

23 Chairs: Eames Lounge, Monobloc, and Beyond

Sunday, March 13, 2016 6:36 PM

Today

- Workshop with Kara Priest: Textures and Patterns. Case studies:
 - Eames lounge chair
 - Ubiquitous Plastic Chair: Monobloc
- End of class today: Feedback. Strengths and improvements to the course so far. Have we missed topics of interest? Photography workshop? Should final presentations just be to pods?, have 2 weeks project only time?

Results:

- Team interactions - Team eval survey is active. Due by April 8
 - Mixed response regarding pods for final presentations
 - Good suggestions about expo, additional topics, will try to add next week
 - Lukewarm interest in photo workshop; will be optional, in class April 20
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- Expo Registration is open now, and will close at 4:00pm on Friday, April 15th. Please register early. Register as an individual, or coordinate with your team to make sure space requirements will accommodate all of you.

Expo Registration Link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SQZrKVebyJ803NmBKKudV0Ht9plZFCNtLqSsn6g2Ag/viewform?usp=send_form

Modern Chairs

Eames Lounge Chair and Ottoman

(Hermann Miller part numbers 670/671)

Design notes <http://www.eamesoffice.com/blog/eames-lounge-chair-is-cared-for/>

Build process videos:

[How We Make the Eames Lounge Chair: Six New Films About the Classic, n.d.](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBLMoMhIAfM&feature=youtu.be> Eames introduce the lounge chair on national TV, the Today Show, in 1956. Long, and difficult for a feminist to watch.

Designed specifically for mass production, organically so that the elements of the mass production process actually enhance the design of the chair. Aimed at the middle class. Now \$4935, still available new from Herman Miller, more than 50 years after its introduction. Priced a bit high for the current middle class.

Monobloc

Contrast the Eames Lounge chair to the Monobloc, or Resin chair:



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Plastic_Tuinstoel.jpg

"Everybody Take A Seat." *Smithsonian*. Accessed March 2, 2016. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/everybody-take-a-seat-2386495/>. Short article describes the ubiquity of the chair, and its mysterious history. "Then, in 1968, came what Fiell calls "one of the most important events in the entire history of furniture design." Danish designer Verner Panton, after ten years of searching for the right plastic, produced the first single-form, single material, injection-molded chair. It achieved total design unity in combination with a high-volume industrial process. Still, Panton's chair was very high style, a single long S curve with a U-shaped base, and demand for it was limited.



<http://www.design-museum.de/en/collection/100-masterpieces/detailseiten/panton-chair-panton.html>

Shortly after, the monobloc began appearing.

Read more: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/everybody-take-a-seat-2386495/#mFMoLElra2BiqCGd.99>



<http://www.uratex.com.ph/industrial-institutional/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/monobloc-chair.jpg>

There is a collector for everything under the sun: Bryan Ropar. *Plastic Chair Collection Video From Tosh.O*, 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLOgsOtujqLgT7k71oh5g44Gc29UyM_QZZ&time_continue=10&v=endP6hTviXE.

Wikipedia: The Monobloc chair is a lightweight stackable polypropylene chair, often described[by whom?] as the world's most common plastic chair.

Based on original designs by the Italian designer Vico Magistretti in 1967, variants of the one-piece plastic chair went into production with Allibert Group and Grosfillex Group in the 1970s. Since then, millions have been manufactured in

countries including Russia, Taiwan, Australia, Mexico, the United States, Italy, France, Germany, Morocco, Turkey, Israel and China. Many design variants of the basic idea exist.[1]

The Monobloc chair is named because it is injection moulded from thermoplastic polypropylene, the granules being heated to about 220 degrees Celsius, and the melt injected into a mold. The gate of the mould is usually located in the seat, so ensuring smooth flow to all parts of the tool. The chairs cost approximately \$3 to produce, making them affordable across the world.

Social theorist Ethan Zuckerman describes them as having achieved a global ubiquity:

" The Monobloc is one of the few objects I can think of that is free of any specific context. Seeing a white plastic chair in a photograph offers you no clues about where or when you are."

Since Then

<http://www.demilked.com/creative-and-modern-chairs-2/> Post-Modern/Contemporary chairs. Very few chairs with upholstery.

The Vitra Museum site also shows intriguing designs under 1981-1990 Design as Lifestyle: <http://www.design-museum.de/en/collection/100-masterpieces.html>



<http://www.design-museum.de/en/collection/100-masterpieces/detailseiten/vodoel-coop-himmelblau.html>

Vodol, by Coop Himmelblau



<http://www.design-museum.de/en/collection/100-masterpieces/detailseiten/ww-stool-starck.html>

W.W. Stool by Philippe Starck. Created for Wim Wenders, 1990. Elements of biomorphism; a germinating rhizome, with 3 roots an a shoot.

More on him on Wednesday.