

EN

**DESIGN MUSEUM**

**BRUSSELS**

# 20 highlights

the Plastic Design Collection





Welcome to *the Plastic Design Collection*, a unique display that showcases the relationship between design and plastics, from the Golden sixties and their economic boom until today and our new outlook on mass production, consumerism and sustainability. Take your time to stroll through our exceptional collection, you will find objects that will question you, surprise you, amuse you or confuse you.

Our team has written this brochure to guide you during your visit and help you spot specific and important pieces, each with a fascinating story. We have chosen 20 objects that illustrate perfectly the role plastic materials played in the evolution of design, of our relationship with objects, tools, furniture, ....

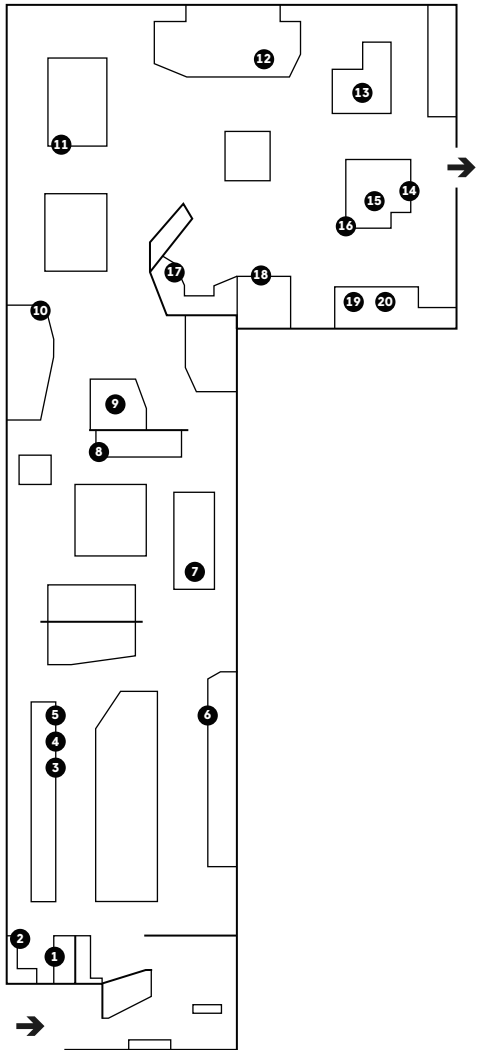
Plastics were a game changer in the years following World War II. We now had a material that led to a new way of producing - faster and cheaper -, and which also symbolized progress and modernity. Aesthetics, innovation and quality in design did not have to be the privilege of the few, but became accessible to the many.

Moreover, plastics can be of any shape, of any color, of any size. The 20 selected pieces map, through time and through the various trends of design, how designers have made use of this incredible versatility. We will show how their work has been impacted by politics, cultural behavior, technological innovation and economic upheavals.

These are only 20 objects in a collection that numbers close to 2.000 pieces. Find your own most important, most curious, most famous, most audacious pieces, because everything we display has been selected with passion and commitment to tell the story of this peculiar material that has been affecting and shaping all our lives for decades.

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*As the exhibition is evolving, this plan might not represent the exact current layout at the time of your visit.*



## Material Codes

ABS *acrylonitrile butadiene styrene*

ASA *acrylonitrile styrene acrylate*

GRP *fiberglass reinforced polyester*

PA *polyamide*

PC *polycarbonate*

PE *polyethylene*

PP *polypropylene*

PS *polystyrene*

PUR *expanded polyurethane*

PVC *polyvinyl chloride*

# 1

**DSW**

**Charles and Ray Eames**

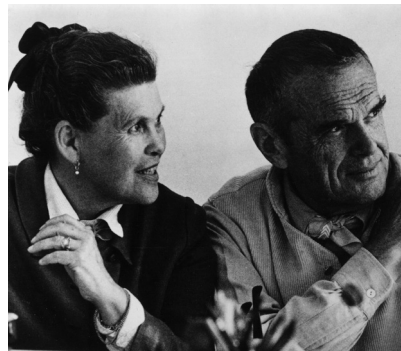
2019, GRP, Wood

Vitra (CHE)



The **DSW** chair and its family, are designated with a code of its characteristics: Dining (D) height, Side (S) chair, on Wood (W) base, making them easy to identify, even just by name. These were the result of the Eameses long research on the idea of a one-piece seat shell, molded to fit the contours of the human body. The couple had spent the last years researching with plywood and developing a technique that was able to mold it, attempting to make more effective medical splints during WWII. The molding research expanded into other materials, and they finally landed on a novelty on the furniture industry: polyester resin reinforced with fiberglass. The material allowed the production of low-cost design furniture, making the DSW the first mass produced plastic chair in the history of furniture, in 1950.

The designer couple, **Charles Eames** (1907-1978) and **Ray Eames** (1912-1988) are an iconic duo of design history. The couple established themselves in Los Angeles in 1941, working from home and exploring different techniques and materials for their creations, and in 1943 they moved to Venice Beach. The Eameses believed that design consists of “beautifully and elegantly” solving problems, not attributing themselves a defined aesthetic style, but a way of positively impacting people’s lives. The legacy left behind by them has been carried by their successors until today, where their studio remains, keeping their work’s memory alive as well as building upon existing designs to improve and adapt them to contemporary life.



