

CREATING THE CONTEMPORARY CHAIR THE GORDON MOFFATT GIFT

ARTWORK LABELS

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Creating the Contemporary Chair: The Gordon Moffatt Gift

Creating the Contemporary Chair presents arresting and provocative chairs by some of the most interesting designers of our time. This exhibition explores the significance of chairs as markers of design evolution and as objects embedded with meaning, expression, experimentation and utility. The five narratives of the exhibition – Individualism, Idealism, Diffusion, Lineage and Invention – offer fresh perspectives on chair design, providing a view of the enduring allure of the chair for designers.

Since Antiquity, chairs have been utilised across diverse cultures and universally understood as a ubiquitous part of human culture. These are objects designed for use as seats of power, discourse, commerce, rest and domesticity. Their intended purpose, linked with their long roots in tradition, encode chairs with great social and cultural meaning.

An enormous variety of chair designs exist; one may rightfully ask – why, in our time, are designers still so hung up on designing them? The pervasiveness of chairs, coupled with their function at the root of ritual and interaction, elevates their significance – hence designers embrace the chair as a typology within which to reveal their own capability, individuality and inspiration.

The acquisition of the thirty-five new chairs featured in this exhibition have been generously supported by Gordon Moffatt AM.

Reproduction

Ant Geernaert photographer

active 2000s

**Adam Goodrum with *Stitch, chair*
photographed for the exhibition
Freestyle: New Australian Design for
Living at Object: Australian Centre for
Craft and Design, Sydney, 2006.**

2006

© Image courtesy of Ant Geernaert

Individualism

In contrast to mass production, which is the result of efficient and repeatable manufacturing steps, individualism in design rejects the uniformity and homogeneity of industry, challenging the principles of the industrial economy and the perceived wastefulness of consumer culture. Designers pursuing their own goals over the interests of the mass market set out to make unique, one-off and limited-edition designs, prioritising self-expression and experimentation into new forms, aesthetics, processes and materials.

Individualised production is idiosyncratic. Jòlan van der Wiel's *Original gravity stool* and Jacoppo Foggini's *Alice armchair* have been created using tools and machinery invented by the designers, which gives these chairs unique aesthetic and material values. Likewise, Maarten Baas's *Clay, dining chair* displays functional imperfection; the designer's handmade aesthetic questions the dominance of highly formal machine-made objects.

Ideas of transformation, reinvention and the convergence of hand and machine resonate in the chairs of Fernando and Humberto Campana, while the handmade hanging seat *Fiona Blackfish* by Porky Hefer discloses the designer's concern for nature. More an expression of the designer's visual and material language than functional, Tracey Deep's *She chair* ties up one of the twentieth century's most iconic chairs: Arne Jacobsen's *Series 7* chair of 1955.

Porky Hefer designer and maker

South Africa 1968–

Fiona Blackfish

2015 designed, 2016 manufactured
leather, steel, sheepskin

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Porky Hefer is recognised as one of South Africa's most interesting contemporary designers, and represented South Africa at the London Design Biennale in 2016. Hefer's mighty *Fiona Blackfish* explores the designer's continuous fascination with human-size nest environments and suspended furniture works. The work resembles a killer whale with a stitched leather exterior including a tail, dorsal fin and flippers. The seat is furry, pink and tongue-shaped, and sits inside a mouth, surrounded by leather teeth. *Fiona Blackfish* is one of six large handmade animal-inspired hanging seats in the *Monstera Deliciosa, Volume 1* series.

Maarten Baas designer

Germany 1978–, emigrated to the Netherlands 1979

Den Herder Production House,

's-Hertogenbosch manufacturer

the Netherlands est. 2005

Clay, dining chair

2006 designed, 2016 manufactured

synthetic polymer clay, steel

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

The irregularity and deformity of designer Maarten Baas's *Clay, dining chair* speaks of the cultural changes in consumption since the turn of the twentieth century. Embracing a handmade aesthetic, the designer's work questions the hegemony of the machine-made, mass-produced object. His one-off and limited-edition pieces are often characterised as functional imperfection. Moving beyond the functional requirements of the object, Baas's *Clay* series of 2006 elevates design as a form of personal expression and communication.

