

**UNITY BY DESIGN:
MIDCENTURY MODERNISM AT WINTERTHUR**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in American Material Culture

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ABSTRACT

Traditional Americana and midcentury modern furniture have been framed as disparate entities through advertisements, museum collections, scholarship and in the collective understanding of American furniture. This thesis uses a collection of over 170 pieces of midcentury modern furniture purchased by the Winterthur Museum, Library and Gardens in the mid-twentieth century to explore this perceived juxtaposition. Winterthur as an institution was founded to elevate early American decorative arts. The choice by the museum founder Henry Francis du Pont to use midcentury modern furniture for office spaces and public facing spaces as the museum expanded are used as a case study to explore the legacy of Henry Francis du Pont, his creation of Winterthur Museum, and midcentury modernism as an aesthetic movement. To understand why midcentury modernism was chosen to furnish the professional settings at Winterthur the paper analyzes how this design mode became a pervasive aesthetic. Its innovative design and promotional efforts by companies who produced it inspired major American museums to employ midcentury in their projects in an attempt to promote “good taste.” Close analysis of midcentury modern furniture’s design, construction and materiality suggests that this aesthetic movement should not be seen as inherently separate from pre-industrial early American furniture. Midcentury modernism belongs at Winterthur and it was, and remains, an important tool to encourage cross-generational unity in American design.

INTRODUCTION

Winterthur has a secret. Scattered throughout the museum's sprawling campus is a midcentury modern furniture collection.¹ These credenzas, tables, chairs and other furnishings shape the material experience of those who visit and work at Winterthur. Despite their prevalence in professional spaces like offices and libraries, these objects were barely researched and un-catalogued prior to this project. This lack of scholarship seems to be at odds with an institution renowned for the study of American furniture and decorative arts. This thesis will give credence to this collection and explore the perceived juxtaposition of midcentury modernism at an institution rooted in traditional Americana.

Execution of this thesis project occurred in phases and is composed of five major components. The following components are described in the order in which they were executed. The first phase consisted of cataloguing the majority of the midcentury modern objects throughout Winterthur's campus.² The catalogue currently contains

¹ Winterthur refers to the Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library. It is a historic house museum situated on almost 1,000 acres near Brandywine Creek in northern Delaware. More on Winterthur can be found in this thesis and on the museum's website: <https://www.winterthur.org/>

² There are a multitude of logistical complications that make creating a complete catalogue of midcentury modern furniture at Winterthur impossible. One is the definition of midcentury modernism itself. For this catalogue, I attempted to only record objects produced before 1970 that were produced by Knoll or Herman Miller. However, both Knoll and Herman Miller continue to produce forms that express a midcentury modern aesthetic. Winterthur purchased furniture from Knoll into the 1980s. Some scholars identify these furnishings as midcentury modern while others do

173 midcentury modern furnishings. The size of this catalogue suggests the pervasive impact that midcentury modernism had and continues to have at Winterthur.³ The catalogue is captured in modified form, formatted to the thesis template in the first appendix. The full midcentury modern catalogue that includes images of each object can be found in digital and print format through the Winterthur museum library. Please see the first appendix for more information.

The second component is the critical analysis of this collection via a written thesis paper that follows this introduction. This paper explores the concept of design and how it is similar to and dissimilar from traditional craftsmanship.⁴ Using this analysis the paper will then explore how midcentury modern designers revolutionized the American office to understand why Henry Francis du Pont approved of the aesthetic for use at his museum dedicated to early Americana.⁵ The paper analyzes

not. Furthermore, regardless of production date, these objects are still in use. That means they continue to move around the campus. For this reason, even after completing cataloguing in one area of the campus, it is likely that the objects will move. In this way it can be understood as a living collection. More on the cataloguing process can be found in the first appendix.

³ For a critical analysis of the process of cataloguing and exhibiting a collection of midcentury modern furniture refer to the first appendix titled, “Winterthur’s Midcentury Modern Furniture Catalogue.”

⁴ See appendix for detailed explanation of how to access the catalogue.

⁵ Much has been written, said, criticized, copied, analyzed and reproduced in the literature on midcentury modernism. The task of this paper is to comprehend how midcentury modernism operated at Winterthur. In order to remain focused, the paper will therefore focus on objects produced by Herman Miller and Knoll and Associates as almost all of the furniture at Winterthur was produced by one of these manufacturers. Furthermore, my project focuses specifically on this furniture’s materiality and construction.

the role of the museum in developing public taste through both midcentury modern objects and early Americana. Through close investigation of midcentury modernism as a movement and the materiality of midcentury modern objects the paper ultimately argues that there is a unity between early American and midcentury modern furniture.

The third component is Winterthur's first gallery exhibition focused on midcentury modern content titled *Unity by Design: Midcentury Modernism at Winterthur*. The exhibition expands the narrative used to understand Winterthur as an institution and examines how American design operates in a cross-generational context. The exhibition is captured in appendix three in the form of a document version of the gallery label copy and appendix four in the form of a schematic drawing of the gallery layout.

The fourth component is an acquisition proposal for a selection of objects in Winterthur's midcentury modern furniture collection. As Winterthur continues to expand its institutional mission and outreach it is important to preserve the institution's material legacy. The midcentury modern furniture housed on Winterthur's campus is a significant part of the Winterthur story and the story of American design. The second appendix titled, "Midcentury Modern Acquisition Proposal," functions as a guiding document advocating for accessioning a meaningful group of midcentury furniture into the Winterthur museum collection.

The fifth component is a digital exhibition that will allow for interested scholars to continue the scholarship and analysis of Winterthur's collection of midcentury modern furnishings. This component will exist on Winterthur's website and be archived through Winterthur's library collection beginning in the Fall of 2019.

Chapter 1

MIDCENTURY MODERNISM AS A STYLE

On October 30, 1951 Mr. Henry Francis du Pont presented his unparalleled collection of American decorative arts to a limited public in the form of a museum for the first time.⁶ The institution was then known as the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, furthering its identity as directly connected to its founder. Henry Francis created the collection with the intention of celebrating and cultivating appreciation for American decorative arts. When the museum opened to the public a date range of 1640 – 1860 was set to dictate the acceptable time for any object that could be acquired into the collection. Today, the institution, known as Winterthur Museum, Garden, and Library, has changed substantially, but its central assets still include a house museum composed of approximately 195 rooms, galleries, and storage spaces that house over 90,000 early American museum objects.

Interpreting Henry Francis du Pont from the house museum alone could suggest that he was fixated on historicism and enmeshed solely in a colonial revival

⁶ Henry Francis du Pont (May 27, 1880 – April 11, 1969) was the only son of Henry Algernon and Pauline du Pont. A member of the prominent industrialist du Pont family, he grew to be a renaissance man and in his words, "always loved everything." More on Henry Francis can be found at <http://www.winterthur.org/visit/about-winterthur/about-h-f-du-pont/> And in his daughters autobiography. Ruth Lord, *Henry F. Du Pont and Winterthur: A Daughter's Portrait* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998)

aesthetic.⁷ Henry Francis was a passionate advocate for distinctly American decorative arts at a time when most other collectors in the United States were focused on eighteenth-century English and French antiques.⁸ He described Winterthur as “a house which records the decorative history of our country.”⁹ The collection was created with the intention of providing insight into the lives of early Americans. Today, the house is also a showcase of American interior design, carefully crafted by the founder and his advisors. From 1954 until 1966 Henry Francis du Pont wrote precise instructions to the executors of Winterthur for how his museum should be maintained once he passed away. The document provides a fascinating insight into Henry Francis’ vision for Winterthur. In the letters Henry Francis states:

As it is my desire to keep the building in such a way that it will retain its charm, nothing shall be roped off. The reason for this is that the interest of the museum, quite aside from its furniture, beauty of colors, and upholsteries, lies in the infinite details, such as the different hooks which hold the tongs at various fireplaces, the moldings of picture frames and the many different ornaments and accessories.¹⁰

Henry Francis du Pont was creating complete interiors that functioned as an immersive historical and aesthetic experience. He wanted his house collection to

⁷ Donald L. Fennimore, eds. *Eye for Excellence: Masterworks from Winterthur* (Winterthur, DE: The Museum, 1994), 7.

⁸ More on the emergence and scope of American antique collectors can be found in. Briann G. Greenfield, *Out of the Attic: Inventing Antiques in Twentieth-Century New England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009)

⁹ Letter, H.F. du Pont to Miss Eunice Chambers, Hartsville, S.C., February 3, 1930, Du Pont correspondence, Registration Division, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁰ Henry Francis du Pont to the executors, 1951 – 1965, Registration Division, Winterthur. 1.

remain in a domestic context. The authenticity of objects, as well as their color, line, and appropriateness, were all considered as Henry Francis created the interior arrangements for his museum. The house was not just an interpretation of a historic period it was an expression of American interior design.

With his museum, Henry Francis du Pont shared an aesthetic vision that was rooted in the interpretation of historical artifacts. But he also created a professional culture and community founded with the intention of expanding a collective understanding of material culture. He had a broad vision for what Winterthur could be that expanded beyond the objects that comprise his museum's collection. It was through that expansive vision that midcentury modernism came to Winterthur.

It is impossible to call Henry Francis du Pont a midcentury modernist writ large. But it is important to honor his legacy as a cultural influencer who borrowed from an array of design aesthetics. Henry Francis du Pont was in no way a cloistered historian. He was a renaissance man who was friends with modernist icons such as Andrew Wyeth and Albert C. Barnes.¹¹ He was also on the board of the Whitney Museum of American Art.¹² In 1966 it is likely that he attended the opening of the Whitney and would have wandered the galleries in Marcel Breuer's modernist

¹¹ Dr. & Mrs. Albert Barnes were invited to and visited Winterthur multiple times. For more information see folder 69HF4, HF 630 in the Winterthur Archives; H.F. wrote various correspondence to Andrew Wyeth see folder 69HF3, HF 541 in the Winterthur archives for more.

¹² Multiple records in the Winterthur Archives confirm H.F. was on the board at the Whitney including meeting minutes and donation records. For more information see 69HF, HF 616 in the Winterthur Archives.

marvel.¹³ If he flew into New York he would have walked through Eero Saarinen's TWA Flight Center which finished construction in 1962. In a more personal fashion, Henry Francis supported modernism: on April 4, 1956, the du Ponts bought a modernist Danish silver candlestick as a gift for close friend Miss Suzan Brand. Despite his interest in early Americana, modernism and midcentury material culture were a part of his lived experience as a twentieth-century, cultured man of the world.¹⁴

Documentation of his role in selecting midcentury modern furnishings also makes clear that he endorsed the aesthetic. There is no singular point in which Winterthur began to adopt a midcentury modern aesthetic for its professional spaces. Rather, modernism has been employed by this institution, in varying degrees, since the museum was opened to the public in 1951. Furthermore, the aesthetic has been consistently reaffirmed in at least three distinct stages, the furnishing of the South Wing in 1957, the building of the Visitor Center completed in 1960, and with the opening of the Crowninshield building in 1969. This continued use of a modernist aesthetic for large scale architectural projects indicates an institutional approval of midcentury modern design.

Each of these modernist spaces incorporated midcentury modern furnishings that Henry Francis approved. On October 31, 1961 a Winterthur employee sent a letter to building architect Mr. Homsey stating: ¹⁵

¹³ H.F. has an invitation and notes from the opening of Breuer building. It is likely he attended. For more information see 69HF, HF 616 in the Winterthur Archives.

¹⁴ H., Nils, "Receipt to Henry F. Du Pont for 1 6 arm candlestick, No. 21287," April 13, 1958, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁵ Homsey Architects is an architecture firm founded in Wilmington, Delaware in 1935. The firm has had a long relationship with Winterthur and would be selected for

Dear Mr. Homsey: The sample of tables, one round and one square, and a chair arrived today. Mr. du Pont and everyone else is very pleased with the table design for the pavilion, but the tops are a little too stark in their whiteness. Upon comparison they are whiter than the desk tops of the Knoll furniture we bought for the new wing. Do you think there is any possibility of getting another shade of whiteness?¹⁶

The letter above proves that Henry Francis saw the midcentury modern furniture being used in his museum and that he approved of these furnishings. It is also evident that he employed his renowned eye for color and design in the selection of these midcentury modern furnishings. He invested time and interest in the aesthetics of Winterthur as it emerged as a leading American cultural institution and he supported using midcentury modern furniture in these projects.

When it came to furniture, the world was Henry Francis' oyster. He had the resources to purchase whatever style of furniture he preferred for the functional spaces at his museum. As a collector, he had a team of dealers scouring the country to find him the finest examples of early American decorative arts. The approximately 175 room installations that compose the Winterthur house are most similar to period rooms.¹⁷ Using the interior spaces at Winterthur, Henry Francis du Pont and his team

the construction of a Visitor's Pavilion in 1960. More on the firm can be found throughout Maggie Lidz book on du Pont properties. Maggie Lidz, *Houses and Gardens of the Du Ponts in the Brandywine Valley, 1900-1951* (New York: Acanthus Press, 2009)

¹⁶ This sentiment was expressed in a letter. (W.A. Adams, "Winterthur Museum to Mr. Samuel E. Homsey," October 31, 1960.) This letter along with other correspondence regarding the furnishing of the Visitor's Pavilion can be found in WC 603 J5D, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁷ More on period rooms and their development in American cultural institutions can be found in Neil Harris "Period Rooms and the American Art Museum," *Winterthur Portfolio* 46, no. 2/3, (Summer/Autumn 2012) 117-38.

painstakingly tried to depict the material lives of colonial Americans through the selection and display of antiques. There are hundreds of letters between Henry Francis and his curatorial staff that thoroughly debate object selections for the last twelve period rooms he developed for the South Wing.¹⁸ His attention to detail and his persistence were some of the attributes that made him such a renowned collector. Through his collecting efforts he developed Winterthur's reputation as a safe-haven for early Americana.¹⁹

But he did not select an early American aesthetic for functional space. This was not due to a lack of available material that mimicked the early American style. In the 1960s there were dozens of companies making reproduction furniture modeled after American antiques. Companies like Kaplan Furniture Co., Ethan Allen, and Baker were highly successful at manufacturing and marketing early American style furnishings.²⁰ There was no shortage of new or used furnishings in traditional styles available to consumers at all economic levels.

Henry Francis du Pont, like others in the marketplace for furniture, faced aesthetic choices for how he wanted to design the interior professional spaces at his museum. And according to period publications this choice in interior aesthetic would

¹⁸ This correspondence can be found in WC 606 04 WC 3, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁹ Numerous books on the collections at Winterthur have been written and are cited throughout this paper. More on Winterthur as an institution and how it operated can be found in Jennifer Nicole Lindner, "Food and dining at Winterthur: the Personal Passions and Public Performances of Henry Francis du Pont," (Master's Thesis, University of Delaware, 2001.)

²⁰ Erica Lome. "Heirlooms of Tomorrow: Crafting and Consuming Colonial Reproduction Furniture, 1890-1945," (PhD diss., University of Delaware, forthcoming 2020.)

reflect something about the character of his museum. Mid-twentieth century decorating magazines presented consumers with different aesthetic options. These publications suggested that one could evoke differing personas by choosing between “classic” or a “modern” aesthetic. A trade catalogue from Firth Carpet Company titled “How to decorate with confidence” informs women that they can choose between these options of tradition or modernity.²¹ The first section asks consumers, “Are you in the mood for modern?” while the fourth poses the question, “Do you long for the gracious living of yesteryear?” In the modern section the author instructs, “You should be sure of yourself in undertaking Modern decoration... not afraid to try something different... and have more than your fair share of imagination and instinct for drama.”²² The section goes on to explain how muted colors should be selected for upholstery if one is prone to contrast in their decorative scheme. In the Classic section the author states:

Do you look with longing upon the gracious pattern of your ancestors and wish to emulate their cultivated taste in your personal setting? If so you belong in that decorative world of perpetual elegance wherein tradition and enduring formality of 18th century decoration sets the stage.²³

The article goes on to explain how important a rug in the dining room is and how a deep rose with 100% wool face will show all guests that you are a perfectionist. These articles spend very little time discussing the merits of the products they are selling.

²¹ Firth Carpet Company, *How to Decorate with Confidence* (New York: Firth Carpet Co, 1956.)

²² Firth Carpet Company, 4.

²³ Firth Carpet Company, 7.

The focus is on how their products can reflect the character of the consumer. If one is modern, they might have an “instinct for drama.” If one is classic, one is likely to value being identified as a “perfectionist.” Furthermore, these excerpts pose the eighteenth century-inspired classic in opposition to the modern. Advertisers suggested that a choice needed to be made by consumers and it was a choice that would express something distinct about a consumer’s personal character.

The last section of the Firth catalogue is a guide to cultivating the right interior for the man in your life, and it suggests that women create special spaces for men. It states, “We think you’d make this room Modern, not only because men have taken so well to Modern but also because Modern furnishings abound in the ingenious space-saving, work-saving gadgets that most men like.”²⁴ Modern was a choice that consumers could make to cultivate a lived experience that was efficient and technologically savvy. As such, midcentury designers deemed it the ideal selection for men because it reflected efficiency.

It is likely that Henry Francis du Pont had cultivated a more refined sense of aesthetics and design than the target demographic for the Firth Carpet Catalogue. As is mentioned above, he was a highly cultured man who had wide array of connections and was an influencer at various cultural institutions. Nonetheless, he was a man in the mid-twentieth century and therefore would have been aware of and subject to the connotations and character reflections of his interior aesthetic choices.

An article published on October 9, 1960 titled “Modern or traditional?” by Raymond Toucher from *Today’s Living* opened by stating that “you needn’t make a

²⁴ Firth Carpet Company, 32.

choice between two but should tailor your decorating to suit your needs.”²⁵ The author presents the dilemma of choosing to decorate a home interior with modern or traditional furnishings as a matter of personal crisis. He goes on to cite examples of interiors he designed that integrated both aesthetics depending on the needs of the space. Toucher states, “An interior may be of a definite period or character – French, English, early American, contemporary – and still achieve this blending by a subtle and understanding combination of styles and designs.”²⁶ The article highlights the perceived juxtaposition between early Americana and modernism. Toucher’s article is a clear attempt to address concerns about choosing between the two. And while the author argues that consumers do not need to make a choice, at Winterthur it is clear that one was made. While the house displays an early American aesthetic, the professional spaces and those created to foster public access to the museum express a midcentury modern aesthetic. There is a distinct visual boundary with almost no blending between the two approaches to furnishing.

Given his passionate advocacy for the advancement and preservation of early Americana, why would Henry Francis du Pont create functional offices spaces that pose a decorative argument contrary to the one he so carefully cultivated in his home

²⁵ Raymond Toucher was fairly well-known New York decorator who wrote for a variety of publications including *Life Magazine*. (Raymond Toucher, “Today Designers have a Different Aim,” *Life Magazine*, October 14, 1957.); Raymond Toucher, “Modern or Traditional?” *Today’s Living the Herald Tribune Magazine*, October 9, 1960. 30.

²⁶ Raymond Toucher, 31.

turned museum?²⁷ To answer that question, we need to build a better understanding of the midcentury modern aesthetic, and how Henry Francis du Pont envisioned Winterthur as an institution that was both designed and crafted.

²⁷ The phrase, “decorating argument,” is used repeatedly throughout this paper. I am using this term to refer to an aesthetic that has an advocational quality. Others may say “decorative scheme” or “decorative approach” but I believe it is essential to emphasize the specific advocacy evoked by midcentury modernists and Henry Francis du Pont. I am also borrowing from midcentury modern scholars, such as MoMA Curator of Architecture and Design Juliet Kinchin, who in various exhibitions and publications such as her 2009 MoMA show titled *What is Good Design?* argues that midcentury modern designers presented consumers with an argument for better living. (Label text for *What is Good Design?*, May 6, 2009–January 10, 2011, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY.)

