

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Fred Kaplan-Mayer
Director of Advancement
215-923-8000
fred@centerforartinwood.org

On the Edge of Your Seat: Chairs for the 21st Century
May 6 – July 23, 2016



Adrian Ferrazzuti *Baleen Chair*

In May 2016, The Center for Art in Wood, in partnership with The Furniture Society, will mount an exhibition of chairs, benches, and stools for the 21st century. On view will be sculptural, conceptual, functional (and the occasional dysfunctional) seating, reflecting the dramatic evolution from the storied history of chairmaking in Philadelphia.

The Center and the Society issued an international call to artists in early 2015 and received a gratifying response – 251 entries from 147 artists.

As Albert LeCoff, co-founder and executive director of the Center, describes it, “The innovative responses to the call for chairs reflects and documents our world in the first quarter of the 21st century. Responses to the call included drawings, models, prints, videos and a chair installation incorporating sound and projected lights.”



Keunho Peter Park *Cocoon Chair*

Juror Susie Silbert states “Yet, almost equal to the impact of the old in this collection, is the presence of the new. More than in any other furniture exhibition in recent memory (outside of ones devoted specifically to the topic), the artists, makers, and designers included here demonstrate a sustained embrace of digital technologies. These works and the exquisite, compelling seats that join them are just a small glimpse of the vibrant field of small-scale design and studio furniture production today. They stand as a testament to the ingenuity of the makers and their ability to conjure meaning from material and technique. If they are any indication, the 21st century will be a good one for chairs.”

A jury of distinguished curators and artists selected 45 works from 39 artists including 7 students. The exhibition, *On the Edge of Your Seat: Chairs for the 21st Century* coinciding with The Furniture Society’s annual conference in Philadelphia June 23 – 26, 2016.





1740-1750. Winterthur
Museum, 1960.1037

Philadelphia has been a center of furniture making since before the American Revolution. The “Rising Sun Chair,” made by John Folwell in 1779, was used by George Washington for nearly three months of the Federal Convention's continuous sessions in Philadelphia¹.

Accompanying the exhibition will be a richly-illustrated catalog with juror essays and statements by each of the artists on their sources of inspiration and creativity.

Setting this new work in context is a comprehensive essay on the evolution of Philadelphia chairs, the makers and their significance in furniture history by Joshua Lane, the Lois F. and Henry S. McNeil Curator of Furniture, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.



Mira Nakashima *Concordia Chair*

Jurors for the exhibition included Nora Atkinson, Lloyd Herman Curator of Craft at the Smithsonian American Art Museum Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C; Jasper Brinton, designer and woodworker, Principal, Brinton Design, Phoenixville, PA; Benjamin Colman, Associate Curator of American Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts; and Susie Silbert, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Glass, Corning Museum of Glass. Reflecting on the submissions for the exhibition, Brinton said, “I think it vital we acknowledge those brave artists who blaze ahead undaunted at times able to work unexpected materials effectively sympathetically discovering effects that are fresh pristine as they stumble across the doorstep of the future.”

Exhibiting artists include: Jennifer Anderson, Justin G. Bailey, Bob Brox, Stoel Burrowes, Sheri Crider & Nina Dubois, Alicia Dietz, Jack R. Elliott, Dugan Essick, Adrian Ferrazzutti, Amy Forsyth, Jordan Gehman, Sophie Glenn, Tad Gloeckler, Doug Jones & Carrie Compton, Lauren Kalman, Patrick Kana, David Knopp, Beth Krensky, Joseph G. La Macchia, Jack Larimore, Po Shun Leong, Laura Mays, Christine Mei, Taiji Miyasaka & Darrin Griechen, Mira Nakashima, Christy Oates, Keunho Peter Park, Gord Peteran, Dean Pulver, Andrew Jay Rumpler, Fabiano Sarra, Matt Selnick, Mark Sfirri, Michaela Stone, Joshua Torbick, Misha Volf, and Takahiro Yoshino

