, the ancient Egyptians have left a more extensive record of their dining customs. Illustrations on tomb paintings reveal that the Egyptian king and queen customarily sat together in a large chair, but most often male and female diners sat at opposite sides of the room. High-backed chairs,

studded with semiprecious stones, were lined up one behind the other and the food was served on low wicker stands beside each diner.

Few utensils were used, and servants passed basins for handwashing between courses, along with perfumes and garlands of lotus flowers. Rituals surrounding Egyptian dining led to the development of highly decorative tableware—plates, bowls and goblets in alabaster, bright blue and green faience, or gold and silver.

IMPERIAL ROME

The Romans adopted the Persian tradition of reclining while dining, in the belief that this position aided the digestion. In their dining rooms three couches were arranged in a U-shape around a single large, low table or several smaller ones. Three diners shared each couch, leaning their left elbows on cushions. Most guests brought their own napkins which they draped over their cushions and togas.

At first the tables of marble, ivory, or gem-studded gold were left bare. However, by the 1st century A.D., it became stylish to cover them with gold-embroidered tablecloths.

The silver service, or *synthesis*, was the mark of the Roman family of means. It included trays, platters, dishes, plates and spoons. Some services also contained specialized pieces for mushrooms, vinegar, eggs and the like. Special spoons designed for eating shellfish and eggs were also known. Pitchers, goblets, and cups of exquisitely colored glass complemented the silver.

Slaves placed food on the table one course at a time—appetizers, main course, and dessert. Throughout the meal, wine was poured from amphorae through a strainer into a bronze mixing bowl, or *cratera*, and cooled with snow.

Possibly the most famous dining scene in literary history is Petronius' satirical description of "Dinner with Trimalchio" in the *Satyricon*. In this scene, Petronius reveals the Roman fondness for transforming the appearance of food in order to surprise and delight the guests. Thus, Trimalchio serves eggs which appear whole, yet have cooked and seasoned figpeckers inside, and the pig, which looks alive, has been cooked and stuffed with sausages.



MEDIEVAL EUROPE

Medieval cooks were also skilled in the art of creating edible extravaganzas. They shaped pastry into turreted castles and sculpted multicolored marzipan into the likeness of the feast's honored guest.

By the 14th century, dining had become an elaborate ritual. Feasts were public affairs, eaten in the castle's great hall. Tables, made of boards supported by trestles, were arranged to form a U, with the bottom of the U a raised dais or *high borde*. Most diners sat along the outside of the U on backless benches called *banquettes*, the French term which has given us our word banquet. Only a king, lord, or honored guest had a chair with a back, and therefore came to be known as "chairman of the borde."

Linen cloths covered the tables which were set with knives and, sometimes, spoons. Loaves of hard bread were sliced, squared off and smoothed into trenchers by the *pantner*, so named because he was responsible for the bread, or *pan*. Each diner received three trenchers for his personal use, and so began today's custom of individual place settings. But some dishes were still communal. A common cup was carried to thirsty guests by the cupbearer and then returned to the *cup-board*. Sauce and spice dishes were shared by two diners. Because forks were not yet in fashion, the carver sliced the meat into small portions and placed it on the trenchers. Most other food was prepared as soup or stew, which could be eaten with spoons or the hands. Napkins and "wasshying towels, bothe for before mete and after" were clearly essential to trenchermen.

Probably the most symbolically important table accessory of the period was the salt cellar. Large elaborate salts, called *nefs*, were shaped like boats, perhaps because much of the precious salt was produced from sea water. The *nefs* were placed before the host on the *high borde*, and diners not sitting on the raised dais were therefore ranked "below the salt."

An intimate Roman supper.
Harper's Monthly, 1866. Courtesy,
 New York Public Library Picture
 Collection, New York, NY.



THE RENAISSANCE

Large banquets were a political necessity in the feudal age, when loyalties were often based on how generously the feudal lord provided for his supporters. With the passing of feudal fiefdoms at the time of the Renaissance, large banquets became more the exception than the rule, and dining became more of a private affair.

The medieval table, easily dismantled to leave the great hall free for other household activities, was replaced by a stationary joined table. The construction of this permanent table was made possible by the architectural development of a special room reserved only for eating—the dining room. Guests now sat all around the table as there was no longer sufficient space to seat them along only one side.

Dishes also became more permanent. Plates of silver, pewter and wood replaced trenchers of bread. Napkins were provided for each guest, to be slung over the left shoulder or, if long enough to make both ends meet, to tie around the enormous Elizabethan ruff.

Knives and spoons were still the most common eating utensils, but the fork was already in daily use in Italy and began to win acceptance in England by the late 17th century.

This was a great period of artisanry. Italian silver and glassware were in vogue, and goblets from Murano decorated with elaborate scenes stood on delicately carved pedestals. Tall statuary of gilded sugar, called *trionfi*, stood along the center of the 8-foot-wide Italian banquet table "to gratify the Eye, as the Meats, Musique and Perfums do the other Senses." Napkins, folded to look like flowers or birds adorned each diner's place.

GEORGIAN ENGLAND

By the 18th century, Renaissance flamboyance gave way to the Georgian respect for order. The arrangement of centerpieces and place settings became as symmetrical as a sonata by Handel. Cookbooks of the period offered fold-out diagrams called *ambigues*, which showed the hostess precisely how to lay an elegant table.

Food was served on platters, set in the center of the table, from which guests were expected to help themselves during the first two courses. The climax came with dessert. An ornate *sur-tout* or *epergne*, a pyramided silver or porcelain centerpiece, was piled high with meringues, molded jellies, sweetmeats, preserved fruits, syllabubs (usually made of sweetened milk mixed with wine) and flowers. Carried to extremes, such dessert centerpieces might include what Horace Walpole described as "temples in barley-sugar and pigmy Neptunes in cars of cockle-shells." The very rich went one step further. They used mechanical devices to make tables disappear into the floor or cause dancing figures to jump out amongst the syllabubs and dance to music-box tunes. Those who preferred pastoral scenes brought the garden to the center of their tables with porcelain or glass trees, urns and fountains.

Porcelain, at first imported from China, began to be produced in Europe in the early 18th century—first at Meissen and Dresden, then in France and England. Soon Chinese export porcelain was used by people of means only for everyday use, while the new patterns from Wedgwood, Limoges and Sèvres were preferred for special occasions.

19TH CENTURY EUROPE

Gradually *service à la française*, the 18th century custom of setting out all the platters for each course, gave way to *service à la russe*, the practice of having a waiter serve each guest individually. The innovation was introduced by a Russian ambassador to Paris, and it enabled the host not only to serve the food hot but to reduce the overall number of dishes in a meal.

With the arrival of the machine age, during the Victorian period, manufacturers began to make the elegant table appointments of the rich available at moderate cost to the newly affluent middle class. White damask cloths covered the tables, and conspicuous consumption of silver and crystal became the

A Roman banquet scene
Circular dining table (below)
Depicted in an 18th century
engraving.



style. As many as 15 pieces might make up a table setting, including silver oyster forks and marrow spoons and three or four wine glasses. Cut crystal fruit bowls, glassware, celery holders, decanters and finger bowls also became fashionable. And a variety of typically Victorian accessories were added to the table—spoon warmers, butter coolers and knife rests, for example.

Every space on the tabletop was used. Tall gas lamps with elaborate shades were placed down the length of the table at the center. Arrangements of ferns and flowers, small baskets of nuts and candies and hand-painted place cards filled any remaining space.

Today's Western lifestyles do not lend themselves to eating on the ground or while reclining, nor do slaves pass food or pantners shape trenchers. Large banquets are rare, and they tend to take place in restaurants rather than the center of someone's home. We have forks as well as knives and spoons, and we take fine porcelain for granted. Our styles reflect our culture as others reflected theirs. And, yet, some things remain unchanged: the act of eating is still vitally important, and the tabletop, today as before, is at the center of our lives.

Meryle Evans
Lorna Sass



Dinner at Westminster Abbey following the coronation of King James II, April 23, 1685. Courtesy, Mansell Collection, London, England.

Chinese official banquet for 2,000. Photographer: Rene Burri/Magnum.

THE GRAND TABLE



Detail of banquet table at dinner given for Queen Christina of Sweden, 1668. Courtesy, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden.

Bette Davis in "All About Eve"
having breakfast in bed. Courtesy,
20th Century-Fox. Beverly Hills,
California.

THE PRIVATE TABLE

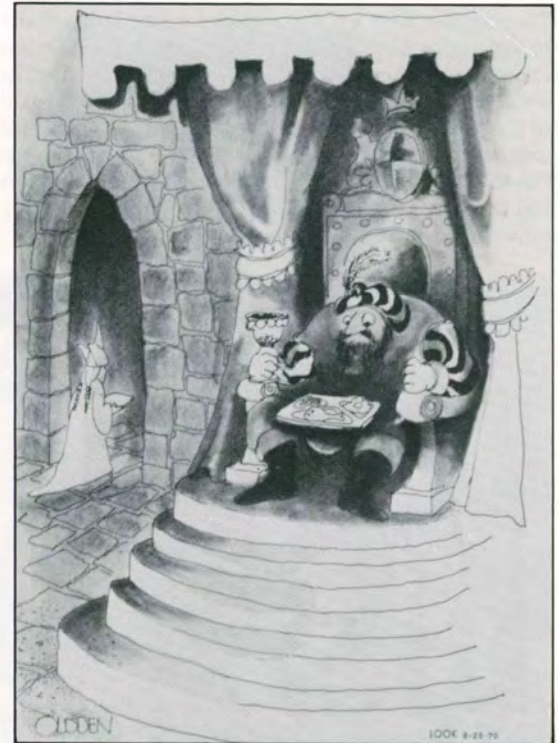


Illustration from *Food and Drink*,
A Pictorial Archive from
Nineteenth Century Sources.
Selected by Jim Harter. Dover
Publications, Inc., New York, 1979.