Jacopo Foggini designer

Italy 1966–

Edra, Pisa manufacturer

Italy est. 1987

Alice armchair

2011 designed, 2016 manufactured
polycarbonate, LEDs, electrical components

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Working in his family's plastic company from a young age, Italian artist and designer Jacopo Foggini discovered a love for experimenting and working with industrial materials, including methacrylate, a material used in the automotive industry to produce headlights. Inventing machines that can heat the material to a temperature required to produce a thread-like filament, Foggini learnt to model luminous design and works of art made by a maze of plastic threads in intertwining colours. *Alice armchair* by Foggini is composed of one long continuous thread of plastic, applied manually into the mould as if extruded from a tube of paint.

Humberto Campana designer

Brazil 1953–

Fernando Campana designer

Brazil 1961–

Estúdio Campana, São Paulo

manufacturer

Brazil est. 1983

Vitória Régia stool

2002 designed, 2013 manufactured

steel, ethylene vinyl acetate foam, carpet underlay

edition of 8

Purchased with funds donated by

Gordon Moffatt AM and Jacqueline Moffatt, 2013

2013.940

Founded in 1983 in São Paulo by brothers Fernando and Humberto Campana, Estudio Campana has become famous for its furniture design and the creation of intriguing objects, and has grown to produce interior design, architecture, landscaping, scenography, fashion, artistic partnerships and more. The Campanas' work incorporates the idea of transformation, reinvention and the integration of craftsmanship in mass production.

Made from coiled foam and carpet, *Vitória-Régia stool* references the *Victoria Amazonica*, a species of flowering plant. The largest of the water lily family, its leaves can grow up to 3 metres in diameter, floating on the Amazon River.

Jólan van der Wiel designer and maker
the Netherlands 1984–

Original gravity stool

2011 designed, 2016 manufactured
iron, polyurethane, pigment

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2016

Dutch designer Jólan van der Wiel established his studio in Amsterdam in 2011. Inventing tools and experimental processes that allow him to create new and unorthodox forms, Van der Wiel's design work covers furniture, fashion, sculpture, installation and architecture. *Original gravity stool* is made with the use of Van der Wiel's own gravity tool, a unique invention installed with two large magnets that influence the metal powder in the polyurethane through gravitational force. The stool rises from the mixture, determined by the natural force of magnetism. Made in limited edition, no two stools are the same.

Tracey Deep designer and maker

Australia 1967–

She chair

2016 designed, 2017 manufactured
timber, steel, cotton rope

Forthcoming acquisition to be purchased
with funds donated by Gordon Moffat AM, 2017

Tracey Deep trained as a florist in Sydney and established Tracey Deep Floral Sculptures in 1994. Deep is recognised for her use of Australian native flora and produces large-scale, temporal floral installations and sculptures incorporating sticks, leaves, kelp, rope and found objects. For *She chair*, Deep took the classic *Series 7* chair designed by Arne Jacobsen in 1955 for Danish furniture manufacturer Fritz Hansen and applied her signature rope-binding technique, as seen in her sculptures and floral installations. More an expression of Deep's visual and material language than functional, *She chair* ties up one of the twentieth century's iconic chairs.

Humberto Campana designer

Brazil 1953–

Fernando Campana designer

Brazil 1961–

Estúdio Campana, São Paulo

manufacturer

Brazil est. 1983

Cake stool

2008 designed, 2013 manufactured

soft toys, steel, canvas

ed. 106/150

Purchased with funds donated by
Gordon Moffatt AM and Jacqueline Moffatt, 2013

2013.939

Drawing inspiration from Brazilian street life and carnival culture, the Campana brothers combine found objects – such as scraps of wood, furry toys and fabric offcuts – with advanced technologies to create a vibrant, energetic and definitively Brazilian approach to design. Central to their practice is the importance of materials, and their unexpected combinations transform modest found items into works that celebrate the discarded and mundane. Their designers are instilled with the spirit of contemporary Brazil, which the brothers refer to as ‘zest for life’.

Reproduction

Chris Shurey designer

1967–

**Australia Post 45 cent stamp featuring
Pepe, chair to commemorate the
Bicentenary of the arrival of Merino
sheep in Australia**

1997

Collection of Australia Postal Corporation

© Chris Shurey. Australian Postal Corporation

Lineage

Lineage refers to the historical prompts from which some design stems, connecting the present to the past. Designers regularly draw upon previous art, design, tradition, technology and cultural constructs, including styles and movements. Contemporary design is therefore inseparable from the designs of the past – being encoded with information and reference points drawn from history that can hold great significance to the designer and even become the impetus for the design.