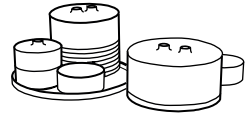
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# 2

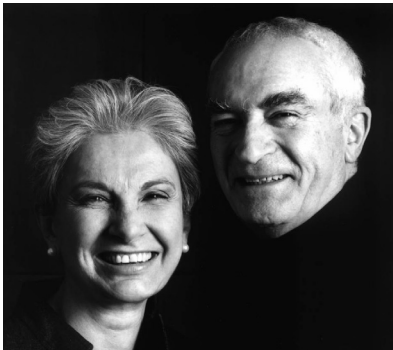
## **Max 1**

### **Lella and Massimo Vignelli**

1964, Melamine  
Heller (USA)



Winning a Compasso d'Oro in Italy, the Vignellis' **Max 1** is a utility chic staple of the 1960's. The Max 1 tableware set – here accompanied by the later launched, MaxMug – features the Vignelli Duo's clean lines, creating a product that was aimed to meet versatile needs. This period presented designers with a lot of new, different materials and techniques yet to be explored, melamine being a famous one of them. The plastic allowed this set to be stackable, light, durable and dishwasher safe, in addition to it, presenting the manufacturers with endless color possibilities – the set's later rainbow version is an example of that. The material and production conveniences turned tableware plastic design into a more common and popular thing now and designers had a chance to apply their problem-solving skills into many different aspects of a household.



© Luca Vignelli Photographer

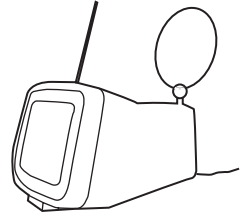
**Lella Vignelli** (1934-2016) and **Massimo Vignelli** (1931-2014) are an influential Italian wife-and-husband designer duo that gravitated between graphic, industrial and interior design. Massimo Vignelli studied arts and architecture in Italy while Lella Vignelli started her studies in the same university but continued in the USA. The duo met at an architect's convention, married in 1957 and in 1971, after working in several famous projects, they established the Vignelli Associates office in New York. They worked side by side in almost every project and they helped define modern design in the US and Europe, authoring some iconic projects such as the New York City Subway map and Bloomingdale's visual identity.

# 3

## *Algol 11*

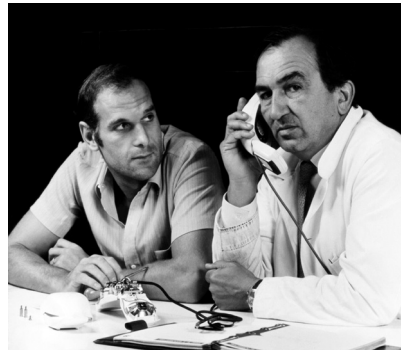
**Marco Zanuso, Richard Sapper**

1964, ABS, Electric circuit, Glass, Metal  
Brionvega (ITA)



A little portable, 11-inch, ABS plastic TV, the **Algol 11** is a well-known industrial design piece. Produced by Brionvega in 1964, the device has a slightly tilted up shape that, according to Marco Zanuso (1916-2001), is an allusion to a dog looking at its master. It features a metal handle that tucks inside when not in use, making it easily carried, and its screen takes up all its front face, leaving the buttons and adjustments to be located on top of it. This piece is a good example of the freedom and playfulness of its decade's spirit applied to everyday life and the domestic space. Television became a more universal habit in the 1960's, that's why a lot of companies were making investments into new and diverse designs for them and other related appliances.

**Marco Zanuso**, Italian architect born in 1916, graduated at the Politecnico di Milano in 1939 and opened his own design office in 1945. **Richard Sapper** (1932-2015), born in Germany, has studied philosophy, anatomy, and engineering, before graduating in business from the University of Munich. He then began his design career in the styling department of the car manufacturer Daimler Benz in Stuttgart, before transferring to Milan, where he met Marco Zanuso and started to collaborate, in the early 1960's. Their partnership was a long and successful one, being known for projects that were both formally and technically innovative. They consulted for the Italian company Brionvega in a series of televisions and other communication devices.



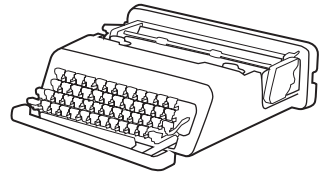
Courtesy of Richard Sapper Archives

# 4

## **Valentine**

### **Ettore Sottsass, Perry King**

1968, ABS, Metal  
Olivetti (ITA)



The **Valentine** was initially thought out to be a new, utilitarian, and cheaper take on the classic typewriters available, proposing a new way of using and interacting with the object. Its portability was the key: as stated by the designer himself, Ettore Sottsass (1917-2007), it was for “use in any place except in an office”. The Valentine however, ended up not carrying the most revolutionary changes the designer intended, such as eliminating the bell and lowercase letters. In turn, its price was not lowered quite enough, and it was not as successful as expected on sales. However, the typewriter is considered amongst the design world as an icon of the end of the 1960’s, when the aesthetics and playfulness of Pop Art flourished, and society dreamed of nomadism. In addition, the ABS material allowed its shape and color to reflect the fun aspects of the pieces developed around the same time.

