

CUTTING EDGE

An Exhibition of British Cutlery and Table Settings

26 March – 2 June 2002

This special exhibition will feature five thousand years of the cutler's art in a stunning collection of knives, forks and spoons ranging from the New Stone Age to the 1950s, providing a complete overview of the design and evolution of British cutlery.

Amassed over 45 years by designer and collector Bill Brown, this fascinating assembly of over 500 pieces celebrates the many design triumphs created through the ages in making the functional beautiful. Knives of Neolithic flint, Egyptian copper, Celtic bronze and Roman bronze and iron will be displayed, along with medieval daggers for eating and fighting. Decoratively-handled cutlery sets from the Stuart period, pistol-grip scimitar-bladed Georgian cutlery, and artistic inspired Victorian pieces will also be featured. Innovative 20th century Art Nouveau and Deco tableware and the clean lines of our best modern designer cutlery will provide an interesting contrast to earlier pieces.

The displays will be arranged in both thematic and chronological order. In addition, two table settings, with all the appropriate food, will help to bring the exhibition to life. Coloured prints and engravings by artists like Hogarth, Rowlandson and Gillray will provide a social comment on the art of dining in the 18th and 19th centuries.

This exhibition was originated at Fairfax House, York, by its director Peter Brown. A lavishly illustrated book, edited by Peter Brown and published by Philip Wilson Publishers, will accompany the exhibition which contains essays by leading experts in the field of food, history and the decorative arts.

Cutting Edge Designs

To complement *Cutting Edge*, the Design Centre will highlight the work of selected contemporary designers and makers working with cutlery in London today.

The work displayed will celebrate, challenge and demonstrate the diversity of the discipline of cutlery. Some pieces function as cutlery, some as art pieces and others as jewellery. Materials used include silver, stainless steel and ceramics, and techniques incorporate casting, firing, piercing, waterjet cutting and hot forging.

The show will include the work of Miake Dahl, Jonathan Levien and Nipa Doshi of Doshi Levien Design Office, Kay Ivanović, Lisa Marklew, Rebecca de Quinn, William Phipps, Lucian Taylor, Susana Shaw, Diana Greenwood and William Warren. The Worshipful Company of Cutlers will award a special prize for the best piece of cutlery design in the show, judged by a panel of experts.

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Study Day

Saturday 20 April, 10.00am – 4.30pm

A study day looking at the decorative arts and social history themes relating to British dining and etiquette, with contributions from leading historians and writers.

Understanding British Cutlery: Highlights of the Bill Brown Collection

Peter Brown, Director, Fairfax House, York

Food for the Table

Ivan Day, Food Historian

From Beast to Banquet: Laying the Table 1500-1700

Dr David Mitchell, Institute of Historical Research, University of London

From Salt to Centrepiece: Laying the Table 1700 – 1900

Phillipa Glanville, Academic Adviser, Gilbert Collection

Flowers for the Table

Mary Rose Blacker, Author of *Flora Domestica, A History of Flower Arranging* (National Trust)

Cost: £45/£30 concessions. Includes morning coffee and a sandwich lunch.

This study day has been supported by The Cutlers' Company.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- 1) For further details or transparencies, please contact Nancy Loader, Press and PR Officer, on 020 7739 9893 or nloader@geffrye-museum.org.uk
- 2) The Geffrye Museum presents the quintessential style of English urban middle-class interiors from 1600 to the present day through a chronological sequence of period rooms.
- 3) Admission: FREE
Address: Kingsland Road, Shoreditch, London E2
Tel No: 020 7739 9893
Recorded Info: 020 7739 8543
Web Address: www.geffrye-museum.org.uk
Email Address: info@geffrye-museum.org.uk

Opening Hours: Tue-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun and Bank Hol Mon 12-5pm
Travel: Buses: 149, 242, 243 or 67
Tube: Liverpool St, then bus 149 or 242
Old St (exit 2), then bus 243

10 January 2002