Helen Kontouris's *101 chair* was inspired by the sculptural practice of the twentieth-century Australian-American artist Clement Meadmore. In a similar fashion, Konstantin Grcic's *Myto, chair* references the first cantilever plastic chair – the iconic *Panton* chair of 1960 by Verner Panton. Likewise, Adam Goodrum's *Stitch, chair* is a contemporary interpretation of American inventor Fredric Arnold's aluminium collapsing chair of 1956.

Revisiting the concept of multifunctional furniture pioneered by avant-garde designers of the 1960s, Schamburg + Alvisse's *Stop playing with yourself puzzle*, 2005, identifies with theories of the Italian Radical and Anti-Design movements that aim to inject design with fun and play.

Marc Schamburg designer

Australia 1965–

Michael Alvisse designer

Singapore 1963–

Schamburg + Alvisse, Sydney

manufacturer

Australia est. 1994

Stop playing with yourself puzzle

2005

wool, fibreglass, foam

Forthcoming acquisition to be purchased
with funds donated by Gordon Moffat AM, 2017

Stop playing with yourself puzzle by Australian design studio Schamburg + Alvisse relates to the concept of multifunctional furniture explored by avant-garde designers of the 1960s, including Roberto Matta and Superstudio. A large three-dimensional upholstered puzzle, the design comprises six units of equal size and shape that interlock to form a large star. The units may be reconfigured to create a sofa, chair or day bed. Designed as a social experiment, adapting to the needs of people, community and space, the usefulness of the furniture system is discovered through the act of play.

Konstantin Grcic designer

Germany 1965–

Plank, Ora manufacturer

Italy est. 1893

Myto, chair

2006 designed, 2014 manufactured
thermoplastic polyester

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Myto, chair by Konstantin Grcic received the prestigious Compasso d'Oro Award for industrial design in 2011, and is one of the most innovative cantilever chair designs since the iconic *Panton* chair of 1960. The first chair made from a continuous flowing material, the *Panton* chair maximises plastic's properties to create an integrated form combining the chair back, seat and legs. Manufactured in one plastic injection moulding, the cantilever, mesh seat and back of Grcic's *Myto* stacking chair is only achievable due to advances in plastics technology. The thermoplastic polyester formula gives the chair its great strength and flexibility.

Adam Goodrum designer

Australia 1972–

Cappellini, Arosio manufacturer

Italy est. 1946

Stitch, chair

2008 designed, 2016 manufactured
painted aluminium, polypropylene

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Adam Goodrum's *Stitch, chair* for Italian company Cappellini is a contemporary interpretation of American inventor Fredric Arnold's aluminium collapsing chair of 1956. Manufactured from laser-cut aluminium plate, *Stitch, chair* is put together using hinges, which allow the chair to fold flat in profile to a depth of 4.5 centimetres. Included in London Design Museum's *Designs of the Year* in 2008, the chair's inventiveness and playful appeal have come to characterise the Australian designer's style. It inspired an installation of colourful acrylic folding houses for the NGV's 2015 Rigg Design Prize, which saw Goodrum take out the coveted award.

Masanori Umeda designer

Japan 1941–

Edra, Pisa manufacturer

Italy est.1987

Rose armchair

1989 designed, 2016 manufactured
cotton/silk velvet, polyurethane foam, plywood, polyester
wadding, steel, aluminium, plastic

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Rose armchair by Masanori Umeda is regarded an icon of postmodern design. Emerging in the mid twentieth century, postmodern design challenged the styles and doctrines of modernism. Denoting the trivialisation of values and symbols, postmodernism often employed pastiche, parody and deconstruction. *Rose armchair* is a provocation of sorts. It appears like a large flower, and the act of sitting in the bloom could be viewed as slightly absurd. The chair exemplifies the creative freedom practised by designers who subscribed to the postmodern framework.

Chris Connell designer

Australia 1955–

Merchants of Australian Products Pty. Ltd, Melbourne manufacturer

Australia est. 1992

Pepe, chair

1992 designed, 2016 reupholstered

wool, polyurethane foam, polyurethane, steel, rubber

Forthcoming acquisition to be purchased
with funds donated by Gordon Moffat AM, 2017

Established by Chris Connell and Raoul Hogg in Melbourne in 1992, Merchants of Australian Products was a driving force in contemporary Australian furniture design in the 1990s. The studio's distinctive designs stemmed from Connell's prodigious drawing practice, and the partners' fascination with new materials and manufacturing processes inspired the next generation of Australian furniture designers. Included in the exhibition *Mutant Materials in Contemporary Design* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1997, *Pepe, chair* was recognised for its innovative use of environmentally friendly moulded polyurethane foam and drew attention to a new era of Australian furniture design.