Born in Austria to an Italian father and an Austrian mother, the Italian designer **Ettore Sottsass** (1917-2007) studied architecture at the Politecnico di Torino, graduating in 1939. He founded his design studio in Milan in 1947 and went on to work in the USA for a few years, before going back to Italy, and in 1981, becoming a founding member of the Memphis Group. His work encompasses architectural projects such as shops, showrooms, exhibitions and interiors, and more design focused projects such as company identities, consumer electronics, and furniture. Along with **Perry King** (1938-2020), English industrial designer and his assistant at the time, Ettore Sottsass designed this typewriter for Olivetti in 1969.

# 5

## **Combi DL5**

**Dieter Rams, Gerd A. Müller**

1957, PS, Electric circuit, Metal  
Braun (DEU)



The **Combi DL 5** was launched in 1957 and it presented a big technological update compared to its predecessors: a fixed-position trimmer added on one side of the head, earning it the name "Combi". Producing electric shavers had been Max Braun's (1890-1951) goal for years before he even was able to reopen his factory after WWII. When time finally came, the brand launched a series of increasingly more intricate shavers, if compared to their own previous models. Personal grooming objects such as electric shavers and hair dryers are an interesting example of how design has been inserted in people's daily lives in many different areas. The diverse developments of these objects by different designers are also a great way to get an insight into their method and how they apply their own design principles into their creative process.

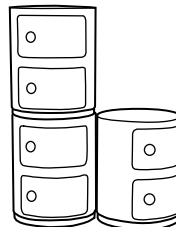
Both German industrial designers born in the same year, **Dieter Rams** (1932) and **Gerd A. Müller** (1932) have notable works in the consumer products field, working for other manufacturer brands such as Lamy (DEU) and Vitsoe (GBR). Gerd A. Müller has worked for Braun for 5 years and has developed products found in museums everywhere. Dieter Rams is a significant name within design, not only known for his iconic projects but for his take on the design process itself, having created his '10 principles for good design', which were a response of his worries surrounding the state of the world he lived in. His principles are talked about in design schools across the globe to this day.



Dieter Rams and Gerd A. Müller at the exhibition opening  
Design: Dieter Rams & IDZ Berlin (1980) © Dieter and Ingeborg Rams Foundation, Kronberg

# 6

## **Componibili** **Anna Castelli Ferrieri** 1967, ABS Kartell (ITA)



**Componibili** is a round or square modular piece of storage furniture and one of Kartell's best sellers to this day. Made entirely of plastic, this piece comes with different modules: the original piece had customizable stackable modules, giving the user the final power of decision - nowadays only a simplified round model is available, no longer stackable nor customizable. The square version of the storage solution was designed in 1967, two years before the circular version was released. Both versions were a novel way of meeting young people's demands during the 1960's, who wanted more informal and lightweight furniture pieces. The bright colors and flexible nature of ensemble fit into the aesthetic and socio-cultural demands of the time of its creation, while also turning it into a timeless piece of furniture that appeals to a similar public currently.



© Valerio Castelli

One of the big names when it came to the use of plastic materials in design, **Anna Castelli Ferrieri** (1918-2006) was one of the first women to graduate in architecture from the Politecnico di Milano. Going on to work as design director of Kartell, she worked on designs that centered the optimization of the space and the improvement of people's lives. Her projects had a concern with affordability and plastics have allowed her to make mass produced, accessible to all yet still resistant, pieces. Her pieces have received many awards over the years but the relevance of her body of work can be seen in the fact that most of her designs are still produced today.

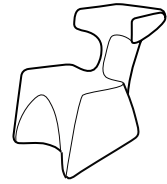
# 7

**Zocker**

**Luigi Colani**

1972, PE

Top System Burkhard Lübke (DEU)



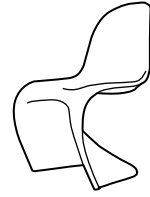
Maybe not immediately recognizable as a chair, **Zocker** is specifically designed for children. Made of a hollow construction, smooth surface polyethylene and resulting of Luigi Colani's (1928-2019) extensive research, the seat presents a unique shape that results in a multifunctional piece. The chair was commissioned by German maker Burkhard Lübke, following the The Kind und Umwelt (child and environment) symposium held at the International Design Center Berlin (IDZ) in 1971. The prosperous social environment of the 1960's resulted in discussions surrounding different aspects of life, including previous notions in raising children, which combined with Luigi Colani's close relationship with ergonomics, gave this chair a unique character. The use of ergonomic studies is a big part of design, and this specific application makes the piece work simultaneously as a seat-desk, a chair with backrest and even as toy for play.

