



MIAD's 'Great American Kitchen 1900 - 2010'; Exhibiting a century of cultural values, product innovation & consumerism

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Summary: "The Great American Kitchen 1900 – 2010"; Opening Reception, Gallery Night, July 24, 5 – 9 p.m.; Brooks Stevens Gallery of Industrial Design, 273 E. Erie St.; Tues. – Sat. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Free. 414.847.3200. miad.edu

MILWAUKEE... Opening Friday, July 24 at the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, "The Great American Kitchen 1900 – 2010" entertains and educates through exploration of the history and character of one of America's most significant contributions to world culture – the modern kitchen.

The exhibition continues through February 20, 2010, in MIAD's Brooks Stevens Gallery of Industrial Design, 273 E. Erie St.; Tues. – Sat. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Free.

"The kitchen's rise in importance over a century has paralleled the emancipation of women in our culture as well as the development of the consumer product industry," said Mark Lawson, Director of Galleries. "Over the past 120 years, the kitchen has evolved from a room of toil to its current position as a place at the center of American family life."

Five period kitchens containing a multitude of appliances and artifacts, such as recipe books and an apron collection, reflect the cultural evolution and innovative product developments of:

1900 – 1920: Despite a dramatic shift from farm life to city living, many kitchens reflect the pre-electric and gas era, though they cleverly combine elements of new technologies with traditional mainstays, such as a stove designed to use either gas or wood.

1920's, 30's, 40's: Widespread connection to electricity and gas ushered in an unprecedented era of kitchen product development leading to today's modern kitchen. Science and engineering approaches were applied to kitchen design, and efficiency, sanitation and safety standards all greatly improved.

1950's – 1960's: The post-World War II housing boom triggered a similar boom in kitchen product development and creative marketing – particularly in the inventive appearance of kitchen appliances and cookware.

1970's – 1980's: Design reaches new heights, as the kitchen becomes an integral component of a home's living space. Products reflect new technologies and improved materials, and increasing attention is given to creating a cohesive stylistic appearance through color coordination of appliances, countertops, walls and flooring.

1990's – 2000's: The digital age influences a more minimal footprint and aesthetic, with increasingly smaller electronics and a contemporary approach to design reflecting the modernist styles of the last century.

Most of the artifacts are from MIAD's extensive collection of industrial design products, with numerous donations, such as a vintage apron collection, by individuals, and appliances from American and Electrolux.

MIAD is Wisconsin's only college devoted exclusively to the education of professional artists and designers. Founded in 1974, it is accredited to award the bachelor of fine arts degree in 11 majors. With 80 percent of its 2,800 graduates using their innovative skills in Wisconsin, the college contributes a vital "brain gain" to the state that shapes its creative and economic future.