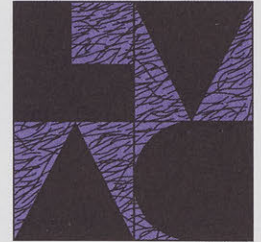


## N E W S R E L E A S E



**The Process of Elimination**  
**The Bathroom, the Kitchen and the Aesthetics of Waste**

Innovative design exhibition opens May 9 at MIT

Public opening reception May 8, 5 to 7 pm

This selection of historic bathtubs, toilets, stoves and other domestic fixtures, installed in a labyrinth of inventive, modular, quasi-architectural units, tracks the design evolution of these two highly charged locations in the home. The exhibition revises an understanding of the **streamlined style** of modern design. Streamlining, the quintessentially American contribution to 20th century design history, has traditionally been understood as an expression of the aerodynamic efficiency associated with speed and progress in transportation. This exhibition, however, illustrates how streamlining's smooth and fluid lines served both the new ideals of bodily hygiene and the economic policy of planned obsolescence, and how, in fact it emanated from the bathroom and kitchen as much as from the airfoil.

Between 1890 and 1940, America's culture of consumption took its modern form. Products were mass produced and mass distributed, designed to be purchased and rapidly replaced by a vast buying public. The modern bathroom and kitchen emerged in the same period: the bathroom became a laboratory of managing bodily waste, and the kitchen became a site not only for preparing food but for directing household consumption at large.

The phrase **process of elimination** refers to the overlapping patterns of **biological** digestion, **economic** consumption and **aesthetic** simplification. The organically

modeled yet machine-made surfaces of streamlined objects collapsed the natural and the artificial, the biological and the industrial, into an **aesthetic of waste**.

The exhibition has been organized by two guest curators: **Ellen Lupton** (recently appointed Curator of Contemporary Design at the Cooper Hewitt, National Museum of Design) and **J. Abbott Miller**, a designer, writer and principal of Design, Writing, Research, New York. They have written and designed the 80-page, copiously illustrated publication which accompanies the exhibition and which will be available at the List Center and through Princeton Architectural Press.

The topic of creative and responsible waste management is particularly timely for both consumers and designers. **Mierle Ukeles**, Artist-in-Residence with the New York City Department of Sanitation, and currently creating a major public art project in Cambridge, will speak on the topic "Does Responsible Design Mean Boring Design?" at the List Center on Wednesday, June 10 at 7:30 pm.

Partial support for the exhibition has been received from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, and from the Graham Foundation, Chicago. Generous in-kind donations have been received from the Ivory Brand Division of Procter and Gamble and the Charrette Corporation, Woburn.

The exhibition continues through June 28, 1992. List Center hours are Monday through Friday 12 to 6 pm; weekends from 1 to 5 pm. (Closed Monday, May 25.) Admission is free. The List Center galleries are located in the Wiesner Building at 20 Ames Street, Cambridge, a five-minute walk from the Kendall Square Red Line T station.

For further information and/or publicity materials call Ron Platt at 253-4400.