

# Chairs

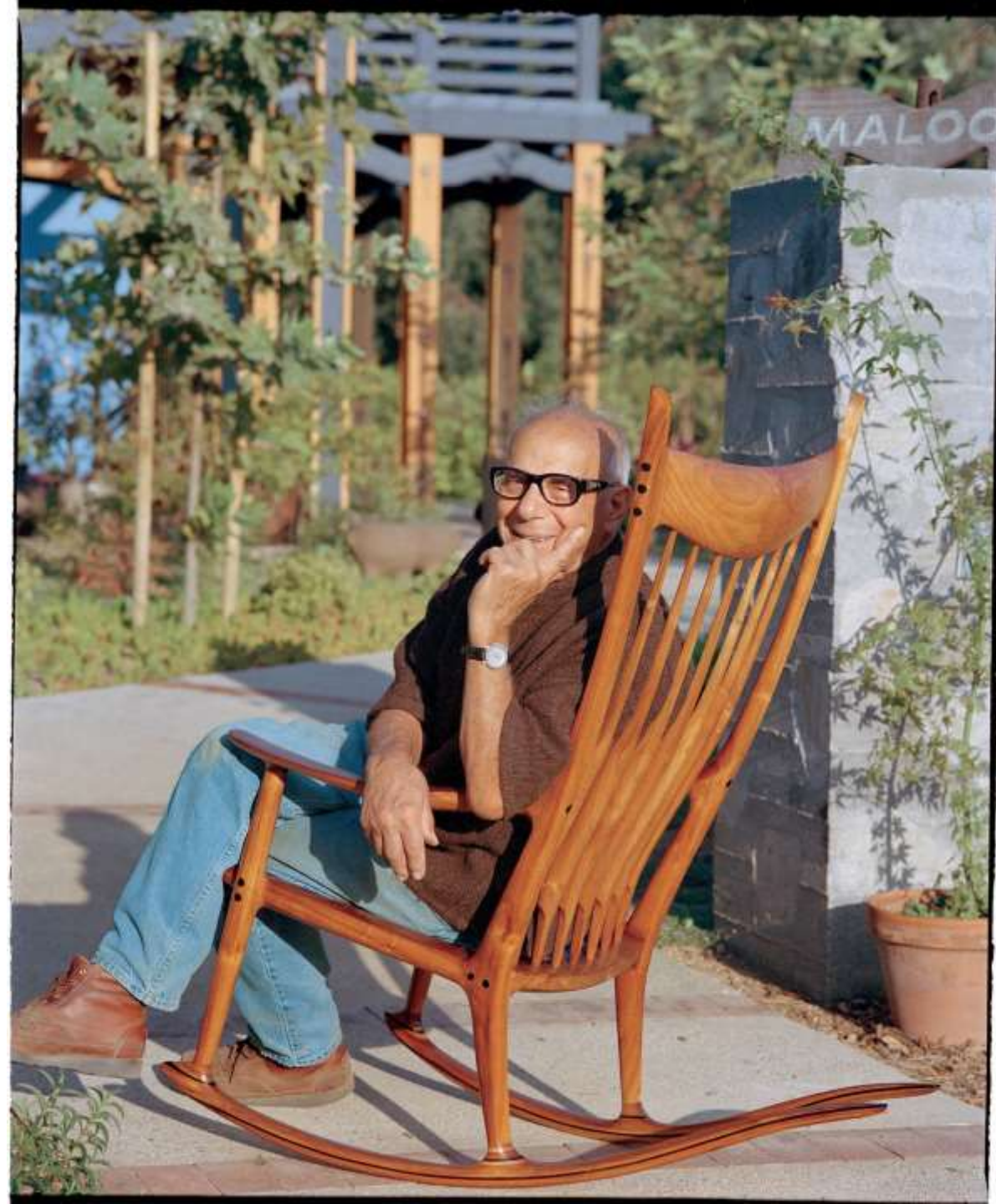
Fun Functional and Dysfunctional Furniture

# Sam Maloof

Sam Maloof (1916-2009) was a self taught furniture maker and woodworker who worked and lived in Alta Loma, CA. He married his first wife, Alfreda Ward (d. 1998) in 1948 and together they founded the Sam and Alfreda Maloof Foundation for Arts and Crafts in 1994. He was known for his signature rocker and had been commissioned by Presidents Carter, Reagan, and Clinton. In 1985, he was awarded the MacArthur Foundation fellowship “genius grant,” making him the first craftsman to ever receive the honor. His work is in numerous public and private collections, including the White House Collection of American Crafts.

