Art and Industry (1962): Speech 01

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From C.P.'s letter to Mrs. Kennedy: Thought and planning should also be given to the role that art plays in industrial design and economic competition. Examples are the remarkable active factories that are being built in Western Europe, the simple and smart designs that the Japanese are perfecting in their products and all the similar relationships between industrial design and economic success. In fact, two products can be equally good, but the edge will go to one or the other, as the direct result of the simplicity and purity of its design."

Plato: "Beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity."

Good art has a real relationship to industrial competition. A Beautiful, simple machine can be efficient. Where did beauty win out over Victorian fussiness? CP?

Art is more than amateur recreation. Only after considerable experiment does society arrive at a satisfying design. Sometimes it is dependent upon the development of suitable material—ie new glass, new stronger metals, nylon etc.

In the airplane, today not only are Boeing, Martin, Lockheed efficient, they are beautiful machines, simpler, better proportioned more perfectly balanced than earlier designs.

Auto is an example of the relation of beauty to utility. After 1925 sleek body design became the order of the day. Once powerful efficient body design became important in selling cars, the high point in the industry today is public acceptance on a basis of
appearance. Part of the success of the Rolls Royce (non-changing appearance) is that it early attained a satisfying basic design and has been constantly redesigned along the lines of sensible application of aesthetic principles.

It has been said that man is generally prone to undervalue art in its relation to human welfare. I go one step further, we have undervalued art in its relation to industrial progress.

Art has rendered tremendous service to the advancement of civilization. Is built on human experience. Scene, picture or object of order produces a feeling of well-being...easily comprehended and no need to exert effort to correct in harmonious situation.

There has always been a relationship between simplicity and good art---Greek temples, cave mens drawings. The basic elements of art are line, form and color. May add tone and texture.

In architecture is a close relationship between materials and design---mud block Indian structures...steep pitched Norwegian dwelling reduces snow load and also is aesthetically harmonizing with the gross forms of spruce tree. The Chinese pagoda and the Japanese temple resemble downward branching evergreens. Only lately have buildings had functional designs.

Of late marketing is done with consideration for artistic principles. Product must be good to look at and presented in a pleasing manner.

Radio is a case in point... once was excessively embellished sometimes stark, complete gamut of color and finishes today.
In the better ad lay outs aesthetic qualities are in evidence and the spectacular distortions catch the eye but studies have found that aesthetic ads are more effective for recall.

Is a new movement away from the stereotypeed form that many feel has beset mass media, towards a more freewheeling treatment of art. Pushing the trend is the impact of foreign imports and foreign advertising.

Raymond Lowey... industrial designers have had a profound influence on what the eye sees in a product, what the product costs and how well it works. In 1953 the Studebaker was redesigned by Loewy, began the automobile industry move to the low silhouette that continues today.

In non-glamorous products such as bags, made attractive and dramatized so sold more.

Color--- selection of cloro is becoming a marketing science. G.M. has 650 standard colors and combinations and more non-standard combinations.

One of the greatest success stories is the telephone. Now are dozens of fashion colors, more than 10 million color phones have been installed despite the fact that they cost money and black ones are free.

Sylvania: Had a problem because people couldn't distinguish between wattage sizes... so they created color identification for sizes... red for 100 watt, blue for 75 watt, green for 60 watt etc. Within 6 months sales jumped as much as 66%.

Kleenex led in color tissues, towels, other followed.
Color is an art form. Historically fine artists have led color tastes...abstrance painters using color and pattern to express emotion have combined in us a new desire for bolder use of color. Led way to pink typewriters, purple chairs.

Oleo without yellow would not sell; gray package won't sell soap/
Howard Johnson is know by its orange roof.

The best design is the best business. in all the visible aspects of a company's communication with the public.

There are indications all over that better design that is a part of a total corporate entity is being sought and practised on a higher level.

Industrial design alone is a 40 million collar business today and billions more on re-tooling after product acceptance by management. Packaging industry is a 17 billion dollar one.

Proctor and gamble gain an edge by being the first major soap producer to introduce a package printed in fluorescent inks TIDE.

Soft voice often proving more effective than screaming.

Chemical firms are expanding record sums in cultural activities... to enhance company prestige. CArue collections serve as a business tool to "attract important customers. Some stress fine art in advertising, music is used as an image builder, big business men support cultural organizations.

Art for art's sake at reynolds metals...new buildings sculpture in aluminum. Interest in contemporary design is closely
tied to selling their product. They set up architectural contest to honor their father, prize was for the best design in Aluminum. Executives are exposed to art, sculpture, paintings, so they will be influenced.

Interest was begun for most valid reason--- the business of promoting aluminum:
1) to find a way to print on aluminum foil
2) construction industry which has become biggest single market for their products. They set up a department in 1953 to explore the possibilities in 1960 "aluminum in modern architecture" gave the company new stature among architects. In graphic arts designers have tried to create feel of new rispneww. Made own corporate image. Have gone from humble beginnin as maker of foil for cigarette packages to one of the top 100 of U.S. industrial companies. Even sponsor urban renewal plans.

Industry should sponsor art as Medici did in Florence.

SPEECH BY ALFRED BUSH - BROWN;

Art is more than amateur recreation it has an important role to play in our whole economy. Is dangerous not to realize this Is more than just the act itself...must be an inegral part. Histor knows a century by the contributions of its men of culture...its artists, musicians and painters. European common market products are cutting into our oveses markets, good design has transformed the Japanese product.... neglect role of art at our peril. Mustn't neglect role of art when our cities' physical aspect is one of
one of decau. A population has fled to scattered dispersed suburbs...

must not miss the opportunities for giving our institutions for communications and transportation the locations and forms that can inspire a pluralistic community to civic action. Art does not reflect life so much as life emulates art. Should create not reflect.


"Best way to honor an artist its to put him to work." In Mexico art is used in her national life. Full of the pulse of life as people life it.

Too often modern designs are conceived in the spirit of uniqueness rather than meeting the need for functional excellence. Often design is prostitute for appeal. Should be more than a gimmick. Change is not necessarily improvement.

It is not only manufacturers' fault --- customer demand the latest, most modernistic. Rather than newness might be concentration on evolution of proven design/

Auto industry typeifies change for changes sake. Volkswagen has not done this and evidence is that VW has continued to increase its sales in this country while other foreign authors have decreased.

For decades no changes were made in basic design of sewing machine. Then after WWII foreign machines began to invade the market with completely new concepts and hurt our manufacture. We rushed to make changes without adequate testing and inadequately tested designs were marketed, failed and customer confidence wanted. Must get back
A generation ago pioneers set out to convince manufacturers that a attractively designed product would out sell an ugly one. Norman Bel Geddes, Loewy etc. In the 1930s after Loewy redesigned one manufacturer's radio set at a retooling cost of $15,000, its sales rose 700%.

Are approximately 300 industrial designers.

Chase Bag co. . . . . dull, ordinary product, but started advertising with animated bags, imaginative