

According to Beekenkamp, the Duraglide slide, made of plastic, is much more efficient than its metal predecessor in several ways. The metal slide was welded and riveted together, standing approximately 2.4 m high at time of shipping; the Duraglide slide packs to a 273 cm² box.

Beekenkamp says that there were many considerations besides packaging that led him to this particular design: "The Duraglide slide is made of polyethylene plastic, which has a much lighter weight than metal. It is easier to assemble for the consumer and doesn't heat up nearly as much on hot summer days. Furthermore, it is less labour-intensive than the old metal slide, and is therefore less expensive to manufacture."

When the slide went on the market in 1981, it achieved resounding consumer approval as sales soared to five times that of the metal slide in its best year. Today, the Duraglide slide is sold in more than 20 countries worldwide, including Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Singapore. It is also sold in many countries throughout Europe and North America, and according to Edward Attlebery, marketing director for Paris Playground, "sales are increasing dramatically every year."

Another interesting item on display at the exhibition was L'Attaché, a briefcase made of a single piece of plastic. Designed by Michel Dallaire for La Compagnie Resentel Ltée of Montreal, it is inexpensive, waterproof and durable. Available at retail outlets across Canada, the briefcase was also selected to appear in the boutique catalogue of New York's famed Museum of Modern Art.

The Strala, a floor lamp designed by Scot Laughton and Thomas Deacon, combines modernism with ancient references. Composed of two

black rods, the higher one has at its top a light bulb surrounded by a conical shade, while the shorter one is topped by a brass knob that serves as a dimmer. Said Deacon, "It has a ritualistic, totemic feel, and at the same time, it is reminiscent of an early astronomical model." The name Strala is doubly fitting since the word, taken from Middle English, means "beam of light" and "javelin."

By far the biggest item at the exhibition is the decidedly glamorous four-wheel-drive tractor from Versatile Farm Equipment Ltd., of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Designed by Morley Smith and William Stanton, the tractor first appeared on the market in 1976. The Model No. 276 Bidirectional on display at the Toronto show is a revised version of the original and dates back to 1984. The

design's most prominent feature is that it allows the driver to sit inside the cab and turn or swivel the entire seat so that he or she may face either the front or the back of the tractor, according to the needs of the task — that is, whether it is a "pull" or a "push" job. A less-expensive swatter head is available that fits onto the tractor; instead of the typical \$35 000 swatter, one can be bought in the \$10 000 to \$15 000 range. The No. 276 Bidirectional is currently sold in Canada, the United States, Saudi Arabia, the Ivory Coast and Australia, and plans for distribution include many more countries in the very near future.

Thomas Lamb of Uxbridge, Ontario, brought several of his elegant designs to the Art in Everyday Life show, including his 1978 Steamer Lounge Chair. Reminiscent of steamboat deck chairs, it is made of interlocking wooden slats, thus creating a look that is both practical and adventurous.

Although Canada does not yet rival such international design heavyweights as Italy and the United States, the recent successes of many domestic products are sounding notes of optimism. Canadian design is finally gaining recognition both at home and abroad.

And now, the situation looks even more promising as there is an ambitious project under way to convert Toronto's old stock exchange into a resource centre for design. Tentatively called The Design Exchange, it will contain a large gallery space for national exhibitions to enhance the promotion of Canadian talent. The project is being spearheaded by the Toronto show's curator Linda Lewis who hopes the centre will bring Canadian design to the international forefront in the 1990s.

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