Chapter 2

DESIGNED AMERICANA

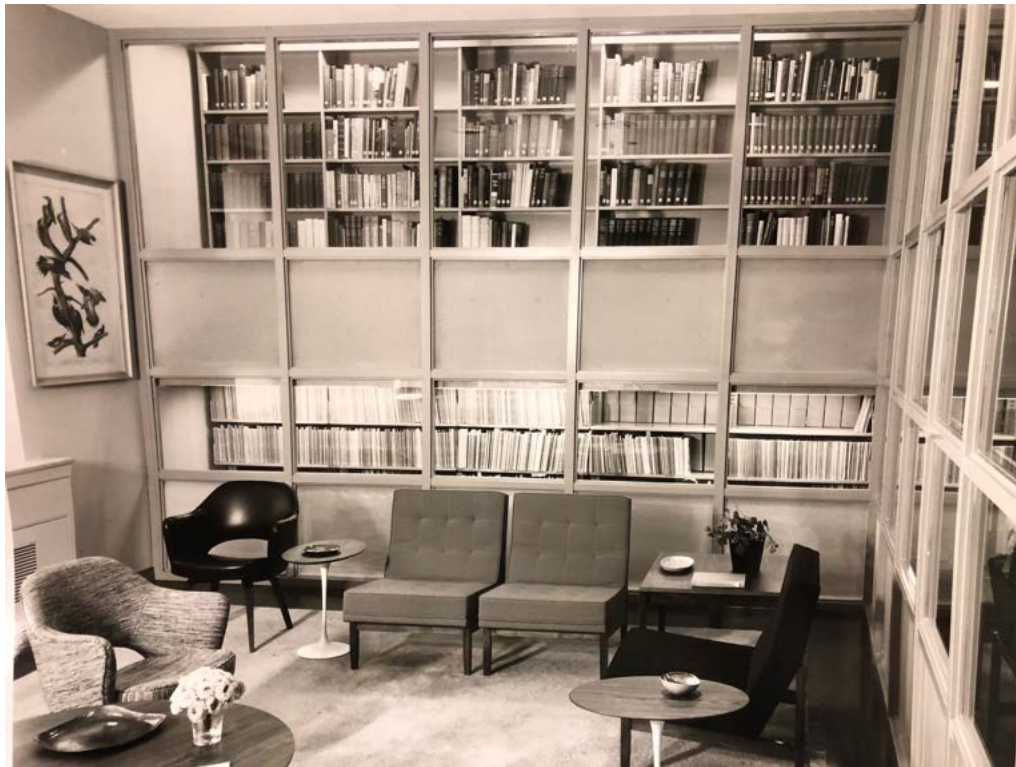


Figure 1. A staged photo of the Belknap Research Library in Winterthur's South Wing circa 1957. (Image courtesy of: Winterthur Library: Winterthur Archives.)

The original Research Library at Winterthur exemplifies the presence of midcentury design at Winterthur (Figure 1). This space in the South Wing (added 1957) is now remodeled and currently acts as the home of the Education and

Registrations departments. The image above depicts a carefully articulated display of midcentury modern objects. It is a designed space that operates as a visual expression of mid-twentieth century professional interiors.

Midcentury modernism is a term that applies to a particular style of mid-twentieth century, primarily American, made objects.²⁸ Early Americana is a term that applies to a range of pre-industrial objects that could have been in use in early America. Unlike Winterthur's collection of early Americana, which is typically

²⁸ Past scholarship has rereferred to midcentury modernism with a hyphen i.e. "mid-century modernism." Recent scholarship like Monica Obniski and Darrin Alfred's fantastic exhibition catalogue *Serious Play Design in Midcentury America* have made the decision to remove the hyphen when referring to midcentury modernism. Midcentury modernism is an evolving term. I have chosen to drop the hyphen in my scholarship because I believe midcentury does not act as a union of two separate words in contemporary scholarship. Rather, with the rise of midcentury modernism's popularity it has become nearly ubiquitous and therefore the style is best referred to as midcentury modernism. Monica Obniski and Darrin Alfred, *Serious Play: Design in Midcentury America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018). The term midcentury modernism is employed frequently and remains fairly present in the pop-cultural vernacular today. However, it has not always been directly affiliated with the design movement that will be discussed in this paper. Many scholars and journalists point to Cara Greenberg's 1984 publication titled, *Mid-Century Modern: Furniture of the 1950s* (Cara, Greenberg. *Mid-Century Modern Furniture of the 1950s*. (London: Thames et Hudson, 1984)) as the impetus for the upturn in the use of the term midcentury modern to describe post WWII American manufactured furniture. She argues that the movement only lasted from 1947 – 1957 due to the slew of cheap knock-off reproduction furniture that flooded the markets. She also credits herself with coining the phrase, "mid-century modern." However, the phrase "midcentury modern," was used in large publications far back as 1953 when it was published in a *New York Times* article titled, "Modern Furniture is Getting Fancier?" The article mentions that the term midcentury modern is used by furniture designer J. Stuart Clingman to describe his new line of home furnishings available at Wanamaker's department store. Betty Pepis, "Modern Furniture is Getting Fancier?" *The New York Times*, September 14, 1953.

framed as “crafted” or “constructed,” midcentury modern objects are almost always described using the term, “designed.” Design emphasizes the use of industry to mass produce goods, a central principle in the revolutionary ideology of midcentury modern designers. In *Art and the Machine* Sheldon Cheney and Martha Cheney define industrial design as an artist’s contribution to mass products in the three-dimensional field. They suggest that:

Industrial design is most characteristically evident in objects that are new in the machine age, or that have not hitherto been thought of appropriate subjects for the artists attention. But the prevailing principle that the mechanical facts of construction and of use are the basis for the appearance values is rapidly being adopted for commodities of all kinds as mass produced by factory machines. Even the former “decorative arts” industries, notably furniture making and interior decoration, are being submitted progressively to the basic requirement that design is not applied but brought out.²⁹

In the twentieth century new technology fostered a new set of “appearance values” or aesthetic tastes that resulted in new forms. But this cycle of design fostering new forms was inherent in the decorative arts long before the machine age.

In discussions that emphasize design and midcentury modern objects, authors tend to shape their analysis around broad historical, biographical, and cultural trends. This results in a canon of modern scholarship that interprets midcentury modern objects from a macro perspective. This research frames narratives of midcentury modern objects as an illustration of broader sociological shifts that enabled a specific designer such as Charles Eames to make sweeping aesthetic change. Midcentury

²⁹ Sheldon Cheney and Martha Smathers Candler Cheney, *Art and the Machine: An Account of Industrial Design in 20th-Century America* (New York: Acanthus Press, 1992), 4.

modern scholarship often focuses heavily on the designer or maker's autobiographical narrative rather than the objects themselves.

In *Objects of Desire* Adrian Forty states, "The emphasis on the person of the designer to the exclusion of all other considerations has been particularly marked in the way that manufactured goods have been displayed in museums and exhibitions."³⁰ Forty's argument is centered around the premise that label text often includes the name of the designer, the name of the manufacturer, the date of the design, and the name of the present owner of this information. No further information on the object, such as the original price or the market these objects were intended for, is included in the labeling of these objects. Concentration on the designer in label text could lead visitors to conclude that the designed object was a direct expression of the designer's creativity. Forty argues that this is not the case, that designed objects also express embodied ideas and material constraints over which designers have no control.³¹

My scholarship moves away from the designer-centric understanding of midcentury modern objects and focuses instead on the materiality of specific objects. Rather than focusing on designers' biographies, this project is rooted in careful analysis and interpretation of objects using the close-looking analytical skills I developed as a Winterthur student.³² This unique lens allows us to see midcentury modern objects as more than simple byproducts of individual design. By focusing on

³⁰ Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 239.

³¹ Forty, 240.

³² The Winterthur Museum (founded 1951) and the Winterthur Program in Early American Material Culture (founded 1952) are renowned for the study of objects materiality and construction.

the materiality and the material culture of these objects we can appreciate them as crafted productions. By shifting the primary source material from documents alone to the chairs, desks, and tables in Winterthur's collections, a new understanding of the technical and material qualities that brought midcentury objects into existence can be brought to light.

The classification of midcentury modern objects as designed is one of the most persistent ways that midcentury American-made objects are connected to their industrial production and therefore removed from the field of traditional Americana. Our contemporary conception of "Americana" as applied to decorative arts is rooted in traditional framing of early American culture by institutions and scholars as being defined by the preindustrial past.

Looking at Samuel Johnson's definition of design and craft from the early 1700s we can garner a better understanding of the connotations that have evolved surrounding the terms.³³ Johnson's dictionary defines design as, "1. An intention; a purpose. 2. A scheme; a plan of action. 3. A scheme formed to the detriment of another. 4. The idea which an artist endeavors to execute or express." In comparison, Johnson defines craft as "1. Manual art; trade 2. Fraud; cunning; artifice. 3. Small sailing vessels." The term craft implies the making of an object as a primary definition while design is defined by an idea or conception. The removal of making from the very definition of design separates it from the object's materiality. Broadly

³³ Johnson Samuel, *A Dictionary of the English Language: In Which the Words Are Deduced from Their Originals and Illustrated with Their Different Significations by Examples from the Best Writers: To Which Are Prefixed, a History of the Language, and an English Grammar* (London: Printed by W. Strahan, for J. and P. Knapton; T. and T. Longman; C. Hitch and L. Hawes; A. Millar; and R. and J. Dodsley, 1755.)

understood, design can be framed as an idea and craft as an action. But craft and design are inherently connected concepts. That is to say, craft cannot exist without design and the aim of design is almost always craft. By unifying our conceptions of craft and design we can better understand the connection between early Americana and midcentury modernism in the context of Winterthur's collections.

Industrially produced objects are not fundamentally separate from handcrafted production. The underlying supposition that they are leads to a false perception that these objects are of inferior quality due to their mass-production. In *Art and the Machine*, the Cheneys argue instead,

Machine production depends for its integrity and distinction upon the artist's acceptance of the machine as tool, and upon a greatly widened range of materials particularly adapted to mechanical manipulation and duplication. A certain honesty to approach and a devotion to functional expression are common to both handicraftsman and workers for the machine.³⁴

Both craftsmanship and industrial production demand an appreciation of material in the development and construction of objects. Midcentury modern objects are certainly designed. However, the use of "design" should be suspended from any value judgement that these objects are less impressive, valid, or important than those made by hand and handtools alone in early America. Design should not separate midcentury modern objects from early American objects. It was not a new concept or action that emerged in post-industrial society. Design has been inherent in the making process for as long as craftspeople have been making things.

³⁴ Cheney, 120.

Designers played an integral role in the construction and production of early American furniture. Within the Winterthur house museum thousands of objects are attributed to a particular cabinetmaker.³⁵ These objects are often further defined by a particular style or design movement that corresponds to their formal qualities. Wandering through the house you can hear guides and scholars identifying Queen Anne style chairs or Phyfe tables. This is not a practice that is exclusive to Winterthur. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, entire period rooms such as the Richmond Room, renowned for its display of New York Phyfe furniture, are maintained with the intention of showcasing particular design aesthetic. These early American objects were not only constructed, they were designed.

The most infamous designer in the world of early Americana can be referenced with the ubiquitous descriptor “Chippendale.” Chippendale frequently refers to objects designed or modeled after forms depicted in *The Gentleman & Cabinet-Maker's Director*. The importance of Chippendale’s work as a designer was recently honored at the Metropolitan Museum of Art with their exhibition *Chippendale’s Director: The Designs and Legacy of a Furniture Maker*.³⁶ This exhibition demonstrates how the publication of his cabinetmaking guide propelled Chippendale from near obscurity to

³⁵ Examples of this type of scholarship can be seen in one of Winterthur’s earliest and most important publications *American Furniture, the Federal Period, in the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum* by Charles Montgomery. Charles Franklin, Montgomery, *American Furniture, the Federal Period, in the Henry Francis Du Pont Winterthur Museum* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 1966.). In this important text Montgomery defines the federal style of American furniture primarily around specific cabinetmakers and regional attributions.

³⁶ Museum Gallery, *Chippendale’s Director: The Designs and Legacy of a Furniture Maker, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, The Met Fifth Avenue, Galleries 751–752, May 14, 2018–January 27, 2019.

the epitome of high-taste in the English luxury market. The impact of his designs is so pervasive that the cultural legacy of his mid-Georgian designs endures today.³⁷ This landmark exhibition that acts as a celebration of the 300th anniversary of Chippendale's birth emphasizes the concept of design in early Americana objects.

Upon entering the gallery of the Met exhibition, visitors are presented with a group of side chairs that represent the span of his cultural legacy. These include a rococo chair produced around 1769 by Philadelphia cabinetmaker Benjamin Randolph, a 1772 chair that is one of the few that can be firmly attributed to Chippendale's workshop, and a molded plywood chair designed by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown produced by Knoll in circa 1980. The plywood adaptation of Chippendale's signature form is as a caricature of what has become one of the most notorious forms in western Decorative Arts. Its stylized "ears", fret back, and tapered feet act as signaling design elements that incorporate the key elements of Chippendale design. The visual unison of these three Chippendale-style chairs at the entry of the exhibition emphasizes the role of design in Chippendale's historic notoriety. Arguably, the most iconic figure in popular conceptions of early American furniture is not renowned for his craftsmanship. He is notorious for his designs.

Midcentury modern designers used different materials and created different forms for furniture made in Early America. There is no mahogany present in Winterthur's midcentury modern collection. There are no fret backs or ball and claw feet like we see in Chippendale furniture. These objects embody a shift in the

³⁷ Laurence Scherer, "'Chippendale's Director' Review: Furnishing His Place in Design History," *Wall Street Journal*, September 5, 2018.

manufacturing process toward mass produced goods. But these are still crafted products that borrow signifiers from the early American furniture tradition.

In *Designing for Democracy* Judith Barter argues that eighteenth and nineteenth-century antiquarians valued art objects for their intrinsic worth and historical associations such as their relationship to classical sources.³⁸ Many modernist designers eschewed historicism and decoration and aimed to achieve in their work a complete integration of art, science, and technology. Midcentury modernists projected an air of the “new” in a way that separated perceptions of their aesthetic from traditional Americana. Yet, even though midcentury modern design employed new materials and new technology, their aesthetic was not entirely new. In fact, when we look closely at the objects themselves and how they were presented by midcentury modern designers and manufacturers, the ways in which they borrowed from early American aesthetic identity becomes transparent.

³⁸ Judith A. Barter, “Designing for Democracy: Modernism and Its Utopias.” *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 27, no. 2 (2001) 7-8.

Chapter 3

THE SAARINEN 72 CHAIR AND CRAFTED MIDCENTURY MODERNISM



Figure 2. A Saarinen 72 Executive Armless chair designed by Eero Saarinen and Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc. The chair is composed of black Naugahyde, fiberglass, plastic, plywood. (Image courtesy of: Elizabeth Humphrey and Aaron Morris)

Look in almost any office of an employee at Winterthur who has been at the institution for more than ten years and you are almost guaranteed to see a Saarinen 72

chair.³⁹ There are 67 chairs in Winterthur's collection that can be identified as Saarinen model 71 - 73 chairs, with the armless version known as the, Saarinen 72, being the most popular by far. These chairs were designed by Eero Saarinen and manufactured by Knoll and Associates.⁴⁰ The Saarinen 72 chair is composed of an upholstered fiberglass crest and upholstered fiberglass seat with four plywood or metal legs.⁴¹

³⁹ Finnish-American architect and designer, Eero Saarinen was the son of Eliel Saarinen and sculptor Loja Gesellius. Eero Saarinen is a major figure in modern design. He is best known for a number of modernist American landmarks, the notorious stainless-steel Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri (1963–65), TWA terminal building at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport (1956–62) and the Dulles international airport constructed in 1958. Like many modernist architects he employed his architectural aesthetic through furniture design and used the chair form as another medium to present his curvilinear organic structures. The above information and more on Saarinen can be found in Jayne Merkel and Eero Saarinen, *Eero Saarinen* (London: Phaidon Press, 2014); The continued existence of these chairs is a testament not only to their durability but also to their expression of an aesthetically interesting style that remains compelling to Winterthur staff 68 years after they were initially acquired. The fiberglass and plastic that was used to construct the frame of the chairs maintain almost perfect condition. The greatest condition degradation is seen in the decomposition of the latex foam upholstery employed on seat and back.

⁴⁰ What we think of as the Knoll furniture company was founded in New York in 1938 by Hans G. Knoll who, in 1943, hired the Cranbrook alum and close family friend of the Saarinens, the young architect Florence Schust. Florence Schust and later Florence Knoll quickly became a partner in the business. The Knolls were interested in developing new and modern products by working with well-known designers like Eero Saarinen who began working for Knoll in 1943. Early on, Knoll became associated with the best in style and durability, dominating the high-end of the midcentury modern furniture market. More background information on Knoll can be found in Earl Martin, Paul Makovsky, and Bard Graduate Center, *Decorative Arts, Design History, Material Culture, Knoll Textiles* (New Haven: Published for Bard Graduate Center by Yale University Press, 2011), 9.

⁴¹ Catalog, *Furniture Price List*, (New York: Knoll & Associates Inc, 1969.)

Eero Saarinen was on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1956. A profile of the architect stated his work had “a sense of spaciousness and orderliness, the complementing of existing structures, resistance to set a style, a fondness of expressive materials.”⁴² The Model 72 embodies this design spirit by displaying a curving back that mirrors the curve of the seat, creating a physical sense of harmony in the chair form itself. The deeply rounded crest of these chairs is able to seamlessly fold into the chair’s seat thanks to the pliability of the newly available molded fiberglass. The structural design of the chairs was rooted in both industrial materials and midcentury modern aesthetic. Although the Saarinen 72 chair is quintessentially midcentury modern in form, manufacturer Knoll borrowed from the early American furniture tradition in both the upholstery and naming of the chair.

Winterthur’s Model 72 chair collection showcases a range of textile upholstery from a wool nylon blended tweed to a full wool tweed to a synthetic leather called Naugahyde. There is even an example covered in woven polyurethane.⁴³ Textiles were crucial to Knoll’s interpretation of midcentury modern design. A 1956 catalogue for Knoll Office Planned Furniture states, “Knoll textiles are planned for specific roles to

⁴² “The Maturing Modern,” *Time Magazine*, July 2, 1956, 54.

⁴³ There is a large discrepancy in the latex foam upholstery’s degradation from the 72 chairs that are covered with woven fabrics and those that were covered with polyurethane. Joelle Wickens, Preventive Conservator at Winterthur, believes this discrepancy is due to the fact that the polyurethane upholstery is nearly airtight and therefore is more effective in preserving the foam. However, more study would need to be conducted to prove this hypothesis conclusively.

meet specific needs.”⁴⁴ Textiles were one of the ways that Knoll took a streamlined, industrialized aesthetic and made it feel personal, even handcrafted.

In 1958 Knoll introduced what they labeled “Knoll Nylon Homespun,” which was initially available in six colors.⁴⁵ The fabric was 100% spun nylon and could be finished with newly available Scotchgard for an additional .39 cents per yard.⁴⁶ This is likely the fabric that covers nearly 40 of Winterthur’s Saarinen 72 chairs.

The fabric was discovered and developed by Suzanne Huguenin, who was the head of Knoll Textiles beginning in 1955, and who continued to lead the division into the early 1960s.⁴⁷ As head of Knoll Textiles, she worked directly with mills to produce new fabrics that met the needs of Knoll’s client base. She discovered what became Knoll’s Homespun fabric while visiting the Moss Rose Manufacturing Company, a mill in Philadelphia.

One of their designers showed her an experimental sample woven with heavy nylon carpet yarn that had been developed by the DuPont chemical company.⁴⁸ In

⁴⁴ Catalog, *Furniture Price List*, (New York: Knoll and Associates Inc, September 1, 1956), 101.

⁴⁵ Susan Ward, “Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65,” in *Knoll Textiles* (New Haven: Published for Bard Graduate Center by Yale University Press, 2011), 167.

⁴⁶ Catalog, *Furniture Price List*, (New York: Knoll and Associates Inc, September 1, 1961), 34.

⁴⁷ Ward, “Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65,” 158.

⁴⁸ Ward, “Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65,” 167.; This is one of the instances that the DuPont chemical company collaborated with Knoll. More on these collaborations should be researched and studied. There is a file at the Knoll Archives in New York on the DuPont collaborations. The scope of this project did not allow for further investigation. It should also be noted that Henry

“Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65” Susan Ward notes, “The ‘homespun’ look of the fabric came from the yarn, which had a slub texture achieved by spinning new and waste nylon fibers together.”⁴⁹ It was the textured appearance that made the fabric look unique and evoked the notion of handcraft that may have in part led to the fabric’s branding as Homespun.

Though the fabric was relatively expensive due to the complex spinning process and the cost of newly developed dyes, it was a huge success, selling over 5,000 yards its first year.⁵⁰ It continued to be one of Knoll’s most popular fabrics well into the 1980s. Furthermore, the durable nature of “Knoll Nylon Homespun” made it one of the few upholstery fabrics from this period that survives in relatively large quantities to this day.

Marketing and the choice of specific words for products was integral to Knoll’s business model as they used print media to shape their brand and expand the reach of their products. The use of “Homespun” in the name of this fabric evokes a notion of handcrafted fabric that humanizes the industrially-produced furnishings that Knoll was selling in the 1960s.

In *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* Laurel Ulrich closely analyzes early American material culture to reveal how objects like textiles were made, used, sold and saved to establish personal and national

Francis du Pont was never affiliated directly with the DuPont chemical company in any professional capacity.

⁴⁹ Ward, “Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65,” 167.

⁵⁰

identities in America.⁵¹ She argues that the notion of “homespun” had a symbolic meaning that outweighed the physical act of textile production itself, stating:

For sentimentalists, spinning and weaving represented the centrality of home and family, for evolutionists the triumph of civilization over savagery, for craft revivalists the harmony of labor and art, for feminists women’s untapped productive power, and for antimodernists the virtues of a bygone age.⁵²

Spinning thread to make yarn was not solely concerned with the production of fabric. The act of handmaking textiles was a functional necessity of a historical era that became a cultivated quality in forming personal and collective identity. These processes assisted in constructing one sense of purpose and place in the collective community. Particularly in the American context, Ulrich argues that handcraft was not only what one did but it became a way to express who they were. To tap into this notion of handcraft in Americana and the collective American identity, Knoll labeled one of its most prolific textile lines, Homespun. This very fabric featured synthetic materials newly developed by DuPont Chemicals but instead of marketing material innovation, Knoll rooted the fabrics and their brand in the American craft tradition.

