

Press release
Frankenberg, January 2019

The 118: Filigree Details and Convincing Citations **Design: Sebastian Herkner, 2018**

Minimalistic and honest while at the same time filigree and concise: the 118 is a classic wooden chair that ensures subtle elegance. With his chair range for Thonet, Sebastian Herkner references the company's diversified heritage. Based on the principle of reducing a chair to the fewest elements possible which Michael Thonet developed in the mid-19th century, Herkner takes this principle one step further with the 118: the sought-after designer adds sophisticated details to often seen simplicity in the chair segment, making his design less dominant and, at the same time, more noble.



The chair range 118 refers to the chair 214, the archetype of a Thonet chair, with the seat frame bent from a single piece and the wicker cane seat. Optionally, the 118 is offered with a moulded seat (model 118 M). The shape of the chair legs is another special feature: Rounded on the back and characterised by slight edges on the front, they reference the horseshoe shape of the seat. The incline of the back panel is perfectly coordinated with the seat and ensures the highest seating comfort.

For Sebastian Herkner, the “Frankfurt Chair”, which was developed in the 1930s and used as a universal chair for a long time, was another direct source of inspiration in addition to the history of Thonet. It stood out due to its solid construction consisting of four legs, a seat and a backrest, and at the time was part of the Thonet portfolio in a range of versions. Herkner, referring to his home town, likes to call his new design for Thonet the “Offenbach Chair”.

Chair 118 is available in natural beech and stained versions. The seat is covered with wicker cane and also available with a moulded seat. In 2019, the chair range will get new additions: a bar stool 118 H and the upholstered version 118 SP.

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Thonet – future-oriented furniture design with a long tradition

The unique success story of Thonet began with the work of master carpenter Michael Thonet. Since establishing his first workshop in Boppard on the River Rhine in 1819, the name Thonet has stood for high-quality, innovative and elegant furniture. The breakthrough came with the iconic chair No. 14, the so-called Vienna Coffee House Chair: the pioneering technique of bending solid beech wood for the first time enabled the mass production of chairs. The second milestone in design history was the tubular steel furniture by the famous Bauhaus architects Mart Stam, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer in the 1930s. At the time, Thonet was the world's largest producer of these tubular steel furniture designs, which are considered timeless today.

For the company today, the continuous process of innovation stands in the foreground alongside a focus on tradition and fine craftsmanship. Thonet collaborates with renowned national and international designers – in addition, some of the furniture is designed by the in-house Thonet Design Team. All of the furniture is produced in the company-owned manufacturing facility, and, following the motto "Individuality is our standard", custom-tailored solutions are part of everyday life in Frankenberg. Chief Executive Officer Brian Boyd together with Chief Operating Officer Michael Erdelt and Creative Director Norbert Ruf manage the company at the corporate head offices and production site in Frankenberg/Eder (Germany). The descendants of Michael Thonet, the fifth and sixth generations, are actively involved with the company's business as partners and sales representatives.