



**From *The India Report*
By Charles & Ray Eames**

Of all the objects we have seen and admired during our visit to India, the *lota*, that simple vessel of everyday use, stands out as perhaps the greatest, the most beautiful. The village women have a process, which, with the use of tamarind and ash, each day turns this brass into gold.

But how would one go about designing a *lota*? First one would have to shut out all preconceived ideas on the subject and then begin to consider factor after factor:

The optimum amount of liquid to be fetched, carried, poured and stored in a prescribed set of circumstances.

The size and strength and gender of the hands (if hands) that would manipulate it.

The way it is to be transported—head, hip, hand, basket or cart.

The balance, the center of gravity, when empty, when full, its balance when rotated for pouring.

The fluid dynamics of the problem not only when pouring but when filling and cleaning, and under the complicated motions of head carrying—slow and fast.

Its sculpture as it fits the palm of the hand, the curve of the hip.

Its sculpture as complement to the rhythmic motion of walking or a static post at the well.

The relation of opening to volume in terms of storage uses—and objects other than liquid.

The size of the opening and inner contour in terms of cleaning.

The texture inside and out in terms of cleaning and feeling.

Heat transfer—can it be grasped if the liquid is hot?

How pleasant does it feel, eyes closed, eyes open?

How pleasant does it sound, when it strikes another vessel, is set down on ground or stone, empty or full—or being poured into?

What is the possible material?

What is its cost in terms of working?

What is its cost in terms of ultimate service?

What kind of an investment does the material provide as product, as salvage?

How will the material affect the contents, etc., etc.?

How will it look as the sun reflects off its surface?

How does it feel to possess it, to sell it, to give it?