Helen Kontouris designer

Australia 1976–

Schiavello Systems, Melbourne

manufacturer

Australia est. 1966

101 chair

2001 designed, 2017 manufactured

wool, fibreglass

Forthcoming acquisition to be purchased
with funds donated by Gordon Moffat AM, 2017

101 chair by Australian designer Helen Kontouris takes inspiration from the work and career of esteemed Australian-American artist Clement Meadmore (1929–2005). Known for his large outdoor sculptures in steel, Meadmore designed numerous chairs, and in 1997 authored *The Modern Chair: Classic Designs by Thonet, Breuer, Le Corbusier and Eames*. Drawn to Meadmore's devotion to line, movement and geometric form, and the artist's enduring interest in chairs, Kontouris designed her *101 chair* as an homage. In production with Australian manufacturer Schiavello since 2005, *101 chair* was a finalist in the NGV's 2009 Cecily and Colin Rigg Design Award.

Reproduction

Unknown photographer
active 1980s

**No title (Edra campaign image of
Rose armchair)**
1989

© Edra, Pisa and Masanori Umeda

Idealism

Designers can create objects to communicate beliefs and values – and in doing so, theories such as inclusivity, environmentalism and ethics shape their designs and give them substance. Given design's relationship to the production and consumption of goods, contemporary objects can ask us to make a stand in relation to whether a product should exist, how and by whom things are made, what they are made from and how they will be disposed of after their useful life has ended.

Idealism in design has its roots in the doctrines of the Arts and Crafts Movement of the nineteenth century, and twentieth-century modernism. Tackling social, spiritual and aesthetic issues, proponents of the Arts and Crafts Movement believed that 'mechanical commodities' were dehumanising and promoted the de-culturing of the world. Fast-forward to the twenty-first century and design can be seen as a positive force – for humankind and nature.

Embracing production efficiencies and the potentiality of twenty-first-century manufacturing, designer Dirk van der Kooij's *Endless chair* is 3D printed using plastic reclaimed from old refrigerators. Exploring sustainable material alternatives in the form of bioplastics, Jean Louis Iratzoki created his *Kuskoba bi, armchair* from beet, cornflour and sugar cane, and Christien Meindertsma's elegant *Flax chair* is made from a composite combining flax with polylactic acid.

Jean Louis Iratzoki designer

England 1965–

Alki, Itsasu manufacturer

France est. 1981

Kuskoa bi, armchair

2014 designed, 2016 manufactured

bioplastic (beet, cornstarch, sugarcane), limed oak

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Designed by Jean Louis Iratzoki for Basque manufacturer Alki, *Kuskoa bi, armchair* is the first commercial chair to be thermoformed in a bioplastic derived from beet, corn starch and sugarcane. Iratzoki's studio was involved in the research and development of the new compound, which is obtained using a series of mechanical processes, followed by a fermentation period. The resulting polymer can be injected, extruded and thermoformed into shape and is 100 per cent biodegradable. Iratzoki's *Kuskoa bi, armchair* demonstrates how the invention of a new material can lead to sustainable design solutions.

James Shaw designer and maker

the Netherlands 1987–

Marjan van Auble designer and maker

the Netherlands 1985–

Well proven chair

2012 designed, 2016 manufactured

wood shavings, American Ash (*Fraxinos americana*)

polyvinyl acetate, oil, pigment

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Designers Marjan van Aubel and James Shaw met while studying at the Royal College of Art in London. They have shared a studio since 2012 and collaborated on many projects. With the support of the American Hardwood Export Council, Van Aubel and Shaw developed the *Well proven chair* upon learning of the magnitude of timber waste generated by the furniture industry. Aiming to create a new material from sawdust and timber shavings, they discovered that when combined with an organic resin, the porridge-like mixture expands and cures hard, and they have since applied it to make unique chairs, stools and tables.