**Luigi Colani** (dit Lutz Colani, 1928-2019) was a German industrial designer, mostly known for his unusual use of shapes. Born from a Polish mother and Italian father, the designer started his studies in Berlin's Academy of Arts, which he interrupted, shifting his focus to aerodynamics, engineering, and industrial design. His work is very recognizable by the use of, as he himself named, «biodynamic» shapes, which he claimed are ergonomically superior to traditional designs.

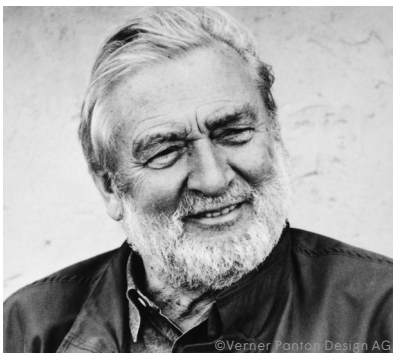
This very particular style is what gave him his fame within the design field and the general public and he went on to design Formula 1 cars and several other vehicles, furniture, and household objects, all within his very recognizable personal aesthetic.

# 8

## **Panton Chair** **Verner Panton** 1968, PU Herman Miller - Vitra (CHE)



Although the concept of a cantilever chair dates from the 1920's, Verner Panton (1926-1998) brings a new perspective to it with the **Panton Chair**. The challenge of making an S-shaped chair in a single piece of plastic was evident and making the chair's design usable and producible took years and several different versions, until it was finally commercialized in 1967. The 1960's were a time of revolutionary ideas in design, reflecting the world around it, and plastic was used more in furniture because of its versatility as a material. The Panton Chair was iconic, the first mass produced cantilever chair that could be used inside and outside and became very popular very quickly. Nowadays, the Panton is considered a design classic, having had editions in many different materials – some of which can be found here in the museum - and it encourages other designers to experiment with the cantilever format, that has since expanded its realm of possibilities and shapes with the evolution of techniques and materials over the years.



Design by Verner Panton, [www.verner-panton.com](http://www.verner-panton.com)  
©Verner Panton Design AG

The Danish designer **Verner Panton** (1926-1998) is considered one of the major designers of the 20th century. His body of work is extensive and showcases his fondness for bold bright colors and geometric shapes, focused on furniture projects but also including lamps, textiles and interiors. In 1951, he graduated from the Royal Academy of Arts in Copenhagen and in 1955 founded his own design office in Switzerland, after working for renowned designer and architect Arne Jacobsen (1902-1971) for two years. Panton's projects are known for being innovative and marking design history, and new materials such as plastics allowed him to experiment and reinvent with his pieces, such as with the Panton Chair.

# 9

## **Spiral SP1** **Verner Panton**

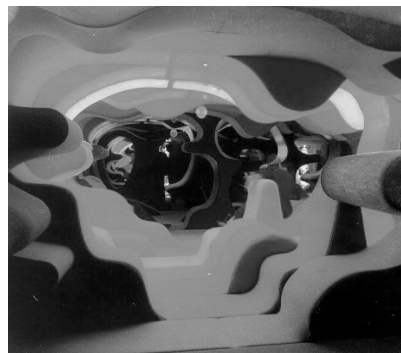
1970, Cellidor®, Electric circuit, Metal  
Lüber (CHE)



Like its name suggests, the **Spiral SP1** is a hanging lamp built of several Cellidor® (a high-strength acrylic fiber) plastic spirals, of different lengths, attached to a base, in order to form into the spheroid shape of the final piece. This project is regarded as a further development of another of Panton's lighting fixtures, the Fun/Shell lamp (1963), which presented a similar structure, although with different, round shaped, pieces. The plastic material granted the designer the opportunity of exploring different color combinations, and it very much plays into the space-age aesthetic of the 1960's and 1970's, especially when combined with all the other pieces that comprised the Visiona II (1970) environment. The period's collective fantasy of a futuristic and stellar lifestyle was materialized by several different designers in projects as big as whole houses and as small as tiny table lamps.

Regarded as one of the biggest experimental project of the late 1960's, Visiona was an interior design exhibition presented, between 1968 and 1971, during the Cologne Art Fair. The chemical company Bayer rented a boat during the fair and invited well-known designers to transform the environment, having featured Joe Colombo (Visiona 1, 1969) and Olivier Mourgue (Visiona 3, 1971).

**Visiona II** (1970) was the second time **Panton** was contracted for this project (he was also responsible for the Visiona 0 in 1968). He highlighted his signature design style with the Fantasy Landscape, an installation filled with organic rounded shapes and very bright, colorful furniture, lighting, wall coverings and textiles.

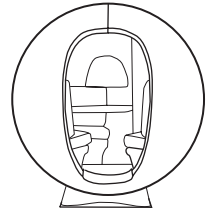


Bayer AG, Bayer Archives Leverkusen

# 10

## ***Sphère d'isolement S2*** ***Maurice-Claude Vidili***

1970, GRP, PUR, Electric circuit, Metal  
Les Plastiques de Bourgogne (FRA)



The **Sphère d'isolement S2** is one in very few models made of Maurice-Claude Vidili's most celebrated design. Diving into the futuristic influence of the time, the sphere was launched by Les Plastiques De Bourgogne in 1971 and works as a small office. Made of glass reinforced polyester with a hardened outer layer, the contained environment presents storage, seating, electricity, shelves and a hole on the roof, for light and to allow smoking inside. The idea was to offer an escape from the outside world, anywhere you located it. The futuristic cocoon structure fits into the space-age aesthetic seen in architectural and design projects, combined with the technological possibilities of plastics in the late 1960's. Exploring how spaces relate to the home lives of its users is an ever-present design matter that can be seen represented in the 1960's and 1970's by capsule, ephemeral, inflatable, and even audiovisual projects.