It would be a mistake to think that this branding and affiliation with traditional craft was purely a symbolic gesture only conducted through the use of cleverly worded labels and astute marketing teams. Knoll products also frequently featured handcrafted elements. To counter the inexpensive machine-woven upholsteries like “Prestini,” handwoven upholstery and drapery fabrics were offered by the Knoll Textile Division

⁵¹ Laurel Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001.)

⁵² Ulrich, 29.

from its beginning in 1947.⁵³ Little is known about Knoll's early exploration into handwovens, but ample research has been published regarding Knoll's continued application of handwoven fabrics.⁵⁴

In the late 1950s the wool industry in the US fell into decline.⁵⁵ At the time, Knoll faced an increased demand for sophisticated upholstery and turned to European mills and designers for new wool upholsteries. Textile designer Suzanne Huguenin introduced a group of handwoven upholsteries that were made by Paul Maute's mill in Germany. Maute had a relationship with Knoll because he had been weaving handwoven designs for Knoll Germany since at least 1950. He led a production handweaving factory and had his own wool carding, spinning, and dyeing operations on site.⁵⁶ The Maute handwovens became signature Knoll fabrics. They were available in a wide range of colors through the 1960s and 1970s. The fabric "Arno" was introduced in 1961 and featured a simple plain-weave fabric. Thin black warps were grouped in pairs and interacted with slightly irregular colored wefts to create a unique surface texture. The fabric was so successful Maute's factory was used to produce three more fabric lines including "Ebro" introduced in 1962, "Heather" introduced in

⁵³ Ward, "Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65," 122.

⁵⁴ Ward, "Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65," 122.; Ward notes that it is likely that the majority of the early handwovens designed for Knoll were woven by Gerda Nyberg, a skilled Swedish-born handweaver who worked from her home in Pontiac, Michigan, not far from Cranbrook. Gerda Nyberg also produced all of the handwoven fabric for Eero Saarinen's General Motors Technical Center. Ward, 123.

⁵⁵ Susan Ward, "The Design Promotion, and Production of Modern Textiles in the USA 1940-60," in *Knoll Textiles* (New Haven: Published for Bard Graduate Center by Yale University Press, 2011), 39.

⁵⁶ Ward, "Making Knoll Textiles: Integrated Fabrics for Modern Interiors, 1945-65," 159.

1964 and the most luxurious “Cato” introduced in 1961. Knoll used these high-end handwoven fabrics to cultivate new aesthetic possibilities and appeal to customer demands.

Every element of the Saarinen 72 chair from the textiles, to the curvilinear form to the chairs’ name, was constructed to connect with consumers’ desires and increase sales. Knoll introduced the 72 chair in 1948 as a smaller alternative to Saarinen’s widely popular Model 70 Womb Chair.⁵⁷ The bold and eccentric branding of a chair as a Womb Chair suggests that there was a substantial amount of value placed in a chair’s name at Knoll. The 72 chairs were initially referred to in Knoll advertisements as the “Saarinen Side Chair.” The use of the term “Side Chair” referenced a form that has existed in western furniture since at least the 17th century.

In his comprehensive text *American Seating Furniture, 1630-1730: An Interpretive Catalogue*, Benno Forman uses the term, “Side Chair,” in reference to a spectrum of chairs including those with caned, turned, leather, or joined elements. The most identifiable unifying element of all of the side chairs is the lack of arms. Even in his thorough examination of American seated furniture, Forman never defines side chair.⁵⁸ The earliest example he identifies is from 1660-1700 in Lancashire, England.⁵⁹ The term is used by Knoll as though it is a ubiquitous and clear reference to a form indicates that it was a widely used term within American furniture design.

⁵⁷ Brian Lutz, *Knoll: A Modernist Universe* (New York: Rizzoli, 2010), 128.

⁵⁸ Benno M. Forman, Robert Blair St. George, and Robert Trent, *American Seating Furniture, 1630-1730: An Interpretive Catalogue* (New York; London: W. W. Norton & Co, 1988), 396.

⁵⁹ Forman, 141.

With the initial conceptualization of the Saarinen 72 chair Knoll borrowed language and design elements from traditional American furniture. In a physical sense, the 72 chair was different from early American side chairs. It was constructed of fiberglass and upholstered with new synthetic material. But Knoll wanted the chair to fit in with existing furniture forms. The 72 was not the Womb Chair. It was intended for broader application and larger markets. The use of the term, “side chair” referenced a familiar domestic form with an understood function. By evoking conventional American furniture Knoll gave consumers clearer conceptual access points that fit Knoll’s commercial intentions for the 72 chair.

But these commercial intentions would quickly evolve. While Knoll introduced the 72 using terminology familiar to domestic settings, the biggest impact of the Saarinen 72 chair was its application and success in modern professional settings. Knoll continues to sell these chairs today but has chosen to label them as the Saarinen Executive Armless Chair.⁶⁰ This shift in identity points to the greatest impact of the Knoll aesthetic. The aesthetic borrowed from the domestic tradition but found its widest application in professional and public space. Saarinen chairs evolved to be specifically designed for use in the public, professional sphere.

The vast majority of seventeenth- through nineteenth-century furnishings used in Winterthur’s historic house are presented in domestic settings. Visitors walk through parlors, bedrooms, and living rooms to see an interpretation of how early Americana shaped lived experience in the domestic sphere. Midcentury modern

⁶⁰ “Saarinen Executive Armless Chair | Knoll,” Knoll, Inc., accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.knoll.com/product/saarinen-executive-armless-chair>.

objects dominated a different sphere. Midcentury modern design companies borrowed from identifying qualities of early Americana, handcraft, and references to domestic life to make their products relatable and accessible. But true commercial success of their products rested in the object's utility in professional and public spaces. If one was to construct a period room illuminating the impact of Knoll design, they would be best served using a modern professional setting such as a library or office. To fully understand the midcentury modern furniture at Winterthur we need to explore it's professional context.

Chapter 4

THE APPROPRIATE OFFICE



Figure 3. A photograph of an office in Winterthur's South Wing circa 1957. (Image courtesy of: Winterthur Library: Winterthur Archives.)

In May of 1956 the Eero Saarinen-designed General Motors Technical Center opened in Warren, Michigan.⁶¹ The 710- acre campus showcased Saarinen's design philosophy through architecture and furniture. The Knoll Planning Unit was selected by GM to furnish all of the interior spaces at their newly opened facility. The Saarinen

⁶¹ Lutz, 12.

72 chair was used throughout the sprawling campus. Leader of the Planning Unit Florence Knoll recalled the project as, “The first real event in using one of Eero’s designs in a big commercial establishment.”⁶² This important commission established Knoll as a national furniture manufacturer and design powerhouse. The precise number of 72 chairs that were ordered for this project is unknown. But the commission solidified the 72 chair as one of Knoll’s most popular forms.⁶³ Large-scale commissions that demanded hundreds and even thousands of chairs became the foundation of Knoll’s business model.⁶⁴ Through a slew of corporate commissions in the United States and abroad Knoll built their brand and spread their specific midcentury modern design philosophy.

Seventy-eight percent of the midcentury modern furniture that exists at Winterthur today can be attributed to what is now ubiquitously referred to as Knoll. These furnishings were purchased in relatively large batch orders and used to furnish offices and professional spaces with a midcentury modern aesthetic. On the 2nd of February 1959, Henry Francis du Pont’s Winterthur Museum placed a huge order for Knoll furnishings. Invoices from Knoll totaled \$3,779.85.⁶⁵ The furniture was ordered

⁶² Cherie Fehrman, and Kenneth Fehrman, *Interior Design Innovators 1910-1960*. (San Francisco: Fehrman Books, 2009), 129.

⁶³ Rita Reif, “Pioneer in Modern Furniture Is Charting Expansion Course: Deal Narrows Span Between Office and Residential Fields,” *New York Times*, 1959.

⁶⁴ Bobbye Tigerman, “‘I Am Not a Decorator’: Florence Knoll, the Knoll Planning Unit and the Making of the Modern Office,” *Journal of Design History*, (2007): 70–74.

⁶⁵ Records indicate that the Knoll furniture was selected from a showroom located at 1640 Wisconsin Ave. N.W. Washington 7, DC. The order was then fulfilled by Knoll out of New York City. An invoice from Knoll Associates Inc. dated February 2, 1959

for the South Wing Office Building that would include a Research Floor and Winterthur's first academic library, the Belknap Library. The initial order lists five desks, at least ten chairs, and three typewriter platforms. This was just the first of at least five different orders that Winterthur would place with a Knoll distributor based out of Washington, D.C.⁶⁶ These furnishings were used to create interior spaces that were composed entirely of midcentury modern furniture. Based on the volume of furnishings that were purchased it can be assumed that most of offices at Winterthur featured complete midcentury modern interiors like one displayed in the image at the start of this chapter (Figure 3).

The photograph of the Winterthur office above is a clear articulation of a complete midcentury modern interior that exemplifies the Knoll aesthetic. It not only displays Knoll furniture like the Florence Knoll double pedestal desk and the Saarinen 72 chair, but it also features humanizing touches like the plant in the ceramic pot on the credenza and the pewter tankard on the bookshelf. These office accessories were crucial to personalizing environments with industrial materials that could otherwise appear austere in midcentury modern interiors. The personality and personalization reflected in Winterthur offices like that in Figure 3 were central tenants of the Knoll design philosophy.⁶⁷

can be found in WC 606 04 WC 3, Winterthur Archives. Robert Le Fort and Co., Inc., Knoll Associates Inc, Invoice to Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, February 2, 1959, Winterthur Archives.

⁶⁶ More invoices from Knoll can be found in WC 606 04 WC 3, Winterthur Archives.

⁶⁷ Lutz, 59.

What separated Knoll from other midcentury modern furniture companies was the Planning Unit founded in 1946 and led by Florence Knoll. In *Objects of Desire* Adrian Forty argues, “Design can be used to convey to people the shape and nature of organizations that might otherwise appear formless... design is a way of conveying their collective identity to the world...”⁶⁸ The Planning Unit was able to create designed spaces that shaped and expressed the nature of organizations. The Knoll interior was not just an expression of a midcentury modern aesthetic; it was a material statement of a company’s identity. Knoll built its brand by creating spaces that cultivated a distinct corporate culture. The objects that compose Winterthur’s midcentury modern furniture collection are direct design disseminations from Florence Knoll and the Planning Unit that were used to express a professional culture at Winterthur.

The objective of the Knoll Planning Unit was to integrate all activities within a business through interior design that connected the building to the furniture based on function and use. Florence Knoll did not just design a suite of furnishings or a series of innovative floor plans. She was a leader in a movement that created a different way of thinking about space and its intended purpose.⁶⁹ She did this by thinking of the client on a micro level. The Planning Unit conducted extensive interviews with executives and secretaries to understand what they really needed. The forms that occupied most Knoll designed spaces could be seen as mass produced or generic, however the professional environments they created were completely customized to the needs of

⁶⁸ Forty, 223.

⁶⁹ Tigerman, 61–74.

each individual project.⁷⁰ Thanks to Florence Knoll, interior design became an active agent of synthesis in which space, furniture, technical equipment, textiles and wall hangings all come together in aesthetic harmony. While modernist designers and manufacturers had been arguing for the complete interior, Florence Knoll and the Planning Unit made it a logistical reality within the office space.

Florence Knoll infamously stated, “People ask me if I am a furniture designer, I am not. I never really sat down and designed furniture. I designed the fill-in pieces that no one else was doing. I designed sofas because no one was designing sofas.”⁷¹ Despite her modesty, the tables, desks and storage units she designed are prototypically midcentury modern. They express a streamlined aesthetic that utilized technologically advanced materials like the laminate veneer that can be found on almost every desk top in Winterthur’s collection. Winterthur’s collection contains Florence Knoll-designed Executive and Small Executive desks in range of configurations including the “Single Pedestal.” (Figure 4)

⁷⁰ Cherie Fehrman and Kenneth Fehrman, 65 – 69.

⁷¹ Transcript of interview with Florence Knoll Bassett, n.d., p. 9, Knoll Archives.



Figure 4. A Single-Pedestal Desk designed by Florence Knoll and Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc. after 1946. The desk is composed of Walnut-veneer lumber core, chrome finished steel, cream-color laminate. (Image courtesy of: Elizabeth Humphrey and Aaron Morris)

A Florence Knoll-designed desk was not just a table with drawers. A Knoll advertisement from the November 1962 issue of *Architectural Forum* begins with the question: “What is a Knoll desk?” goes on to say:

A Knoll desk may not be a desk at all, but a beautiful rosewood oval table that converts any office into a conference room. It may be an L-shaped design of teak with generous storage space. It may be rectangular or round, boat-shaped or oval. The Knoll collection offers

an impressive choice of fine woods and functional features, developed to satisfy individual tastes and needs.⁷²

This same statement was presented on the first page of a catalogue produced by Knoll Associates Inc. in 1954.⁷³ The repetition of this wording in multiple advertisements indicates that it was an important sentiment to the Knoll brand. From the above description it is clear that Knoll wanted consumers to imagine the desks as tailored to meet their needs. The desk was more than a functional flat surface. It was a vehicle for communicating professional purpose. The customization of the desks to meet clients' needs went so far as to reconceptualize what a desk was. Florence Knoll's executive desk evolved in design to only feature three drawers along the front rail.⁷⁴ This is because she realized that executives did not have a need for extensive drawer space as they spent the majority of their time in meetings. With this design, she streamlined the physical experience of the executive desk.⁷⁵

⁷² Knoll advertisement, Architectural Forum, (November 1962), 142-3.

⁷³ Knoll Associates, Inc. Knoll Index of Contemporary Design. New York, 1954.

⁷⁴ Tigerman, 68.

⁷⁵ When it comes to midcentury modern scholarship, chairs receive far more scholarly attention than tables and desks. Chairs became token objects for famous architects, like Saarinen, to design. But desks were just as essential to the aesthetic. Florence Knoll was tasked with the design of many midcentury modern desks and tables. She refers to her own line of desks as "the meat and potatoes" and states "I did it because I needed a piece of furniture for a job and it wasn't there." Transcript of interview with Florence Knoll Bassett, n.d., p. 9, Knoll Archives. Acknowledging and studying objects like this desk enable us to shed light on these influential forms and understand recognized designers like Florence Knoll.

The Planning Unit went so far as to reconceptualize the use of space in executive offices. The desk in Figure 4 of the Winterthur office shows the desk sitting perpendicular to the wall. Traditionally office desks were oriented in a corner of an office on a diagonal.⁷⁶ But Hans Knoll's 1951 office, designed by Florence Knoll, at the New York headquarters of Knoll Associates, popularized the shift of the desk in space.⁷⁷

The Knoll office gained public visibility as the company continued to win contracts for large corporate commissions. One of the Planning Unit's most notorious commissions was the CBS building, completed in 1959. The CBS commission was a landmark project for Knoll and the Planning Unit. The CBS headquarters was a 38-story building designed by Eero Saarinen and located at the corner of 52nd Street and the Avenue of the Americas in downtown Manhattan. The Planning Unit was tasked with the challenge of creating a working environment for 2700 employees through a total of 868 individual rooms.⁷⁸ The project received a substantial press both domestically and internationally, with articles published in periodicals such as the *New York Times* and *Queen Magazine*. The *Architectural Record* stated of the project,

CBS employees now work in a serene environment in which paintings and vases of flowers accent subtly controlled spaces in which all clutter has been carefully tucked away. Television sets, high fidelity

⁷⁶ Bobbye Tigerman, "‘I Am Not a Decorator’: Florence Knoll, the Knoll Planning Unit, and the Making of the Modern Office," (Master's Thesis, University of Delaware, 2005), 53.

⁷⁷ More on the evolution of executive office desk orientation can be found in Rita Reif, "Old is Out and New is in for Businessmen's Desks," *The New York Times*, December 2, 1974. 53.

⁷⁸ Notes on CBS Commission, Knoll Bassett Collection, Folder 15, Knoll Archives.

equipment and the speakers and control panels which go with them...and other electronic paraphernalia have disappeared into custom-made desks and cabinets that have been unobtrusively placed in the walls. Florence Knoll Bassett is a master of such sleights of hand. She designed the furniture in which some of the miscellany of office life is concealed...⁷⁹

The intention was to create a corporate office space that was a professional and livable environment. Midcentury modern furniture inherently expressed a modern sensibility by using technologically advanced materials and streamlined forms. But the objects were not just used to create a streamlined professional setting. In the article Florence Knoll is quoted saying “My real job was the proper assembly of everything.”⁸⁰ Each office at CBS displayed carefully selected furniture, fabric, color schemes, paintings and decorative objects. The subtle pops of color and expressions of personality cultivated a culture that was simultaneously formative and representative for CBS employees.

CBS, GM, and dozens of other companies hired the Planning Unit because they were expanding into new spaces. As the organizations grew physically they cultivated an updated professional persona, one that marked them as efficient, effective, and modern. As Winterthur expanded its footprint and furnished these spaces, leaders in the institution chose to employ a midcentury modern aesthetic for many of the same reasons.

⁷⁹ Mildred Schmertz, “Distinguished Interior Architecture for CBS,” *Architectural Record*, June 1956, 2.

⁸⁰ Schmertz, 2.

When answering the question of why midcentury modernism was selected for Winterthur instead of reproduction furniture that was more reflective of the objects found in the house, the notion of “appropriateness” comes to the forefront. Henry Francis du Pont carefully cultivated a legacy for himself and his museum. The ubiquitous quote amongst Winterthur staff is, “There wasn’t a thing that happened here that Henry Francis didn’t have a hand in.” Midcentury modern furniture came to Winterthur for a reason. The consistent application of midcentury modernism suggests there is another layer to the design aesthetic that Henry Francis du Pont was cultivating. Henry Francis du Pont had a vision for what his museum could become, and by using midcentury modern furniture, he must have believed he could cultivate a favorable characterization of the professional activity at his museum. Thus, midcentury modern furniture was employed for functional spaces because it was deemed appropriate and professional. To understand why this was so, it is important to understand Winterthur and Henry Francis du Pont as purveyors of taste.

Chapter 5

APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY AND THE MUSEUM AS A PURVEYOR OF TASTE

On October 30, 1951 Mr. Henry Francis du Pont celebrated his newly opened museum and presented his unparalleled collection of American decorative arts to a very select public. The significance of this act and the potential of the museum was clearly stated by Mr. David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art and Chairman of the National Trust for Historic Preservation at the museum's founding:

The opening of the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum is an event of great importance in the cultural life of this country. For here, under this roof, we have a vast and unique collection of American decorative arts, carefully selected, superbly installed and shown in such a way as to give a history of civilized living in this country for a period of over two hundred years.⁸¹

The use of the phrase “civilized living” indicates that Winterthur opened to present a particular moralizing aesthetic. Only objects deemed to be of a certain caliber were collected and displayed at Winterthur. The museum was not depicting the 200-year history of the full spectrum of American material existence, only that which the institution deemed to be reflective of an elevated state of cultural development and refinement. Walking through the house, it becomes clear that the majority of objects within Winterthur's collection represent the pinnacle of high-end early American

⁸¹ David E. Finley, “Transcription of opening remarks,” October 30, 1951, 04 WC3 WC 599, Winterthur Archives.

artifacts. Even the more “everyday” artifacts in the collection were framed as exemplars of managing natural resources, advanced handcraft, or other attributes valued for their connection to American achievement in manufacturing. These objects were “carefully selected” to show the best, as defined by the museum’s founder and staff, of American decorative arts and craftsmanship in early America.

Furthering this elite persona, the museum, despite being nationally renowned, was only accessible to a limited number of public guests. On opening night, October 30th, 1951 there were 185 confirmed guests.⁸² Guides were ready from two o’clock into the evening to take groups of four through the museum.⁸³ These exclusive house tours were Winterthur’s foundation. In his notes to the executors Henry Francis states, “I believe that admission should be allowed only upon presentation of a card for which application has been made in advance.”⁸⁴ From this statement, it is clear that wide public access was not one of Winterthur’s founding priorities. Reservations were required when the museum first opened and no children under the age of 16 were permitted into the museum well into the 1960s.⁸⁵ Winterthur was presenting itself as a purveyor of elite objects for a select group. It would not be until the completion of the

⁸² Secretarial Note, “Opening Night October 30th Invitations for Opening of the Museum South Wing,” WC Box 4, Winterthur Archives.

⁸³ Copy of invitation for Opening of South Wing, WC Box 4, Winterthur Archives.

⁸⁴ Henry Francis du Pont to the executors, 1951 – 1965, Registration Division, Winterthur. 4.