Nebraska bachelor preparing his supper. Courtesy, Solomon D. Butcher Collection. Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.



Cartoon by Oldden. *Look*, August 25, 1970. Courtesy of the artist, Dick Oldden.



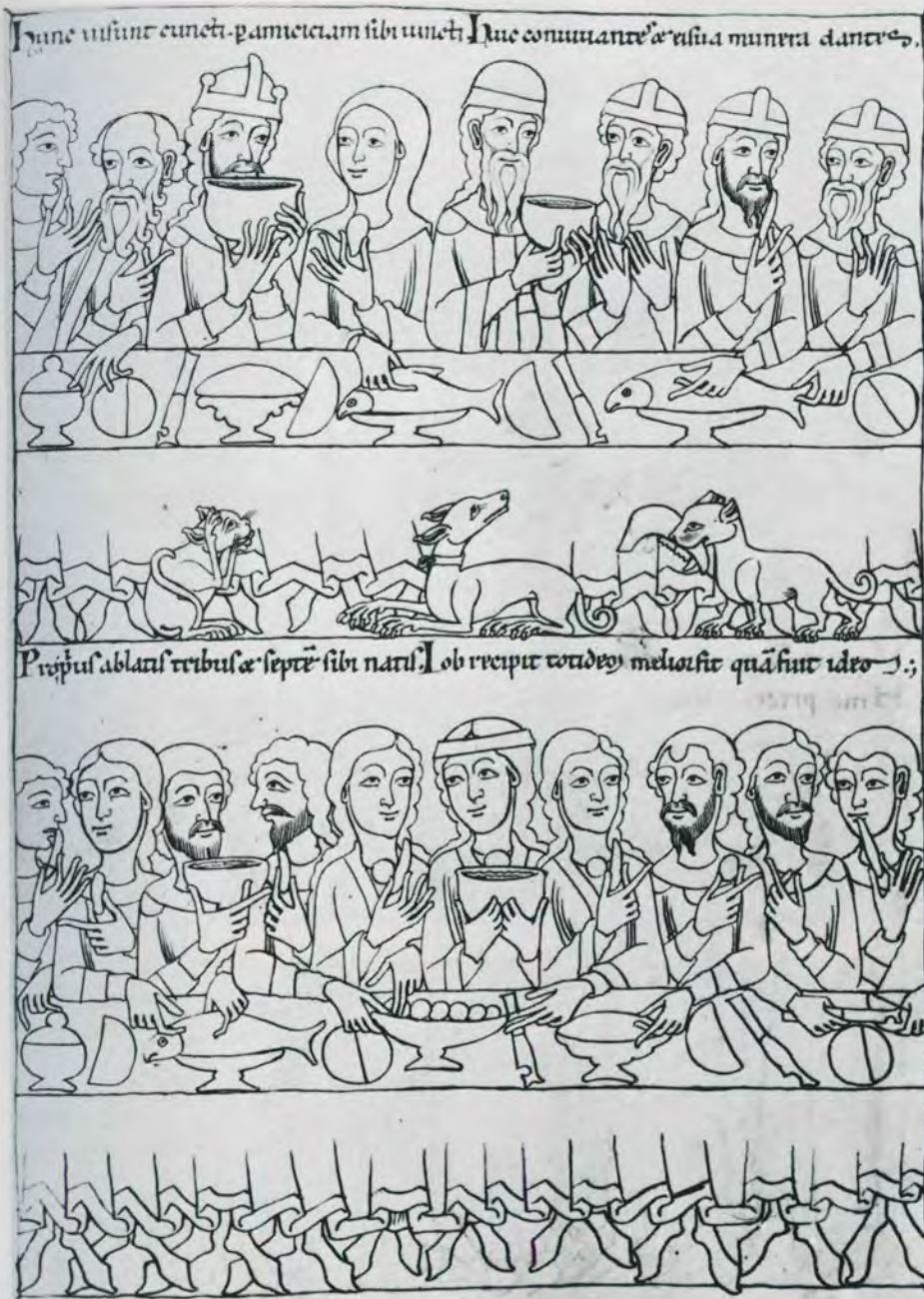
THE COMMUNAL TABLE

Throughout history, people have gathered about the dining table under circumstances as varied as our social customs. From the formal black tie banquet to the rural backyard supper, sharing our meals has been a continuing tradition in all parts of the world. On some occasions breaking bread together has taken on the symbolic significance of religious ritual. At other times, the encounters have been more casual—strangers meeting at political functions or testimonial dinners, or friends enjoying a tête-à-tête over a cup of tea.



Succoth (The Festival of Booths), a Jewish harvest celebration in Poland. 18th century engraving. Courtesy, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France and American Heritage Publishing Company.





Guests sharing drinking cups and eating with their hands at a 12th century banquet. Courtesy, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France.

Wooden cup.
Africa, Zaïre, Kuba
Courtesy, The Brooklyn Museum,
Brooklyn, NY



At a gentlemen's dinner given in New York about 1900, the guests pose for the photographer with laurel wreaths on their heads. Courtesy, The Byron Collection, Museum of the City of New York, New York, NY.

Backyard garden party in Black River Falls, Wisconsin, 1905. Courtesy, Charles Van Schaick Collection, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison and American Heritage Publishing Company.





A Welsh tea party.



Japanese tea ceremony. Courtesy,
Tea Ceremony Society of
Urasenke, New York, NY.

Directors of the Crystal Palace in London dining in an Iguanodon model, 1853. From: *Panorama 1842-1865, The World of the Early Victorians as Seen Through the Eyes of the London Illustrated News*. by Leonard de Vries. Houghton Mifflin, 1969. Courtesy, John Murray, London, England.



A political dinner. Photographer: Charles Harbutt/Magnum.

Feasting in a communal bathing chamber. From the 15th century German *Master of the Housebook*. Courtesy, Madeleine Pelner Cosman, author of *Fabulous Feasts, Medieval Cookery and Ceremony*, George Braziller, New York.



C.K.G. Billings horseback dinner
at Sherry's, 1903. Courtesy, The
Byron Collection, Museum of the
City of New York, New York.



15380

Hindu wedding feast, Punjab,
India. Photographer: Marilyn
Silvertone/Magnum.

THE TABLE FOR CELEBRATION



Family wedding celebration.
From: *Food and Drink: A Pictorial
Archive from Nineteenth Century
Sources*. Selected by Jim Harter.
Dover Publications, Inc., New
York, 1979.



"My Compliments to the Chef."
Drawing by R. Taylor © 1954.
Courtesy, The New Yorker
Magazine, Inc.

Early 20th century children's
birthday party. Caufield and
Shook Collection, Photographic
Archives, University of Louisville,
Louisville, Kentucky.



THE PORTABLE TABLE



An English picnic lunch, 1939.

Picnicking after a drive, about 1915. Courtesy, Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association and American Heritage Publishing Company.



"A Picnic in a Shady Dell—As it seems to a finicky nature." From *Life*, 1914.



The earliest portable tabletop was an animal skin or woven mat spread on the ground by nomads. As societies became more structured and people moved about in organized groups, ingenious dining paraphernalia was developed to meet specialized needs. Folding tables and chairs, fitted camp chests and compact eating utensil cases were designed for armies marching to battle, explorers on safari, picnickers, gypsy caravans and cowboys on the trail. Since the transportation revolution, the serving of meals on ships, trains, airplanes and space capsules has become as mechanized as the vehicles in which we travel.

19th century picnic. Courtesy, New York Public Library Picture Collection, New York, NY.



Dining from the back of a chuck wagon. L.A. Huffman Collection.
Courtesy, Range Riders Museum,
Miles City, Montana and American
Heritage Publishing Company.



