The Goldstein Museum of Design (GMD) announces the generous donation of a Ralph Rapson Rapid Rocker to the museum’s collection.

The Rapid Rocker, designed by architect Ralph Rapson, will be presented to GMD by Minneapolis resident Mary McGee. The presentation will take place at 5 p.m. on April 7, 2008 at the HGA Gallery in Rapson Hall on the Minneapolis East Bank campus. Following this ceremony, Rip Rapson, president and CEO of The Kresge Foundation (and Ralph’s son) will present the Mertie Buckman Lecture in Leadership and Philanthropy. His talk, “The Fifth Sector: Philanthropy’s Role in Community Change” will be at 5:45 p.m. in 100 Rapson Hall. The ceremony and lecture are free and open to the public.

This rocker was built specifically for GMD and the donation facilitated by Jonathan Leck, one of the rocker’s builders. Leck, who worked on Mary McGee’s 1951 Frank Lloyd Wright house, responded to her offer to do something in return for his work on her house by suggesting she donate a Rapid Rocker to GMD’s collection. Leck had previously communicated with GMD director, Lin Nelson-Mayson and discovered that GMD did not have a Rapid Rocker in its collection. Leck collaborated with retired shop teacher William Lender to fabricate the rocker. Ralph Rapson selected the woven seating leather.

The bentwood Ralph Rapson Rapid Rocker was first built for the Museum of Modern Art in 1939. Knoll offered a solid wood version as part of their “Rapson Line.” After the company sold this design to Bloomingdale’s in 1945, Bloomingdale’s took out a full-page ad in the New York Times, proclaiming the rocker an “innovative and attractive modern take on a traditional piece.”

Leck began working with Rapson in 1999 to produce examples of Rapson’s earlier furniture for exhibitions at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Weisman Museum of Art. The 2003 version of the Rapid Rocker is closer in design to the 1939 bentwood model and represents new design collaboration between Rapson, his son Toby, Leck and Lender.