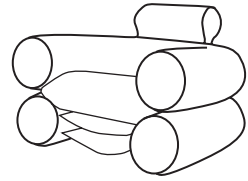
**Maurice-Claude Vidili** is known as a daring 1960's and 1970's designer, painter, and sculptor. Born in Nice (France) in 1937, that is also where he completed his studies in urban planning and where he has worked on many architectural projects after. Following, he worked at French manufacturer Renault, in which he established his reputation as a creative thinker and innovator. Known for licensing editions of his design, Maurice-Claude Vidili aspired for novelty and created unique furnishing designs, transitioning from a more practical design viewpoint to an avant-garde position. His work focused mostly in graphic and architectural design, areas which allowed his pursue for uniqueness and exploration, facilitated by the period's aesthetic and technological advances.

# 11

## *Blow*

*Jonathan de Pas, Donato d'Urbino,  
Paolo Lomazzi, Carla Scolari*

1967, PVC  
Zanotta (ITA)

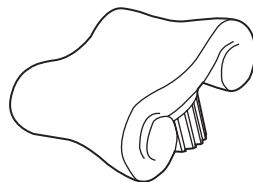


An icon of the 1960's, the **Blow** armchair is the first industrially produced and commercially successful inflatable seat. Presented at the Milano Furniture Fair in 1968, where it was received very eagerly, this seat presents no legs given its inflatable structure. Its design is inspired by inflatable installations and boats. However, its material and technical development is a little different: the armchair is made from thermo-bonded PVC in transparent and colorful versions. This design is also a great expression of its time, when young designers and architects were looking to detach themselves from concepts they found to be outdated and find more flexible and free styles. Inflatable furniture was an ephemeral and relatively easy way to express concepts and even to protest establishments. It was explored by different designers at the time as way to also instill a political message, representing a fight for a more egalitarian society.

The four Italian designers responsible for the conception of the iconic armchair, **Paolo Lomazzi** (1936), **Donato D'Urbino** (1935), **Jonathan De Pas** (1932-1991) and **Carla Scolari** (1937-2020) had similar backgrounds. Paolo Lomazzi studied at the Athenaeum architecture school in Lausanne in the late 1950's while Carla Scolari, his wife and professional partner, Donato D'Urbino and Jonathan De Pas graduated from the Politecnico di Milano shortly after. The men met a few years later – after Paolo Lomazzi and Carla Scolari had started their own studio in 1963- and went on to found Studio DDL in 1966. There, they worked in collaboration with Carla Scolari in architectural and small domestic objects projects for a few years, Blow chair included.

# 12

**Capitello**  
**Studio 65**  
1971, PUR Guflex®  
Gufram (ITA)



Inspired by pictures of tourists taking a break, sitting in columns on the Acropolis in Athens, the **Capitello** was Studio 65's entry to a DuPont competition, where the goal was to design a chair with material produced by the organizing company. The design process of this included the whole studio, from seasoned designers to newly hired students, and was long and laborious. The concept of bringing an archeological representation inside people's homes was a way of demystifying Classicism and something symbolic of only empires. Launched in 1972, the seat fitted well into the Anti-Design movement, a school of thought that rejected modernist ideals of function above all else and focused on exaggerated traits. Anti-designers proposed ornamentation and decoration through bold colors, shapes, and materials, distorting scales and playing with the ideas and irony of different forms. Several Gufram furniture projects portray these ideals quite clearly.

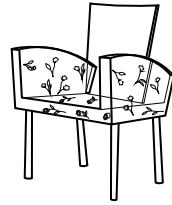


The avant-garde experimental collective **Studio 65** was founded in Turin in 1965 by Franco Audrito, Roberta Garosci, Enzo Bertone, Paolo Morello, and Paolo Rondelli. The studio was made up by designers, architects, and varying artists of differing experience levels, and was a big name of the Italian Anti-Design movement. The studio worked in diverse aspects of living spaces in different scales, producing some well-known and iconic pieces, such as the Bocca Sofa (1972). Following radical design principles, their projects often refuted the minimal and strictly functional nature of modernist offices that preceded them. The whole team was involved during Capitello's development, including the newly brought on students, which provided a diverse and unique perspective to the design process.

