

**From:** Manitoga / The Russel Wright Design Center

**Subject:** \$1M Gift + Rare Wright Collectibles to Manitoga from Gary and Laura Maurer

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## MANITOGA RECEIVES \$1,000,000 GIFT FROM GARY AND LAURA MAURER

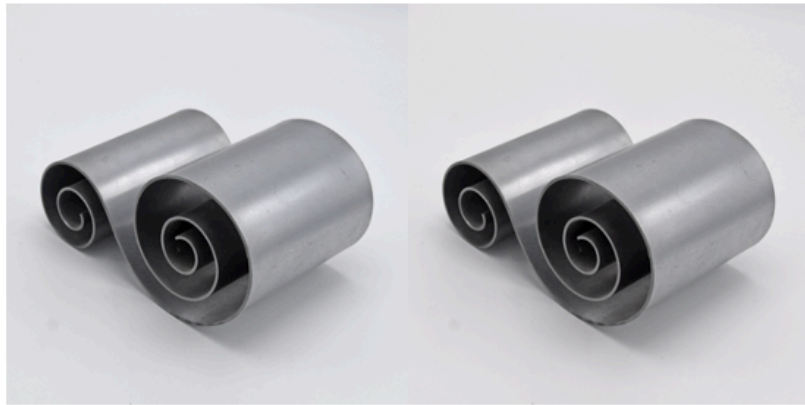
**GARRISON, NEW YORK. February 15, 2023 - Manitoga / The Russel Wright Design Center is thrilled to announce a \$1 million dollar gift to Manitoga's Collections Endowment Fund from long-time Trustee Gary Maurer and his wife Laura Levy Maurer.**

“After a decade leading this organization, I am honored by the Maurers’ generosity, engaged leadership, and belief in Manitoga to steward Russel and Mary Wright’s design legacy into the future,” shares Executive Director Allison Cross.

**In addition to their transformational endowment gift, the Maurers have donated over 75 rare items from the Wrights’ earliest years in design.** These range in form and scale from decorative, cast-metal circus animals in surrealist forms to Bauhaus-inspired geometric tableware and the first modern piano - an ebony baby grand designed by Russel Wright for the Wurlitzer Company in 1934. Other unique treasures are a glass and brass tubular aquarium and the iconic Cowboy Modern Chair – a pony skin armchair, also in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. The chair was among the original furnishings at Dragon Rock and will be on display in the House beginning this season.

*from Russel Wright's Circus (clockwise):*

*LIBBILOO, horse bookends; CALLIOPE, scroll bookends; RODEO, bull bookends; WHOOZOO, seal paperweight*



"After many enjoyable years of acquiring and displaying these works of art in our home, Laura and I wanted to ensure that our collection would remain intact and available for everyone to view and appreciate. We decided that Manitoga, with its commitment to preserving and sharing the timeless design vision of Russel and Mary Wright, was the perfect place for these objects."

By the late 1930s, the Wrights would introduce the American Modern line, revolutionizing the American home and the way people lived there through their inexpensive, mass-produced ceramic dinnerware, wood furniture, appliances, and textiles. Together they forged a distinctly American lifestyle that was gracious yet contemporary and informal. In 2021, the award-winning **Russel & Mary Wright Design Gallery** opened to the public at Manitoga, offering the only permanent in-depth display of the Wright's groundbreaking designs for the American home.

Today, Manitoga's Design Collection numbers over 2,500 objects with the goal of becoming the definitive resource for Russel and Mary Wright's product designs and their contribution to modernism in America. The Maurer collection joins signature donations from the collections of George R. Kravis II (1938-2018) and Manitoga Trustee Dennis Mykytyn. According to design curator Donald Albrecht, "with the Maurer gift of these extraordinary items from the Wrights' formative years, Manitoga's already excellent collection reaches a new level of distinction as one of the world's preeminent compilations of the designers' work."



*Wurlitzer Baby Grand Piano by Russel Wright, 1934*



*from Russel Wright's Circus: FIREDEER, andirons, 1930*