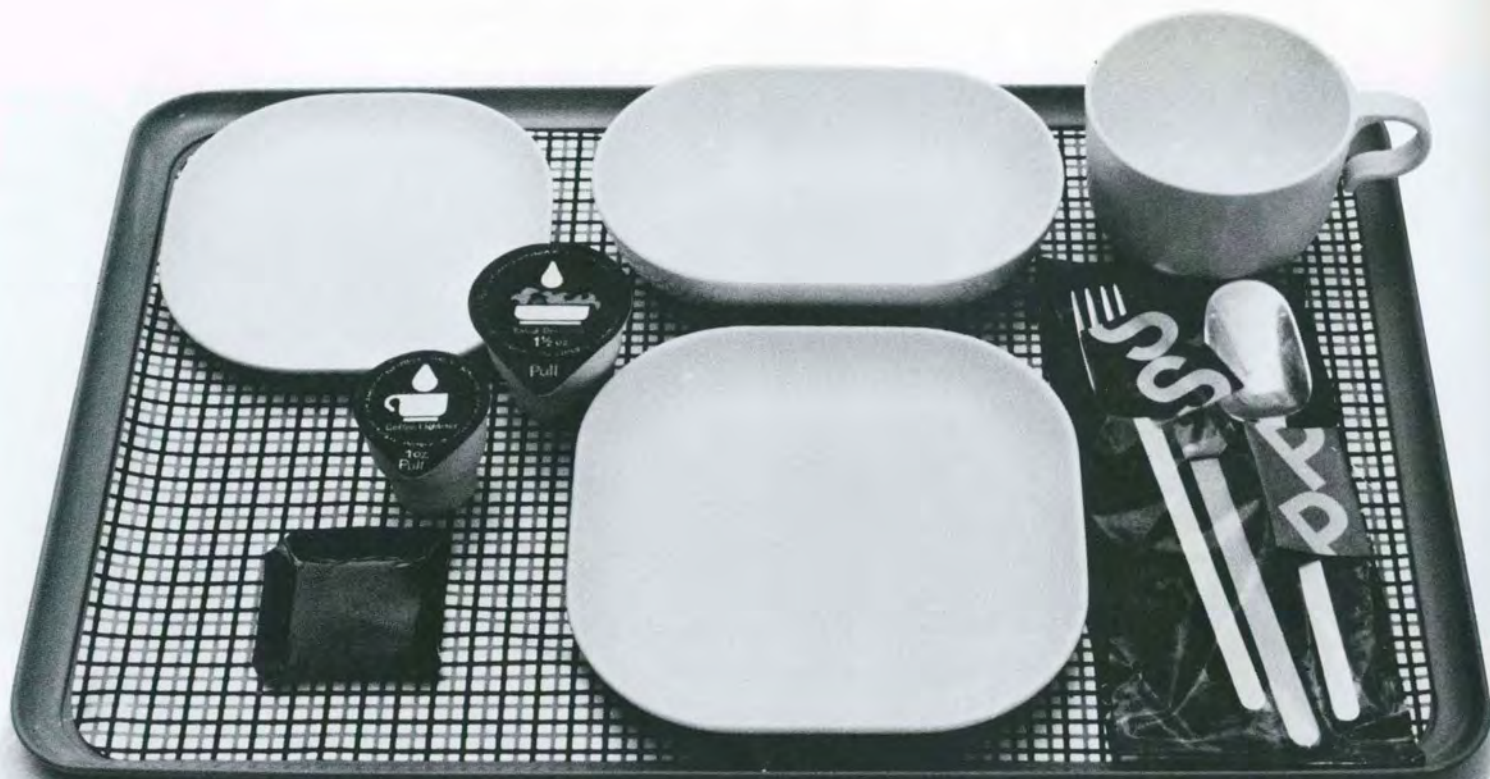
Dining on the train. From: *Food and Drink: A Pictorial Archive from Nineteenth Century Sources*. Selected by Jim Harter. Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1979.

First Class Dining Salon on the Ile de France, about 1920. Courtesy, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Smithsonian Institution, New York, NY.



Dining on the river in China. 17th century engraving. Courtesy, New York Public Library Picture Collection, New York, NY.

In-flight plastic dinnerware,
stainless steel flatware, traymat;
c. 1972-73. Designed by Henry
Dreyfuss Associates, New York,
NY, for American Airlines



Technician drinking orange juice
in Gemini Capsule, 1963.
Courtesy, National Aeronautics
and Space Administration,
Washington, D.C.





Amy Anthony, Rochester, NY
"Come Drink With Me", 1980.
Paper cups.

Selection of Tiffany foam
mealservice disposable dishes.
Courtesy, Dixie/Marathon,
Division of American Can Co.,
Greenwich, CT.

DISPOSABLES

From the palm leaf to the paper plate, disposable tableware has always provided a carefree alternative to the more formal setting. Scooped out shells of fruits and vegetables such as the coconut, pineapple and pumpkin are traditional food containers in certain cultures, while leaves and corn husks wrapped around various fillings have been used both for cooking and serving throughout the world. Today, mass production of vast quantities of paper, plastic and aluminum foil dishes, plates, cups, napkins, cloths and eating utensils have made disposables commonplace in industrial societies.



Cookout. Photographer: Elliott
Erwitt/Magnum



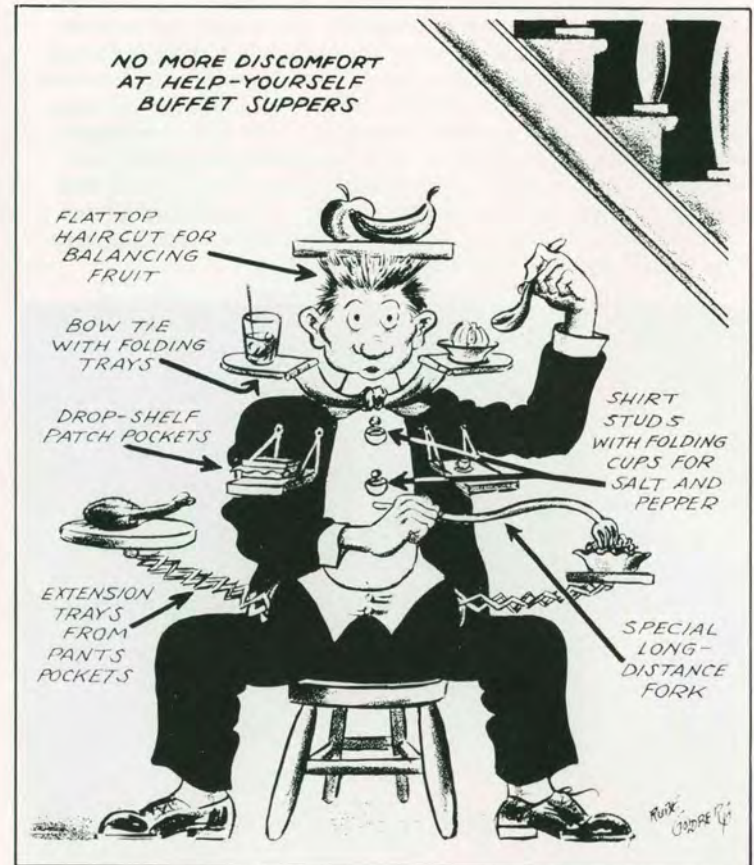
Fast Food Thanksgiving. Drawing
by Frascino © 1977. Courtesy, The
New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

"No More Discomforts at Help-Yourself Buffet Suppers." From: *Rube Goldberg His Life and Work* by Peter C. Marzio. Courtesy, King Features Syndicate, Inc., New York, NY.

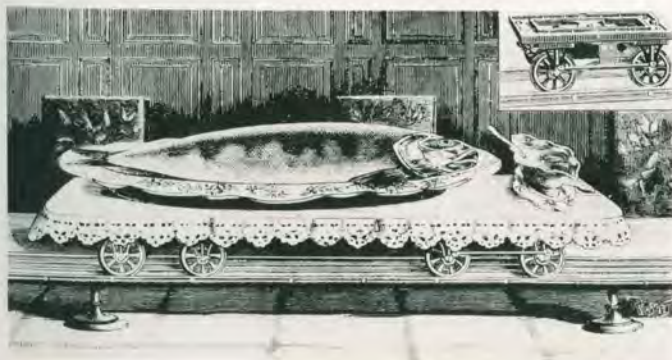
INVENTIONS



Cartoon by Emmett. *Punch*, January 12, 1949. Courtesy, *Punch*, London, England.



Midget Electric Train Used to Carry Food from Kitchen to Table, 1887. From: *Victorian Inventions* by Leonard de Vries. Courtesy, John Murray, London, England.



THE TABLETOP IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

During the 20th century the landscape of the top of the table has been substantially altered. Among the factors coming to bear on it have at a minimum been the decline of the genteel tradition and its displacement by the cult of casualness and informality, the impact of mechanization and the disappearance of servants on the preparation and service of food, and the effect on eating of house design in which kitchen and dining room as such tend to disappear and be replaced by articulated "work spaces." Obviously all have closely interacted with one another.

The century began with an enthusiasm for the formal dinner which seems now almost inconceivable. So great was the importance of the banquet to turn-of-the-century Paris, for example, that one historian was led to call a book about the period *The Banquet Years*. Anything was the occasion for a banquet, from a relatively modest three-hundred-plate affair to observe the erection of a monument to the poet Paul Verlaine, to the celebration of "Sarah Bernhardt Day" by a banquet for six hundred, and on to the one mammoth banquet given by the newly elected premier of France for the country's twenty-two thousand mayors.

It is in the nature of a formal dinner that it consist of a number of courses, each of which requires a separate set of china, glassware, and eating utensils. Everything is symmetrically arranged, candlesticks and service plates with folded napkins evenly spaced around a centerpiece of flowers or fruit, silver to each side in order of use (farthest outside first) and glasses to the right roughly in order of size depending on the number and variety of wines. All of this of course requires servants whose behavior is as stylized as that of the guests.

How one behaved at the formal dinner table was the mark and test of gentility, what Russell Lynes in *The Domesticated Americans* called "the proving ground of poise." He quotes from



1 George Nelson, New York, NY
 "Florence Ware." Dinnerware.
 1952. Melamine. Made by Proton
 Manufacturing Co., Florence, MA.
 Courtesy, George Nelson and Co.,
 Inc., New York, NY.