<https://www.craftinamerica.org/artist/sam-maloof>







# Garry Knox Bennet

Garry Knox Bennett was an American woodworker, furniture maker, metalworker and artist from Alameda, California, who was known for his whimsical, inventive and unconventional uses of materials and designs in his work. His workshop and studio was in Oakland, California.

- <https://www.craftinamerica.org/artist/garry-knox-bennett>









# Memphis Group Design

The Memphis Group, also known as Memphis Milano, was an Italian design and architecture group founded by Ettore Sottsass. It was active from 1980 to 1987. The group designed postmodern furniture, lighting, fabrics, carpets, ceramics, glass and metal objects.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCI8IPvr6SM&t=15s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SC1O03GCssU> (15 mins)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEBEm9fQJiY>















# Tatiane Freitas

Hitting peak popularity in the mid-20th century, acrylic furniture—sometimes branded as [Lucite](#)—represented a fresh, modern take on traditionally functional objects, from tables to headboards to kitchen chairs. The clear thermoplastic can easily steal the show in a room, drawing attention to its own silhouette and contrasting the furnishings that surround it. São Paulo-based artist [Tatiane Freitas](#) taps into the legacy of the material and the relationship between past and present in her ongoing *My New Old Series*.

Redolent of [kintsugi](#), a Japanese philosophy that embraces breakage and repair as part of the history of objects, Freitas molds strikingly transparent replacements for chair arms, spindles, and seats. The artist “aims to explore the dynamic between the past versus present, old versus young, and how this tension can be presented in a physical state,” she says in a statement. The plastic fits precisely into place and mirrors its wooden counterparts, creating an effect that is both solid and spectral.

Freitas has recently translated her full-size sculptures into miniature versions that appear to float on the wall, several of which are currently on view at [Guy Hepner](#) in New York City through the end of this month. You can also find more work on the artist’s [website](#) and [Instagram](#).

<https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2023/08/tatiane-freitas-my-new-old-series/>









TATIANE FREITAS



# Hugh Hayden

Hugh Hayden's practice considers the anthropomorphization of the natural world as a visceral lens for exploring the human condition. Hayden transforms familiar objects through a process of selection, carving and juxtaposition to challenge our perceptions of ourselves, others and the environment. Raised in Texas and trained as an architect, his work arises from a deep connection to nature and its organic materials. Hayden utilizes wood as his primary medium, frequently loaded with multi-layered histories in their origin, including objects as varied as discarded trunks, rare indigenous timbers, Christmas trees or souvenir African sculptures. From these he saws, sculpts and sands the wood, often combining disparate species, creating new composite forms that also reflect their complex cultural backgrounds. Crafting metaphors for human existence and past experience, Hayden's work questions the stasis of social dynamics and asks the viewer to examine their place within an ever-shifting ecosystem.

- <https://www.facebook.com/artbasel/videos/436502797903566/>

















# Patrice Letarnec

**Famous, functional designs become impractical and awkward objects in French photographer Patrice Letarnec's collection of 'prank furniture'.** the series 'uncomfortable' deforms iconic tables and chairs with painfully protruding seats, precariously unbalanced legs and alarmingly uneven surfaces. rendered unusable, these emblems of contemporary design become idle art objects, subverted from their original meaning and motive.





designboom



eames molded fiberglass chair — charles & ray eames, 1950





# Pamela Weir-Quiton

Pamela Weir-Quiton is a Los Angeles artist with more than fifty years of woodworking under her tool belt. As a young art student at CSUN with a knack for fashion design, Weir-Quiton initially explored ceramics and photography but was soon drawn into the woodshop, where she immediately found her calling. Rather than sticking with the pack of her predominantly male classmates, Weir-Quiton decided to use laminated hardwoods to make her own mark by creating a dapper wooden Mod girl doll ala Mary Quant for her class project. Weir-Quiton immediately received media attention for her singular vision, virtuosity, and creative spirit as a student in 1965 and various commissions followed in suit. She was swooped up and featured in catalogs, lifestyle magazines and leading newspaper spreads for her sculptures. This began a lifelong pursuit of bringing fun, imagination and biting humor into her work, which has always been intended for the chicest kids of all ages, namely, grown-ups.

