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***Wirkkala Revisited* at Design Museum Reinterprets the Life and Work of Designer Tapio Wirkkala**

Wirkkala Revisited

5 June–2 August 2015

This year marks the centenary of the birth of Tapio Wirkkala (1915–1985). Design Museum is celebrating the event with *Wirkkala Revisited*, an exhibition reinterpreting and recreating the work of this legendary Finnish designer. Wirkkala’s original drawings and objects are viewed from new perspectives with the artists and designers.

Tapio Wirkkala was an exceptionally versatile designer and artist whose work was of very broad scope. He was not limited by the size, materials or professional boundaries of his projects. For Wirkkala, form was not just an aesthetic aim or intellectual insight. It was the result of a sensitive dialogue of thought, hand, eye and material.

Design Museum held a major Wirkkala retrospective in 2000. When we began to develop this new exhibition, we wanted to approach Wirkkala’s work from the viewpoint of an outsider. We invited Bora Hong, the director of Gallery Factory in Seoul, South Korea, to curate the exhibition,” says Chief Curator Suvi Saloniemä of Design Museum. Bora Hong has curated Nordic exhibitions of art and design also on previous occasions.

Curator Bora Hong describes the starting points of the exhibition in further detail: *A few years ago, I saw Design Museum’s Tapio Wirkkala catalogue. I was extremely fascinated by the pictures of Wirkkala’s hands working on various materials. I wanted to make an exhibition presenting to viewers the work of the designer and the meaning of working with one’s hands in both art and design.* She particularly liked the way Wirkkala’s artworks and design objects blended so many different elements, such as wind, sound, scents and daylight. The point of departure for the exhibition is provided by the designer’s hands, shown in black and white photographs of Wirkkala’s hands drawing, carving a graphite mould for a glass piece and chopping wood with an axe that he had designed. The different sections of the exhibition are accordingly named the Hand That Makes, the Hand That Talks and the Hand That Works.

The exhibition features unique and mass-produced original works by Tapio Wirkkala. There are also 3D-printed interpretations of pieces by him that visitors can touch. The exhibits include glass, ceramics and original sketches from the collections of Design Museum. Visitors can also carve wooden birds in a special workshop designed for the exhibition space. Curator Bora Hong hopes exhibition visitors will understand and learn the processes of design in a deeper way through participatory activities.

Just as Wirkkala collaborated with skilled and specialized craftsmen, the visiting curator has worked in close cooperation with the **NONAME NOSHOP exhibition architecture office**, video artists **Sinae Lee, Sojung Jun, Jeamin Cha, Junebum Park** and artists like **Elina and Ida Nissinen**, and an **archive researcher Kinga Hamvai** in order to create a multi-layered exhibition triggering different ways of seeing and experiencing things.

A discussion on the Wirkkala Revisited exhibition hosted by curator Bora Hong (in English) will be held at 3 p.m. on Saturday 6 June. Guided visits to the exhibition: in Finnish on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. and Saturdays at 4 p.m., in Swedish at 2 p.m. on 18 July, in English at 2 p.m. on Saturdays, and in Russian at 2 p.m. on the last Sunday of the month.

Design Museum, street address Korkeavuorenkatu 23, 00130 Helsinki, summer opening hours: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m., Mon. – Sun. Tickets: adults €10, pensioners €8, students €5, visitors under 16 free of charge. Design Museum is included in the Museum Card of the Finnish Museums Association.

Tapio Wirkkala (1915 – 1985) was a Finnish designer and sculptor, who is regarded as a leading figure of modern applied art and design in Finland. He designed several works that became classics, such as the Chanterelle vase, banknotes for the Bank of Finland, and bottles for Koskenkorva spirits and Finlandia vodka. Glass designed by Wirkkala for Iittala is particularly well known, the most popular items being perhaps the glassware of the Ultima Thule series. Wirkkala won several prizes at the Milan Triennales. He was given the Pro Finlandia medal in 1955 and the honorary title of Academician in 1972. The artistic legacy of Wirkkala and his wife Rut Bryk is maintained by the Tapio Wirkkala Rut Bryk Foundation.

Curator Bora Hong was a visiting curator in the autumn of 2014 in the HIAP – Helsinki International Artist in Residency Programme at Suomenlinna. She has previously studied the Finnish designers Oiva Toikka and Anu Tuominen. Bora Hong has curated several exhibitions of Nordic design, including The Nordic Day - Nordic Design in Everyday Life at the Korea Foundation in Seoul. Bora Hong is currently the director of Gallery Factory in Seoul, www.factory483.org.

Design Museum Iittala celebrates the Tapio Wirkkala Centenary with the exhibition In the Whirlwind of Designing Glass, which will be opened to the public on 6 June 2015. This exhibition features centrifugally cast objects designed by Wirkkala such as the *Solaris* and *Aura* plates. *Design Museum Iittala, Könnölänmäentie 2 c, 14500 Iittala. Summer opening hours: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tue. – Sun.*

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