⁸⁵ The Winterthur Archives has records of requests to visit Henry Francis du Pont’s home dating back at least as far as 1935. In box WC 6 folder 69.WC.1 a Secretary who is unidentified responded to multiple requests for visitors under the age of 16 to visit the house by explaining that they were not permitted. There are letters from 1941-1952.

Visitor Center (originally the Garden Pavilion) in 1960 that Winterthur would begin to create spaces designed for greater accessibility to the broader public.⁸⁶ Institutional growth and public accessibility would continue to be the driving forces behind Winterthur's acquisition of midcentury modern furniture from 1957 through 1969.

Museums and large collecting institutions emerged as publicly accessible entities in western society during the late nineteenth century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (founded 1870), the Philadelphia Museum of Art (founded 1876), the Art Institute of Chicago (founded 1879) and by one estimate more than two thousand other museums of art and science opened during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century.⁸⁷ Much like Winterthur, many of these museums were only accessible to a limited public when they initially opened.⁸⁸ But by the end of the nineteenth century almost all cultural repositories were accessible to the broader public, with the majority of their visitorship coming from urban communities.⁸⁹

These museums housed a spectrum and blend of collections, from scientific to anthropologic to historic and/or artistic. In his important essay "The Fetishism of Artefacts," Peter Gathercole argued that, "Museum artefacts are analogous to

⁸⁶ Numerous black and white photographs in Winterthur Archives, Box193, are dated as 1963 and show children being brought through the house indicating that children were permitted in the early 60's.

⁸⁷ Steven Conn, "Museums, Public Space and Civic Identity," *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 201.

⁸⁸ Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?*, 202.

⁸⁹ More on building of museums in relation to urban development can be found in Steven Conn's fascinating essay, Steven Conn, "Museums, Public Space and Civic Identity," *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 197 – 232.

commodities, in that they have properties bestowed upon them by virtue of the museum existence.”⁹⁰ Placing an object in a museum gave it a certain value and cultural authority. By bestowing value on selected artefacts, museums acted as cultural tastemakers. In the nineteenth century classification was central to how objects were displayed and interpreted. In his book *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876 – 1920*, Steve Conn describes one of the roles of museums, stating: “Knowledge about the world, according to the Foucauldian way of thinking, might well be divided into any number of different categories, and it is one job of museums to persuade visitors that the classifications they employ are the “correct” ones...”⁹¹ Classification was a method of interpreting the material world. But it also created a codified value structure. What was placed in museum galleries gained public attention and recognition. Museums built taste by displaying objects they classified as being significant.

Museum institutions as cultivators of public taste did not end in the nineteenth century. In 1925 the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened. In *Addresses on the Occasion of the Opening of the American Wing*, the final address is presented by Elihu Root who was the Secretary of State under Roosevelt and McKinley. In his address, Root quotes a 1785 letter penned by Thomas Jefferson in Paris: “How is a taste in this beautiful art to be formed in our countrymen, unless we avail ourselves of every occasion when public buildings are to be erected, of

⁹⁰ Peter Gathercole, “The Fetishism of Artefacts,” in Susan Pearce, *Museum Studies in Material Culture* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press: 1989), 74.

⁹¹ Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 11.

presenting to them models for their study and imitation?” Jefferson here is referring to the implementation of architecture to build public taste, but Root follows the Jefferson quotation, stating:

There is the reason for the museum. There is no slight authority of the great apostle of democracy, no slight testimony to the existence of a quality in the American democracy which calls for study and imitation of products of art; and that is the office of the museum, to form in our countrymen a taste for all the beautiful arts by presenting them models for their study and imitation...as a means of enlightenment and growth.⁹²

Root suggests that the museum’s role in developing taste is a patriotic act. By referencing Jefferson and the “American Democracy,” Root is suggesting that the development of public taste is important for the progress of the United States. Well into the twentieth century, major collecting intuitions were understood as having an obligation to foster and build a sense of taste amongst their visitors and communities.

When Henry Francis du Pont opened the Winterthur Museum he would have been furthering one of the engrained functions of museums: to articulate and proliferate what is “good” or “tasteful.” The collections were of central importance to Henry Francis du Pont. In his notes to his executors he set very specific regulations on how objects, from curtains to glasswares and pewter tankards, should be maintained and presented. On the arrangement of the objects in rooms Henry Francis du Pont states:

It has taken many years of careful planning to place the furniture, rugs, pictures, mirrors, and all the small objects in exactly the places where they are now; and in case there are no blueprints showing the location

⁹² Elihu Root, *Addresses on the Occasion of the Opening of the American Wing* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1925), 31-33.

of these pieces for each room, I wish them to remain precisely as I have placed them and on no condition do I want the arrangement changed by even an inch.⁹³

From these very specific guidelines it is evident that Henry Francis du Pont had a particular vision for how his collection should be presented. By displaying this collection in the context of a museum, Henry Francis du Pont was imbuing it with a sense of cultural authority. His insistence on maintaining such a specific aesthetic vision for his museum suggests that he wanted visitors to experience and be influenced by the aesthetic taste the display of his collection expressed.

As an epicenter of early American decorative arts, Winterthur expressed Henry Francis du Pont's hope that visitors would find his collection early Americana inspiring. And for many it certainly was. When Jacqueline Kennedy visited Winterthur for the first time in 1961 she stated, "I just can't believe it was possible for anyone to ever do such a thing Mr. du Pont, you have me in such a state of awe and reverence I may never be able to write to you again! I now have an ambition for our old age – for us to be gatekeepers at Winterthur."⁹⁴ This candid response illustrates the strong reactions the Winterthur collection could elicit from visitors. Jacqueline Kennedy was so inspired by Winterthur that she commissioned Henry Francis to assist with the interior design of the White House.⁹⁵ One of the greatest powers of Winterthur was the

⁹³ Henry Francis du Pont to the executors, 1951 – 1965, Registration Division, Winterthur. 54.

⁹⁴ Jacqueline Kennedy to Henry Francis du Pont, 8 May 1961, Winterthur Archives. Cited in Wendy Cooper *An American Vision: Henry Francis du Pont's Winterthur Museum* (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2002,) 14.

⁹⁵ Patrick Phillips-Schrock, *The White House: An Illustrated Architectural History*. (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2013) 77-82.

cultivated style and taste it presented through the carefully articulated display of early Americana collections.

But Henry Francis du Pont's Winterthur Museum also fostered the creation of a vast midcentury modern collection that was not presented in the gallery-like space of his historic house. These midcentury modern objects composed complete interiors that were used in a functional capacity. At Winterthur midcentury modernism was not promoted outright but fostered through utilitarian necessity. It would be through the mid-twentieth century collecting efforts of other museums like Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Detroit Institute of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago and other major collecting institutions that these objects would be elevated to a status of "tasteful" in the public eye.⁹⁶

Continuing the nineteenth-century foundation of many collecting institutions, museums popularized midcentury modern decorative arts and design at least in part to build public taste. MoMA was a leader in these efforts. In the spring of 2019 MoMA opened an exhibition titled *The Value of Good Design*. In the opening text, curator Juliet Kinchin stated the exhibition intended to explore the democratizing potential of design by evaluating MoMA's Good Design initiatives beginning in the late 1930s. These initiatives took the form of exhibitions, competitions, publications, and partnerships with commercial enterprises like department stores. Through these

⁹⁶ Between the war's end in 1945 and the end of decade, there were a number of American exhibitions of midcentury modern furniture. For practical purposes this paper will focus on the efforts by MoMA to foster public appreciation of midcentury modernism. However, it should be emphasized that a large number of museums engaged in efforts to promote midcentury modernism. More on this can be found in Fredie Floré, Cammie McAtee, *The Politics of Furniture: Identity, Diplomacy and Persuasion in Post-War Interiors* (London: Routledge, 2017.)

initiatives MoMA shaped how midcentury modernism was perceived and consumed. Juliet Kinchin goes on to state that “The concept of good design was a worldwide phenomenon, with government on both sides of the Cold War embracing it as a vital tool of economic reconstruction, technological advancement, and political persuasion.”⁹⁷ In post-World War II America, there was a perceived civic function to building good taste in broader society. Both MoMA and Henry Francis du Pont hoped to influence public taste by providing access to collections of American made objects. The primary difference between these intuitions was in the objects they chose to present.

Unlike the objects that were selected to present Henry Francis du Pont’s carefully articulated interpretation of an early American aesthetic, midcentury modern objects were crafted by designers who worked directly with museums in the development and dissemination of their designs. In *A Modern World: American Design from the Yale University Art Gallery, 1920-1950* John Stuart Gordon states:

The average American first learned about museums through print sources, but first experienced modern design at museums, department stores, or world’s fairs. Between 1920 and 1950, these public settings blended commerce with culture to educate Americans about aspects of modern design and inspired them to incorporate it into their lives.⁹⁸

Midcentury modern objects on display in museums differed from American antiques because they were presented by museums as commodities designed to be purchased by

⁹⁷ Juliet Kinchin, Introductory Panel, *The Value of Good Design*, New York, Museum of Modern Art, 20 February 2019.

⁹⁸ John Stuart Gordon, “Merchandizing Modernism.” In *A Modern World: American Design from the Yale University Art Gallery, 1920-1950* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Art Gallery : Yale University Press, 2011), 245.

contemporary consumers. Although these objects were created, designed and displayed in order to motivate the public to consume them, placement in a cultural institution like MoMA gave these objects a particular authority. In the gallery space, new commercial objects were elevated in status to the one-of-a-kind rarities that visitors experienced in other museums, giving them a distinct allure and imbuing them with a sense of cultural refinement. By displaying mass-produced goods, museums were now more directly able to influence public taste. Rather than merely exposing the public to a certain aesthetic and shaping thought, museums used midcentury modern design to more directly alter the tangible lived-experience of the masses.⁹⁹

In the twentieth century, one-of-a-kind rarities like antiques were also important commodities in the public marketplace. In *The Antiquers* Elizabeth Stiller explores the passions and motivations of tastemakers by chronicling the lives of American antiques enthusiasts active between 1850 and 1930.¹⁰⁰ She pays particular attention to the 1924 opening of the Metropolitan Museum's American Wing in shaping personal collections.¹⁰¹ The American Wing's period rooms fostered

⁹⁹ Midcentury modern objects were available in a range of price points. Some used materials like marble that made them expensive. However, the forms of the objects were almost always available in cheaper more accessible materials. For more on high-end midcentury modern objects see Kathryn Bloom Hiesinger and Mary Cason, *Collecting Modern: Design at the Philadelphia Museum of Art since 1876* (Philadelphia; New Haven: Philadelphia Museum of Art ; Yale University Press, 2011.)

¹⁰⁰ Elizabeth Stiller, *The Antiquers: The Lives and Careers, the Deals, the Finds, the Collections of the Men and Women Who Were Responsible for the Changing Taste in American Antiques, 1850-1930* (New York: Knopf : distributed by Random House, 1980).

¹⁰¹ Elizabeth Stiller, *The Antiquers: The Lives and Careers, the Deals, the Finds, the Collections of the Men and Women Who Were Responsible for the Changing Taste*

a commercial appeal for domesticating the American past. The objects that furnish Henry Francis' house museum are products that embraced and popularized a cultivated historicized aesthetic. After seeing Americana in museums people wanted to adapt a similar aesthetic in their own homes. But they could not buy the exact objects they were seeing. They could buy antiques that borrowed from the same design tradition or replicas, but the precise objects were artefacts preserved in the cloistered protection of museum collections. Most consumers could not afford to engage in the level of high-end collecting being conducted by museums. They could borrow from the aesthetic promoted by museum institutions, but they could not possess the exact objects museum's presented.¹⁰²

A unique blend of artifact presentation and indirect promotion of the midcentury modern aesthetic is expressed in Winterthur's Shaker Rooms. Henry Francis du Pont was reluctant to display Shaker material because these objects relate directly to a single religious group.¹⁰³ However, in 1957 the same year the South Wing opened, the museum acquired architectural woodwork from a large stone Shaker

in American Antiques, 1850-1930 (New York: Knopf : distributed by Random House, 1980), 34-46.

¹⁰² In very rare instances, high end collectors could purchase parts of a set that had been broken up, with some pieces ending up in institutions and some in private homes or offices, but this was not common or a form of purchasing available to more than a select and typically wealthy crowd.

¹⁰³ This section on the acquisition and installation of the Shaker Rooms at Winterthur relies heavily on a memorandum from Lisa Minardi to Linda Eaton. That memo should be consulted to learn more about the Shaker Rooms at Winterthur. Lisa Minardi, Memo to Linda Eaton, April 14, 2014, Winterthur Archives.

house located in Enfield, New Hampshire that dates to the early nineteenth century.¹⁰⁴ The rooms would not be installed and opened until 1962, in a space that had previously been the photography studio.¹⁰⁵ The most persistent advocate for the installation of these rooms was John Sweeney. Born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, Sweeney was a graduate of the first class of fellows from the Winterthur Program in Early American Material Culture (1954) Sweeney was a senior curator from 1960 to 1966. He then became the senior deputy director for collections and interpretation from 1967 to 1976 and was then named as assistant to the director of Winterthur, a position he held until his retirement in 1991. John Sweeney was a prolific scholar and educator who had a profound impact both on Winterthur and on the decorative arts community as a whole.¹⁰⁶

In January 1961, John Sweeney wrote to Henry Francis du Pont about the Shaker rooms, stating:

Aesthetically, the Shaker arts reduced the design of late-eighteenth century furniture to its essentials and preserved the principles of good design through the confusion of the mid and late nineteenth century. Thus, in Shaker arts are to be found the elements of simple, straightforward design sought by modern designers, and in effect these arts are the bridge between the handcraft tradition of the eighteenth century and the design principles of the present.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Minardi, 2.

¹⁰⁵ Minardi, 2.

¹⁰⁶ “Winterthur Mourns Death Of John AH Sweeney,” *The News Journal*, May 20, 2007.

¹⁰⁷ John Sweeney to H. F. du Pont, January 30, 1961, Winterthur Archives.

From the above it is evident that Sweeney advocated for the installation of the Shaker rooms in part because these rooms spoke to the midcentury modern design aesthetic that was popular at the time. The motive behind his advocacy for presenting these rooms was beyond the need to display early American material culture. Sweeney saw the rooms as important expressions of the design principals that were inherent to midcentury modernism.

John Sweeney was published in the *Winterthur Newsletter* of April 1962 echoing the connection he perceived between Shaker design and modernism. Sweeney notes that the built-in cupboards found in the Shaker room were the “forerunner of storage facilities in modern buildings”¹⁰⁸ linking Shaker and mid-twentieth century design principles. Sweeney goes on to describe the rooms as having an “austere simplicity reflecting the aesthetic principles of the Shaker sect, and the use of simple sheathing and unadorned wooden trim painted in a bold color, presages the major theories of modern architecture.”¹⁰⁹ Through the Shaker Rooms, Winterthur was engaging in a similar exploration of modernism as museums across the country. Although the museum was still displaying antique artefact objects, leaders at the institution like John Sweeney clearly thought that modernism in America was an important movement. Winterthur did not exist in a vacuum and Sweeney’s justification for the importance of Shaker Rooms proves that from an early stage scholars at this institution were interested in midcentury modernism and how the movement was influenced by early Americana.

¹⁰⁸ John Sweeney, “The Shaker Rooms: Room Analysis and Description,” *Winterthur Newsletter*, April 23, 1962.

¹⁰⁹ John Sweeney, April 23, 1962.

Through a variety of different displays, programs and studies, midcentury modernism was promoted and analyzed by museums across the country. The aesthetic was accessible to consumers through a range of industrially produced goods in a new and more direct way than had been experienced prior to the mid-twentieth century. Access may have been one of the reasons midcentury modernism became so pervasive that it was even explored and investigated in Winterthur's historic house museum. This direct dissemination of codified taste to broader markets and its association with institutional settings such as museums enhanced midcentury modernism's role as an appropriate style for public and professional spaces throughout the mid-twentieth century. It is this broad notion of appropriateness that was likely central to Henry Francis du Pont's approval of the use of midcentury modern furniture in professional settings at his museum.

Chapter 6

THE LCM CHAIR AND THE POWER OF PLYWOOD

What made midcentury modernism appropriate and accessible was movement's innovative use of revolutionary materials through organic design. In the 1940s MoMA referred to the midcentury modern aesthetic as "organic design." Organic design emerged as an antidote to the industrializing and machine-driven material world. Designs were meant to create associations with the natural world through streamlined, often curvilinear and even anthropomorphic forms. MoMA curator Elliot Noyes defined "Organic" as a "harmonious organization of the parts within the whole, according to structure, material and purpose."¹¹⁰ In that same catalogue Noyes also posited organic design would enable America to "emerge from the tasteless clutter of inheritance from the nineteenth century."¹¹¹ MoMA sanctioned designers became the authority on high-style or "civilized" furnishings. Though, these objects borrowed from what was defined as an organic style they were made using innovative industrial materials.

In 1940 MoMA announced a design competition titled, *Organic Design in Home Furnishings*. Winners not only had their work exhibited but they were also

¹¹⁰ Eliot Noyes, *Organic Design in Home Furnishings* (New York, N.Y.: The Museum of Modern Art, 1941), 4.

¹¹¹ Noyes, 4.

presented with the opportunity to have their products manufactured and distributed for mass markets. Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen would win that competition with their now infamous molded plywood Organic Chair. Although the exhibition would put Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen into national spotlight, mass production of the Organic Chair never occurred due to the start of World War II.¹¹²

Although the chair was labeled the Organic Chair, it was designed for production by utilizing newly available materials and technologies that are not what most consumers would consider to be organic or natural. Arthur J. Pulos in *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975* states that Eames and Saarinen's used layered veneers in construction of their chairs in a way that echoed methods developed for other mass-produced products such as cabinetry that advanced principles of standardization, interchangeability, and functional adaptability.¹¹³ He goes on to quote *Architectural Forum*, which argued that the Eames/Saarinen chairs offered "the most convincing glimpse of the future, when such pieces may well be squeezed out on huge presses like Henry Ford's new plastic fender."¹¹⁴

¹¹² Cherie Fehrman, and Kenneth Fehrman, 121.; MoMA did not put the Organic Chair into their galleries with the intention of the object serving solely as an artifact. As discussed in Chapter 5, it was meant to democratize taste by making high style available to the masses. The chair offered the opportunity not only to shape taste conceptually but to shift trends in consumption of objects.

¹¹³ Arthur J Pulos, *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1988), 24 – 25.

¹¹⁴ Pulos, *The American Design Adventure*, 49.

Charles Eames famously said that his objective was to “Bring the most of the best to the greatest number of people for the least.”¹¹⁵ In post-World War II America new industrial technology blended with emerging markets in search of an alternative lifestyle. Midcentury modern designers strove to offer objects with an emotional authenticity and functionality to the masses by using new technologies and materials. Mass accessibility was a central tenet of midcentury modern design. These designers cultivated mass accessibility by working with newly available industrial materials, like plywood.

Partially due to the icon of the organic chair, plywood has become one of the materials most directly linked to midcentury modern design. Plywood is defined as a wood material made by gluing together several veneers (thin sheets of wood) under pressure, each with its grain at right angles to the succeeding layer.¹¹⁶ Plywood is often thought of in relation to postindustrial objects. However, it has a long history and played an important role in early American furniture.¹¹⁷ Plywood as a material has existed in various forms since antiquity.¹¹⁸ As a technique in furniture

¹¹⁵ Gloria Koenig, *Charles and Ray Eames: Pioneers of Mid-Century Modernism*. (Koln, London, Los Angeles, Paris, Tokyo: Taschen, 2015), 2.

¹¹⁶ Lucy Trench, *Materials & Techniques in the Decorative Arts: an Illustrated Dictionary* (London: John Murray, 2003), 384.

¹¹⁷ Early American furniture scholars have long displayed a propensity and even fixation for wood as a material. Evidence of this can be found in a range of publications. For introductory evidence of this at Winterthur see Charlie Hummel, *With hammer in hand; the Dominy craftsmen of East Hampton, New York* (Charlottesville : Published for Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum by University Press of Virginia, 1968.)

¹¹⁸ Christopher Wilker, *Plywood a Material Story* (London: Thames & Hudson), 8.

construction it emerged in Europe in the eighteenth century.¹¹⁹ In Christopher Wilker's important book on plywood, *Plywood: a Material Story*, he notes that Thomas Sheraton provides a valuable written description of the use of plywood for table tops. Sheraton's design drawing for a 'Universal Table,' a dining table that could be suitable for two to eight people, features a table top made of panels designed to be constructed as veneers glued together.¹²⁰ John Henry Belter is credited with one of the first patents for a plywood cutting machine that was granted in 1847.¹²¹ These examples indicate that in early American furniture plywood was used to expand objects' potential both in function and form. Plywood would go on to provide midcentury modern designers with a new range of material possibilities.