2 Frank Lloyd Wright
 Dinnerware for the Imperial Hotel,
 Tokyo, Japan, 1921-1967. Made by
 Noritake Co., Tokyo, Japan.
 Courtesy, Frank Lloyd Wright
 Memorial Foundation, Taliesin
 West, Scottsdale, AZ.



a manual of behavior: "The rules to be observed at table are so numerous and so minute in respect to detail, that they require the most careful study; and the worst of it is that none of them can be violated without exposing the offender to instant detection" The author might have mentioned an additional hazard in the fact that the rules change. They had been changing throughout the 19th century—e.g. no more eating with gloves on: you took them off after you got to table—and they went right on changing.

The design of objects for the tabletop changed accordingly. In the *beaux arts* tradition a designer was expected to be able to design everything from the tableware to the landscape gardening, and this was no less true of the tradition that followed which put the same emphasis on the overall unity of the design process. When the modern movement got around to the paraphernalia which appear on the table, it expressed there the same urge for rationality and simplification, the same abhorrence of grossness and ornament, which it had already shown in painting, sculpture and architecture. For many, after the first world war, the liberation from overly stylized manners and the

adoption of new styles in the arts of design went hand in hand and were resisted and detested accordingly by the defenders of the past and the proper. The artists and craftsmen (and women) of the Bauhaus and their equals elsewhere may in that sense be said to have designed in advance for an emancipated lifestyle which was still in the process of becoming.

Frank Lloyd Wright, as so often in his long life, represented something indicative of what was happening. His early dining rooms were places of awesome formality, uncomfortable high-back chairs psychologically riveted in place around the familial board, and his kitchens were little more than square rooms for containing a stove, a sink, a few cabinets and a cook. Despite the playfulness of his delightful china for the Imperial Hotel, it took him time to recognize that eating habits had been transformed. Food processing was making the elaborate preparation of food by hired help superfluous and the diminishing availability of that help was making self-help economically attractive if not compulsory.

In 1934, in the Willey house in Minneapolis, Wright opened the kitchen along its entire length into the living room, calling it a "work space" and somewhat arbitrarily proclaiming that he had invented something new. In 1939 Allmon Fordyce designed for the New York World's Fair a room full of natural wood, stainless steel, dark linoleum, and exposed brickwork which was simultaneously intended for cooking, eating, and living. He had successfully reinvented the old farm kitchen. This was greatly admired.

But it was after World War II, in this country above all, that these dreams began to take hold of peoples' lives. The new faith was proclaimed in 1945 by George Nelson and Henry Wright in a book called *Tomorrow's House*, an uncommonly successful work of prediction (this is a second Wright; the third, Russel, designed dishes in a related vein which became a kind of talisman among young-marrieds of the postwar generation). Whatever has hap-

3 Josef Albers

Fruit bowl, 1924. Silver plated metal, glass, wood. Mfr.: Bauhaus Metal Workshop, Weimar, Germany. Courtesy, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY. Gift of Walter Gropius.



pened, Nelson and Wright asked, to the dining room as we knew it as children, with its extendable table, overarching lamp or chandelier, its sideboard ornamented with mementos, and its solemn function as a center of family life? It had been replaced by a multiplicity of options. Nelson and H. Wright admired F.L. Wright's own house in Spring Green, Wisconsin, because there were so many different places in it where you could eat, at different times and in different ways.

The perceptions of time and space which surround a meal were being altered by mechanization—of food preparation and preservation, of cooking, and of cleaning up after. Since the eating place was no longer narrowly defined, portability and disposability and introduction of new materials could become factors in the concept and manufacturing of tableware and table linen. On the horizon were the techniques of food-freezing and microwave cooking which at their worst would produce the TV dinner but at their best can make elaborately and finely prepared dishes available on demand with a minimum of time and bother.

Limited in their resources and impatient of rigidity, the young of the late 1940's and early 1950's took these lessons to heart. They constructed for themselves a lifestyle in which

informality became the form. This was the great era of casserole (or guess-what's-in-it) cooking, of peasant-like crockery and fabrics, of the preparation of food as increasingly an integral part of the social act of serving it both within the family and with guests. Where the dining table did not vanish or turn into a buffet, its surface was reorganized by place mats substituting for the previously ubiquitous table cloth. Gone was the earlier clutter of objects—cruets, napkin rings, place cards, knife rests, gravy boats, finger bowls, doilies, table crumbers, candy dishes, and bells for summoning the maid. The design innovations of the 1920's and 1930's took root and flowered in this newly benign and cleansed environment. Hollow etiquette and banal food lost their appeal, and conversation and cuisine began to come back into their own.

What showed itself here was heightened concentration on the aesthetics of the matter at hand: the delight in food attractively presented in enjoyable company. That there is no longer a single "correct" way of achieving this enlarges the dimensions of expressiveness in decisions made about it. In all the abundance of styles and possibilities, the choice of tableware is as it always was a process of self-definition and, by extension, a definition of the occasion, one which is no less ceremonial but perhaps only more Japanese in its revelation of the potentiality for exquisiteness in simple means. The top of the table remains a focus of aspiration, pleasure, sociability, and renewal in the immutably symbolic act of breaking bread together. It is a place of sharing, of a communion over which it was long the practice to ask for a blessing, and it is still a place that deserves to be blessed.

Eric Larrabee



4 *Marguerite Wildenhain,*
Guerneville, CA
 Cup and saucer, 1930-1933.
 Porcelain. Designed for Royal
 Berlin. Courtesy, Marguerite
 Wildenhain.

5 *Eliel Saarinen*
 Compote, c. 1934-1935. Silver
 plate. For International Silver
 Company. Courtesy, Cranbrook
 Academy of Art Museum,
 Bloomfield Hills, MI.

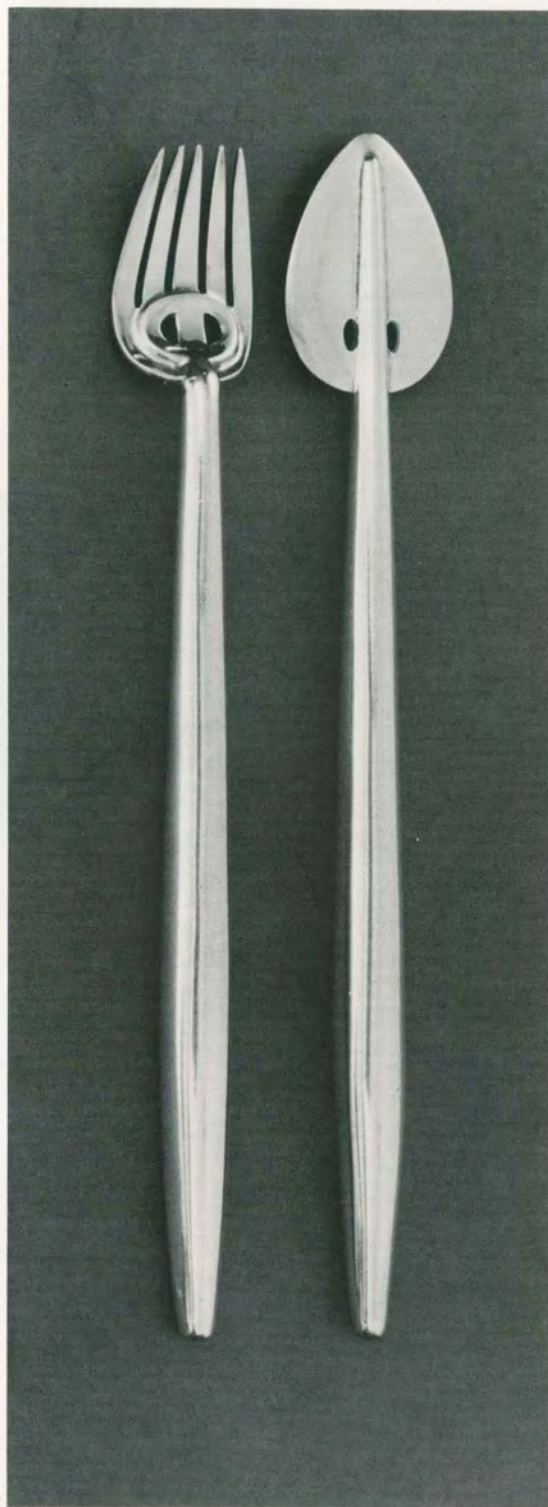
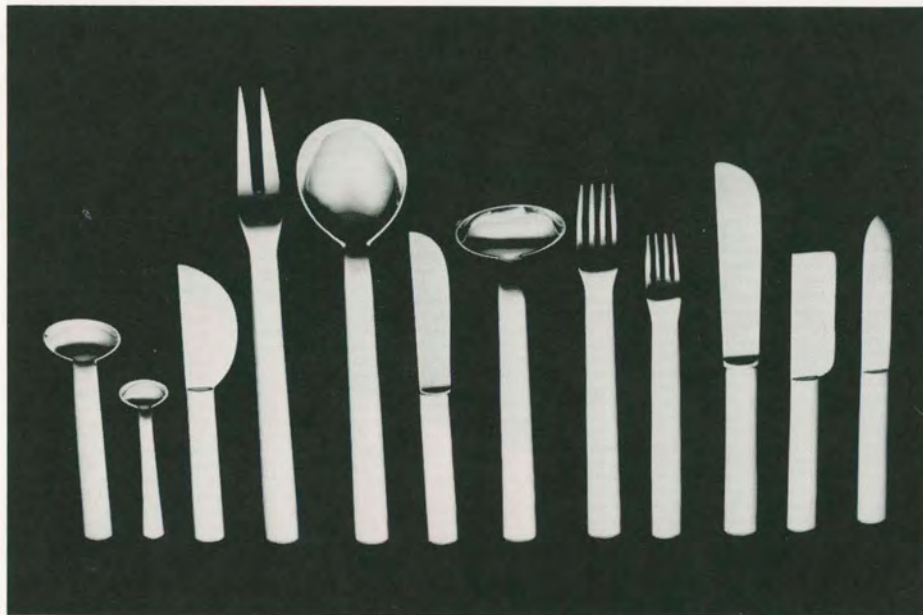


6 *Josef Hoffmann*

"Fledermaus Caberet," Flatware.
1903. Silver plate. Wiener
Werkstaette, Austria. Courtesy,
Alan Moss Studios, New York, NY.