<http://www.ophirgallery.com/designers/pamela-weir-quiton-1944-usa-ca>

<https://pamelaweir-quiton.com/video>







# Jon Brooks

Jon Brooks (b. 1944 in Manchester, NH) is a woodworker and furniture maker. He makes use of found materials from his house and surrounding woods to create his playful furniture and sculpture. Brooks derives inspiration from the natural setting in which he lives.

He received a BFA and MFA from the Rochester Institute of Technology. He has also taught at Haystack Mountain School of Arts and Penland School of Crafts. His work can be found in the collections of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Renwick Gallery, and the Museum of Art and Design.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1tFTYwQynU&t=127s>











# Full Grown—Gavin Munro

The most common way of producing wooden furniture is fairly straightforward: grow the proper trees for a few decades, chop 'em down, cut them into smaller pieces and assemble the pieces into a chair. Derbyshire-based furniture designer Gavin Munro wondered if he could try a wholly different approach: what if he could just grow chairs? What if trees could be forced to grow in chair-like shapes and through strategic sculpting and grafting result in an annual “chair harvest.” After a lengthy years-long trial in his mother’s garden and a sturdy proof-of-concept, [Full Grown](#) was born.

Munro points out that the idea of growing furniture actually dates back millennia. The Chinese were known to dig holes to fill with chair-shaped rocks and had tree roots grow through the gaps, while the Egyptians and Greeks had a method for growing small stools. But Full Grown appears to be on a scale entirely of its own, with an entire farm destined to be harvested into chairs, assorted light fixtures, and other unusual objects. He shares a bit about the process which can take between 4 to 8 years,

<https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2016/12/full-grown-trees-grown-into-furniture-and-art-objects/>











# Valentina Gonzalez Wohlers

Before you plop down on one of [Valentina Gonzalez Wohlers](#)'s vibrant chairs, take a peek at the spine-covered seat. The Mexican designer has crafted cacti-inspired furniture for her [Prickly Pair](#) collection that blends the French Louis XV style with Mexican elements. On each pink and green chair, one or two tall shoots branch off the backs with spiny tufts secured on each button.

A few years ago, Gonzalez Wohlers added [a small footstool](#) to the humorous collection that she's named Baby Peyote. Keep up with the designer's spiked furniture on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#), and check out this artist's [piñata variation](#). (via [The Sleep of Reason](#))







# Urs Fischer

Urs Fischer is a Swiss-born contemporary visual artist living in New York City and Los Angeles. Fischer's practice includes sculpture, installation, photography, and digitally-mediated images. Fischer's current studio occupies a large warehouse in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn, near the waterfront.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6L2ugPzv8JU&t=35s>









# Frank Tjepkema

Dutch designer [Frank Tjepkema](#) of [Studio Tjep](#) created the [Recession Chair](#) in 2011 as a response to the world's economic crisis. To produce the work, Studio Tjep sanded down a mass-produced IKEA chair to a ragged and skeletal structure. "The resulting object is barely functional as it most likely won't withstand the weight of the person it is trying to support," said [Tjep in a statement about the chair](#), "much like a society plagued by recession."

As an opposing gesture, Tjep cast the work in bronze, adding strength to the chair's areas of fault. You can see various states of the chair in the images below, including a partially sanded version of the chair in white, and several examples of the piece fully cast in luminous bronze. To view more examples of Tjep's work with architecture, objects, and interior design, visit their [website](#). (via [@designers\\_need](#))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qmzo3z-9Ok&t=102s>







# Mán-Mán Studio

Designers Daishi Luo and Zhipeng Tan of [Mán-Mán Studio](#) have ensured the stability of otherwise impermanent objects, like delicate lotuses and the human spine. Manipulating copper and brass, the pair conceives of tall spinal chairs with pelvis seats and other stools and tables mimicking the tops of lotus pads. The duo told [China Design Centre](#) that their frequent use of copper is in part “because of the charm of the material. Copper is alive, its plasticity is very high, and it is not what we always see.”