The use of the exact term plywood seems to have emerged in America around 1915 as it began to replace "3-ply" as a descriptor in furniture advertisements.¹²² After waterproof synthetic resins replaced animal glue as a binding agent in the late 1930s, plywood was more readily available and used.¹²³ This enabled furniture forms to be industrialized and streamlined while maintaining material strength.

¹¹⁹ Wilker, 18.

¹²⁰ Wilker, 19.

¹²¹ Wilker, 19.

¹²² Wilker, 65.

¹²³ Pulos, *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975*, 29.

Plywood developed a reputation for being of an inferior quality to wood and the public began to conceptualize the material as a hasty cheap substitute.¹²⁴ However, Arthur Pulos in *The American Design Adventure* notes that with waterproof glue plywood proved to be superior in quality to wood in both versatility and durability.¹²⁵ Aircraft and the development of mass producible planes were a central impetus for the technological development of plywood in the early twentieth century.¹²⁶ As plywood evolved so did the forms it could be used to create.

Plywood was flexible as a material and therefore was better able to express sinuous and complex designed forms. As a composite the material also had a strength and durability comparable to wood.¹²⁷ There is a lingering conception that organic or natural materials are stronger or of better quality. This conception suggests an underlying suspicion that accessibility inherently leads to a lack in quality.¹²⁸ Plywood has always been available in a range of strengths. When analyzing the potential merits of plywood, it is important to emphasize that there is a range in quality that is more

¹²⁴ For more on the long history of the public's negative response to plywood see Wilker, 55-70.

¹²⁵ Pulos, *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975*, 29.

¹²⁶ Wilker, 73.

¹²⁷ Arthur J Pulos, *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1988), 28-34.

¹²⁸ I worked with numerous furniture scholars throughout Winterthur and I am forever grateful for their support and insight. But, every early American scholar I worked with mentioned the inferior construction of midcentury modern objects in comparison to early American objects. I believe this stereotype of modern construction quality creates a false dichotomy that limits our ability to understand the cross-generational concepts that are inherent in American design.

severe than the range in quality experienced in hard woods. Some midcentury modern designers like Charles Eames continually used strong high-end plywood.¹²⁹

Companies that made knock-offs of Eames designs frequently used lower quality plywood and thus furthered the stigma against the material.¹³⁰

In some instances, plywood is physically weaker than hard wood. But in the evaluation of the material the intended use and impact should be considered.

Midcentury modern designers wanted to democratize taste and make well-designed and built goods available to a wider public. Without plywood their vision would have never been fulfilled.

Plywood would not gain its status as a ubiquitous alternative to wood until after the second World War. In 1946 MoMA conducted another influential midcentury modern exhibition titled, *New Furniture Designs by Charles Eames* which ran from March 12 until April 14th closing just before they opened the first retrospective on Georgia O’Keeffe’s work.¹³¹ The optimism of the postwar era created collective aspirations for a better life through better design. Institutions like MoMA suggested the best guides to a well-designed future would be museums, galleries, and similar nonprofit institutions, which were assumed to be above financial temptations.¹³²

¹²⁹ Wilker, 157.

¹³⁰ Clement Meadmore, *The Modern Chair: Classics in Production* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1975), 85.

¹³¹ It is important to note that this was not an exhibition on Charles Eames designs alone; it was an exhibition on the collaborative efforts of Ray and Charles Eames.

¹³² Pulos, *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975*, 71.

The exhibition was a commercial breakthrough for Ray and Charles Eames.¹³³ After the exhibition the Herman Miller Furniture Company began mass producing several of their designs including the Lounge Chair Wood (LCW) and Lounge Chair Metal (LCM). The LCM chair would become a staple of midcentury modernism and eventually the form would be used on the Winterthur campus.

¹³³ In 1940 Ray Eames began classes at Cranbrook where she met Charles Eames, an architect and designer who had come to the school in 1938 on a fellowship and who had been made an instructor of industrial design. Ray's collaboration with Charles began almost immediately and did not end until his death in 1978. This information and more on Ray and Charles Eames can be found in Pat Kirkham, *Charles and Ray Eames, Designers of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1995.)



Figure 5. An LCM (Lounge Chair Metal) Side Chair designed by Ray and Charles Eames and Manufactured by Herman Miller Furniture Company. The chair is composed of molded-birch plywood chair with steel rod spine and legs and rubber feet, rubber shock mounts. (Image courtesy of: Elizabeth Humphrey and Aaron Morris)

W Winterthur currently has 12 LCM chairs still in use. The LCM is quintessentially midcentury modern, with graceful curves and a sense of floating planes. These chairs express a design sensibility cultivated over more than five years of Eames experimentation with the capacities of molded plywood. The plywoods that consumers could originally choose from included rosewood, walnut, birch and ash. Laminated birch was the most popular and was also used in the production of children's furniture after 1945.

The technological achievement and craftsmanship of these chairs should not be overlooked. They reflect an incredibly innovative form that dozens of furniture manufacturer began to replicate immediately after their release. In a 1954 letter to

Structural Engineer Frank Newby, Charles Eames detailed the construction of the chairs, stating:

The molded plywood chairs are molded from sheets of veneer between heated platens bonded with thermosetting resin (Seat and back from five sheets - legs and spine from nine.) Finish of most of these starts in the form of an impregnating resin sprayed on the surface of the veneer and cured against the platen. Molded parts adhere to the frame by means of the rubber shock mount. The rubber shock mount is a rubber part with a metal insert molded into it. The metal insert is threaded to receive machine screw. The shock mount is secured to the wood seat and back with a thermosetting adhesive. 134

The technical language that is used in this description is analogous to the detailed description of the construction of an early American chair found in many museum catalogues. The persona and personality of the Eameses and discussion of their work often dwarfs analysis of the materiality of their design. Such close readings of the furniture they created should not be lost as an aside to discussions of their biographies or broader histories of modern taste. The LCM is more than an aesthetic argument; it is a technological marvel. Frank Newby was one of the leading structural engineers of the twentieth century. He wanted to know how the chairs were made so that he could implement some of the design techniques in his future building projects. Just as architecture influenced furniture influenced architecture. Today, the LCM is included in countless museums across the world as an accessioned object

¹³⁴ Charles Eames to Frank Newby, March 2, 1954, in *An Eames Anthology: Articles, Film Scripts, Interviews, Letters, Notes, Speeches*, ed Daniel Ostroff (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2015), 342.

representative of an important modern moment in American decorative arts and design. By embracing and appropriating an aesthetic that was proliferated through museum institutions, Eames not only shaped things but shaped the way people think about things.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Pat Kirkham, “Humanizing Modernism: The Crafts, ‘Functioning Decoration’ and the Eameses,” *Journal of Design History*, (1998), 28.

CONCLUSION



Figure 6. Henry Francis du Pont and Mrs. Ruth Wales du Pont sit Eames Shell Chairs. Charles F. Montgomery and Dorothy Greer stand behind them during an event at in the Garden Pavilion (Visitor's Pavilion) circa 1960. Photography by Robert Hurst Whitten Associates. (Image courtesy of: Winterthur Library: Winterthur Archives.)

Henry Francis du Pont not only collected early Americana, he also changed the way people think about American decorative arts. A true visionary who was distinct from other collectors of Americana, Henry Francis du Pont also founded a graduate program, the Winterthur Program in Early American Material Culture (WPAMC), to foster and support the scholarship surrounding early American objects. In his notes to executors Henry Francis stated, “Years after all the books on the Museum have been written I feel that the training and education of these young people at Winterthur will make the museum a living force for the ages.”¹³⁶ The idea that this was a “living force” suggests that it was a force inherent to growth and change. This program was created to continue H.F.’s legacy of expanding the appreciation for and understanding of American decorative arts.

After being open to the public for six years (1951 – 1957), attendance at Winterthur grew from 20 a day to 60 a day to over 40,000 by 1957. This growth in visitorship demanded growth in the museum’s staff and infrastructure.¹³⁷ In 1957 at

¹³⁶ Henry Francis du Pont to the executors, 1951 – 1965, Registration Division, Winterthur. 64.

¹³⁷ Interestingly, Charles Montgomery and Henry Francis’s correspondence about the development of the South Wing is primarily focused on the 10 new period rooms the museum would exhibit. A press release from Winterthur states that on April 26, 1960 the South Wing opened to the public and that the museum would now be able to show to visitors ten new rooms including a seventeenth-century farmhouse, an early New England kitchen, a neoclassical parlor and early-nineteenth-century hallways. See Charles Montgomery, Press Release, April 26, 1960, 93 WC 11 Winterthur Archives.; Winterthur’s fixation with the development of its period rooms is pervasive in the correspondence between Charles Montgomery and Henry Francis with regards to opening the South Wing. Over 200 letters discuss the purchasing of various furnishings and logistics for the new rooms. And this focus emphasizes that Winterthur’s main purpose was building an incredible collection. But, the collection wasn’t the only thing that was growing in Winterthur’s early years.

least three curatorial positions were added. In addition to positions such as the Operations Administrator there was an expansion of guard staff.¹³⁸ In its earliest years as a public institution, the museum only expanded to create more space for the early Americana collection. Once Winterthur had more visitors, the institution grew to accommodate more professional and public space. This growth was the impetus behind the acquisition of midcentury modern furnishings.

These midcentury modern furnishings assisted Winterthur in crafting and expanding its public persona and brand. Winterthur could no longer solely be seen as a collection of early Americana for a single owner: it was becoming a public-facing institution. Winterthur's choice of midcentury furnishings followed popular professional design of the day. Just as with CBS and GM, a growth in business and staff necessitated a growth in infrastructure. Midcentury modern objects were one of the vehicles that Winterthur used to present its identity as an important and professional cultural institution. The museum was not just a warehouse for early Americana. It cultivated an identity as a space for active engagement with American material culture.

Charles Hummel, Curator Emeritus at Winterthur, has been a tremendous asset in understanding how midcentury modernism came to Winterthur. He was a graduate of the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture (then called the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture) class of 1955 and in 1958 he was an Assistant Curator, beginning what would become a lifelong career at Winterthur. He can

¹³⁸ Charles Montgomery, Memo to Winterthur Staff, 1957, Montgomery Charles Papers, 69. WC. 1 Box 6, Winterthur Archives.

anecdotally recount the precise impetus for the creation of the Visitors Pavilion.¹³⁹

Prior to its construction, Henry Francis du Pont allowed local non-profits to operate a snack bar in and near the Cottage during the busy spring tour season. At the time, the Cottage was also functioning as the du Ponts' living quarters when they were residing at Winterthur. Charlie Hummel remembers hearing about three women in the spring of 1959 who inadvertently wandered into Mrs. Ruth Wales du Pont's personal bathroom with spring tour tickets. Mrs. du Pont spotted the guests in her personal home and the Pavilion was built the following year.

This new space demanded new furniture. An invoice from Robert Lefort and Co. Inc. placed on January 9th, 1961 indicates an order for 270 Herman Miller Shell Chairs in red orange, greige, elephant hide, and ochre light. These chairs furnished the Visitor Pavilion. And the photograph above (Figure 6) indicates that the chairs were used by Henry Francis du Pont.¹⁴⁰

Winterthur currently has 15 Eames for Herman Miller molded fiberglass Shell Chairs that are more than likely from this order. These chairs are specifically identified by Herman Miller as DSSN stacking Shell Chairs. The chairs are the perfect encapsulation of midcentury modern design due to their use of newly available materials and their intended use for public professional spaces.

¹³⁹ Charles Hummel and Carrie Greif, Interview, Midcentury Modernism at Winterthur, in person, October 29, 2018.

¹⁴⁰ Invoice from Robert Le Fort and Co., Inc. February 2, 1959, Winterthur Archives.

As was previously illustrated, the Eames duo is notorious for their innovative application of material technology that became available in the wake of World War II. Initially the Shell Chairs were built by Zenith Plastics and were constructed out of the same material the company had used during the war to make fiberglass reinforced plastic radar domes.¹⁴¹ They represented the first commercial use of plastic for seating and were widely imitated. These plastic chairs evolved into the fiberglass armchair made out of a material called Zenaloy, a plastic resin reinforced with fiberglass that Charles Eames described as “virtually indestructible and extremely lightweight.”¹⁴²

When we think of Henry Francis du Pont, we may be tempted to think of him sitting in a prototypically colonial style Windsor Chair. However, as the image above reminds us, it is just as fitting to remember him in one of Winterthur’s Shell Chairs. Both the Windsor Chair and the Shell Chair embody the flexibility and reproducibility of American design. The Windsor chair, in its seemingly infinite variations, is an icon of Americana showcased in collections from the Metropolitan Museum of Art to Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where it reminds visitors of the physical experience of the nation’s founders. Yet, just like midcentury modern objects, the Windsor chair’s technology is suited to low-cost, high-volume production. The chair employs fairly simple wooden spindles with pegs that pierce through a wooden seat plank.¹⁴³ The Windsor could be assembled in pieces using woods sourced from

¹⁴¹ Cherie Fehrman, and Kenneth Fehrman, 115.

¹⁴² “Chairs by Charles Eames.” *Arts and Architecture*, October 1950.

¹⁴³ Nancy Goyne Evans, *Windsor-Chair Making in America: From Craft Shop to Consumer* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2006), 126.

different regions. This design technique was a precursor to mass-production used in midcentury modern furniture.¹⁴⁴ Framed together, the Shell Chair and the Windsor, or more broadly, traditional Americans and midcentury modern objects at Winterthur, can best be understood as complementary components of American design.

Scholarship at Winterthur, even within the graduate program alone, reinforces a connection between early American and more modern objects and histories. To date there have been 519 theses written by WPAMC students. Of these theses, 85 cover twentieth century content.¹⁴⁵ Though it is not a majority 16% is a significant proportion that indicates scholars at Winterthur are inspired by early America but are not defined by it. Winterthur's collection has the power to foster scholarship and experience far beyond the scope of what Henry Francis du Pont could have envisioned. Twentieth century scholarship and objects are not at odds with Winterthur's collection and mission; they are an extension and expression of it.

Florence Knoll famously said, "No compromise, ever."¹⁴⁶ A close relative of Henry Francis du Pont, Lamont du Pont Copeland, is quoted as saying, "Henry

¹⁴⁴ Pulos, *The American Design Adventure, 1940-1975*, 24.

¹⁴⁵ It is difficult to calculate the number of theses that created scholarship outside of Winterthur's initial collecting policy and focus because there are so many topics that challenge this boundary and cross between time periods. This breadth of scholarship suggests that postindustrial and modern objects have been a part Winterthur's intellectual output since its founding. Including a century of the nude in America Art a thesis by McSherry E. Fowble. (McSherry E. Fowble "A Century of the Nude in American Art 1750-1850," University of Delaware, 1967.)

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in Cherie Fehrman, and Kenneth Fehrman, 123.

Francis du Pont was, above all things, a perfectionist.”¹⁴⁷ Florence Knoll and other midcentury modern designers were relentless in their drive to design and craft quality furniture for the masses by utilizing technologically innovative material. Winterthur’s founder Henry Francis du Pont was relentless in his advocacy for American made objects and the importance of these objects as distillations of the American material experience. The legacy of his collecting should not be understood as separate from the work he did to advance the field of American decorative arts scholarship. Winterthur’s midcentury modern furniture collection should not be understood in opposition to its collection of early Americana. Rather, the collections at Winterthur presents the opportunity to find unity in form, function and influence throughout American design.

Dozens of books have been published on Henry Francis du Pont and the Winterthur collections. Not one has mentioned the midcentury modern furniture that has been in used throughout this institution since it opened to public. It is time that we unify this midcentury modern collection in order to better understand Winterthur as a museum, Henry Francis du Pont as a collector and midcentury modernism as a movement.

¹⁴⁷ Quoted in Donald L. Fennimore, *Eye for Excellence: Masterworks from Winterthur* (Winterthur, Del: The Museum, 1994.)

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Appendix A
CATALOGUE OF MIDCENTURY MODERN FURNITURE AT
WINTERTHUR

Note: The full Midcentury Modern Furniture Catalogue, which includes images of each object, is only available in person at the Winterthur Museum Library. To access the complete catalogue please visit the Winterthur Library (105 Kennett Pike, Winterthur, DE 19735). The catalogue is housed on the Winterthur Library N Drive and is titled, “Midcentury Modern Furniture Catalogue.”

Cataloguing a large collection of furniture is a lengthy process, facilitated by a team of scholars and staff. In my project cataloguing midcentury objects, I was fortunate enough to have assistance from almost every department at Winterthur. The estate historian, Jeff Groff, was crucial in supporting and developing this project, but I would be remiss if I did not pay special attention in thanking Winterthur’s Preventive conservators including Joelle Wickens and Melissa King as well as the entire Registration Department.

I want to begin by emphasizing that this is a working catalogue. Despite my best efforts, I was not able to catalogue every object in every space at Winterthur. These objects are still in use and are therefore constantly being moved across the institution. Furthermore, Winterthur is a sprawling campus of over a hundred buildings. These objects have moved fluidly for over 50 years and tracking each and every object down is an impossible task for one person. The catalogue itself, like

Winterthur's catalogue of collection accessioned objects, is also a working document. It is my deepest hope that future scholars find the midcentury modern objects at Winterthur as compelling as I have and that they build on this foundational body of knowledge.

If one comes across an object in Winterthur's collection that they believe is a midcentury modern object the first thing they should do is look for a green, "MF" number. The Registrars and I chose to label each object with "MF" followed by the object number. The "MF" signifies the object is part of the Modern Furniture Collection and the number is intended to assist in finding the object in the catalogue. Green ink was selected to designate that the furniture was different from general collection objects which are tagged with red ink.

When possible, photographs of the object were taken from the front, side, back and underside. All manufacturing labels were also photographed when possible. These images are housed in the full digital catalogue housed at the Winterthur Library. I hope that future scholars are able to reference these images in order to get an initial understanding and interpretation of the objects.

The conservation department guided me in executing the most object-safe methods for handling and tagging objects. Working directly with Preventive Conservation, I learned about using B72 (a thermoplastic resin used by many museums) which acts as a barrier between the object and its label. Once B72 is applied and dried the object was numbered with green acrylic paint. It is then finished with another layer of B72 that acted as a top coat. If possible, the catalogue number was put on metal to avoid any degradation to the objects.

Registration guided me through all of the necessary information that would be needed for my catalogue to be compatible with KE EMu (the database the Winterthur museum uses for its collection.)

Although, these are not collection objects, I wanted to treat them with the same amount of care and acknowledgement that Winterthur uses for their collection objects. In this way, I hope that I am creating a body of research that foster the work of future scholars.

For logistical reasons, the complete fields for the objects could not be listed in the version of the catalogue included with this thesis. Many fields have been deleted and the titles of each field have been abbreviated. The fields presented on the complete catalogue are:

(Object ID;)

(Object Name; Other Name)

(Category)

(Accession Details)

(Provenance Name; Role; Notes)

(Creator Name; Creator Role; Date of Birth; Date of Death)

(Design Date, Manufacturing Date, Purchase Date)

(Mark/Signature; Type; Location; Text; Dated earliest - latest; Creation notes)

(State; County; City)

(Description; Date; Author; Materials)

(Height; Width; Depth)

(References)

(Current Location; Current Location Date; Purpose; Movement Notes)

(Condition Status; Date Checked; Checked By; Condition Details)”

These fields straightforwardly and accurately accommodate Winterthur’s collection of historic objects that tend to predate the twentieth century. However, when this system was used for midcentury modern objects, there were some logistical difficulties such as the Creator field. Because these objects are industrially produced, there are often multiple people who can be credited for the design and production of an object. Midcentury modernism is notorious for designer-branded objects such as the Bertoia chair. And while Harry Bertoia was central in designing his famous Knoll line it is likely that he acted in direct collaboration with others at Knoll. I tried to acknowledge all of those present in the design process when I felt there was evidence to support a collaborative effort. As this scholarship continues I hope that more research is conducted on design collaboration, so we can have a better understanding of how these objects came into existence.

Certain forms were far easier to attribute than others. Some objects have obvious makers such as the Saarinen Armless Chair. Others like the desks, credenzas and tables do not. This should be kept in mind when using this catalogue as a reference.

The use of the company name Knoll was also a complicated matter. Knoll has gone through various branding shifts since the company was founded in 1938. It is currently known as Knoll, Inc. but what we think of as Knoll has had at least seven other names since 1938. I chose to use “Knoll Associates Inc.” because that is the title the company used when most of this furniture was purchased. I wanted to acknowledge the objects’ origin, but I do worry that this

naming could be confusing for future scholars and that it could fail to acknowledge the evolution of the company.

I hope that future scholars are better able to work out how to accommodate the spectrum of a living company within the parameters of a museum catalogue.

Interestingly, the midcentury modern objects within Winterthur tend to travel in groups. That is to say, you will rarely find a single midcentury modern object in an office or room. It seems as though staff choose to have as many pieces of midcentury modern furniture as they can in their offices. And they almost always have more than one piece, in a manner that is reminiscent of the complete interiors the furniture was designed for. I believe that the consistency of midcentury modern objects existing in groups reflects the longevity of the design intention for these objects.