7 *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*

Fish knife and fork, 1900. Silver
plated nickel. Photo courtesy of
The Museum of Modern Art, New
York, NY. Gift of the University of
Glasgow.

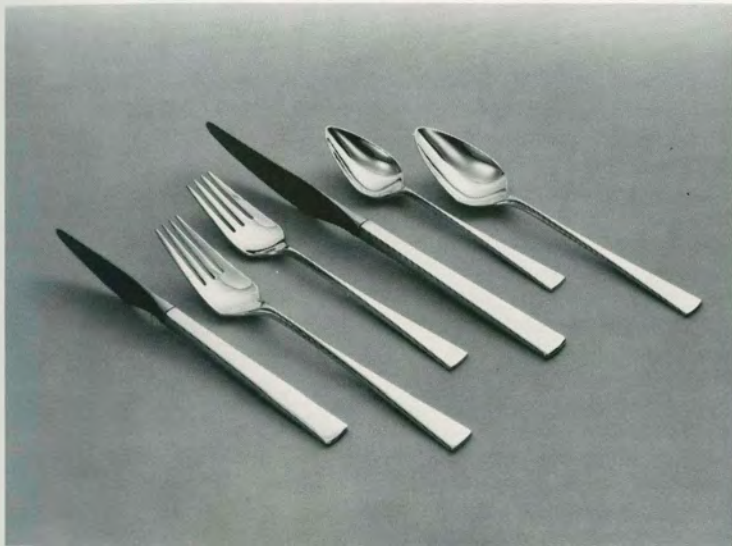


8 John Prip, Rhode Island
 "Dimension," 1961. Flatware.
 Sterling silver. Designed for Reed
 & Barton Silversmiths. Courtesy,
 Reed & Barton Silversmiths,
 Taunton, MA.

9 Lella and Massimo Vignelli,
 New York, NY
 Bar tools. 1971. Sterling silver.
 Designed for San Lorenzo,
 Milan, Italy

10 Sergio Asti, Italy
 "Boca," 1976. Flatware. Stainless
 steel. Designed for H.E. Lauffer
 Co., Inc. Courtesy, H.E. Lauffer
 Co., Inc., Somerset, NJ.

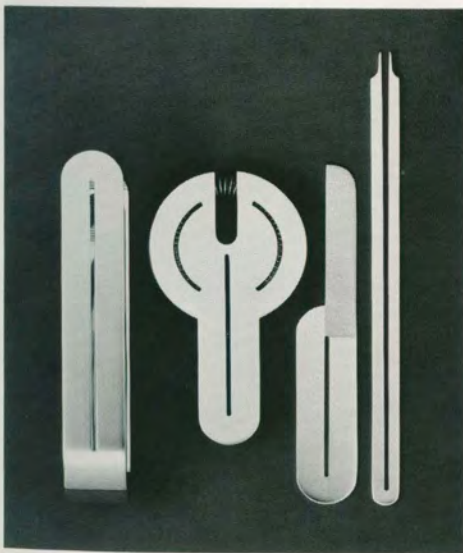
11 Tapio Wirkkala, Finland
 "Composition S," 1963. Flatware.
 Stainless steel. Designed for
 Rosenthal Studio-Linie. Courtesy,
 Rosenthal Studio-Linie.



8



10



9



11

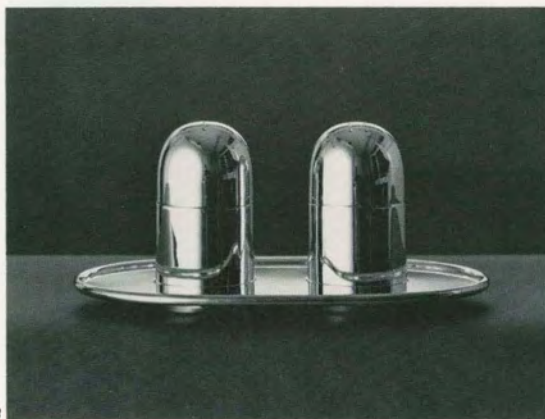
12 Professor Arne Jacobsen
Coffee pot, creamer and sugar
bowl with lid. Stainless steel.
Designed 1967 for Stelton, Ltd.
"Cylinda-line" of Denmark.
Courtesy, Royal Copenhagen
Porcelain Corp., New York.

14 Henning Koppel, Denmark
Pitcher. Hand-raised and
sculptured sterling silver. Design
introduced 1952 by Georg Jensen
Silversmithy, Denmark.

13 Antonio Piva, Italy
Salt and Pepper Shakers
Sterling silver. Designed for
San Lorenzo srl.
Courtesy, San Lorenzo srl,
Milan, Italy



12



13



14

15 Professor Walter Gropius and
Louis A. McMillan, the Architects
Collaborative
TAC Teapot. Porcelain. Designed
for Rosenthal Studio-Linie, 1969.
Courtesy, Rosenthal Studio-Linie.



15



16 Wilhelm Wagenfeld
Teapot, 1932. Clear heat-resistant
"Jena" glass. Mfr.: Jander
Glaswerk Schott & Gen, Germany.
Courtesy, The Museum of Modern
Art, New York, NY. Gift of Fraser's.

16

17 Kaj Franck, Finland
 "Kilta." Dinnerware. Designed
 1952 for Oy Arabia Ab, Finland.
 Courtesy, Oy Arabia Ab, Finland.

18 Russel Wright
 Dinnerware, c. 1937. Designed for
 Steubenville. Courtesy, Alan Moss
 Studios, New York, NY.



17



18

19 Timo Sarpaneva, Finland
 "Suomi." Dinnerware. Designed
 1976 for Rosenthal Studio-Linie.
 Courtesy, Rosenthal Studio-Linie.

20 Masahiro Mori, Japan
 Cup forms. Porcelain. Designed
 for Hakusan, Japan.
 Courtesy, Hakusan Toki Co., Ltd.,
 Nagasaki, Japan.

21 Lella and Massimo Vignelli, New
 York, NY
 "Kyoto." Dinner set. Melamine.
 Design introduced 1980 by
 Casigliani Import Design, Pisa,
 Italy. Made in Japan. Courtesy,
 Lella and Massimo Vignelli, New
 York, NY.



19



20



21

22 Roy Lichtenstein, New York, NY
Plate, cup and saucer, 1966.
China. Limited edition, designed
for Durable Dish Co., Villanova,
PA. Produced by Jackson China
Co. Lent by Joan Kron, New York,
NY.



23 Ernst Fuchs, Austria
Teapot. Porcelain. Designed 1980
for Rosenthal Studio-Linie.
Courtesy, Rosenthal Studio-Linie.



23

24 Victor Vasarely, France
"Decor Manipur." Dinnerware
Decorated for the Rosenthal
Studio-Linie. 1978. Slip cast
porcelain. Courtesy, the Rosenthal
Studio-Linie.

25 Salvador Dali, Spain
"Suomi." Coffee pot. Decorated for
Rosenthal Studio-Linie, 1976.
Limited edition of 500, numbered
and signed. Courtesy, Rosenthal
Studio-Linie.



24



25

26 Josef Hoffmann
 "The Patrician." Stemware.
 Designed 1920 for J & L Lobmeyr.
 Courtesy, Lillian Nassau Gallery,
 New York, NY.



26

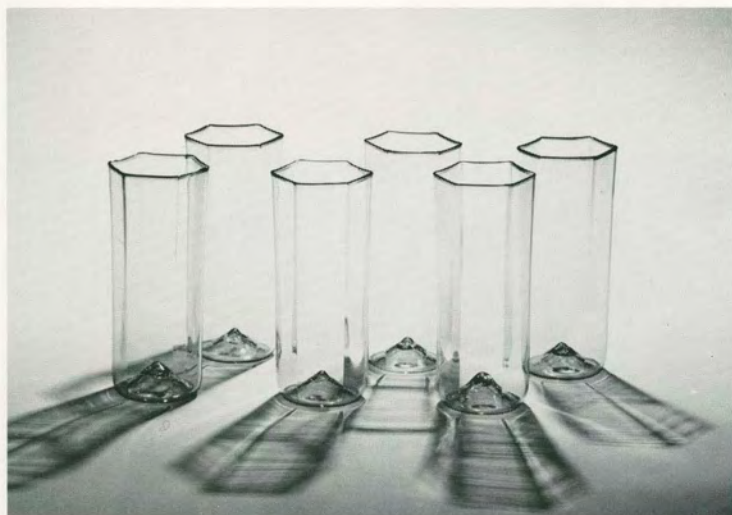
27 Louis Comfort Tiffany
 Tableware, c. 1900. Gold ir-
 idescent. By Tiffany Studios
 under the direction of Louis
 Comfort Tiffany. Courtesy, Lillian
 Nassau Gallery, New York, NY.