Because Luo and Tan release limited editions of each structural piece, their projects work counter to larger productions. “This is an introspection behavior in the process of industry. After industrial mass production meets most of the needs of life, handicraft often represents the products of nature and culture. People begin to pursue the appeal of inner spirit instead of fast consumption,” they said.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK3zZSfiH3s&t=43s>







# Annie Evelyn

Artist [Annie Evelyn](#)'s primary medium: wood. Her primary vessel: the chair. One work, "Cathedral Train Chair", sports an ocean-blue silk train that fans out from a tufted armchair, emulating the fashion symbol of high social status or a special occasion. Another, "Windsor Flower Chair", surrounds the sitter with a garden of gently curving vertical wood slats, which burst into synthetic blossoms.

"Evelyn uses furniture's inherent interactive qualities and relationships to the human body to create new and surprising experiences," reads a [statement](#) on the artist's website. Her "Static Adornment" series reinvents the role of furniture as physical decoration: wall-mounted structures covered in densely layered beads, copper scales, and red roses fit around a human body not as support but as ornamentation.

Evelyn received her BFA and MFA at Rhode Island School of Design, and is currently a Visiting Professor in the furniture department at California College of the Arts. Her work is also a part of [Making a Seat at the Table](#), a group show of female-identifying woodworkers on view through January 18, 2020 in Philadelphia. Keep up with Evelyn's latest projects and inspiration on [Instagram](#), and explore more of her portfolio on her [website](#).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFZaYTWWh7xA&t=9s>















# Chris Wolston

Brooklyn-based designer [Chris Wolston](#) wonders why traditional furniture created for people to lounge and rest on lacks human-like qualities.

“Wouldn’t it be nice to actually embrace these similarities?” asks a [statement](#) describing his recent Nalgona Chair line, which attempts to rectify the problems he sees with conventional seating models. Wolston’s imitative chairs have distinct appendages displayed in a way that mimics a person with their hands in the air or resting gently on their knees.

The playful seats are made entirely of wicker harvested in the Colombian Amazon. “The human form riffs on the iconic shape of the plastic Remax Chair, ubiquitous through Colombia, and the playful humanoid quality found in pre-Columbian ceramics,” reads the [product’s description](#). Head over to [The Future Perfect](#) to add one these unconventional furnishings to your collection, and follow Wolston on [Instagram](#) for his latest projects.







# Sharon Sides

Israeli designer [Sharon Sides](#) translates natural forms into designed objects by digitally transferring their patterns onto metal. In her series of bronze and acid-etched brass furniture titled *Stumps*, she utilizes the concentric rings of tree stumps to create richly textured surfaces. As a way to more deeply connect each piece to the object it is inspired by, Sides also keeps the edges of her tables and chairs as close to the stump shapes as possible, and molds the furniture's legs to appear like twigs or branches. You can watch the design process behind Sides's series of tree-inspired objects in the video below.

<https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2018/08/tree-stump-chairs-by-sharon-sides/>







# Donna Wilson

Textile designer [Donna Wilson](#)'s newest body of work is a collection of colorful chairs and benches called Abstract Assembly. The designer, who you may be familiar with through her quirky plush characters like [Rita Radish](#) and [Lenny Leopard](#), debuted her new venture into hard goods at this year's [London Design Festival](#).

The vibrant, multi-part chair backs are translated from Wilson's watercolor paintings and use offcuts of oak, beech, and Douglas fir wood. Each design is a limited edition of ten. All components are hand-painted by Wilson and then dovetailed together (she partnered with [Jon Almond](#) on production). [Design Milk](#) quoted Wilson's creative exploration that sparked the Abstract Assembly collection:









# Nuru Karim

In the new Mumbai-based cafe [Cardboard Bombay](#), corrugated cardboard composes each chair, table, and light fixture, in addition to the sinuous walls which sweep across the space. The restaurant was designed with the biodegradable material by Nuru Karim, founder of Mumbai-based architectural firm [NUDES](#), who chose the material because of its sustainability, versatility, and ability to absorb sound.

