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Artek and the Aaltos: Creating a Modern World

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The first English-language survey to focus on the Finnish Modernist design company Artek and its founders, Alvar and Aino Aalto

The Finnish design firm Artek is best known as the producer and distributor of Modernist bentwood furniture designed by Alvar Aalto (1898–1976). However, its mission was more complex and multifaceted, grounded in the notion that art and design could enhance everyday life. *Artek and the Aaltos* showcases more than three hundred objects, including furniture, glassware, lighting, design sketches, drawings, textile swatches, and photographs. Most of the material is published here for the first time. It contextualizes the contributions of Artek, and those of its founders, Alvar and his wife, Aino Marsio Aalto (1894–1949), providing evidence for their close professional partnership as well as critical interpretations of their major projects. It also considers individuals such as Maija Heikenheimo, whose career at Artek spanned three decades. In addition, this book examines the Aaltos' advocacy for the use of standardized forms and shows how modern designers continue to work with the Artek product line and within the parameters of the company's mission. Fully indexed appendices present new scholarship, including an inventory of the Artek product line (furniture, textiles, and glass), and a list of public and private commissions. This book is the first English-language publication on the topic, as well as the most comprehensive, with chapters authored by leading scholars of design history and architecture.

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