Object ID	Object Name	Creator Name	Mark/Signature	Description; Date; Author; Materials	Height; Width; Depth	Current Location	Condition Status
MF 1	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Herman Miller label bottom of seat	Orange molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs and hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;21;16	M518 center table	fibre glass chair body shows significant stains and markings
MF 2	Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Art Metal/Knoll label bottom of seat	Rectangular orange polyurethane upholstered back and seat on metal frame	31;19;21	Guides Lounge	Minor scratching on upholstery
MF 3	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Written in marker on base, " M 202 A.H.S"	Orange upholstered Eames Shell chairs; Entire fiber glass body covered in vinyl or polyurethane textile with stacking handles all four feet are in tacked	31;18.5;12.5	2nd Floor Lunch Room; South Wing;	Wire that runs along the back rail is coming off the back - VERY RARE
MF 4	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Knoll International ; 1938-present;	Label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black	32;22;19	M 107; Ellen's Office;	Small tear in bottom left rail of

		Eero Saarinen;1910-1961		polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.		South Wing	upholstery otherwise fairly good condition
MF 5	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Ray Eames;1912-1988; Charles Eames;1907-1978	2 labels on the bottom of the seat 1 is a Herman miller sticker the other is a patent label	Cream molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	30;18;21	Public Safety R111	good condition
MF 6	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associated Inc.	2 labels on the bottom of the seat	Rectangular ash chair back, seat and legs. Green woven upholstery on seat and back.	31;21.5;21	M112	good condition
MF 7	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Knoll Associates Inc; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	1 Knoll label on the bottom of the seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered in polyester striped fabric; four legs are a metal alloy	31;18;12	M112	The upholstery is disintegrating particularly on the back rail of the chair
MF 8	Credenza	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label on the front, "460" - could be label on the back could not move in office	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors on cabinet doors featuring pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs. Interior features one shelf.	27;48;18	M112	

MF 9	Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label from Knoll on bottom of the seat	Rectangular metal frame and legs with blue polyester upholstered seat and back	30;17;18	Glass Study Back Room storage	very good condition
MF 10	Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label from Knoll on bottom of the seat	Rectangular metal frame and legs with blue polyester upholstered seat and back	30;17;18	Glass Study Back Room storage	very good condition
MF 11	Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label from Knoll on bottom of the seat	Curved ash(?) frame with green upholstered seat	30;20;19	Glass Study Back Room storage	Very good condition
MF 13	Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label from Knoll on bottom of the seat	Curved ash (?) frame with orange upholstered seat	30;20;19	Glass Study Back Room storage	Very good condition
MF 12	Table	Thos La Thomas	Label on bottom of center point of legs	Round Table with four legs that are supported by a bottom by central "X" support	16;41;41	Glass Study Back Room storage	Very good condition
MF 14	Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label from Knoll on bottom	Curved ash (?) frame with blue upholstered seat and back	30;17;18	Glass Study Back Room storage	Very good condition
MF 15	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label 975 on front rail of desk - Knoll label on bottom of desk table	One locking sliding drawer over a larger rectangular drawer. Desk sits on a metal frame. Drawer fronts are veneered fiber board drawer sides are solid oak. Desk top is laminate.	29;60;26	M405	chips on right side of top and bottom drawer indicative of ware
MF 16	Table	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Knoll label on the bottom of the table	Metal frame and legs with laminate top	29;60;26	M402	tape on left front leg metal shows ware
MF 17	Credenza	Art Metal	Label on interior	Two sliding taupe metal doors -	27;60;18	M402	the front drawers

			left side "Art Metal Inc Jamesto wn NY"	brown laminate top - see notes regarding Art Metal			appear to have been painted unsure if that is original or not
MF 18	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterth ur label on the left corner of desk edge "1074"	3 sliding drawers on left- and right- hand side of desk. Top drawer locks on each. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal chrome legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored lament.	29;60;30	M402A	Chipping on the right side of drawer fronts
MF 19	Creden za	Knoll	Winterth ur label that reads "533" and is on the front center edge of the top	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors. Cabinet doors feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs. Top is lament.	27;48;18	M402A	Chipping on surface of doors
MF 20	Creden za	Probably Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938- present	No Knoll sticker - Winterth ur sticker on left side of front top edge 1273	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors. Cabinet doors feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs. Top is lament.	27;48;18	M408	chipping on surface
MF 21	Creden za	Probably Knoll Associates	No Knoll sticker - Winterth ur sticker	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors. Cabinet doors	27;48;18	M408	Chipping on surface

		Inc.; 1938-present	on center of side of front top edge 496	feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs. Top is lament.			
MF 22	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associates Inc.	Label on bottom of chair seat	"Library Chair," "Rectangular ash chair seat, back and legs with flannel green and orange upholstery textile (could be original)	32;23;21	M407	
MF 23	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associates Inc.	Label on bottom of chair seat	"Library Chair," Rectangular ash chair seat, back and legs with flannel green and orange upholstery textile (could be original)	32;23;21	M407	
MF 24	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present	Knoll Label on bottom left of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	31;19;13	M419	Ware on the back of chair where it connects to the seat
MF 25	Credenza	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Knoll label on back upper left-hand corner - Winterthur 504 label on the center edge of credenza's top	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors. Cabinet doors feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs.	28;36;18	M501	fairly good condition some scrape marks on the front of the doors

MF 26	Chair; Bertioia Diamond Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Harry Bertioia; 1915-1978	Knoll label on the bottom near the front edge of the chair	Knoll Bertioia Diamond Chair; Curvilinear welded stainless-steel wire grid composes the chair body. Orange wool upholstery covers chair	30;30;33	M504	VERY good condition though lacking upholstery
MF 27	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Knoll label on bottom of right-hand top of L shaped desk	L shaped desk with three walnut veneer sliding drawers on the left-hand side and a swinging veneered walnut veneer door on the right. Cream colored laminate desk top. Metal legs extend from desk top to floor on the left. Metal feet support the right side of desk.	29;60;26 (left hand desk) 26;44;20 (right hand desk)	M508	A lot of chipping particularly on the right edge of the sliding drawers
MF 28	Chair; Bertioia Diamond Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Harry Bertioia; 1915-1978	Knoll label on the front edge of chair and on the base of the seat	Knoll Bertioia Diamond Chair; Curvilinear welded stainless-steel wire grid composes the chair body. Orange wool upholstery covers chair	30;30;33	M515	Some staining on the fabric and upholstery disintegrated
MF 29	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Herman Miller Furniture Co.; 190-present; Ray Eames; 1912 -1988; Charles Eames; 1907 -1978	Herman Miller label on the bottom of seat at front edge	Orange molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs and hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;21;16	M515	some black coating on the upper part of the chair; missing front right foot
MF 30	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman	label on front edge of	"Library Chair," Rectangular ash chair seat, back and legs with	31;21.5; 21	M515	fairly good condition

		Associates Inc.	bottom of seat	flannel green and orange upholstery textile (could be original)			
MF 31	Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Two Knoll labels on front edge of the seat bottom	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered in woven orange textile ; four legs are chrome metal	34;20;15	M516	some black staining on seat of chair
MF 32	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label on front edge "485"	3 sliding drawers on left t hand side of desk. Top drawer locks . Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored lument.	29;66;32	M512A	Difficult to see due to yuletide stuff covering it
MF 33	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Herman Miller Furniture Co.;190-present; Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Charles Eames;1907 -1978	2 Herman Miller Labels on the bottom of the chair seat	Elephant gray molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;21;16	M518 back	Legs show normal signs of dirt and ware, but body of chair is in good condition
MF 34	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Knoll label on the bottom of the center of desk top Winterthur label on front ledge "1382"	3 sliding drawers on left hand side of desk 2 drawers on the right-hand side of desk. Top drawer locks on each. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is	29;66;32	M518	Drawer fronts show significant damage including replaced veneer

				walnut colored lament.			
MF 35	Creden za	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterth ur label on front edge "1434"	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors. Cabinet doors feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a brown leather handle. Credenza has no legs.	20;36;18	M518	significan t chips on drawer fronts
MF 36	Creden za	Art Metal	Winterth ur label on left corner of front edge 1343 - interior label for Art Metal Jamesto wn	NOT A FULLY RELEVANT OBJECT Two sliding door cream colored metal credenza with lament wood top and silver metal legs - door pulls are silver metal	27;36;18	M518	Some markings on metal surface of doors
MF 37	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacture r Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905- present; Designer Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907 -1978	Two labels from Herman Miller on the bottom of the seat	Elephant grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;21;16	M518	good condition
MF 38	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacture r Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905- present; Designer Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Designer Charles	Two labels from Herman Miller on the bottom of the seat	Orange molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;21;16	M518	Some black markings particular ly on back of chair

		Eames;1907-1978					
MF 39	Cabinet	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label on the front reads "561" Knoll label on back left leg upper corner	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors. Cabinet doors feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs.	36;28;18	Building 40 Dairy Barn - Main room at top floor entrance - northwest entrance	
MF 40	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Knoll sticker on bottom of desk top	3 sliding drawers. . Top drawer locks. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.	67;29;32	Building 40 Dairy Barn - Main room at top floor entrance - northwest entrance	
MF 41 NOT NUMBERED	Clock	General Electric; 1892 - present	Label on the face of clock reads, "General Electric"	Plywood frame with face that appears to be a metal laminate face	NOT MEASURED approx. 11;6;3	M518	
MF 42	Credenza	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label on the front center rail "Winterthur Museum 530"	Rectangular cabinet with two sliding doors. Cabinet doors feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs.	48;28;18	M519	right door leather handle shows significant signs of wear and is almost completely removed - surface of doors is in good condition
MF 43	L Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label on the front center	L shaped desk with three sliding drawers on the left-hand side of the taller desk.	Upper Desk 66;29;31 Lower	M519	

			edge of taller desk reads "Winterthur Museum 530"	The taller desk also features a white Formica top that is trimmed in plywood. The desk has long steel legs that extend from the table top to the floor. The shorter desk is of the same plywood and white Formica top but features short steel legs that extend from the bottom of the desk to floor the shorter desk has one door that opens on a hinge concealing rail supports for three pull out drawers that are no longer with the piece.	Desk 47;26;20		
MF 44	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present		3 sliding drawers on left hand side of desk. 1 sliding drawer above a swinging drawer on the other side. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.	32;66;29	M518 Daniella's Desk	
MF 45	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered in woven green and	33;19;17	M 609 Ann's Office	VERY GOOD SHAPE even the foam is in good condition

				blue textile; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.			
MF 46	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered with blue textile; four legs are a metal alloy	33;19;17	M611 Josh Office	Upholstery is heavily degraded
MF 47	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered with brown striped textile; four legs are a metal alloy	33;19;17	M612 Leslie's Office	Upholstery in good shape textile does not show significant wear or stains
MF 48	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered with brown striped textile; four legs are a metal alloy	33;19;17	M614 Linda's Office	foam upholstery is significantly degraded - textile in good shape
MF 49	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	M614 Linda's Office	Seams on front of seat are detaching and upholstery is falling out

MF 50	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered with brown speckled tweed potentially wool; four legs are a metal alloy	33;19;17	M616 Stephanie's Office	VERY GOOD SHAPE even the foam is in good condition
MF 51	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label on front rail reads "Winterthur 495"	3 sliding drawers on left- and right-hand side of desk. Top drawer locks on each. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.	29;60;31	M 618	Slightly chipping on the bottom right hand drawer front but otherwise VERY good condition
MF 52	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Winterthur label on front rail reads "Winterthur 1546"	Steel desk with three sliding drawers on the left-hand side and an imitation walnut laminate top	25;60;30	M 618	Sides of desk need to be cleaned but otherwise in good condition
MF 53	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered with blue textile; four legs are a metal alloy	33;19;17	M620	Textile dirty - foam upholstery very collapsed
MF 54	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair	33;19;17	M620	VERY GOOD CONDITION

		Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.			
MF 55	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	M620	VERY GOOD CONDITION
MF 56	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round tan polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	33;19;17	M620	VERY GOOD CONDITION
MF 57	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round white polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	33;19;17	M620	white upholstery has staining on the upper chair back
MF 58	Chair	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label on bottom	Chair with curved back and arms. Woven blue textile over upholstered swivel chair with metal base	31;26;16	M620	
MF 59	Table	Manufacturer Knoll	Knoll label on	Square table with cream Formica	30;48;48	M620	some chips on

		Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	bottom of table top	top and dark brown tapering plywood legs. Interior support is light plywood square frame.			legs but very good condition
MF 60	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered with brown speckled tweed potentially wool; four legs are a metal alloy	33;19;17	M623	Chair back is degrading
MF 61	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round chair back and seat upholstered with green and blue tweed potentially wool; four legs are a metal alloy	33;19;17	M623	VERY GOOD CONDITION upholstery fully intact
MF 62	Stool; Chair	I.V. Furniture Corp	Label on bottom of seat	Black polyurethane upholstered seat-stool with long metal legs	38;18;11	M701	Good condition leather shows no signs of wear or use
MF 63	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.; 1905-present; Designer Ray Eames; 1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames; 1907-1978	Label on bottom of seat	Dark grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;18;12	M701	metal legs are beginning to rust but otherwise in good condition

MF 64	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Label on bottom of seat	Dark grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;18;12	M701	metal legs are beginning to rust but otherwise in good condition
MF 65	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Label on bottom of seat	Grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;18;12	RLF07	Fiber glass chair body show significant degradation and chipping
MF 66	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round cream polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	33;19;17	RLF07	black staining on back and seat of chair
MF 67	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associated Inc.	Roffman label on bottom of chair seat	Maple frame chair with green tweed upholstery	31;20;19	RLF8-A	
MF 68	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair on wheels; Round green tweed upholstered chair	32;19;13	RLF06A	Casters need to be oiled

		Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		back and seat; on four wheels with brushed metal base			
MF 69	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associated Inc.		Maple frame chair with green tweed upholstery	31;20;19	RLF 06A	the upholstery on the bottom of the seat is detaching from the chair frame
MF 70	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label inside top drawer - Winterthur label on front rail "Winterthur Museum 608"	3 sliding drawers on left hand side of desk. Top drawer locks. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.	29;66;32	RLF06	Chipping on the drawer fronts but desk top in very good condition
MF 71	Table	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label underneath the table top	Rectangular table with cream Formica top and steel legs	29;76;35	RLF06	VERY GOOD CONDITION
MF 72	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round light brown polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	33;19;17	Prints and Painting Study	re plastered
MF 73	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round light brown polyurethane	33;19;17	Prints and Painting Study	re upholstered

				upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood			
MF 74	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round light brown polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	33;19;17	Prints and Painting Study	re upholstered
MF 75	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round light brown polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	33;19;17	Prints and Painting Study	re upholstered
MF 76	Cubicle	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Knoll label on bottom of table top	Cream colored Formica table top and cubicle sides with black metal legs	36;28;24	R208	some scratching on left side of partition
MF 77	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	R209	
MF 78	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair	33;19;17	R209A	

				back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.			
MF 79	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	R209A	
MF 80	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	R209A	
MF 81	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	R209A	
MF 82	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.; 1905-present; Designer Ray Eames; 1912-1988; Designer	Two Herman Miller Labels on the bottom of the chair	Elephant grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked.	32;17;12	R210	Legs show some sign of rustication

		Charles Eames;1907-1978					
MF 83	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll ;1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of table top	Rectangular metal table with cherry laminate top and black brushed steel metal frame and legs	28;60;32	R210	
MF 84	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	R210	Legs show some sign of rustication
MF 85	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll ;1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of table top	Rectangular metal table with cherry laminate top and black brushed steel metal frame and legs	28;52;32	R210	Top shows significant signs of ware
MF 86	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll ;1917-present		Rectangular metal table with cherry laminate top and black brushed steel metal frame and legs	28;52;32	R210	Top shows significant signs of ware
MF 87	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll	Knoll label on bottom of table top	Rectangular metal table with cherry laminate top and black brushed steel metal frame and legs	28;52;32	R210	Top shows significant signs of ware

		;1917-present					
MF 88	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll ;1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of table top	Rectangular metal table with cherry laminate top and black brushed steel metal frame and legs	28;52;32	R210	Top shows significant signs of ware
MF 89	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll ;1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of table top	Rectangular metal table with cherry laminate top and black brushed steel metal frame and legs	28;52;32	R210	Top shows significant signs of ware
MF 90	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue tweed upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	33;19;17	R202	
MF 91	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal pedestal base with four feet	19;29;13	R202	
MF 92	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present;	Two Knoll labels on the	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile	19;29;13	R202	

		Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	bottom of seat	upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal pedestal base with four feet			
MF 93	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal pedestal base with four feet	19;29;13	R202	
MF 94	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal pedestal base with four feet	19;29;13	R202	
MF 95	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal pedestal base with four feet	19;29;13	R202	
MF 96	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938-present; Eero Saarinen;1910-1961;	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal	19;29;13	R202	

		Florence Knoll; 1917-present		pedestal base with four feet			
MF 97	Chair;"D CM" Side Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R202A	
MF 98	Chair;"D CM" Side Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Two Herman Miller Labels on the bottom of the chair	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R202A	
MF 99	Chair;"D CM" Side Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R202A	
MF 100	Chair;"D CM" Side Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-	Herman Miller Label on the	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R202A	

		present; Designer Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907 -1978	bottom of seat				
MF 101	Chair;"D CM" Side Chair	Manufacture r Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905- present; Designer Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907 -1978	Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R202A	
MF 102	Chair;"D CM" Side Chair	Manufacture r Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905- present; Designer Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907 -1978	Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R202A	
MF 103	Chair;"D CM" Side Chair	Manufacture r Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905- present; Designer Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907 -1978	Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R202A	

MF 104	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	19;30;15	R202A	
MF 105	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal pedestal base with four feet	19;29;13	R202A	
MF 106	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	19;29;15	R202A	
MF 107	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Woven orange synthetic textile upholstered chair back and seat sits on metal pedestal base with four feet	19;29;13	R202A	
MF 108	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present;	Label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless; Round cream polyurethane	19;30;15	R203A	

		Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present		upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved cherry plywood			
MF 109	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless; Round cream polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	19;30;15	R203A	Burn hole on upper chair back
MF 110	Credenza	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present		Rectangular cabinet with four sliding doors. Cabinet doors feature pickled oak veneer. Each door has a black leather handle. Credenza rests on four black metal legs.	72;28;18	R203	Fairly good condition few noticeable chips
MF 111	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless; Round woven teal textile upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	19;30;15	R203C	upholstery is breaking down otherwise good condition
MF 112	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associated Inc.	Label on bottom of seat	Rectangular solid maple wood chair with original (?) flannel green and orange upholstery	32;23;21	R203B	

MF 113	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associated Inc.		Rectangular solid wood chair with original (?) flannel green and orange upholstery	32;23;21	R203B	
MF 114	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Label in top drawer	Toms Desk: the best desk at Winterthur. 3 sliding drawers on right hand side of desk. Top drawer locks . Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored lamenent.	32;66;29	R203B	VERY GOOD CONDITION USE IN EXHIBIT
MF 115	Chair: Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	19;30;15	R206	
MF 116	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are curved walnut plywood	19;30;15	R206	

MF 117	Table; Saarinen Side Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Saarinen Side Table; Pedestal table with white painted metal base and round walnut top	22;20;11	R105	AMAZING PIECE GREAT FOR EXHIBIT MUST BE IN SHOW
MF 118	Chair; Bertioia Diamond Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Harry Bertioia; 1915-1978	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Knoll Bertioia Diamond Chair; Curvilinear welded stainless-steel grid composes the chair body. Orange wool upholstery covers chair	29;33;11	R105	upholstery very deteriorated but otherwise good
MF 119	Chair; Bertioia Diamond Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Harry Bertioia; 1915-1978	Two Knoll labels on the bottom of seat	Knoll Bertioia Diamond Chair; Curvilinear welded stainless-steel grid composes the chair body. Orange wool upholstery covers chair	29;33;11	R105	upholstery very deteriorated but otherwise good
MF 120	Desk	Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present	Knoll label inside top right hand drawer	2 sliding drawers on right hand side of desk 1 swinging door on the left. Top drawer on right locks. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.	66;29;32	R106	drawer fronts show significant wear
MF 121	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associated Inc.		Rectangular solid maple wood chair reupholstered green fabric	19;31;19	R106	Reupholstered
MF 122	Chair	Edward Axel Roffman Associated Inc.		Rectangular solid maple wood chair	19;31;19	R107	Reupholstered

				reupholstered green fabric			
MF 123	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Saarinen Executive Arm Chair; Round orange vinyl upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	25;30;20	R109	Significant light fading on vinyl
MF 124	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.; 1905-present; Designer Ray Eames; 1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames; 1907-1978	Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat	Light grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked	18;32;12	R109	Fairly good condition
MF 125	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.; 1905-present; Designer Ray Eames; 1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames; 1907-1978	Two Herman Miller Labels on the bottom of the chair	Light grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked	18;32;12	R109	Fairly good condition
MF 126	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll;	Knoll label on the bottom of the seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are a metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	31;19;15	R109	