Before starting on the cafe the design team tested the cardboard they wished to use, researching how it would react with typical hospitality factors such as water resistance and temperature changes. Next NUDES designed the undulating chairs, light fixtures, and wall partitions to have a similar free-flowing appearance, and treated cardboard tables with wax to seal the furniture and prevent damage. You can see more images from the (via [designboom](#))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrbcP2PFXyw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtUFV1HjDWg&t=182s>













# Nina Saunders

Danish artist [Nina Saunders](#) creates sculptures that drip, tip, and spill what appears to be amorphous contents onto the ground, turning domestic objects of comfort and kitsch into sculptural pieces unintended for practical use. Her works typically involve secondhand furniture like armchairs and love seats, with the occasional melting piano thrown into her multi-media practice. Floral fabrics run from chair to floor, while the shiny black exterior of a piano seems to leak from its position on the balcony of a busy mall.

No matter what alteration Saunders makes to her collected furniture objects, they are always rendered unusable, with cushions ballooned to an abnormal proportion or legs leaning to an unnaturally slanted angle. Several of her works were included in the recent [Hang-Up Collections Exhibition](#) at [Hang-Up Gallery](#) in London alongside works by Banksy, David Shrigley, Bonnie and Clyde, and several others. You can see more of Saunders' sculptural works on her [website](#).















# Karin van der Molen

Site-specific installation artist [Karin van der Molen](#) creates connections between the natural and man-made through chair-based works that flow from the windows of aging villas. In her 2015 piece [Flux](#) the Dutch artist created one of her installations at the Le Rayolet in the botanical garden [Domaine du Rayol](#). The wooden chairs meld into a stream of organized logs that connect the work to the surrounding gardens. The piece seems to go from solid to fluid, forming a bridge that she explains “makes us aware of the cross-over between culture and nature.” Molen produces a similar effect in [A Wave of Nostalgia](#) which she installed at the [Museum Lolland-Falster](#) in Pederstrup, Denmark in 2014. You can view a wider range of her installations on her [website](#). (via [WOMENSART](#))

[http://karinvandermolen.nl/?page\\_id=1171](http://karinvandermolen.nl/?page_id=1171)

