

The Museum of Modern Art

MoMA ANNOUNCES *PIROUETTE: TURNING POINTS IN DESIGN*, AN EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTING DESIGN AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE

Exhibition Includes Over 100 Works from MoMA's Collection, Spanning from the Beginning of the 20th Century to Today

NEW YORK, NY, September 16, 2024—The Museum of Modern Art announces *Pirouette: Turning Points in Design*, an exhibition highlighting design as an agent of change, on view from January 26, 2025 to October 18, 2025. The exhibition will include a wide range of objects, drawn largely from MoMA's collection, that have had a deep impact, whether on the design field or on the world at large—including furniture, electronics, symbols, information design, and more—spanning from the 1930s to today. Some of these objects are universally recognizable, while others might be known only to a smaller audience of fans and experts. Some have transformed behaviors, provoked departures from previous typologies and stereotypes, or embodied innovation in materials, form, or function. They have offered unconventional solutions to conventional problems, or designed brand new, constructive problems that lead to new and more evolved studies and solutions. Seen together, the objects in the exhibition highlight how design helps people bring about change, or adapt to it. *Pirouette: Turning Points in Design* is organized by Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, Department of Architecture and Design, and Director, Research and Development, with Maya Ellerkmann, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Architecture and Design.

“Every object has a story. Some objects, moreover, make history—or change it,” said Antonelli. “Design can help us steer the course in positive directions by making us aware of, and helping us correct, negative behaviors. It can also invent novel behaviors that embody new goals, sustainability and justice among them. In this exhibition, we will highlight a sample group of these significant objects, one by one.”

Objects included in *Pirouette* will demonstrate how designers have utilized experimentation, imagination, rigorous research, and sometimes playfulness to shape and redefine human behaviors and experiences. Some of the objects in the exhibition, such as Tejo Remy's “You Can't Lay Down Your Memory” Chest of Drawers (1991), Don Pettit's Coffee Cup for Astronauts (2008), or Sabine Marcelis's Candy Cube (2014), are experiments that never found or even looked for a wide market, but nonetheless have had a strong influence on other designers. Others, like the Apple Macintosh 128K (1983), the Sony Walkman (1979), Art Fry and Spencer Silver's Post-it Note (1977), or Sara Blakely's Spanx (2000), began as revolutionary experiments, achieved wide distribution, and went on to redefine the way we live. Some newer objects hopefully will go on to achieve similar influence, like Gabriel Fontana's Multiform game and set of sports uniforms (2019) that promote openness and a new kind of team spirit.

The exhibition also covers a wide range of design case studies, from indelible icons like Milton Glaser's, "I ♥ NY" logo (1976)—which began on a paper napkin in a yellow cab and went on to inject new hope into the city on the edge of collapse and become a universal symbol; to clear visual renderings of complex datasets, like climatologist Ed Hawkins's Global Temperature Spiral visualization (2018–ongoing), which offers a dynamic portrayal of monthly temperature anomalies across the decades to illustrate the steady rise in global average temperatures; to long-term speculative design research, like Christien Meinderstma's decade-long adventure with flax. The objects on display, each accompanied by a description label, will offer examples of design's wide range and power.

Pirouette will underscore the ever-evolving essence of design and its profound impact on humans and all other species. By highlighting each object's story, background, and influence, the exhibition will demonstrate that design can be a catalyst for progress, especially during times of great social and cultural change.

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