		1917-present					
MF127	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	18;31;14	R109	
MF128	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	18;31;14	R109	
MF129	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Saarinen Executive Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back, arms and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	35;21;16	R109	
MF130	Settee	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll ;1917-present		Rectangular tweed upholstered couch with walnut plywood legs	55;29;29	R109	
MF131	Desk	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present	Winterthur 1087 label	3 sliding drawers on left hand side of desk. Top drawer on right locks. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.	60;29;31	R109	Desk drawer fronts show significant chips and scratches
MF132	Desk	Manufacturer Knoll Associates	Winterthur 505 Label	3 drawers on the left-hand side and on the right 1	66;29;32	R 109 Back room	Desk drawer fronts

		Inc.; 1938 – present		sliding drawer and 1 swinging door. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.			show significant chips and scratches
MF 133	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Florence Knoll ;1917-present		Rectangular metal table with cherry laminate top and black brushed steel metal frame and legs	52;28;31	R 109 Back room	legs show lots of scratching
MF 134	Chair;"DCM" Side Chair	Manufacturer Herman Miller Furniture Co.;1905-present; Designer Ray Eames;1912-1988; Designer Charles Eames;1907-1978	Herman Miller label on bottom of seat	Molded birch plywood chair with steel legs and rubber feet	19;29;16	R205	VERY GOOD LITTLE TO NO CHIPPING EXHIBIT ?
MF 135	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue tweed upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	19;32;13	R205	Foam has degraded significantly otherwise good condition
MF 136	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present;	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue tweed	19;32;13	R205	Foam has degraded significantly

		Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present		upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood			otherwise good condition
MF137	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue tweed upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	19;32;13	R205	
MF 138	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round tan polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	19;32;13	R205	
MF 139	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue tweed upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	19;32;13	R205	
MF 140	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue tweed upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	19;32;13	R205	

		Florence Knoll; 1917-present					
MF 141	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels under seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue tweed upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	19;32;13	R205	
MF 142	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present	Knoll label under table top	Rectangular table with grey steel metal legs and frame and a cream laminate top	76;36;29	R205	Laminate top in very good condition
MF 143	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present	Knoll label under table top	Rectangular table with grey steel metal legs and frame and a cream laminate top	76;36;29	R205	Laminate top has minor scratching
MF 144	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label under table top	Square table with cherry plywood top and brushed black steel legs and frame	34;28;34	R205 B	Plywood top shows chipping
MF 145	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence	Two Knoll labels under seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are walnut plywood	24;30;16	R206	

		Knoll; 1917- present					
MF 146	Table; Saarine n Side Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present		Black steel legs and frame with laminate top	29;76;36	R109 Back Room	Significa nt scratche s and staining
MF 147	Desk	Manufacture r Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present	Winterth ur Label on front rail reads "506"	3 sliding drawers on right hand side of desk. Top drawer on right locks. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminant.	60;31;29	R202C	Drawer fronts show significan t ware
MF 148	Chair; Saarine n Chair	Manufacture r Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 19 10-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present	Knoll label on base of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round brown tweed wool (?) upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	19;31;14	R202C	Upholste ry very deteriorat ed but otherwis e good
MF 149	Chair; Saarine n Chair	Manufacture r Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 19 10-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917- present	Knoll label on base of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round black polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	19;31;14	R311	Upholste ry good condition

MF 150	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on base of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round orange woven textile upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	19;31;14	R309A	Upholstery in very good condition
MF 151	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present	Knoll label on base of seat	Woven blue upholstered textile on metal base rectangular chair back and seat	18;31;18	R309A	Some stains on textile
MF 152	Chair	?		Walnut (?) solid wood chair with tapered arms. Rectangular chair back and seat. Striped upholstery used. Used to be in coat closet on the second floor	24;32;22	R309A	Foam has degraded significantly otherwise good condition
MF 153	Table	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label under table top	Pedestal table with white painted metal base and walnut plywood top	20;22;11	R309A	good condition
MF 154	Chair; Platner Arm Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Warren Platner; 1919-2006		Vertical steel rods welded to a circular base comprise the body of the chair; upholstered	36;28;15	R401A	needs to be cleaned but seat upholstery foam is

				round seat and back			in good condition
MF 155	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round red polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R413	splattered paint on upholstery
MF 156	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R413	
MF 157	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R413	
MF 158	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat;	32;14;18	R413	

		Saarinen;1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present		four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.			
MF159	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R413	
MF160	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R413	
MF161	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen;1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round red polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R413	splattered black paint on textile

MF 162	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Knoll label on base of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round orange polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R413	upholstery degraded
MF 163	Chair; Bertioia Diamond Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present; Designer Harry Bertioia; 1915-1978	Knoll label on base of seat	Bertioia Diamond Chair; Curvilinear welded stainless-steel grid composes the chair body. Orange wool upholstery covers chair	30;33;15	R413	upholstery degraded
MF 164	Desk	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present	Knoll label inside top drawer - Winterthur label "596" on top desk rail	3 sliding drawers on right hand side of desk. Top drawer on right locks. Drawer fronts are walnut veneered lumber core. Four metal legs extend from desk top to ground. Desk top is cream colored laminate.	60;30;30	R41	middle drawer significantly chipped
MF 165	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel.	32;14;18	R41	

MF 166	Chair; Saarinen Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 - present; Designer Eero Saarinen; 1910-1961; Designer Florence Knoll; 1917-present	Two Knoll labels on bottom of seat	Saarinen Executive Armless Chair; Round blue polyurethane upholstered chair back and seat; four legs are metal alloy with instant chrome over steel. Joyce Hill Stoner "Andrew Wyeth sat in that chair"	32;14;18	R406B	On chair back reads "Dark Room 405" in black marker
MF 167	Chair	Manufacturer Knoll Associates Inc.; 1938 – present	Two Knoll labels on bottom of seat	Cream pleather upholstered rolling chair with metal frame and four rolling feet - Joyce Hill Stoner "We had to get ride of all the chairs that only had four rolling wheels for safety reasons	32;13;17	R406	in good condition could be good for exhibition
MF 168	Chair; Eames Shell Chair	Herman Miller Furniture Co.;190-present; Ray Eames;1912 -1988; Charles Eames;1907 -1978	One Herman Miller label on bottom of seat	Dark grey molded fiberglass chair body on four metal legs - hooks on two of the legs indicate chairs are designed to be stacked	18;32;12	East Storage - Grey Building	Missing front right plastic foot body of chair in good condition

Appendix B

PROPOSAL FOR ACQUISITION OF MIDCENTURY MODERN FURNITURE INTO WINTERTHUR'S COLLECTION

MEMORANDUM

WINTERTHUR



DATE: April 1, 2019
TO: Carol B. Cadou
FROM: Carrie Greif
RE: **Gift Offer**

The Institutional Mission of the Winterthur Museum and Garden is stated in the collections management policy finalized in January of 2018. It reads, “Winterthur’s mission is to preserve and enhance the legacy of its founder, Henry Francis du Pont, for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, including: the care, development, and study of its preeminent collection of decorative and fine art made in America...” If the mission is to preserve and enhance the legacy of Henry Francis du

Pont than Winterthur's newly catalogued and researched midcentury modern furniture collection presents an incredible opportunity. The objects in Winterthur's midcentury modern furniture collection act as material evidence to Henry Francis du Pont's broad aesthetic vision. They are also American made decorative art objects that speak to a distinct moment in American design. These objects are part of an important decorative movement that changed American interiors. They are an important part of our institution that need to be acknowledged and cared for.

Currently, Winterthur's collection of midcentury modern furniture includes 173 different objects. While, this furniture is important to Winterthur's institutional history as well as the history of American decorative arts, it is not the recommendation of this curator that all of the objects should be added into the collection. Logistically, all of these objects are still in use and keeping track of all them in a way that satisfies the conservation and registrations regulations of this institution would be impossible. Philosophically, Winterthur's collection policy states that it aims to collect objects that exemplify the finest workmanship and design and/or are the best example of a representative type and/or make a contribution to the story of the development of American arts.

The recommendation of this curator is that eight of these objects fulfill all of the above criteria and therefore should be accessioned. These objects are not the high-end pinnacle of midcentury modern furniture. They have been in use for 60 years and are thus not in perfect condition. These very facts surrounding their materiality are what make them such important objects for Winterthur to collect. These eight objects

say something important about the history of midcentury modern design as well as the history of the movement at Winterthur. It would be incredible to see these objects continually used in the galleries as points of constructional comparison between early American objects.




Central to midcentury modernism was the idea of democratizing design. These objects express that aesthetic in their industrial midrange materiality. These were accessible objects that a wide range of people would have experienced. Many museums collect midcentury modern furnishings. But their collections focus only on high-end objects. These objects are not the most genuine expression of midcentury modern design. As an authority on American furniture, Winterthur is presented with the opportunity to alter the broader framework that surrounds the collection and appreciation of midcentury modern objects. By housing a collection that is honest to the foundational intention of midcentury modern design, Winterthur can signal to other institutions how important these objects are as expressions of the midcentury modern aesthetic.




The less than perfect condition of these objects presents a range of important opportunities. First, it allows for an understanding of how these objects were used and appreciated within our institution and thereby speaking to our institutional legacy. Patterns of wear need to be documented and understood so Winterthur can begin to appreciate the material legacy of those who came before us in our professional setting.



Furthermore, Winterthur is renowned for its institutional innovation and proliferation in the field of conservation. My research has taught me that there are

almost no scientific studies of the material that comprises these midcentury modern furnishings. As far as I can tell, I was the first scholar to x-ray the fiberglass on a Saarinen 72 chair. Our findings showed us that this is a physical difference between the fiberglass used on Saarinen 72 chairs than that used on Eames Shell Chairs. This is an exciting discovery that needs more study and research. There is no institution more perfectly poised to build a scientific study of these objects' materiality. Furthermore, best practices have not been discovered for how to treat these furnishings. Winterthur has one of the best conservation programs in the country and fostering the study and treatment of these objects is an amazing opportunity to the field of conservation so that we can better conserve midcentury modern objects for future generations.

What follows is a list of the object this curator recommends for acquisition. The list indicated the objects that are most prevalent in Winterthur's collection as well as those that are most important to midcentury modern design. It should be noted that no conservator was available for consultation in the making of this list. Before these objects are accessioned each should be approved by a conservator.

Image	Object Name	Condition	Current Location	Brief note on objects important
	<p>Saarinen 72 Chair</p> <p>Eero Saarinen designed</p> <p>Knoll manufactured</p>	Very good condition- Knoll label on base of seat	R206	<p>The Saarinen 72 Chair</p> <p>Is quintessentially midcentury modern. There are over 60 in use at Winterthur. The Naugahyde fabric has preserved the upholstery in nearly perfect condition</p>
	<p>MF 134</p> <p>"LCM" Side Chair</p> <p>Ray and Charles Eames designed</p> <p>Herman Miller manufactured</p>	<p>Some chipping on chair back and seat</p> <p>Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat</p>	R205	<p>The LCM is one of the most widely collected forms by museum institutions. It is adapted from the LCW which was one the first molded plywood chairs Eames manufactured.</p>
	<p>MF 117</p> <p>Saarinen Side Table</p> <p>Eero Saarinen designed</p>	Base shows some signs of ware and use	R105	<p>The pedestal collection designed by Saarinen was innovative and distinct. This table speaks to the pervasiveness</p>

	Knoll manufacture d			of midcentury modern design at Winterthur.
	MF 114 Pedestal Desk Florence Knoll Designed Knoll manufacture d	Very good condition- some minor chipping on drawer fronts Knoll label inside top drawer	R203B	Within the canon of midcentury modern furniture studies desks are underrepresente d. This desk was designed by an important and under collected female designer. It is also in very good condition
	MF 25 Credenza Potentially Florence Knoll designed Knoll manufacture d	Some chipping of wood as would be expected from use - Knoll label on left hand side of case	M501	Credenzas like desks are under collected by museum institutions. It is likely that this was designed by Florence Knoll, but more work needs to be done to prove this conclusively.
	MF 90 Saarinen 72 Chair Eero Saarinen designed	Upholstery foam is rapidly deterioratin g and needs conservatio n – metal frame should be cleaned – upholstery	R202	It is important to show the vast range in upholstery within Winterthur's collection. Upholstery was very important to the Knoll brand. Knoll

	Knoll manufacture d	in fairly good condition - Knoll label on base of seat		also worked with DuPont Chemicals to develop many upholsteries, potentially the one on this chair.
	MF 163 Diamond Chair Harry Bertoia designed Knoll manufacture d	Upholstery foam is rapidly deterioratin g and needs conservatio n – metal frame should be cleaned – upholstery in fairly good condition – Knoll label on base of seat	R413	The Bertoia Chair did not dominate Winterthur’s collection, but it is an iconic form that has important aesthetic value as a representation of midcentury modern design.
	MF Shell Chair Ray and Charles Eames designed Herman Miller manufacture d	Some ware on fiberglass chair – legs need to be cleaned - Herman Miller Label on the bottom of seat	R210	The Shell Chair was used throughout the institution. We have a photograph of Henry Francis sitting in one. It is an important form to both midcentury modernism and our museum.

These objects were essentially acquired as gifts. Since these objects were purchased during Henry Francis du Pont's lifetime it is the opinion of this curator that they should be identified as gifts from our founder.

As Winterthur continues to build its understanding and appreciation of midcentury modern design there could also be a period room created surrounding these objects. We could recreate an image of what an office at Winterthur would have look like in 1957 to give visitors an understanding of our impressive institutional as well as an understanding of how midcentury modernism was experienced in during the period.

To further Winterthur's institutional mission and expand the collections ability to represent American design, it is the recommendation of this curator that these eight objects be accessioned into the museum's collection.

Purchase Price: \$0.00

Approval

Director of Museum Collections

Approval

Director

Approval Date

Appendix C

LABEL COPY FROM EXHIBITION OF MIDCENTURY MODERN FURNITURE AT WINTERTHUR

Below is a draft of the label copy that will be Winterthur's first gallery exhibition on midcentury modernism. The content of the copy is complete though readers should note that minor changes to the content may be made before the exhibit opens May 4th 2019. To better understand the layout of the exhibition please refer to Appendix D. For a digital version of the exhibition please see midcenturymodern.winterthur.org.

(TOO1) Introduction Panel on wall opposite elevator:

Vinyl Wall quotes to go above wallpaper images in the gallery.

Vinyl

(Q001) “No compromise, ever.” Florence Knoll **(over office image on North wall)**

(Q002) “Henry Francis du Pont was, above all things, a perfectionist.” Lammot du Pont Copeland **(over image on South wall)**

Winterthur has a secret. Scattered throughout our lounges, libraries, laboratories, and offices are stashes of furniture that have as much of a story to tell about American design as the furniture that populates the rooms of the museum.

When Henry Francis du Pont opened Winterthur Museum in 1951, his intention was to expand the interest in, and interpretation of, early American decorative arts. He was known for his relentless spirit and uncompromising attention to detail that enabled him to build one of the most important collections of early Americana in the world.

In addition to the museum, over the next eighteen years he worked with architects and designers on the construction of several auxiliary buildings on the estate: a research library, conservation labs, and a visitor pavilion whose interior design presented a radically different look—and argument. From fixtures to furnishings, each of these spaces was designed in the new American style: midcentury modern. Those furnishings—more than 170 pieces—are still in use at Winterthur.

Midcentury modernism refers to the post–World War II design movement that sprung from a desire for a new way of living. The mission was to depart from the past in order to foster a better-lived experience for the future. Designers such as Ray and Charles

Eames, Florence and Hans Knoll, and Eero Saarinen, among others, crafted objects that carried the midcentury modern message to American consumers through simplicity of form, the honest use of industrial materials, and a union of art and technology. Their designs for Knoll Associates and the Herman Miller Furniture Company set a new standard for modern living.

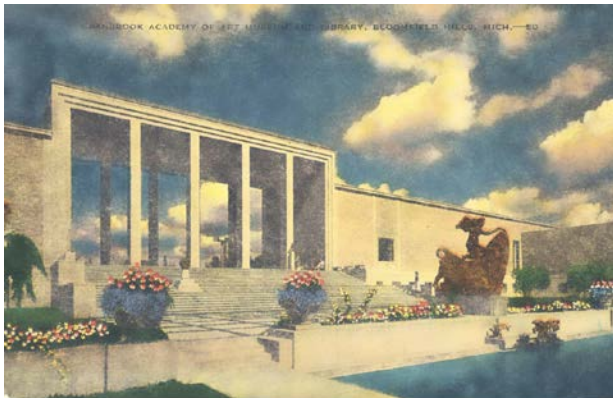
While the desire to promote and preserve American antiques may seem to be at odds with this new and alternative aesthetic, here at Winterthur these seemingly opposite expressions of Americana coexist. This exhibition takes a deep dive into midcentury modern furniture in order to better understand it as an extension of Winterthur's collection and mission—to explore what it means when traditional meets modern.

(T002) Panel Title: Midcentury Modern Designers

On short part of west wall (can be 23x44) Can cut G001, G002, and Cranbrook text if needed.

Graphics:

G001



Cranbrook Art Museum postcard, late 1940s

Published by Dean Brothers, Pontiac, Michigan

Courtesy of Cranbrook Archives, Postcard Collection

G002



Cranbrook Art Museum, ca. 2014

Courtesy of Cranbrook Archives

Cranbrook Academy of Art

“Cranbrook Academy of Art is not an art school in the ordinary meaning. It is a working place for creative art.” Eliel Saarinen

Each piece of midcentury modern furniture in the Winterthur collection can be linked to the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Eliel Saarinen (1873–1950), a Finnish architect who designed and directed the school beginning in 1932, imparted a spirit of connection among his design students, from his son, Eero, to the Eames and Knoll duos. It was at Cranbrook that midcentury modern designers developed their unique and organic styles and built relationships that were fundamental to the development of the movement.

G003



Florence and Hans Knoll

Photograph taken ca. 1950

Courtesy of Knoll Archives, New York

“Whether the project is a building, a chair or a textile...they are each expressions of the same search for a harmonious balance between usefulness and beauty.” Hans Knoll

Florence and Hans Knoll

Hans G. Knoll (1914–1955) founded the Knoll furniture firm in New York in 1938. In 1943 Hans hired, then married, the young architect Florence Marguerite Schust (1917–2019), a Cranbrook alum and close family friend of the Saarinens. Hans and Shu, as she came to be called, shared an idealism fueled by youthful ambition, enabling them to build a company that changed American interiors. The Knolls were interested in developing new and modern products by bringing in well-known designers like Saarinen, who began working for the company in 1943. Knoll Associates, Inc., still exists today, boasting \$1.3 billion in sales revenue in 2018.

G004



Ray Kaiser Eames at Eero Saarinen's home

Photograph taken in May 1980

Courtesy of Cranbrook Archives

G005



Charles Eames at Eero Saarinen's residence in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Photograph taken ca. 1950

Courtesy of Cranbrook Archives

“We want to make the best for the most for the least.” Charles Eames

Ray and Charles Eames

Bernice Alexandra “Ray” Kaiser Eames (1912–1988) and Charles Ormond Eames Jr. (1907–1978) were pioneers of midcentury modern design. They were known for their material experimentation across a slew of media, including furniture, fine art, toys,

and graphic design. The pair met at Cranbrook in 1940 and in 1941 moved to Los Angeles, where they created ingenious forms. Their furniture designs, produced by the Herman Miller Furniture Company beginning in the 1940s, are still in production today.

G006



Eero Saarinen at a drafting table

Photograph taken ca. 1950

Courtesy of Cranbrook Archives

“The clarity and serenity of a good interior give an absolutely marvelous feeling of strength with which to face our complicated and confused world.” Eero Saarinen

Eero Saarinen

Finnish-American architect and designer Eero Saarinen (1910–1961) is best known for his modernist American landmarks, including the iconic Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri (1963–65); the TWA terminal building at New York’s John F. Kennedy Airport (1956–62); and Dulles International Airport, constructed in 1958. Like many modernist architects, Saarinen applied his architectural aesthetic to the furniture he designed. The designs of the 1940s and 1950s became a benchmark for postwar innovations in form, function, material, and production techniques.

(T003) Panel Title: Take a Seat

(Possibly place a floor block between chairs inviting people to sit.)

Seating area outside of gallery near stairwell—8' x 4' walls

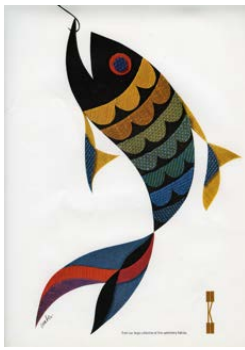
Take a seat. No really, please touch. Use this space to explore midcentury modernism for yourself. Here you will find magazines and catalogues that were available to consumers in the 1950s and 1960s, when this furniture was purchased by Winterthur. Take a step into the world that made this style possible and let us know what you think about it.