Oskar Zieta designer

Poland 1975–

Zieta Prozessdesign, Wrocław

manufacturer

Poland est. 2004

Plopp kitchen stool

2009 designed, 2016 manufactured
stainless steel

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

In 2004 Oskar Zieta developed a new steel process with a team of scientists from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. The process involves welding the edges of ultra-thin sheets of steel and inflating the internal cavity under pressure with air to produce a three-dimensional object. *Plopp kitchen stool* was Zieta's first design to successfully demonstrate the new process, which claims numerous advantages for steel manufacturing, including a fast, easy and precise production time and exceptionally strong, durable and lightweight objects. Recent developments in the technology have led to a footbridge and rotor blades for low-cost wind turbines.

great things 2 People (gt2P), Santiago
designer and maker
Chile est. 2009

Revolution stool L

2016

basaltic andesite, stoneware

Forthcoming acquisition to be purchased
with funds donated by Gordon Moffat AM, 2017

Great things 2 People (gt2P) is an art, design and architecture studio based in Santiago, Chile. *Revolution stool L* by gt2P is a boulder-like stool made from stoneware and coated in re-melted volcanic rock. Experimenting with pieces of cooled lava from Chile's Villarrica volcanos since 2014, gt2P collects a porous lightweight black rock known as basaltic andesite from the volcano slopes to produce the lava coating they call Quitralco, which means 'fire water' in Mapudungun, language of the indigenous people of south-central Chile and west-central Argentina. The embodiment of the designers' homeland, the stool communicates the richness of place.

Christien Meindertsma designer

the Netherlands 1980–

Label/Breed, Amsterdam manufacturer

the Netherlands est. 2005

Flax chair

2015 designed, 2017 manufactured

Flax fibre (*Linum usitatissimum*), polylactic acid

Forthcoming acquisition to be purchased
with funds donated by Gordon Moffat AM, 2017

Designer Christien Meindertsma explores the hidden narratives of materials and everyday objects. From 2009 to 2015 Meindertsma devoted her time to documenting the cultivation and harvesting of flax in the Netherlands. She studied the origins and processes of producing linseed oil, linen and rope from the plant, culminating in a series of video works and products. In collaboration with Amsterdam-based manufacturer Label/Breed and textiles company Enkev, Meindertsma developed *Flax chair* from a composite of flax and polylactic acid, inventing a new bioplastic material. *Flax chair* won the Most Promising Design for the Future at the 2016 Dutch Design Awards.

Dirk Vander Kooij designer and maker
the Netherlands 1983–

Endless chair

2010 designed, 2016 manufactured
polycarbonate

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Dirk Vander Kooij is a Dutch designer and contemporary craftsman who embraces emergent technologies and new materials. Working from Zaandam, an old industrial area close to Amsterdam, Vander Kooij produces experimental, limited-edition and production furniture and object designs. *Endless chair* by Vander Kooij is 3D-printed using plastic reclaimed from the interiors of old refrigerators. Receiving the Dutch Design Award in 2011, *Endless chair* was the designer's first fully resolved piece of furniture using 3D-printing technology. Vander Kooij has become renowned for this process, and his use of large programmable robot arms has enabled a production facility for the twenty-first century.

Reproduction

Unknown photographer
active 2000s)

**No title (Moroso campaign image of
Shadowy armchair)**
2009

© Moroso, Udine and Tord Boontje.

Diffusion

Diffusion describes the ways in which rituals, narratives, history and memory can become embedded within functional objects. Different social, geographical and cultural contexts produce different types of objects; hence it is possible for a design to provide a marker of both place and time, embodying the knowledge, know-how, stories and traditions of a place and its people. Design today strives for this capacity, yet in a globalised, pluralist world, contemporary design illuminates the divergence and recombination of cultures, embedding new narratives in the products that surround us.

Dutch designer Tord Boontje's handwoven *Shadowy armchair* for Moroso's *M'Afrique* collection is acclaimed for introducing the work of African artisans to a global design market. *Fjord, armchair* and *Fjord stone, footstool* by Spanish designer Patricia Urquiola references the form of a broken seashell to draw comparisons with Scandinavian designer Arne Jacobsen's love of nature and the Scandinavian coastline. Trent Jansen's *Broached East Chinaman's file rocking chair* pays homage to the estimated 16,500 Chinese immigrants who walked from Robe in South Australia to the Victorian goldfields during the mid nineteenth century.

