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## **Streamline – the Dawn of Tomorrow**

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

17 November 2001 - 24 February 2002

**From the early 1930s through into the 1950s, in the United States a design style flourished that has become known as the Streamline Style. Its most important characteristics are the closed, streamlined forms that strongly suggest speed, symbolic of the dynamism of modern times. With its explicit reference to the new, utopian future, the Streamline Style was the symbol of the American Dream.**

The Streamline Style stood for mobility, speed, efficiency, luxury and hygiene, all concepts that were identified with modernity. To visualize this, the sharp corners and transitions of objects were rounded off. Knobs, handles and hand grips were recessed, to give the object a closed appearance. “Speed lines” were created by introducing ribs or gleaming chrome strips. Thus, irrespective of their function or content, objects were made attractive and tempting in a way that everyone understood. An iron was given the shape of a bow wave and plates and bowls appear designed to fly back and forth between the refrigerator and the table.

Many diverse examples of the Streamline Style, varying from pencil sharpeners to vacuum cleaners and from lawn sprinklers to a caravan, are to be seen in the Stedelijk's exhibition, from the hands of well-known and less familiar industrial designers, among them Norman Bell Geddes and Raymond Loewy. The designs and products in the exhibition are from collections both in The Netherlands and other countries.

The exhibition has been assembled by Reyner Kras, who with this show steps down from his post as Curator of Industrial Design at the Museum. Kras was responsible for exhibitions in the Stedelijk Museum such as “Holland in Form” and “Raymond Loewy - Universal Design”. Several years ago he began acquiring examples of Streamline design for the collection.

**An extra edition of the *Stedelijk Museum Bulletin* appeared to accompany the exhibition.**