# 13

## **Miss Blanche** **Shiro Kuramata**

1988, Acrylic resin, Metal, Plastic roses  
Ishimaru Company (JPN)



With only 56 pieces produced, **Miss Blanche** is a rare piece, designed as a homage to Miss Blanche Dubois in “A Streetcar Named Desire” (1951) by Tennessee Williams (1911-1983). This acrylic chair is the first on a series of works by Shiro Kuramata (1934-1991) in which he explored the expressive potential of the material. The combination of components of this piece – acrylic body and aluminum legs – reflects the designer’s experimental approach quite well. However, the use of the artificial roses was a never confirmed speculation, although it is said those are a direct reference to the flowers printed in the costumes of the play that gave the chair its name. Determined to create his own distinctive forms and break free from conventional processes, Shiro Kuramata was heavily inspired by Ettore Sottsass (1917-2007) and collaborated with him during the early years of the Memphis Group, in the 1980’s, influence that can be seen on this piece.

Japanese designer **Shiro Kuramata** (1934-1991) was known for his surreal projects and poetic approach to design and materials, where he believed “enchantment should also be considered a function”. Graduated from the Tokyo Polytechnic High School and subsequently trained as a cabinet maker at the Kuwasawa Institute of Design in Tokyo in 1954, Shiro Kuramata is part of a generation of Japanese creatives who are known for changing the perception of the world regarding the country. In 1965 he opened his own studio and, within several important collaborations, in 1976 he designed Issey Miyake’s (1938) first retail store in Tokyo, a partnership which introduced Shiro Kuramata’s revolutionary approach to a global audience and was very long-lasting.



© Takayuki Ogawa, 1990

# 14

## *iMac*

### **Apple Design team, Jonathan Ive**

1998-2003, PC, Electronic circuit

Apple Inc. (USA)



The **iMac G3** was Apple's "computer for the new millennium", designed with the internet and domestic consumers in mind. The – for the time- compact, all-in-one translucent Bondi Blue computer was a success, with its futuristic and original design, its colors and playful form charming the out-of-office users. The technological advances of this model included the use of USB ports and more powerful hardware. Its mouse however was a controversial point, the rounded shape, causing divided opinions, implicating that the new shape could cause pain. The use of bold colors and translucent materials on a piece such as a computer was an irreverent choice, exploring the material's possibilities in a product with a previously established appearance, and in consequence, expanding its public even more. This computer model was seen in several Hollywood movies in its different color versions throughout the early 2000's, cementing its influence in pop culture.



Gary Cohen © Creative Commons

The British-American designer **Jonathan Ive** (1967) graduated from the Newcastle Polytechnic and worked as a Chief Design Officer of Apple Inc. for many years, later also assuming the head-of-college as a Chancellor at the Royal College of Art in London. Jonathan Ive is known for his innovative looking designs, which are considered one of the essential reasons of Apple's success.

His work at Apple Inc. as Chief Design Officer and later as Senior Vice President of Industrial Design has granted him even more opportunities, resulting in groundbreaking designs presented by him and his team. Apple is known for experimenting with visual concepts and material properties, changing the way technology is used in our daily lives.

# 15

**One shot**  
**Patrick Jouin**  
2006, PA  
.MGX by Materialise (BEL)



The **One Shot** stool is produced with nylon polymer powder, fused, and hardened with heat from a laser beam, in a process called selective laser sintering (SLS). The design is a kinetic furniture piece, printed entirely as one segment, that can be open - for use - and closed - for transport or storage. It was also the first piece from this rapid prototyping project, manufactured by the Belgian company Materialise, followed by a plethora of different designers' objects in the following years, which can be found until today. This type of production also allows the stool to emerge from it fully functional and ready, without a need for further detailing. The use of these materials and techniques allows designers, such as Patrick Jouin (1967), to explore more complex and detailed shapes without building too much onto the cost and production of a single piece.

Born in Nantes, **Patrick Jouin** (1967) is a French industrial designer (Diploma of Industrial Design from ENSCI-les Ateliers, Paris), that works with furniture and objects for inside and outside spaces. He explores forms and materials through technology and research, very notably 3D printing, with his PastaPot (2011) awarded with the Compasso D'Oro and several other displayed in museums' permanent collections around the world. The designer has worked with brands such as Cassina, Zanotta, Pedrali, Puiforcat and Grand Paris Express. His 3D printed work portrays the possibilities, challenges and advantages found when working with new technological processes and materials and how this kind of process can be used within the industrial design field to optimize manufacturing.



© Thomas Duval

# 16

**La Marie**  
**Philippe Starck**  
1999, PC  
Kartell (ITA)



As the first transparent chair molded in one piece ever made in the world, **La Marie** has a big legacy. Its elegant yet sturdy shape is produced in a single piece of polycarbonate, resulting in a chair that plays with your visual perception. It can disappear and yet appear again in a space according to its viewpoint and room lighting, making it a very versatile piece. The late 1990's was a time of big changes due to technology in several different fronts: internet became readily available and usable by the general population while new research into components and technology allowed pieces like La Marie to come to life. Its material properties combined with its design is what makes it an icon, and the research put into it turned this piece into the predecessor of many more to come.



© JB Mondino, 2018

Born in Paris in 1949, the architect and designer **Philippe Starck** studied at École Nissim de Camondo, Paris. He is known around the world for his unconventional and wide range of styles, which makes his designs even more interesting, and his pieces so well known. Working from tiny objects, such as phones, to big projects like hotels, he is constantly changing visual perceptions and playing with different materials to imbue his designs with something new. Phillippe Starck believes that design exists within a political background and for it to help and be useful within people's lives and environment, his work aims to offer the best service with the least amount of material needed.