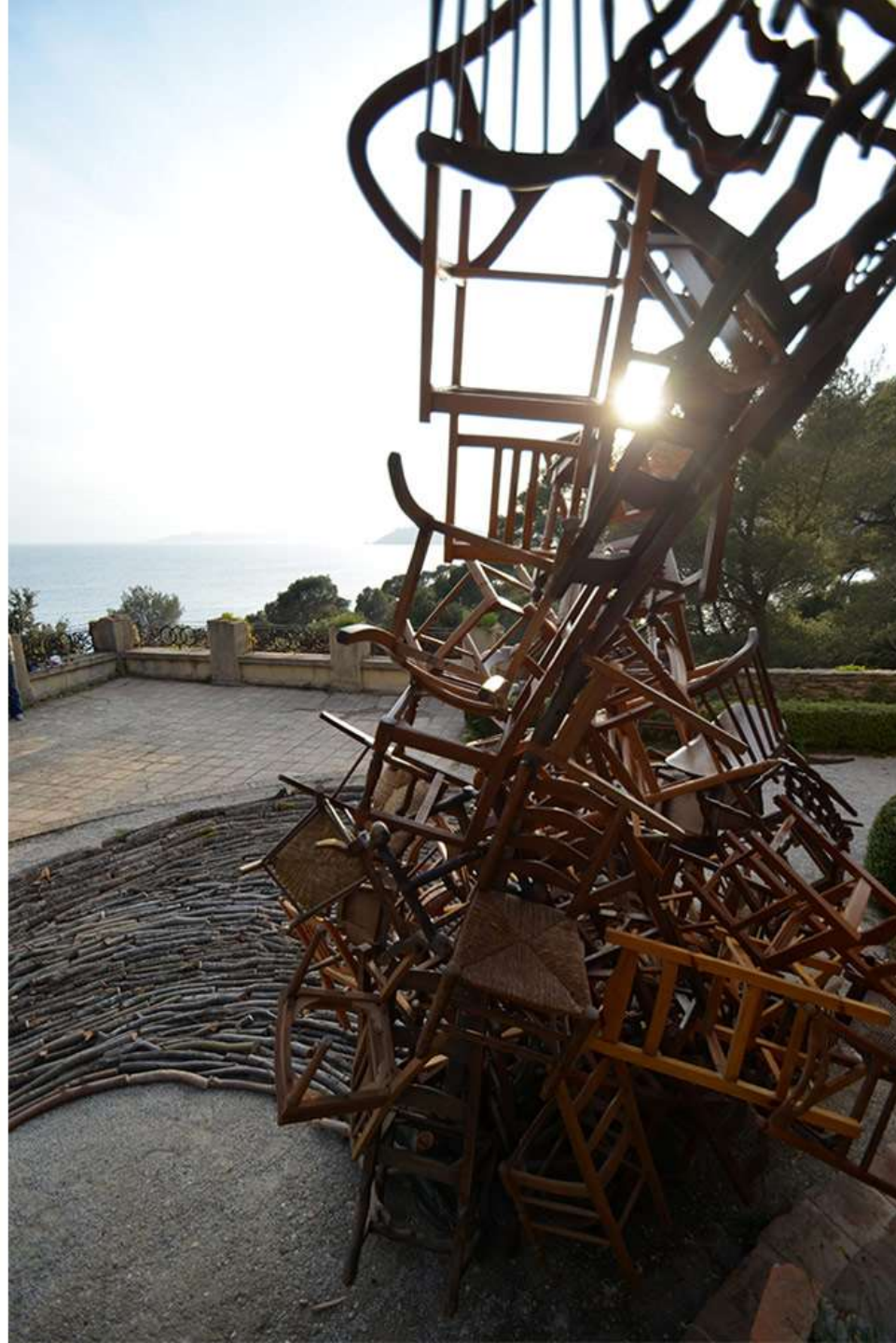
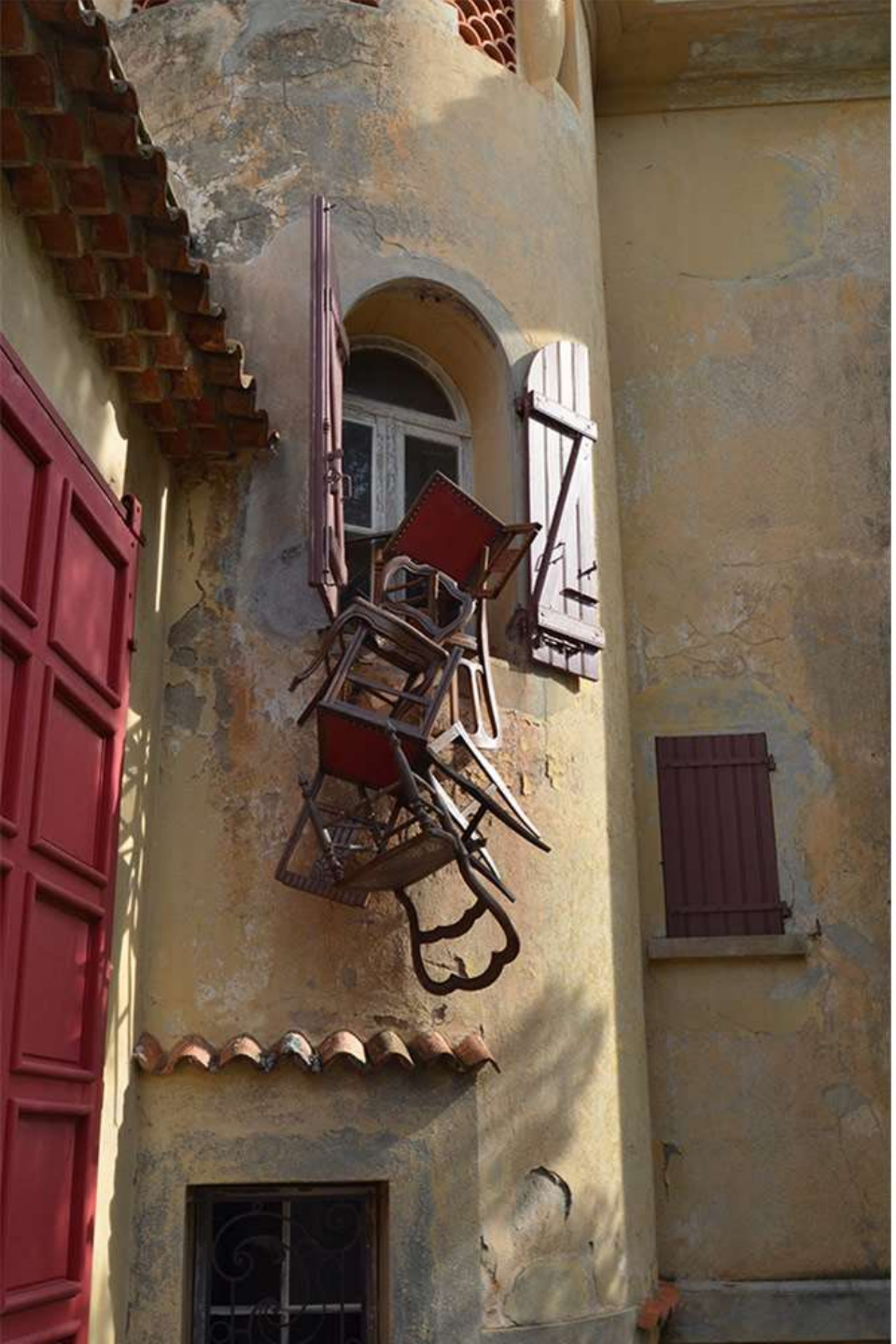




















