

Press release
Frankenberg, October 2022

Real all-rounders: new incarnations of the S 661 moulded plywood chair Design: Günter Eberle (1954) / Thonet Design Team (2022)

Moulded plywood furniture, such as the S 661 chair designed by Günter Eberle, brought lightness and fresh life into the interior spaces of the 1950s. Thanks to its versatility and efficient use of material, the sculptural design of the S 661, with its elegantly curved moulded plywood seat, is just as contemporary today as it was first introduced. For Orgatec, the office furniture trade show running from 25 to 29 October 2022, the recently unveiled update with a sleek tubular steel frame will be joined by the new swivel chair version S 661 Atelier (DR), as well as two upholstered versions and the barstool S 661 H.



With the relaunch of the S 661, Thonet has recreated numerous versions of Günter Eberle's original early 50s design now in different types of wood and various colour choices. A true all-rounder suitable for use in both home interiors and the contract sector, the design is complemented by the addition of the S 661 Atelier (DR) swivel chair version, the S 661 SPV chair with a fully upholstered seat, the fully upholstered S 661 PV chair, as well as the S 661 H barstool, available with and without a fully upholstered seat. These models bring even more flexibility to the range.

The S 661 Atelier (DR) swivel chair works perfectly as stylish and comfortable desk seating at home or in the office. Meanwhile, upholstered versions are an invitation to linger around the dining table and also make a wonderful option for fine dining venues, or in event and conference settings. And, lastly, the slender barstools can be an attractive solution for either private homes – for example at the kitchen counter – or in the contract and hospitality sectors, at reception counters or even in the office kitchenette.

All versions of the S 661 offer various choices, including natural and coloured stained wood types and numerous upholstery fabrics and colours. At the core of all of these pieces is the moulded plywood seat shell, which showcases the beauty of the material, and is available in elegant walnut, warm oak and stained coloured versions. Despite the minimalist shape and use of materials, the visible wood grain and soft curves lend the chair a welcoming appeal and create a special presence in any room.

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“Günter Eberle, head of the Architecture Department in Frankenberg at the time, successfully set the organic against precision in his award-winning design,” says Creative Director Norbert Ruf. “The S 661 combines clear lines with a precise contour. Though the chair has a reserved aesthetic and an intrinsic lightness, its sculptured form is inviting and radiates warmth. Now is the perfect time for this type of furniture to make a comeback.” A two-dimensional material is shaped into a three-dimensional object; lines and planes create a defined form. The combination of moulded plywood and tubular steel is typical of Thonet.

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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. Ever since he established 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, today known the world over as the Vienna Coffee House Chair: the pioneering technique of bending solid beechwood enabled the mass production of chairs for the first time. 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. During those pioneering years, Thonet was the world's largest producer of these tubular steel furniture designs, which are today considered timeless.

For the company today, the continuous process of innovation is the top priority, together with a focus on tradition and fine craftsmanship. Thonet's furniture designs originate both from its collaborations with renowned national and international creatives and from the in-house Thonet Design Team. Chief Executive Officer Brian Boyd and Creative Director Norbert Ruf manage the company from the corporate head office and production site in Frankenberg/Eder (Germany). Michael Thonet's fifth- and sixth-generation descendants are actively involved with the company's business as partners and sales representatives.