

**CHAIR<sup>5</sup>:**  
**FIVE PERSPECTIVES ON FORM,  
 FUNCTION AND INNOVATION**

October 20, 2017 – March 03, 2018  
 Brooks Stevens Gallery

The aim of this experimental furniture exhibit in MIAD's Brooks Stevens Gallery is to introduce visitors, and in particular students and faculty, to a myriad of ways to think about chairs, "chairness", and the physical act of sitting. Spanning across time and place, the displays will include a selection of historic, reproduction, and contemporary seating furniture forms. A matrix of interpretive themes will be explored in five distinctive exhibit spaces in which there will be ample opportunities for physical interaction in an effort to stimulate broader consideration of each chair's function, design, and concept. This multi-dimensional approach to thinking about chairs is integrally woven into MIAD's new Furniture Program, including an innovative MIAD furniture class being taught by Brent Budsberg, who is co-curating this show with Eric Vogel of MIAD and Jon Prown from the Chipstone Foundation.

**WHY DOES THIS EXHIBIT MATTER?**

The Chair installation aims to offer MIAD students and external audiences a matrix of interpretive perspectives to enable them to more fully consider the uses, design principles and meaning of chairs. This interactive gallery will explore five main themes:

- Posture
- Production
- Design
- Materials
- Innovation

In the process, it will introduce audiences to new ways of thinking about and seeing chairs as well as other related seated forms.

Spaces will include physical experience of key forms and a hands-on lab for exploration, measuring and actively rethinking important historic designs. The show will include a selection of historic, reproduction and contemporary forms.

**PROMPT QUESTIONS**

- Ergonomics: how have the physical needs of the user been anticipated and accommodated by the design and engineering.
- How is posture directed and accommodated by the configuration of the chair?
- Are social, cultural, or economic issues raised by the furniture design? Why did many non-Western cultures adapt or reject outright the concept and form of the chair? Why was it preferable for many Asian cultures to simply sit on the ground or on a platform without the use of an intermediary form/construct? What does it say about the type of environment that surrounds the sitting occupant?
- Materials: why are certain materials used in the construction of the chair; are all materials functional or aesthetic or both?
- Design and aesthetics in assessing the quality and narrative of the piece. How does the visual aspect of the design prompt the user to sit in and fully appreciate the chair?
- How are construction methods developed appropriate to the design and configured for most efficient production?
- Innovation: How have contemporary designers taken the concept of the chair beyond the essential elements of form and function?



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**Gallery Hours**

Monday through Saturday, 10  
 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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 open to the public. To sched-  
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