Patricia Urquiola designer

Spain 1961–

Moroso, Udine manufacturer

Italy est. 1952

Fjord, armchair

Fjord stone, footstool

2002 designed, 2016 manufactured

painted stainless steel, aluminium, polyurethane foam,
leather, waxed silk, plastic

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Fjord, armchair and *Fjord stone, footstool* by Spanish designer Patricia Urquiola references the form of a broken seashell to draw comparison with Scandinavian designer Arne Jacobsen's love of nature and the Scandinavian coastline, a reference point for much of his furniture and object design. Like Arne Jacobsen's *Egg chair* of 1958, Urquiola's *Fjord, armchair* has become one of the designer's most recognisable designs. In production with Italian manufacturer Moroso, limited numbers of the *Fjord, armchair* and *Fjord stone, footstool* are released in rare textiles. The chair and stool in the NGV collection features hand-dyed silk from Moroso's *Africano* textile collection.

Doshi Levien, London design studio

England est. 2000

Nipa Doshi designer

India 1971–

Jonathan Levien designer

Scotland 1972–

Moroso, Udine manufacturer

Italy est. 1952

Principessa daybed

2008

wood, polyurethane foam, wool, silk, vinyl, other materials

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

London-based design studio Doshi Levien draws on their mixed heritages to explore the concept of cultural hybridism in product and furniture design. Designed for Italian manufacturer Moroso, *Principessa daybed* by Doshi Levien is from the studio's *Myth and Material* collection inspired by fairytales and folk stories.

Principessa daybed references Hans Christian Andersen's 1835 fairytale *The Princess and the Pea*. On the top mattress of *Principessa daybed* is a modern princess's belongings, including a hairdryer, sunglasses and necklace, represented pictorially in a jacquard weave.

Jon Goulder designer and maker

Australia 1970–

Settler's chair

2015

Tasmanian Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), leather, felt

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2016

2016.423

Designer and maker Jon Goulder's *Settler's chair* draws inspiration from the ingenuity of European settlers in Tasmania in the early 1800s, whose resourceful use of local materials led to furniture that was a departure from the Victorian-era goods imported from England at the time. Emerging from investigation into such furniture, Goulder developed an original process for water forming, laminating and vacuum pressing large pieces of cow leather. Requiring no inner shell, this process delivered the self-supporting form for the leather seat in his *Settler's chair*, and the design marks a change in the designer's typical style, closer to mid-century modernism.

Trent Jansen designer

Australia 1981–

JP Finsbury, Sydney manufacturer

Australia est. 2013

Broached East Chinaman's file rocking chair

2013

Victorian ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*), Manchurian ash (*Fraxinus mandshurica*), rubber, steel

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Designed by Trent Jansen for Broached Commissions, Australia's most noted limited-edition design company, the *Chinaman's file rocking chair* pays homage to the estimated 16,500 Chinese immigrants who walked from Robe in South Australia to the Victorian goldfields during the mid nineteenth century. Ships carrying Chinese nationals to New South Wales and Victoria were taxed, so Chinese passengers disembarked in South Australia. Travelling on foot in single file, each carried supplies in two baskets hanging from the ends of long poles over their shoulders. Carrying up to 78 kilograms per person, the unusual procession was known as the 'Chinaman's file'.

Martino Gamper designer

Italy 1971–

Gebrüder Thonet Vienna GmbH, Torino

manufacturer

Austria est. 1849

Post Mundus chair

2012 designed, 2016 manufactured

European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), plywood, metal, felt

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Renowned for his culturally responsive approach to design, Italian designer Martino Gamper's *Post Mundus chair* is a playful interpretation of the classic *Thonet Bentwood chair no. 16* designed by cabinet-maker Michael Thonet in the late nineteenth century. Thonet famously developed a method for bending timber and explored its flexibility in a number of furniture designs suitable for mass-production. *Thonet Bentwood chair no. 16* is arguably one of the most recognised chairs in the world. *Post Mundus chair* uses the parts of *no. 16* and displays the designer's trademark aesthetic of deconstructing and reassembling furniture in novel ways, to open dialogues with history, tradition and industrialisation.

Tord Boontje designer

the Netherlands 1968–

Moroso, Udine manufacturer

Italy est. 1952

Shadowy armchair

2009 designed, 2016 manufactured
varnished steel, polyethylene, rubber

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Launched by Italian manufacturer Moroso in 2009, the *M'Afrique* collection comprises furniture designs by six noted international designers in collaboration with traditional craftspeople from the African nations of Senegal and Mali. Included in the collection, *Shadowy armchair* by Dutch designer Tord Boontje is handwoven using plastic threads traditionally used for making fishing nets in Dakar. Developed in association with American designer Stephen Burks, the *M'Afrique* collection is acclaimed for introducing the work of African artisans to a global design market.