27

28 Paolo Venini

Hexagonal glasses. Designed 1932 for Venini, Murano, Venice. Courtesy, V-Form Ltd., New York, NY.



28

29 James Carpenter, New York, NY

Oriental Bowl. Blown crystal bowl, 1979. Designed for Steuben Glass, New York, NY.



29

30 Timo Sarpaneva, Finland

Decanter and glasses, 1979. Designed for Iittala Finland. Courtesy, Iittala USA.



30

31 Dorothy Hafner, New York, NY
"Kyoto Homage." Dinner service,
1980. Porcelain, underglaze
decoration. Cast and slab molded.

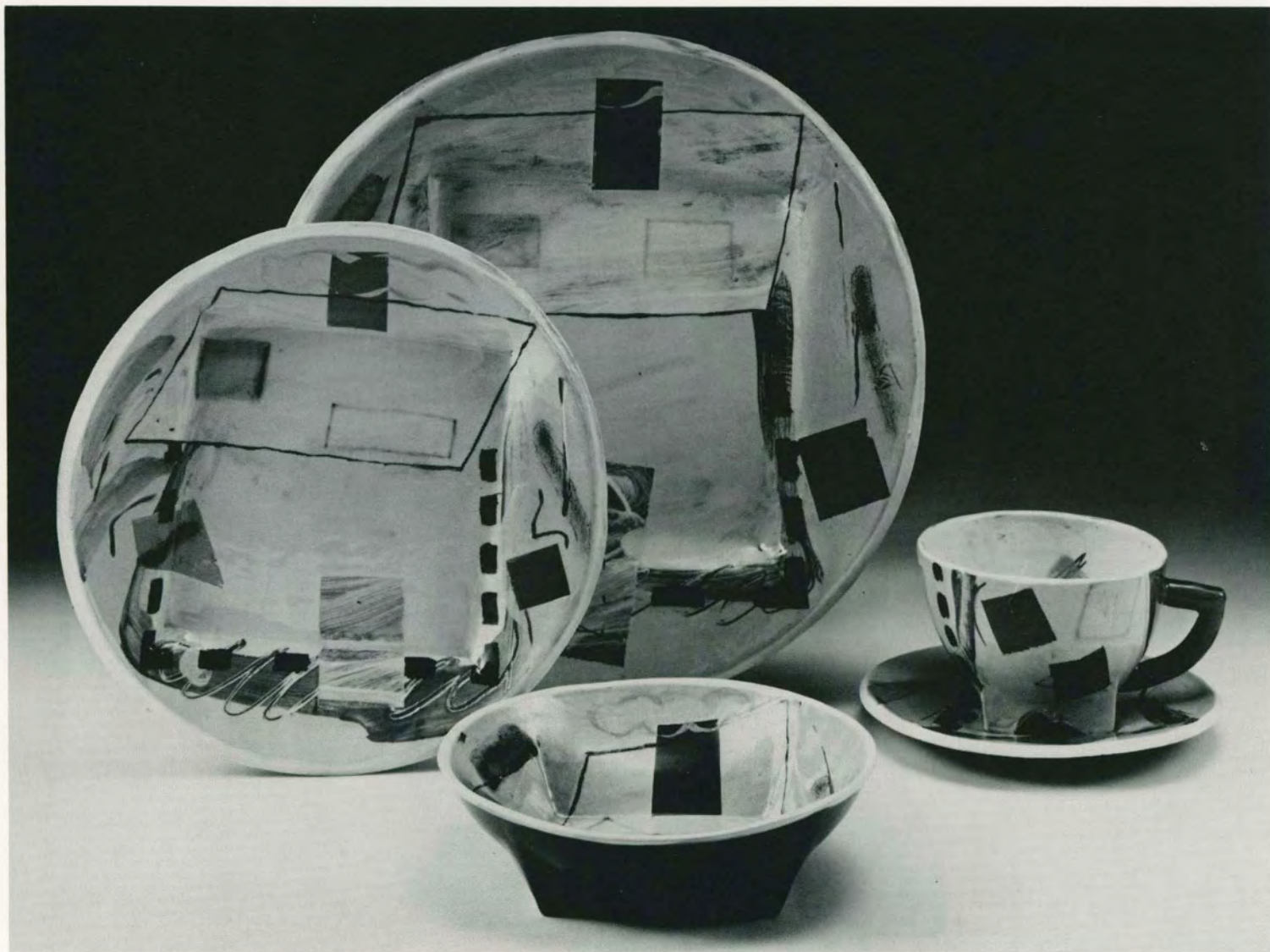
HANDMADE



32 Phillip Maberry, New York, NY
Place setting, 1980. Porcelain.
Thrown, slip cast.

33 Patrick Loughran, New York, NY
Place setting, 1980. Earthenware,
slip decoration. Press-molded,
slip cast.

32



33

34 Beatrice Wood, Ojai, CA
Place setting, 1972. Earthenware,
luster glaze. Lent by John Waller,
Los Angeles, CA

35 Mineo Mizuno, Los Angeles, CA
Place setting and tablecloth, 1980.
Earthenware, thrown. Fabric,
silkscreened. Tablecloth designed
by Mineo Mizuno and created at
The Fabric Workshop,
Philadelphia, PA.

36 Paul Nelsen, New York, NY
Dinner plates, 1980. Earthenware.
Slab construction.



37 John P. Glick, Farmington, MI
Serving tray, 1980. Stoneware.
Slab construction.



37

38 Michael and Harriet Cohen,
Pelham, MA
Tray and French bread tray, 1980.
Stoneware. Imprinted decoration.



38

39 James D. Makins, New York, NY
Place setting, 1980. Porcelain.
Thrown.



40 Michael Delaney and
Richard Loveless, Burlington, VT
Double-spiral plate, 1980. Yellow
birch. Turned and hand-carved.
Courtesy, Hardwood Geometrix
Company, Burlington, VT.



40

41 Mark Lindquist, Henniker, NH
Bowl, 1979.
Spalted maple. Turned.



41

42 Marek Cecula, New York, NY
Rice bowl set, 1979.
Porcelain. Slip cast.



42

43 Wayne L. Bates, Murray, KY
Bowl, 1980. Clay. Thrown, scraffito
decoration.

45 Chester Zmijewski, Gardiner, NY
Square plate, 1980. Raku.
Handbuilt.

44 Ira Sapiir, Oakland, CA.
Untitled, 1980.
Plate. Glass. Blown.

46 Robert Forbes, Philadelphia, PA
Bowl, 1980. Earthenware, slip
decoration. Thrown. Courtesy,
Helen Drutt Gallery, Philadelphia,
PA.



