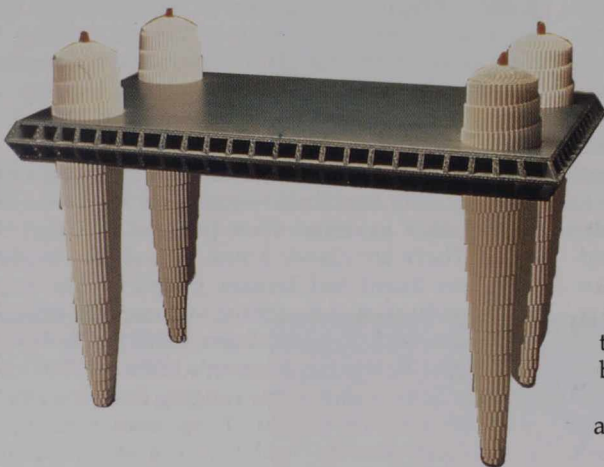


Festival of Canadian design and the arts

*Rosaline Delisle
Three colour pot*

Fashion is not the only aspect of Canadian design which will be on view at Liberty this autumn. Leading furniture designers, ceramists and artists will also have their work featured between September 27 and October 15.



*Brian Gladwell:
Corrugated cardboard,
dowel and laquer table*

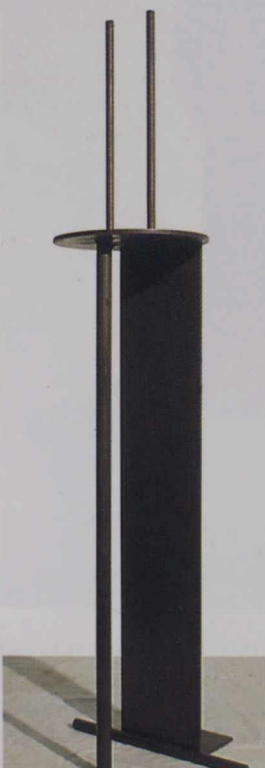
Canadians have been making furniture for centuries, starting with the simple, hand-made utilitarian products of the early settlers. However, it is the opening in 1830 of the nation's first furniture factory in Kitchener, Ontario, which marks the industry's formal beginning.

Today, there are around 1500 furniture

*Joe Fafard
Glass and wrought iron
table*



*John McKinnon
Welded steel table*



factories in Canada, employing a workforce of more than 50 000. Most manufacturers are small-to-medium-sized, family-owned firms.

Canada's furniture exports increased sharply over the past 15 years. Visitors to Liberty will have an opportunity to see why Canadian designers are now reaching buyers around the world.

Liberty has chosen four collections to feature in its autumn display. There will be minimal welded tables and floorlamps by John McKinnon, and a series of glass top tables by Joe Fafard. Brian Gladwell's design will be represented by a table, desk and bookshelves in corrugated cardboard dowl and lacquer; while the Durocher and Pratt partnership will be represented by a Chaise 'X' chair in leather and steel, secretaire and chariot.

Canadian ceramists develop a national identity
Canadian ceramists have taken longer than the furniture makers to evolve their own distinctive style. Before 1950, most of them studied abroad and were influenced by trends in the US and Europe. Oriental influences also appeared, notably in the work of Wayne Ngan and Walter Dexter, two exponents of a free-form Japanese-derived pottery known as *raku*.



Nowadays, Canadian tendencies are more noticeable. Canadians such as Jack Sures, Les Manning, John Chalke and Robin Hopper have developed a style which has been described as 'cool, well designed, sometimes rich in detail, yet severe overall'. The evolution of national artistic identity has been greatly stimulated by the formation of ceramic organisations throughout the country.