Reproduction

Unknown photographer
active 2010s

**No title (Designer Cini Boeri with
Ghost armchair)**
2012

© Cini Boeri

Invention

Inventive design embeds new scientific knowledge within goods and services, unleashing the potential of industry as designers harness the potential of new materials, systems and technologies to create 'innovation' – unanticipated product designs that offer new attributes, features and benefits.

The pursuit of invention and the generation of patents and intellectual property are fundamental to modern commerce. Design sits at the vanguard of this ambition, seeking to perpetually iterate, disrupt and reimagine products and services – as competitive, brand and ideological strategies.

The ultimate mass-produced chair, *Air chair* by Jasper Morrison, is exceptionally light, durable and fast to make. *Air chair*, along with Philippe Starck's *Louis ghost chair*, signalled a new era in the production of plastic chairs. Similarly, *Ghost armchair* by Cini Boeri and Tomu Katayanagi marked a breakthrough in glass manufacture with its unitised structure.

With the rise of digital technologies, the opportunities for invention are staggering. Ross Lovegrove's *Diatom* and *Go* chairs are designed entirely within the computer. By applying the latest technologies to the way products are designed and made, designers are challenging the status quo. Leading to the creation of pivotal works of product design, as in the *Aeron, office chair* by Donald Chadwick and Bill Stumpf, the ability to think differently is a hallmark of invention.

Jasper Morrison designer

England 1959–

Magis, Torre di Mosto manufacturer

Italy est. 1976

Air chair

1999 designed, 2015 manufactured
polypropylene, glass fibre

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

The *Air chair* by British designer Jasper Morrison was the first polypropylene chair to be manufactured in one piece using gas injection technology or air-moulding, a process where inert gas is forced into the mould, pushing the still-molten plastic to the walls. Heralded as an industrial design masterpiece, *Air chair* is exceptionally light and durable; its hollow legs and thin solid seat and back use significantly less material than a regular plastic chair. Designed for the Italian company Magis, *Air chair* signalled a new era of designed plastic furniture.

Ross Lovegrove designer

Wales 1958–

Bernhardt Design, Lenoir manufacturer

United States est. 1889

Go chair

1998–2001 designed, 2015 manufactured
powder-coated magnesium, polypropylene

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Go chair is the first commercial multiuse chair made from solid die-cast magnesium. Designed by Ross Lovegrove for American furniture manufacturer Bernhardt Design, *Go chair* draws inspiration from the automotive industry's efforts to produce lighter, stronger and more durable cars. Specifying magnesium over aluminium for its superior lightweight to high-strength ratio, automotive designers are able to reduce component weight by forty per cent. Sporting Lovegrove's signature organic style, *Go chair* has been in production since 2007 and is regarded the Ferrari of stacking chairs.

Thomas Heatherwick designer

England 1970–

Magis, Torre di Mosto manufacturer

Italy est. 1976

Spun, chair

2010 designed, 2015 manufactured
polyethylene

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Thomas Heatherwick's *Spun chair* belongs to a trajectory of radical design pioneered by designers and manufacturers in Italy in the late 1960s. Consider *Sacco* from 1968 (the 'beanbag' chair) by Italian designers Gatti, Paolini and Teodoro; challenging the conventional structure of the chair, it proposed a new visual form for seating. Similarly, *Spun chair* looks more like an oversized spinning top than a chair, but its shape, dimensions and proportions are the deliberate result of the designer's and manufacturer's intentions to produce a functional chair with an element of surprise. In the process, they invented an entirely new 'spinning' chair.

Marcel Wanders designer

the Netherlands 1963–

Cappellini, Arosio manufacturer

Italy est. 1946

Knotted chair

1996 designed, 1996–2011 manufactured

edition of 1000

carbon and aromatic polyamide fibres, epoxy resin

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Marcel Wander's lightweight *Knotted chair* is made from rope composed of carbon and aramid fibres, a heat-resistant synthetic filament used in bullet-proof body armour. The rope is knotted into the shape of the chair and infused with epoxy resin. Hung to dry, the final form of the chair is assisted by gravity. *Knotted chair* was developed in collaboration with Dutch design company Droog and the Faculty of Aerospace Engineering at the Delft University of Technology, through the *Dry Tech Project* of 1996, that invited young Dutch designers and architects to explore new high-tech materials.

