Chair

500 Designs that Matter

PHAIDON

Tripp Trapp High Chair
1972

Peter Opsvik (1939–)

Stokke (1972 to present)

P110 Lounge Chair, 1972
Alberto Rosselli (1921–76)
Saporiti (1972 to 1979)
↳ p. 018

The work of Italian architect, Alberto Rosselli, reflects the interest in adaptable and modular environments that emerged in the 1970s, as designers sought to challenge preconceived notions about contemporary living. Highly inspired by the work of Gio Ponti, Rosselli featured his P110 Lounge Chair as part of MoMA's famous 1972 exhibition, *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape*. The chair made an appearance in Rosselli's lightweight and expandable Mobile House, displayed on a terrace shaped from a folded-down wall. The experimental chair was composed from a tubular steel frame with an ABS plastic seat, revealing Rosselli's interest in new forms, experimental technologies and 'artful acts of rebellion', as *The New York Times'* critic, Ada Huxtable, described works that formed part of the exhibition.

Synthesis 45 Chair, 1972
Ettore Sottsass (1917–2007)
Olivetti (1972)
↳ p. 455

Ettore Sottsass served as a consultant for Olivetti for over two decades, creating a series of pieces that merged functionality with a playful spirit that was characteristic of the period. Perhaps his most innovative project for the Italian manufacturer was a collection of modular pieces designed for the workplace environment. Although its form is subdued, compared to the ebullience of some of Sottsass's other work for Olivetti, the plastic and lacquered-metal chair from the Synthesis 45 collection is a reflection of Sottsass's belief that hidden wonder awaits in common, everyday things. The chair's clean look and low-cost materials announce a new visual language for the contemporary office.

Tripp Trapp High Chair, 1972
Peter Opsvik (1939–)
Stokke (1972 to present)
↳ p. 106

The Tripp Trapp grew out of designer Peter Opsvik's desire to give children a place at the table – quite literally. Opsvik observed his son's eagerness to be an involved member at family dinners; at two years old, Tor had outgrown his high chair, yet could not safely sit in an adult-sized chair. In response, Opsvik designed Tripp Trapp, an adjustable high chair that can accompany a child from infancy all the way through to adulthood, its seat and footrest easily modified in both height and depth. Tripp Trapp's sturdy structure guarantees that a child can climb into the chair safely, while the timeless nature of its beechwood frame has ensured its continued popularity over the years. Over 10 million Tripp Trapps have been sold since the chair was first introduced in 1972.

Wiggle Side Chair, 1972
Frank Gehry (1929–)
Jack Brogan (1972 to 1973)
Chiru (1982)
Vitra (1992 to present)
↳ p. 069

The molten curves of the Wiggle Side Chair display not only Canadian-born architect Frank Gehry's expressive use of form but also his humour in reworking historical references – in this case, Gerrit Reitveld's Zig-Zag Chair (1934). Made of cardboard, built up in thick layers to achieve a solid appearance, the tactile surface belies the paucity of the paper it is made from. Gehry said Wiggle, 'looked like corduroy, it felt like corduroy, it was seductive'. Conceived as part of a mass-market, low-cost furniture set called Easy Edges, Gehry withdrew the series after only three months, concerned he would become known as a furniture designer, when his ambition lay in architecture. Vitra put four pieces into production in 1992, a fitting home since Gehry is the architect of the Vitra Design Museum in Germany.