# 17

**Zombie**  
**Roger Tallon**  
1967, GRP, Metal  
(FRA)



Designed as a one-piece seat in yellow or orange fiberglass reinforced polyester, the **Zombie** chair was Roger Tallon's (1929-2011) project for the Astroquet bar in Boulevard Saint Germain, Paris. The anthropomorphic seat features a cushion reminiscent of a target on the back rest and two cutouts mimicking eyes. Given this was an exclusive project, only about 20 of these seats were made and, even though they were planned specifically for this setting, the public thought them to be a little too intimidating when installed, which resulted in the owner of the bar, Maurice Marty, to quickly change their initial design, making this piece very rare nowadays. The humanlike chairs were designed amidst the capsule aesthetic boom, in 1967, and are found in museums over the world. Around the same period, several different designers and artists have experimented with limited series featuring humanoid shaped pieces.

Often called the "father of French design", **Roger Tallon** (1929-2011) has been at the forefront of the design industry. Born in Paris in 1929, he followed on the footsteps of household names such as Jean Prouvé (1901-1984), Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999) and many others. After training as an engineer, he worked at a technical and aesthetic design office in 1955, and his body of work portrays a far-reaching variety of products such as household electronics, furniture or even railway equipment. Friend with the New Realists (Yves Klein, Arman and César), his work ran close the artistic avant-garde of the time, nonetheless he played a major role in defining the design profession within France and around the world.

# 18

## *Lots of Dots*

### **Alessandro Mendini**

1991, PS, Clock mechanism, Metal  
Swatch (CHE)



**Lots of Dots** is a limited special edition Swatch Collectors plastic watch released in 1991. The watch's colorful print is reminiscent of one of the author's, Alessandro Mendini (1931-2019), most famous and iconic designs: the Proust armchair (1978). The piece consists of a Rococo revival hand carved armchair that was hand painted with pointillist brushstrokes in several different color palettes and combinations. Reproducing this painting style into plastic materials, Alessandro Mendini creates the pattern used in this wristwatch. The use of plastic in fashion is not a new concept and the use of it in a lot of mainstream accessories was very popular in the 1990s, a trend that keeps true until today.



© Archivio Alessandro Mendini - Ph. Carlo Lavatori

**Alessandro Mendini** (1931-2019) was an Italian designer and architect born in Milan. He graduated from the Politecnico di Milano with a degree in architecture in 1959 and has an extensive and influential career. Known for his contribution to the development of Postmodern design, he co-founded Global Tools in 1973, a collective that participated in the movement opposing traditions, explored by Radical architects. As a very well-known name of the Radical movement, a few years later in 1979, he co-founded Alchimia studio, that focused on projects inspired by popular culture and the kitsch aesthetic. In 1981 he worked on Memphis Group's first collection with the piece Cipriani (a bar cabinet).

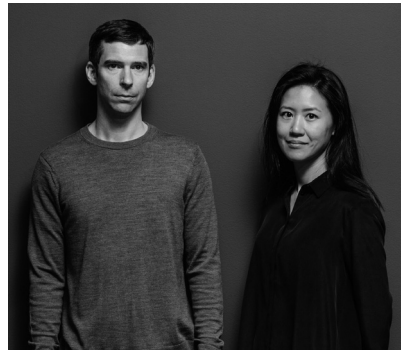
# 19

**Charlie Chair**  
**ecoBirdy**  
2017, Ecothylene®  
ecobirdy (BEL)



With a rounded form and recycled raw material, the **Charlie chair** is the winner of several design awards since its conception. The tiny chair is sturdy but very light, allowing its young users to move it by themselves very easily. Even though its design is modern and sleek, its material is the star here: 100% recycled toys and games. The search for sustainability within design is not new but it is accentuated amid current concerns, which makes this piece even more relevant within its own space. The Charlie chair is a statement, it takes on a present concern amongst designers and public alike and presents new ideas through the whole product concept. A chair, made specifically for kids' ergonomics, that also presents a viable process with a completely recycled composition, sparking an interesting discussion with its final users around design and the use of plastics.

**ecoBirdy** is the result of the designer duo, **Joris Vanbriel** and **Vanessa Yuan**, who focuses their work on social and environmental sustainability. Their line is made from different recycled materials and shows an immense concern for the sustainability of their entire operation. Sustainability is a very current need and rethinking how former processes and habits play into the equation is essential. Plastic has been in the center of this discussion and **ecoBirdy** highlights that material is just one aspect of a piece. The manufacture waste and conditions are just as fundamental, and through their line of products focused on tomorrow's prospects, **ecoBirdy** provides an interesting vision of the future of design.