Cini Boeri designer

Italy 1924–

Tomu Katayanagi designer

Japan 1950–

FIAM, Tavullia manufacturer

Italy est. 1973

Ghost armchair

1987 designed, 2016 manufactured
glass

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

A collaboration between designers Cini Boeri and Tomu Katayanagi, and Italian manufacturer FIAM, *Ghost armchair* is made from a single sheet of clear glass, which is slumped over a mould at high temperature in a kiln. *Ghost armchair* marked an important breakthrough in the manufacture of glass furniture. Cini Boeri says: 'I would never have thought of making a chair from glass ... my initial distrust of an idea which seemed quite unrealistic was overcome by the desire to take up the challenge and see whether FIAM would be clever enough to transform the concept into reality'.

Philippe Starck designer

France 1949–

Kartell, Milan manufacturer

Italy est. 1949

Louis ghost chair (Crystal)

2002 designed, 2011 manufactured

Louis ghost chair (Smoke grey)

2002 designed, 2015 manufactured

Louis ghost chair (Sunset orange)

2002 designed, 2007 manufactured

polycarbonate

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2015

2015.563-5

Philippe Starck's *Louis ghost chair* is made from transparent and batch-dyed polycarbonate and, in its time, was one of the most daring examples of injected polycarbonate from a single mould in the world. Drawing inspiration from a French armchair from the reign of Louis XVI, the *Louis ghost chair* has become one of Philippe Starck's best known furniture designs. Designed in 2002 for the Kartell Company, a leading Italian manufacturer of original furniture designs in plastic, the *Louis ghost chair* is believed to be one of the most copied chairs of recent years, with unauthorised replicas widely available.

Ross Lovegrove designer

Wales 1958–

Moroso, Udine manufacturer

Italy est. 1952

Diatom armchair

2014 designed, 2015 manufactured
painted aluminium, plastic

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

Diatom armchair by designer Ross Lovegrove is an aluminium stacking chair that employs a manufacturing process called hydroforming to produce an exceptionally strong and lightweight chair. A process typically used in the automotive industry to achieve complex forms, hydroforming uses high-pressure hydraulic fluid to press the metal into a mould. *Diatom armchair* is the result of a single pressing, with the legs punched out of the seat pan and welded to form tubular legs. Designed entirely on the computer, *Diatom armchair* takes its shape from a diatom, a primordial single-cell organism found in oceans and waterways the world over.

Donald T. Chadwick designer

United States 1936–

Bill Stumpf designer

United States 1936–2006

Herman Miller, Michigan manufacturer

United States est. 1923

Aeron, office chair

1992 designed, 2016 manufactured

glass-reinforced polyester, cast aluminium, thermoplastic polyester elastomer, polyester and elastane

Purchased with funds donated by Gordon Moffatt AM, 2017

The *Aeron, office chair* is considered one of the finest examples of twentieth-century ergonomic and user-centred design. Analysing the way people sit, industrial designers Donald Chadwick and Bill Stumpf set out to re-envision an office chair that responded to the needs of the body. Over a decade, the designers created a chair that supports a person's weight evenly, regardless of their height or size. The innovative use of materials, its functionality and visual appeal means that the *Aeron office chair* remains a pivotal work of product design, and one that renewed interest in design that considers human and environmental factors.

Reproduction

John Ross photographer
active 2000s

**No title (Ross Lovegrove with scale
model of *Go chair*)**
2001

© Image courtesy of Ross Lovegrove

great things 2 People (gt2P), Santiago
filmmaker
Chile est. 2009

Remolten process
2017

© gt2P and Friedman Benda

Esgo Klein filmmaker
1985–

Creating an *Endless chair*
2011

© Dirk Vander Kooij and Esgo Klein

Miranda Stet filmmaker
active 2010s

Pieter Kamp filmmaker
active 2010s

Peter Lipton filmmaker
active 2010s

Making of Jólán van der Wiel's *Original gravity stool*
2011

© Jólán van der Wiel. Miranda Stet, Pieter Kamp and Peter Lipton

Roel van Tour filmmaker

active 2010s

The Flax Project

2010

© Christien Meindertsma and Roel van Tour

Oscar Zieta filmmaker

Poland 1975–

All you need is less

2011

© Oskar Zieta