

Editorial from New York Observer, August 18, 2003

Aug 18, 2003
Obama

MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN MISSES THE TARGET

The curators of the current exhibit at the new Museum of Arts and Design on West 53rd Street have introduced a new level of crassness and market-driven cynicism to the museum world. The exhibit, *USDesign 1975-2000*, has two main sponsors: Target Stores and J.P. Morgan. It just so happens that the work of architect Michael Graves is featured prominently in the show. In case you didn't know, Mr. Graves happens to design housewares for ... Target Stores.

The show was curated by Craig Miller, the museum's curator of architecture, design and graphics, and the Denver Art Museum. It is stunning that neither Mr. Miller nor Holly Hotchner, the museum's director, were sensitive to this outrageous conflict of interest. By featuring Mr. Graves in a show sponsored by Target, the exhibit forfeits any claim to being an objective survey of American design over the past 30 years. Quite simply, the museum has let its sponsor run away with the show, turning it into a schlocky marketing device to sell Target products.

This is hardly an auspicious beginning for the museum, which was formerly the American Craft Museum and which is planning a highly publicized move into a 54,000-square-foot space at 2 Columbus Circle. One would like to think that the new space will be used to display art, and not to sell more of Mr. Graves' tea kettles.

P.O. Box 20464, Columbus Circle Station, New York, Ny 10023-1492
(212)877-4394; CFESD@aol.com