43



45

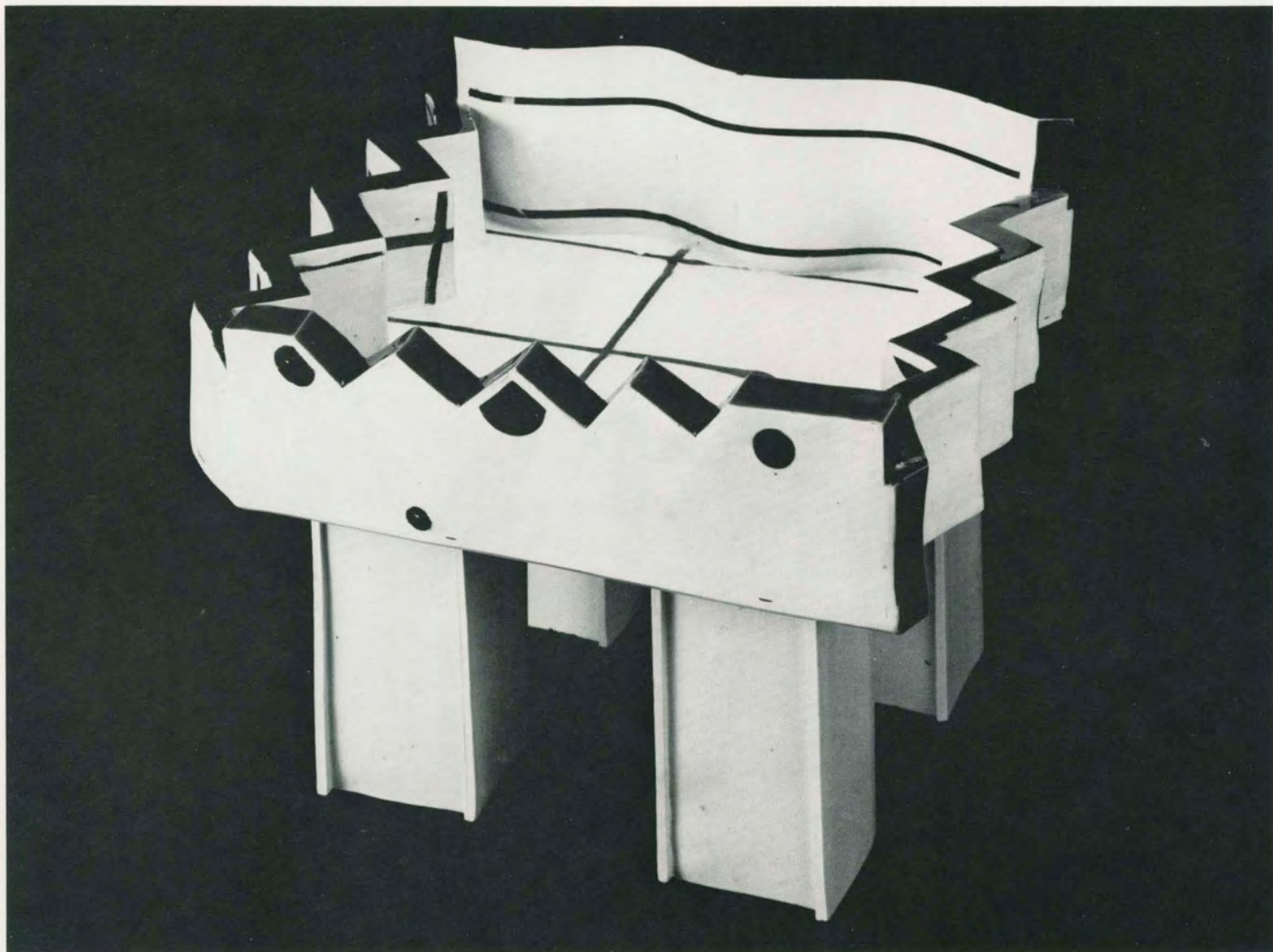


44

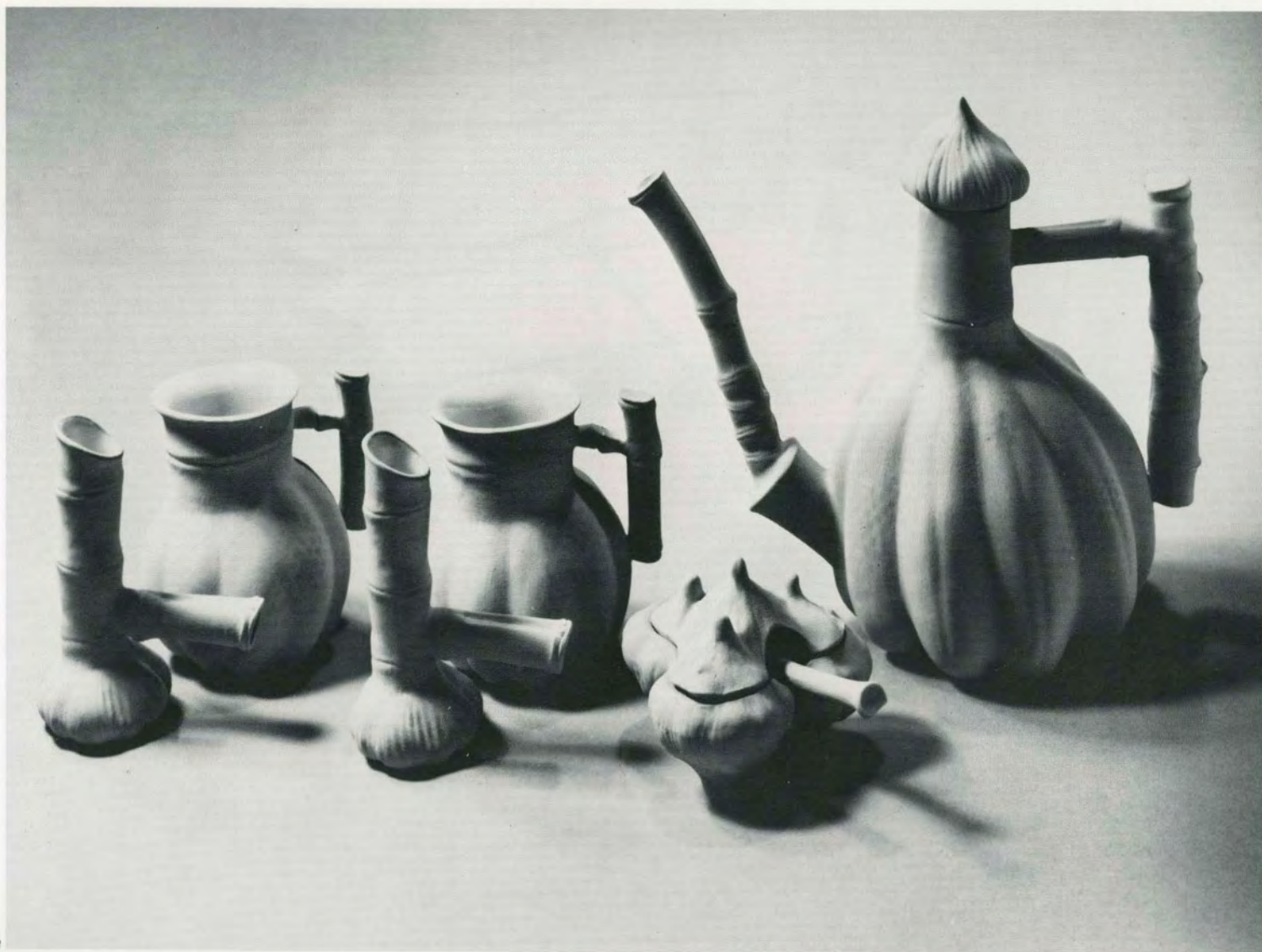


46

47 Judith Salomon, Cleveland
Heights, OH
"Table Bowl," 1980. Earthenware.
Handbuilt.



48 Lynn Turner, Berkeley, CA
Tea service, 1979. Porcelain. Slip
cast, assembled.



49 Stephen Ladin, Gardiner, NY
Teapot, 1980. Porcelain. Slip cast.



49

50 David T. Keyes, Tacoma, WA
Teapot, 1978. Porcelain. Cast and
modeled. Courtesy, Mr. and Mrs.
James T. Keyes, Scottsdale, AZ.



50

Eric Gronborg, Solana Beach, CA
Cup, 1980. Procelain. Lusters,
ceramic photo decal. Handbuilt.
Courtesy, The Elements, New
York, NY.





52 Kathy Erteman, Signal Hill, CA
Goblets, 1980. Porcelain, over
glaze lusters. Slip cast.

53 Coille Hooven, Berkeley, CA
"Animal Cups," 1980. Porcelain.
Thrown and handbuilt.



52

53

54 Madeline Kaczmarczyk,
Rockford, MI
Butterfly Cup and Cozy, 1980.
Porcelain. Thrown and slab built.
Quilted satin cozy.

55 Elisa C. D'Arrigo, New York, NY
Cups, 1977. Stoneware. Handbuilt,
over glaze lusters and enamels.
Courtesy, Agosto Tao Machado,
New York, NY.



54



55



57 Steven V. Correia, Hauula, HI
Tumblers, 1980. Glass. Blown.
Threaded and hooked pattern.
Courtesy, Correia Art Glass,
Santa Monica, CA.

58 Richard Jolley, Concord, TN
"Dixie Cups," 1980. Glass.
Canetorch drawing, blown.



57



58

59 Helen Shirk, San Diego, CA
Cup, 1979. Silver. Formed,
constructed.

60 Ann Heiberger Young, Phoenix, AZ
Beaker and cups, 1980. Britannia
metal, brass, sterling silver.
Formed, fabricated.



59



60



58

61 *Chunghi Choo, Iowa City, IA*
 Sugar server, 1980. Copper, silver
 and copper plated. Electroformed.
 From the Permanent Collection of
 the American Craft Museum.

62 *David LaPlantz, Bayside, CA*
 "Skippy's Peanut Butter Spreader
 #2," 1980. Stainless steel,
 Plexiglas, sterling silver.
 Fabricated.



61

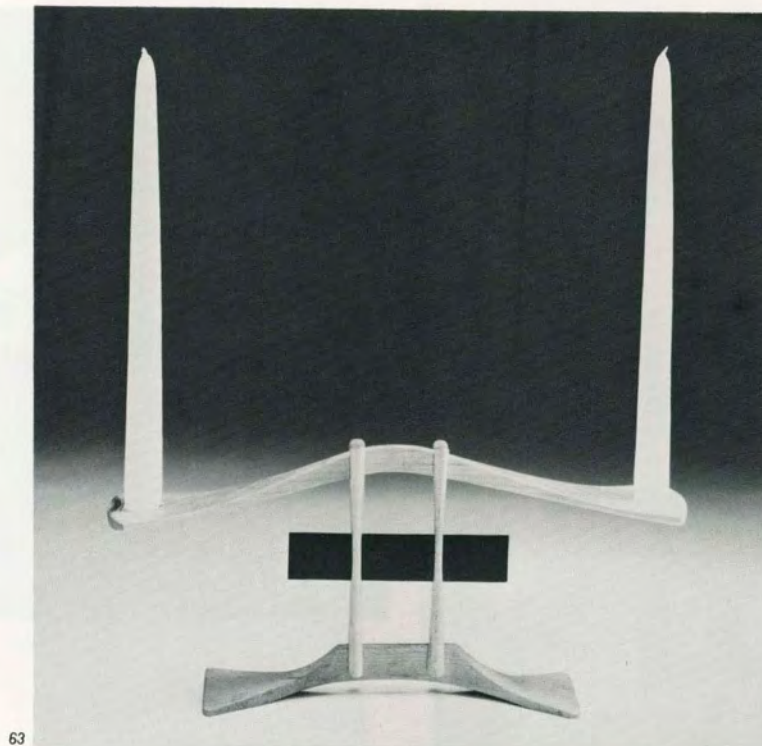


62

63 Warren Durbin, Burlington, VT
Candle stand, 1980. Maple and
ebony.

64 Greg Litsios, Rochester, NY
"Wendy," 1980. Candelabra.
Forged iron.

65 K. William LeQuier, Branford, CT
"Basket Weave Bowl," Series 050-
CF, 1980. Glass. Blown, sand
blasted motif.



63



64



65

THE CORONAL SERVIETTE.

