



***Designing Tomorrow: America's World's Fairs of the 1930s* exhibition opens October 2010**

In the midst of the Great Depression, tens of millions of visitors flocked to world's fairs in Chicago, San Diego, Cleveland, Dallas, San Diego, and New York where they encountered visions of a modern, technological tomorrow unlike anything seen before. Architects and industrial designers like Raymond Loewy, Norman Bel Geddes, Henry Dreyfuss, and Walter Dorwin Teague collaborated with businesses like General Motors and Westinghouse to present a golden future complete with highways, televisions, all-electric kitchens, and even robots. The National Building Museum's new exhibition *Designing Tomorrow: America's World Fairs of the 1930s* is the first-ever exhibition to consider the impact of all six American world fairs of the depression era on the popularization of modern design and the creation of a modern consumer culture. On display from October 2, 2010 through July 10, 2011, *Designing Tomorrow* brings together more than 200 never-before-assembled artifacts from the six fairs. The exhibition further explores how the 1930s world's fairs were used by leading corporations and the federal government as laboratories for experimenting with innovative display and public relations techniques, and as grand platforms for the introduction of new products and ideas to the American public.

Designing Tomorrow is organized into seven thematic galleries: **Welcome to the Fairs, A Fair-going Nation, Building**

a Better Tomorrow, Better Ways to Move, Better Ways to Live, Better Times, and Legacies.

As a companion to the exhibition, *Designing Tomorrow*, a collection of essays, will be published in September 2010. The collection celebrates the influence and impact of the world's fairs of the 1930s and the complicated negotiations brokered between tradition and avant-garde design in the cutting-edge work that was presented. The book is edited by Robert W. Rydell, assistant professor at Montana State University, and Laura Burd Schiavo, curator of *Designing Tomorrow* and assistant professor at the George Washington University. The collection is published by Yale University Press. Also in conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum is developing a variety of education programs intended to further examine the impact of world's fairs on modern design. Visitors to the Museum can also take advantage of free, docent-led tours of the exhibition beginning October 23, 2010. For details and up-to-date information on the exhibition and associated programming, please visit www.nbm.org or call 202.272.2448.