# Damien Ludi and Colin Peillex

Two longtime porch activities are now combined into one simple contraption thanks to designers Damien Ludi and Colin Peillex, creators of the *Rocking Knit*. The wooden rocking chair is rigged to knit as you sway back and forth, producing a cap from minimal energy output. The invention was produced as a part of [Ecole cantonale d'art de Lausanne's Low-Tech Factory](#), a workshop that encourages students from the industrial design program to invent simple machines that at once create an experience and a material good. Ludi and Peillex premiered their contraption at [Designer's Saturday](#) in Langenthal, Switzerland and produced a video that demonstrates their invention below. (via [My Modern Met](#))

<https://archive.curbed.com/2016/4/4/11362458/rocking-knit-chair-damien-ludi-colin-peillex>





# Grant Wilkinson and Teresa Rivera

If home is a feeling, then the wriggling furniture collection by husband-and-wife [Grant Wilkinson and Teresa Rivera](#) are apt representatives of our collective anxieties. The design duo opts for squiggles rather than clean, straight lines in their collection of wooden pieces—the internet dubbed them “[nervous chairs](#)”—that appear to quake with uneasiness. Curved legs and arms offer base structure and coiled rungs back support in the ever-growing line of products by their eponymous brand, which is known for putting updated spins on classic pieces. Rivera shares:

Our tastes can be pretty contemporary but we’re fascinated by traditional techniques. We try to incorporate them in each piece: for the Windsor, it’s steam-bending the backrest. For La Silla, we weave the caned seats by hand. For our latest piece, the Welsh Stick Chairs, we included hand-carved barley twists.

<https://www.themodernhouse.com/journal/modern-pioneers-wilkinson-rivera/>







# Chop Value

[ChopValue](#) to chronicle the entire production process, which starts with collecting the free, raw material from about 300 restaurants around the British Columbian city. When they're brought back to the plant, the utensils are sorted, coated in a water-based resin, and baked in a 200-degree oven for five hours to kill all germs. They're then broken down and loaded into a massive hydraulic machine that compresses the individual sticks into a composite board, which finally is sanded and fashioned into countertops, tiles, and dominos, among a variety of other products. Since its inception, the company has saved nearly 33 million pairs of chopsticks from entering a landfill.

- <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2021/03/chopsticks-recycle-chopvalue/>



# Assignment Suggestions...

- Create an artwork inspired by your favorite chair
- Draw up some crazy chair designs.
- Take close up photographs of chair details and blow them up.
- Alter a chair