Please fill out a comment card on the credenza. What do you think about midcentury modernism? How do you feel when you sit in these chairs? Do you think midcentury modernism belongs at Winterthur?

(G007) Graphic:

Large wall mural behind seating area

Label to go on wall mounted on a backing that contrasts with the large mural



Knoll Associates, Inc., advertisement from the New York Philharmonic Program

Designed by Herbert Matter, 1965–66

Courtesy of Knoll Archives, New York

Highlight quote on panel in some way.

“If you love something, the work will be just fine.” Herbert Matter

Eye-catching advertisements were essential to the Knoll Associates brand. Artist Herbert Matter began producing memorable ads for the company in the 1950s, finding inspiration in the shapes and hues of their sculptural furniture and abstracting them into compelling graphic forms.

(001-003) Object Labels:

On wall behind seating area

Batch tombstone info with 3 objects on 1 label – I would like to have thumbnails of each chair next to the tombstone information



Saarinen 72 Executive Armless Chair

Designed by Eero Saarinen, after 1943

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc., 1948

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Naugahyde, chrome, fiberglass, plastic, latex



Windsor chair

America; 20th century

Painted wood

Winterthur Study Collection

Label on credenza: Let us know what you think!



Credenza

Designed by Florence Knoll, 1952

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc.

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Walnut-pattern plastic laminate, walnut veneer, lacquer, fiberglass, leather, metal

Props for handling in seating area placed on Credenza

(P002, P003, P004, and P006) Facsimiles to Make

- Knoll Associates Library Collection Catalogue
- Knoll Office Planned Furniture
- Knoll Associates Inc Catalogue
- Architectural Record, "Distinguished interior architecture for CBS"

(P011) Comment card box (prop object) to go on credenza. There will be a label and a stack of black comment cards (reproduction of Winterthur 1969 stationery) and a pencil holder. Label to read:

What do you think about midcentury modernism? Do you think Winterthur should do more with modern objects? Let us know on one of these cards!

(T004) Panel Title: The Planned Office

(G008 and G009 to be panels of approximately 16"x20")

Text to go on label rail (48" on deck) but set off from object text in some way.

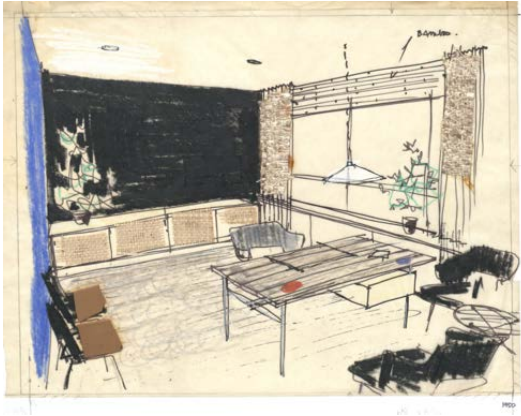


Hans Knoll's office

575 Madison Avenue, New York, ca. 1951

Florence Knoll Bassett Papers

Courtesy of Smithsonian Archives of American Art



Sketch for Hans Knoll's office, 575 Madison Avenue, New York

Drawn by Florence Knoll, 1950

Pen, colored pencil, polyurethane fragments, textile fragments

Florence Knoll Bassett Papers

Courtesy of Smithsonian Archives of American Art

On the wall are images of the office Florence Knoll designed for her husband Hans Knoll. The color scheme was personalized to compliment Hans Knoll's skin and hair tones.

Florence Knoll was a creator—not a decorator—of space. Between 1944 and 1965, she led the innovative Planning Unit at Knoll, drawing on her background in architecture to introduce notions of efficiency and space planning to offices. By creating custom interiors meant to maximize efficiency through careful analysis of professional needs, she defined the standard for the modern corporate interiors of postwar America.

(G010) North wall of Gallery: (5' x appropriate dimension)

All text to go on 48" label rail noted above.



Winterthur office, 1957

Winterthur Archives

The office pictured here, fully furnished in a midcentury modern style, was photographed soon after the ribbon cutting for Winterthur's south wing in 1957. The south wing was the first structure on Winterthur's campus designed to accommodate the growing number of visitors and staff. The building included a library, classrooms, and offices and was furnished in a modern style to reflect the professional and important work that would be undertaken in these spaces.

Object Labels:

To go on rail on deck of platform (see above)

(004)



Desk

Designed by Florence Knoll, after 1941

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc., after 1946

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Walnut-veneer lumber core, chrome-finished steel, cream-color laminate

“People ask me if I am a furniture designer, I am not. I never really sat down and designed furniture—I designed fill-in pieces that no one else was doing.” Florence Knoll

Florence Knoll refers to her own line of desks as the “meat and potatoes” of Knoll furniture, perhaps in reference to the range of executive-style desks that are still in production at the company today. Her desks are customizable with different options for drawer storage to meet the needs of individual users.

(P008 A, B, C, D, E) Props on Desk: A glass ashtray, a pewter bowl, a 1958 copy of *Winterthur Portfolio*, one or two Knoll catalogues (props are in the process of being purchased)

(005)



Pearson Model 46 Secretarial Chair

Designed by Max Pearson, ca. 1960

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc., 1961 onward

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Cast-aluminum swivel base with brushed chrome-plated finish, latex foam upholstery, cream Naugahyde polyurethane

At \$133, this “secretarial chair” was one of the more expensive chairs purchased for Winterthur’s Crownshield Building. Max Pearson’s design offered sophisticated controls that allowed for more comfort and adjustability. It provided the foundation for the ergonomic chairs popular today. Although most of Winterthur’s secretarial chairs have been removed in favor of more stable office chairs, the paintings conservation team prefers the height of these older chairs and keeps a close eye on the ones remaining!

(014)



Credenza

Designed by Florence Knoll, 1952

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc.

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Walnut-pattern plastic laminate, walnut veneer, lacquer, fiberglass, leather, metal

Credenza means “belief” or “confidence” in Italian. During the Middle Ages, Italians referred to dining-room sideboards or tables as credenzas because it was at the credenza that royal or noble families had servants taste their food to ensure it hadn’t been poisoned. The term evolved and was repurposed by 20th-century furniture manufacturers. Credenzas could be found in domestic settings to house new entertainment technology like record players and even televisions. In offices, they created a streamlined aesthetic by hiding supplies that could create clutter.

(T005) Panel Title: Crafting Midcentury Modern

East gallery wall – center of gallery

Graphics: On the Platform between the Saarinen and Windsor chair on a block (13 ½” x 19”); can exceed the 13 ½” to make the image taller. Text can go on the image block or on rail. Deck will accommodate two label rails of up to 57” wide.

(G011)



X-ray image, Eames shell chair

(G012)



X-ray image, Windsor chair

Getting a solid material to curve is no easy feat. Each of the artisans who built these chairs had to cultivate plasticity in the materials. For wood to curve, you need to heat it. To create the back of the Windsor chair, a craftsman applied steam to wood until it became flexible enough to bend. On the X-ray of that chair, you can see the holes drilled through the top band, which holds the vertical rods that give the back additional strength.

The back of the upholstered Saarinen chair is constructed using resin-based fiberglass, which was molded while hot to maximize its plasticity. As it cooled, it hardened and held its shape. The X-ray of the resin-based fiberglass shell chair allows you to see the suspended fibers that add strength to the fiberglass once it is formed.

Object Labels:

(006)



Sack-back Windsor armchair

Providence, Rhode Island; 1770

Painted wood

Museum purchase with funds provided by the Henry Francis du Pont Collectors

Circle 2017.0026

The Windsor chair is quintessentially colonial in style, yet its technology is admirably suited to low-cost, high-volume production. The chair employs turned spindles that are socketed into a solid wood seat that is shaped to fit the body. The Windsor could be assembled in pieces using woods sourced from different regions. This design technique was a precursor to mass-production methods used in midcentury modern furniture.

(007)



Saarinen Executive Armchair

Designed by Eero Saarinen, from 1948 to 1958

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc., 1950 onward

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Laminated maple legs, walnut face veneer, oil finish, nylon button glides

(G013) Graphics: Graphic to go on label rail (can be cropped to image and cut if space does not allow)



Advertisement from *Bride's Magazine*, Spring 1964

Courtesy of Knoll Archives, New York

Period advertisements for midcentury modern furnishings often referred to the goods/designs as a sort of “new” Americana. Branding was critical for the development of the midcentury modern aesthetic as the movement cultivated a spectrum of large-scale commissions. By drawing associations with the furniture most closely connected to colonial America, midcentury modernist manufacturers reflected an evolution of design aesthetics that was rooted in the American cultural identity.

Object Labels:

The next three chairs will be floated underneath the title of the exhibition

The label text for these chairs will go on the deck on the platform (second long rail on this wall).

(008)



Bertoia Small Diamond Chair

Designed by Harry Bertoia, 1952

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc., 1953 onward

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Steel wire, steel rod, polished chrome, latex, woven polyester wool blend

“The urge for good design is the same as the urge to go on living.” Harry Bertoia

Harry Bertoia claimed that his iconic diamond chairs were “made out of air.”

Considering himself to be an artist and sculptor rather than a furniture designer, he worked primarily in metal. To create the floating appearance of this chair, he welded a web out of steel, revolutionizing notions of comfort and the many ways a body can sit.

(009)



Saarinen Model 72 Executive Chair

Designed by Eero Saarinen, from 1948 to 1958

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc., 1950 onward

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Molded plastic shell and plywood seat, foam-rubber upholstery, tubular stainless-steel legs with polished-chrome finish

The model 72 features a fiber-reinforced plastic shell that provides proper back support while allowing the individual to sit fully back in the chair. It was an immediate commercial success and led to large-scale orders, establishing Knoll as a major contract furniture company. The chair is still widely produced today.

(010)



Lounge Chair Metal (LCM) Side Chair

Designed by Ray and Charles Eames, 1940s

Manufactured by Herman Miller Furniture Company, fall 1946 onward

Zeeland, Michigan

Molded-birch plywood chair with steel rod spine and legs and rubber feet, rubber shock mounts

Floating planes and graceful curves are quintessential elements of midcentury modernism. Two planes of “floating” molded plywood, connected by a thin yet strong steel spine, comprise the Eames LCM chair (lounge chair with metal legs). The slightly curved seat and back reflect a design sensibility cultivated by Ray and Charles Eames during more than five years of experimentation with the capacities of molded plywood.

(T006) Panel Title: Midcentury Modern Winterthur

South gallery wall, Label to go on deck rail (48”)

More than 170 pieces of midcentury modern furniture are now scattered throughout Winterthur’s campus, but in the 1960s and 1970s there was even more. Visitors and staff were virtually wrapped in the style. Henry Francis du Pont was far more than an antiquarian. He was a member of the Board of Trustees at the Whitney Museum of Art and moved in the same social circle as many modernist thinkers of his time. He had his hand on the pulse of design in America, whether that be colonial revival or midcentury modern.

(G014) Graphics: (wall mural that can be portrait or landscape 5’ x ?)



Winterthur Library, 1958

This photograph shows the library that opened in Winterthur's south wing. It was a critical component of the institutional expansion that included additional offices and twelve new museum rooms. Curator John Sweeney and the firm of Homsey Architects purchased the furniture from a Knoll showroom in Washington, D.C.

Object Labels: Can cut 011 label down if needed.

(011)



Saarinen Pedestal Side Table

Designed by Eero Saarinen, 1957

Manufactured by Knoll Associates, Inc., 1958 onward

East Greenville, Pennsylvania

Walnut-veneer oil finish on a cast-metal pedestal base with a white finish

Eero Saarinen was troubled by what he called a “slum of legs.” His solution to the problem of cluttered interior spaces was the Pedestal line, a series of forms whose elegant and stem-like base had the stability of four legs without taking up the space. The Pedestal group was visually organic in design, presenting objects that were unified in material and structure.

(P009, P010) Props on table ceramic flower pot with artificial daisies

(012)



Herman Miller Shell Chair

Designed by Ray and Charles Eames, 1939

Manufactured by Herman Miller Furniture Company, 1950 onward

Zeeland, Michigan

Molded-fiberglass chair body, tubular steel legs, rubber feet

Designed by material masterminds Ray and Charles Eames, the plastic bodies of these chairs were developed with the Zenith Plastic Company. They were constructed from an adapted material that the company had used during the war to make fiberglass-reinforced plastic radar domes. Zenith employed the latest tooling technology, including hydraulic dies previously incorporated in boat building.

(013)



Herman Miller Shell Chair

Designed by Ray and Charles Eames, 1939

Manufactured by Herman Miller Furniture Company, 1950 onward

Zeeland, Michigan

Molded-fiberglass chair body, tubular steel legs, rubber feet

Text and image below can be cut if space does not allow.

The metal bars seen on the legs here were used to attach the chairs to each other to create connected, theatre-type seating. The chair was available with six different bases, including wooden legs, metal rod legs, a wire strut base made from cast aluminum, a pedestal base, a swivel style, and a rocker version. The shell chair became an Eames icon and could be found in schools, restaurants, airports, museums, and other public spaces all over the world.

(G015 and G017) Graphics: On deck rail in front of shell chair



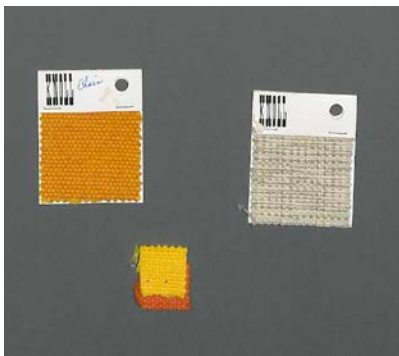
Courtesy of Elizabeth Humphrey and Aaron Morris

Knoll Associates, Inc.

To go on the far right hand corner of platform deck

Knoll Associates manufactured 78 percent of the furniture in Winterthur's midcentury modern collection. The advertisements seen here are indicative of the company's unique branding and marketing strategy. Knoll geared their products toward specific institutions and spaces such as libraries and even created objects like the plastic stencil or template in this case for easier use by architects and designers. The company is still in operation today, and all of the objects in this case are from the Knoll Archives in New York City. **Have a look at copies of these catalogues in the seating area just outside the gallery.**

(015)



Knoll textile sample

Courtesy of Knoll Archive

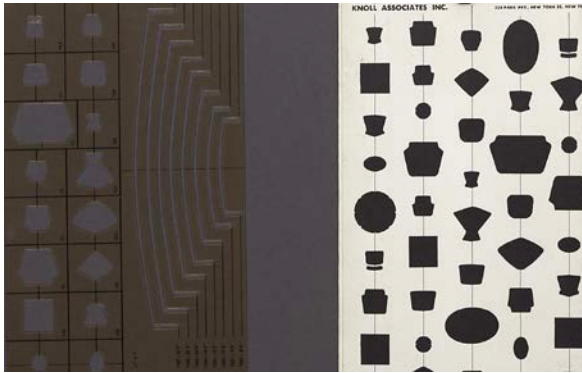
Paul Maute's mill in Germany designed and manufactured the sample you see here and began producing it in 1961. Maute was described as "an extremely gifted designer and ingenious technician." He had his own wool carding, spinning, and dyeing operations on site, which contributed to the quality of his yarns. The sample reflects the incredibly high standards in design and quality that Knoll set for their products.

(016)

Knoll Associates library collection catalogue, 1968

Courtesy of Knoll Archive

(017)



Knoll Associates template

Courtesy of Knoll Archive

(T007) Panel Title: Midcentury Modern Mad Men

Label to go on the wall next to image. Image 42" wide on a panel?



From *Mad Men*

Season 6, Episode 7, "The Crash"

Courtesy of Lionsgate Films Inc.

Do you recognize these interiors from the television show *Mad Men*? Steeped in the midcentury modern aesthetic, the sets of the show accurately portrayed a modernist trend in American business interiors after World War II. Knoll Associates, Herman

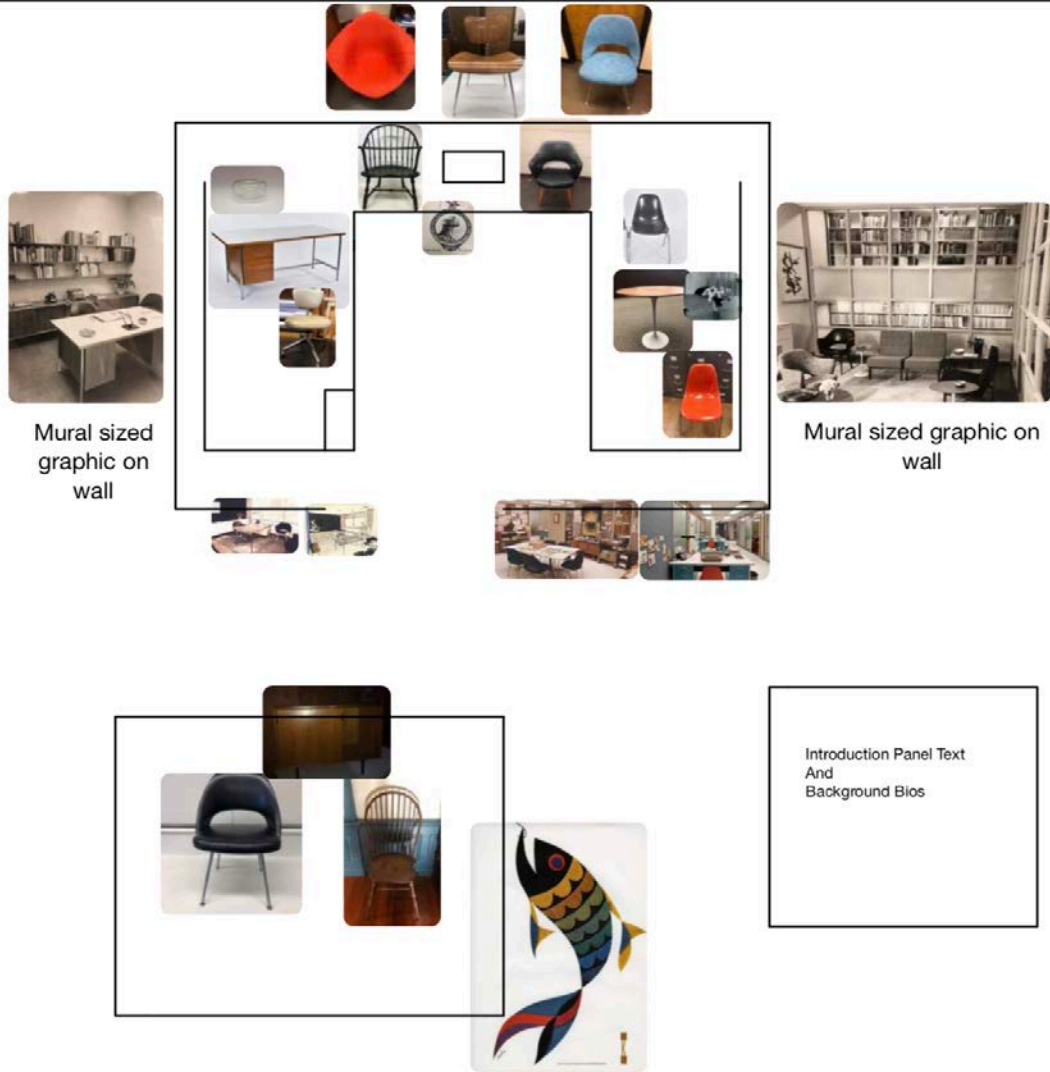
Miller Furniture Company, and other firms catered to the booming corporate development of the 1940s and 1950s by providing furnishings that would allow businesses to maximize efficiency, assert commercial relevance, and look “modern” at a time when America was cultivating its identity as a world leader.

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Appendix D

GALLERY LAYOUT FOR UNITY BY DESIGN: MIDCENTURY MODERNISM AT WINTERTHUR

Below is an early layout of the gallery that was altered before the exhibit opened. It is included to give the reader a better understanding of how the gallery looked. Please visit midcenturymodern.winterthur.org for a more accurate representation of the exhibition please visit midcenturymodern.winterthur.org.



Appendix E

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Elizabeth Humphrey

Wed 3/6, 10:14 AM

Carrie Greif; Elizabeth Humphrey ↕



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WINTERTHUR



April 1, 2019

Carrie Greif
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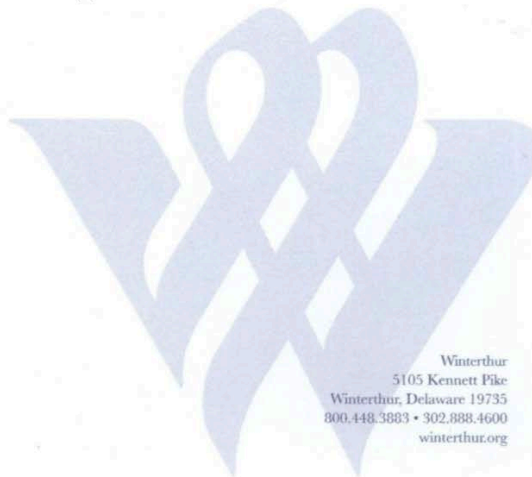
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