BY EDGAR FREEMAN.

PLACE THE SERVIETTE SQUARE before you; fold the bottom edge upwards to within three quarters of an inch of the top edge. See fig. 1. Now make a succession of seven even plaits with the upper portion of the damask, taking about two

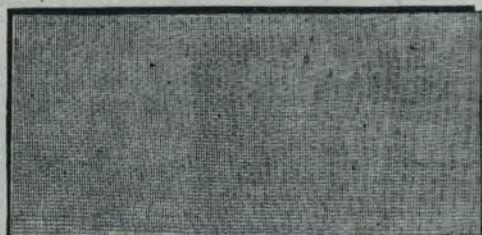


FIG. 1.

inches of the damask for each plait, and always folding upwards, commencing at the top. Observe the left-hand side of the serviette in fig. 2 for the proportion of plaits. Take a paper knife three quarters of an inch wide, place it across the centre of the plaited

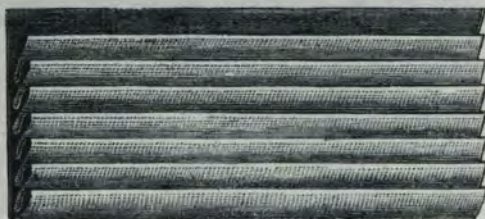


FIG. 2.

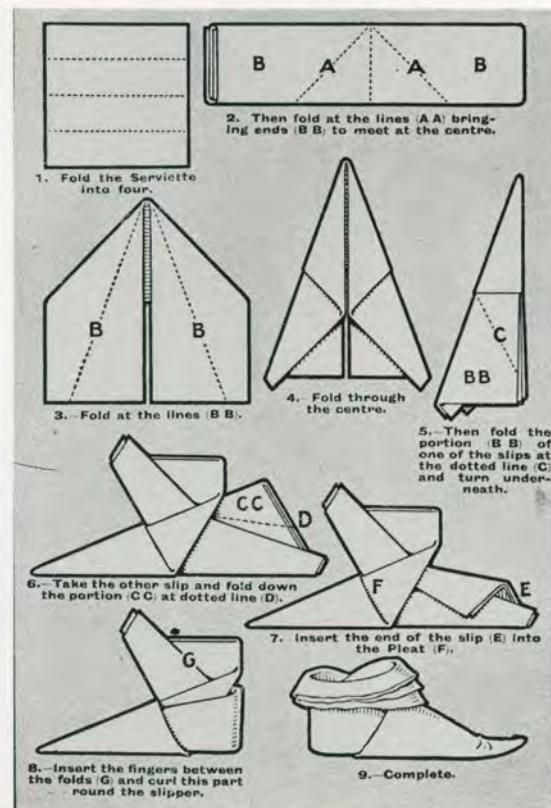
serviette, fold the left side of the serviette over the knife; draw out the knife, and place it on the outside; fold backwards and forwards, drawing out and replacing the knife as each plait is formed. When the left side is completed, plait up the remaining half in the same manner. Now press the folds together so as to crease them firmly, and insert the forefinger of the right hand into the lowest plait of the seven, and crease it backwards so



FIG. 3.

as to form a vandyke. Continue this with the plaits in succession until you arrive at the top. Repeat similar creases between every fold until all are finished. Take the serviette in both hands, and spread it round in the form of a coronal, as illustrated in fig 3.

THE ART OF NAPKIN FOLDING



67

68 Howard Kottler, Seattle, WA
 "Homage to Gertrude," 1971.
 Ceramic decals on commercial
 porcelain plates, leather and
 plastic.



68

69 Lizbeth Stewart, Philadelphia, PA
 "Coffee Cup Hand," 1980.
 Sculpture. Porcelain,
 earthenware. Handbuilt, slip
 molded. Courtesy, Helen Drutt
 Gallery, Philadelphia, PA.



69

70 Mineo Mizuno, Los Angeles, CA
 Rectangular Plate with Cup, 1978
 and 1980. Earthenware. Slab
 construction.



70



71 Phillip Maberry, New York, NY
 "Room #1" (edition of five).
 Portable room environment.
 Fabric, wood, metal and clay.
 Fabric executed at The Fabric
 Workshop, Philadelphia, PA,
 Artists in Residence Program
 1979/80. Courtesy, Hadler/
 Rodriguez Gallery, New York, NY.

72 Judy Chicago
 Detail: *The Dinner Party*
 by Judy Chicago
 Copyright 1979, Judy Chicago
 Courtesy, The Brooklyn Museum
 Brooklyn, NY.



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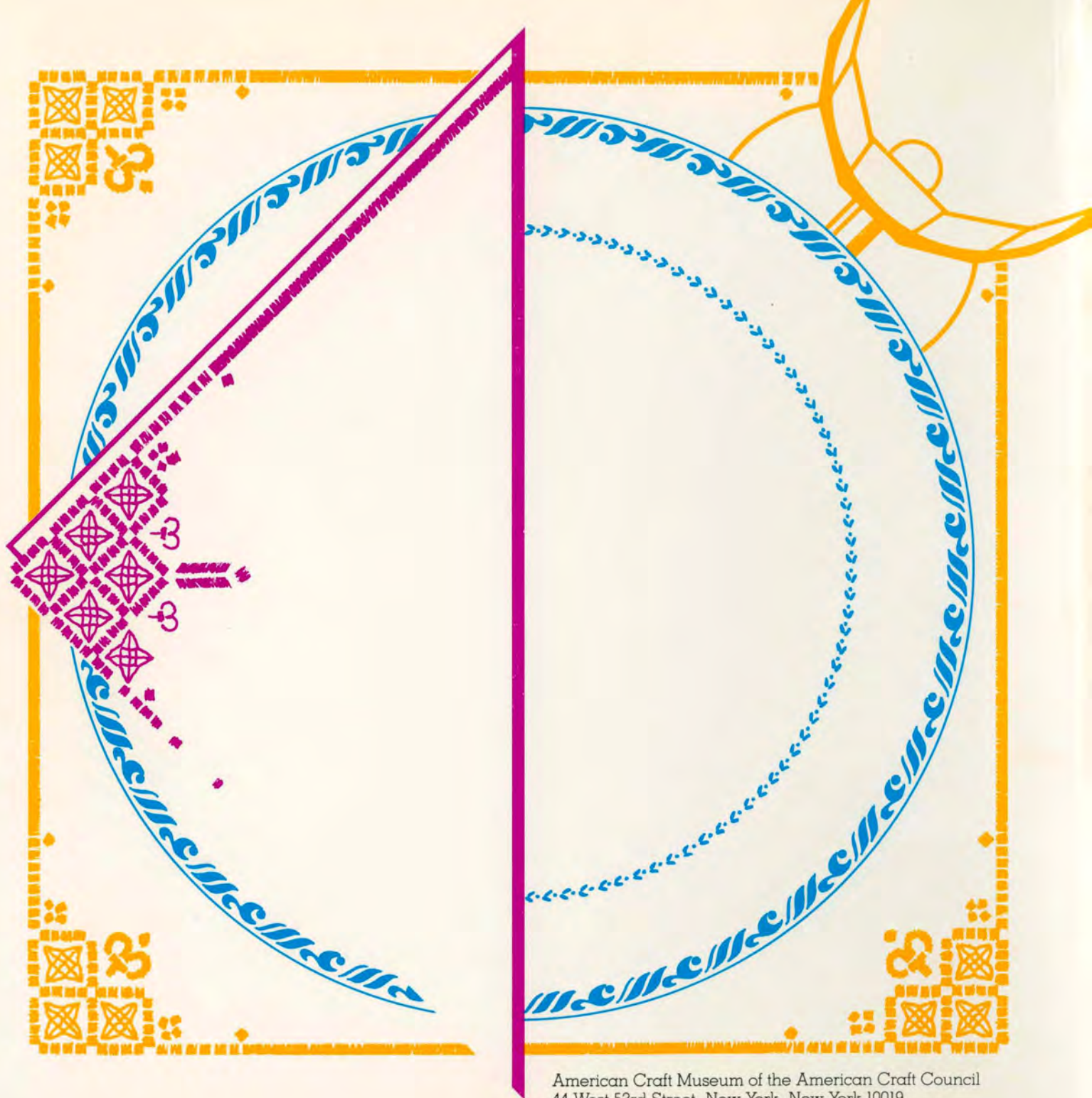
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