© Vanessa Yuan and Joris Vanbriel – Ph. Kris Van Exel

# 20

**Bell Chair**  
**Konstantin Grcic**  
2020, PP  
Magis (ITA)



**Bell Chair** is a monobloc chair made entirely of recycled polypropylene, produced in less than a minute. The chair was designed with sustainability and accessibility in mind, with the aim of producing a chair with the least amount of material possible. Even though it weighs around 2.7kg, which accounts for roughly half of its other chair counterparts, the piece is still stackable, and its small amount of material reduces production time. The Bell Chair is made from industrial waste from Magis production facilities and can be recycled at the end of its life as well, combined with the fact that Konstantin Grcic has redesigned the entire production and distribution process to keep the price and weight of this chair as low as possible. As sustainability grows more and more relevant, designers find solutions in new technology and materials to try and bring new answers to new problems.



Portrait of Konstantin Grcic, 2019.

**Konstantin Grcic** (1965) is a German designer, that started as a cabinet maker at the John Makepeace School for Craftsmen in Wood (GRB), before going on to study design at the Royal College of Art in London. His body of work presents very geometrical and hard shapes and focuses heavily on research and his passion for technology and materials, going from design to architecture. He founded his studio in Munich, in 1991 and works with a small team creating projects focused on logic, utility and simplicity. His passion for research, especially into new technology and materials, allows his projects to remain very current and interesting, and to produce innovative pieces such as the Bell Chair.

# Manufacturers

**Apple Inc.:** In operation since 1976, the American company founded by Steve Jobs (1955-2011), Steve Wozniak (1950) and Ronald Wayne (1934) is known globally as a pioneer computer and consumer electronics manufacturer.

**Braun:** Founded by Max Braun (1890-1951) in 1921, started out as a small shop focused on radio parts based in Frankfurt. Through the years its range expanded, and it is now mostly known for its electric shavers.

**Brionvega:** Founded in 1945 as the B.P.M. Company, the electronic components manufacturer became known as Brionvega in 1960. Focusing on audiovisual products the company features some iconic pieces in its catalogue, such the television Cubo (1969).

**ecoBirdy:** Founded in 2018, the Belgian company recycles plastic toys as their feedstock. Its manufacture has granted them the status of Certified B Corporation®, which is awarded to companies that use the power of business to build a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

**Gufрам:** Founded in Turin in 1966, the name Gufрам is an acronym for Gugliermetto Fratelli Arrendamenti Moderni, which recalls their founders, the Gugliermetto brothers. They produce small series of furniture in a polyurethane material they have developed (Guflex®).

**Heller Inc.:** The founding and production of Heller Inc. are intertwined, both started in 1971

when Alan Heller (1940-2021) called on Massimo Vignelli to collaborate. Since then, the company has been exploring with material and manufacturing processes, opening a furniture division in 1998.

**Herman Miller Furniture Company:** One of the most important manufacturers of modern furniture in the US, the company is the evolution of Michigan Star furniture, founded in 1905. Through the changes in leadership, the company becomes Herman Miller Furniture Company in 1923.

**Ishimaru Co.:** Established in Tokyo in 1969 and still active, the company focuses on the production of furniture and interior design projects.

**J.Lüber:** Swiss manufacturer in collaboration with Verner Panton for Visiona 2.

**Kartell:** The Italian company based in Noviglio was founded by Giulio Castelli in 1949. Kartell is most known for their plastic furniture that features timeless and iconic designs, signed by very important names such as Anna Castelli Ferrieri and Joe Colombo.

**Les Plastiques de Bourgogne:** French plastics manufacturer that operated between 1965 and 1975 and focused on the production of limited-edition designer furniture in plastic.

**Magis:** Italian furniture and small products manufacturer founded in 1976. They focus productions on plastic materials and metal and they are known for their innovative processes when translating ideas into objects.

**Materialise:** Known mostly for their pioneer manufacture processes in 3D printing, the Belgian company was founded in 1989 in Leuven.

**Olivetti:** Starting as an office equipment business in 1908, Camillo Olivetti's (1863-1943) progressive company grew with changes of leadership and collaborations with big names of design throughout the years.

**Swatch:** Swiss quartz watch brand, part of The Swatch Group, founded in 1983 by Nicolas Hayek (1928-2010). Their manufacture focuses on the production of watches of diverse styles and materials, teaming up with designers to bring to life new collections.

**Top System:** Burkhard Lübke's Top System company was founded in 1970 and it was a furniture agency, that worked on linking designers and production teams to offer designers more freedom in all stages of the project.

**Vitra:** Founded in Switzerland in 1953, Vitra is the sequence of merges and acquisitions by the founder, Willi Fehlbaun (1941), and it focused in producing furniture and household appliances. In the late 1950's it became the distributor of several famous Herman Miller designs in the European market.

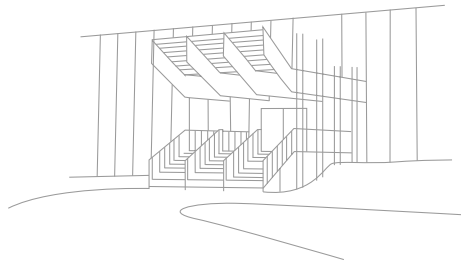
**Zanotta:** Known as an innovative company, Zanotta – named after its founder, Aurelio Zanotta – invested in new manufacturing techniques and plastic materials to reinvent classics.

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