

Press Release
Frankenberg (Germany), April 2018

Thonet goes to Milan: New designs and iconic classics are set to shine at a pop-up showroom in Milan

2019 is a year of notable anniversaries for Thonet, during which the company celebrates both its 200th anniversary and 100 years of the Bauhaus. Among several events to mark these occasions during the year, Thonet presents a special exhibition honouring both its bentwood and tubular steel classics in the Brera Design District during Salone del Mobile. These benchmark designs define the company's DNA, and in Milan they are staged in a direct dialogue with special contemporary interpretations conceived by renowned designers, such as Sebastian Herkner and Studio Besau Marguerre. In a pop-up showroom setting designed by Marcel Besau and Eva Marguerre, products most often seen in residential settings will encounter models designed for the contract segment, as presented in a series of application scenarios.

The showroom display in Milan focuses primarily on the new extension to the wooden chair range 118 designed by Sebastian Herkner. In addition to bar stool versions in two different heights and an upholstered version introduced at the beginning of the year, Thonet now presents six high-gloss lacquered versions which grace the chair with a luxurious finish. Marcel Besau describes the staging of the new product as follows: "The setting we conceived emphasises the new refinements of the 118 range in its additional colours and, set against textile backgrounds, refers to the 'Café Thonet' theme that is a continuing motif for the Thonet celebrations this year."

With this exhibition in Milan, Thonet looks back on two centuries of leading the field in furniture design. Thonet furniture is a popular cultural companion all around the world: as classic pieces with patina and a history, as timeless design icons with a collectible value, and as culturally rich design objects with perennial style and appeal. These design icons can be found wherever people gather, network, relax or work.

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We would appreciate an author's copy in the case of publication.

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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.